

RHODE ISLAND SUPPORTS FOR WORKING FAMILIES AMONG LOWEST IN NEW ENGLAND

Rhode Islanders who work full-time should be able to afford housing, food, and health care. Yet far too many jobs pay wages that are too low for families to meet their most basic needs. Many working families would not be able to get by if not for government funded work and income supports that help close the gap between earnings and expenses.

Contrary to the oft-cited claim that Rhode Island has among the most generous public benefits, working families' eligibility for child care assistance and health care coverage is lower than for residents in other New England states. Families in three other New England states also receive a larger refund through the state's Earned Income Tax Credit than families in the Ocean State. While families in all states who need to rely on welfare (TANF) cash assistance receive benefits that are well below the federal poverty level, Rhode Island's monthly benefit (which has not been adjusted in more than 30 years) is the second lowest in the region.*

Supports for Working Families*

MEDICAID (Rite Care) PARENT ELIGIBILITY LIMITS ¹		MEDICAID (Rite Care) CHILD ELIGIBILITY LIMITS ¹	
CT	\$31,248	CT	\$65,117
NH	\$27,821	NH	\$65,117
VT	\$27,821	VT	\$63,907
MA	\$27,821	MA	\$61,488
RI	\$27,821	RI	\$53,626
ME	\$21,168	ME	\$42,941

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE ELIGIBILITY LIMITS ²		EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT ³ (as percent of Federal credit)	
NH	\$50,225	VT	32.0%
ME	\$54,589	CT	27.5%
CT	\$44,601	MA	23.0%
MA	\$44,593 (Exit limit \$75,808)	RI	12.5%
VT	\$39,576	ME	5.0%**
RI	\$36,162 (Exit limit \$45,203)	NH	none***

** All state credits are refundable except for Maine's.
*** New Hampshire does not have an income tax

Supports for Underemployed or Unemployed Families*

WELFARE (RI Works) MONTHLY BENEFITS ⁴	
CT	\$698
NH	\$675
VT	\$640
MA	\$618
RI	\$554
ME	\$485

WELFARE (RI Works) LIFETIME LIMITS	
MA	none
VT	60 months
ME	60 months
NH	60 months
CT	60 months ⁵
RI	48 months

* Calculations for the Medicaid, Child Care Assistance and Welfare programs are based on a family size of 3.

¹ 2016 income limits. ² 2015 income limits. ³ 2016 Tax Year. ⁴ 2015 benefit levels.

⁵ Connecticut has a 21 month time limit with extensions allowed up to 60 months.