



Analysis of Child Care Market Rates in Niagara County

In New York State any person caring for more than two children for more than three hours a day, unless all of the children being cared for are related to the child care provider within the third degree of consanguinity, is required to obtain a registration or license from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. The New York State Office of Children and Family Services is the governing body for child day care in New York State. A copy of the child care regulations, listing the minimum health and safety requirements for each type of child care program, may be located on the Office of Children and Family Services website at http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/daycare_regulations.asp. The New York State Office of Children and Family Services conducts a biannual survey of child care providers in New York State in order to evaluate the actual cost of providing child care services. The results of the survey were compiled in a report called the New York State Child Care Market Rates for 2022-2024 Report. A complete copy of the report, including the background information and the purpose of conducting the survey, may be accessed at http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/policies/external/OCFS_2014/LCMs/14-OCFS-LCM-03%20Child%20Care%20Market%20Rates%20%202014-2015.pdf.

The fees for child care services are based upon the actual costs of providing child care in a specific type of child care setting. Due to the increased costs of running a licensed or registered center-based child care program, such as the high cost of insurance, staff salaries, staff training, meeting adult/child ratios and other regulatory requirements as required by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services child day care regulations, the cost of enrolling a child in a center-based program is higher than the cost of enrolling a child in a registered or licensed family child care home or a legally-exempt child care home. All persons working in a registered and licensed child care center or family child care home are required to obtain 30 hours of training every two years in nine specific topic areas. The cost of these trainings is reflected in the fees charged for child care services.

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services child day care regulations do not require legally-exempt child care providers to obtain a registration or license because they are caring for two or fewer children or all related children. Legally-exempt child care providers are not required to follow the New York State Office of Children and Family Services child day care regulations or obtain training and have fewer regulatory requirements. Therefore legally-exempt child care providers are able to charge a lesser fee to parents for providing child care services. If a legally-exempt child care provider chooses to obtain ten hours of training each year, the legally-exempt child care provider may charge a higher fee for child care services.

Definition of Child Care Rates

Rates for child care are determined depending on the amount of time a child attends the program. The definition of child care rates are defined in the table below.

Type of Rate Charged	
Weekly	This is the maximum amount charged per week for a child attending a program when the child attends care over thirty hours in a week (defined as full-time care).
Daily	Rate charged when a child attends more than six hours a day and less than twelve hours a day.
Part-day	Rate charged when a child attends less than six hours a day and more than three hours a day.

Adult/Child Ratios

Adult/child ratios are an important consideration in determining the actual cost of care for each type of child care program.

A registered family child care program may care for six or fewer children ages 6 weeks to 5 years of age and an additional two school-age children. There must be one caregiver present for every two children under the age of 2 years.

Licensed group family child care homes may care for up to 12 children ages 6 weeks to 12 years of age plus an additional four school-age children. There must be one caregiver present for each child under the age of 2 years.

The adult/child ratios for licensed day care centers are included in the table below.

Child's Age	Adult to Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
6 weeks to 18 months	1 to 4	8
18 months to 36 months	1 to 5	12
3 years	1 to 7	18
4 years	1 to 8	21
5 years	1 to 9	24
School-age children to 9 years of age	1 to 10	20
School-age children 10 to 12 years old	1 to 15	30

The adult/child ratios for a registered school-age child care program are included in the table below.

Child's Age	Adult to Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
5 to 9 years	1 to 10	20
10 to 12 years	1 to 15	30

A compilation of the market rate survey results for Niagara County with a comparison of the 2022-2023 and the 2023-2024 market rates being charged by each type of child care program is included in the tables below.

Day Care Center Rates												
Child's Age	Under 1½			1½-2			3-5			6-12		
	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease
Weekly	\$295	\$320	\$25	\$275	\$300	\$25	\$253	\$277	\$24	\$245	\$257	\$12
Daily	\$64	\$67	\$3	\$59	\$63	\$4	\$55	\$58	\$3	\$55	\$58	\$3
Part-day	\$43	\$45	\$2	\$39	\$42	\$3	\$37	\$39	\$2	\$37	\$39	\$2

Group Family Day Care Rates												
Child's Age	Under 2 yrs			2 yrs			3-5 yrs.			6-12 yr.		
	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease
Weekly	\$266	\$279	\$13	\$252	\$265	\$13	\$250	\$263	\$13	\$225	\$236	\$11
Daily	\$55	\$58	\$3	\$53	\$56	\$3	\$50	\$53	\$3	\$50	\$53	\$3
Part-day	\$37	\$39	\$2	\$35	\$37	\$2	\$33	\$35	\$2	\$33	\$35	\$2

Registered Family Day Care Rates

Child's Age	Under 2 yrs						2 yrs				3-5 yrs				6-12 yrs			
	2022-2024		2024-2025		Increase/Decrease		2022-2024		2024-2025		Increase/Decrease		2022-2024		2024-2025		Increase/Decrease	
	2022-2024	2024-2025	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	
Weekly	\$266	\$279	\$13	\$252	\$265	\$13	\$250	\$263	\$13	\$225	\$236	\$11	\$225	\$236	\$11	\$225	\$236	\$11
Daily	\$55	\$58	\$3	\$53	\$56	\$3	\$50	\$53	\$3	\$50	\$53	\$3	\$50	\$53	\$3	\$50	\$53	\$3
Part-day	\$37	\$39	\$2	\$35	\$37	\$2	\$33	\$35	\$2	\$33	\$35	\$2	\$33	\$35	\$2	\$33	\$35	\$2

School-Age Child Care Program (SACC) Rates

Child's Age	Under 1½		1½-2 yrs		3-5 yrs		6-12 yrs		
	Under 1½	1½-2 yrs	3-5 yrs	6-12 yrs	3-5 yrs	6-12 yrs	3-5 yrs	6-12 yrs	
Weekly			\$253		\$277	\$24	\$245	\$257	\$12
Daily			\$55		\$58	\$3	\$55	\$58	\$3
Part-day			\$37		\$39	\$2	\$37	\$39	\$2

Standard Rate for Legally-Exempt Family Child Care/In-Home Child Care

Child's Age	Under 2 yrs			2 yrs			3-5 yrs			6-12 yrs		
	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease
Weekly	\$173	\$181	\$8	\$164	\$172	\$8	\$163	\$171	\$10	\$146	\$153	\$7
Daily	\$36	\$38	\$2	\$34	\$36	\$2	\$33	\$34	\$1	\$33	\$34	\$1
Part-day	\$24	\$25	\$1	\$23	\$24	\$1	\$21	\$23	\$2	\$21	\$23	\$2

***Enhanced Rate for Legally-Exempt Family Child Care/In-Home Child Care**

Child's Age	Under 2 yrs			2 yrs			3-5 yrs			6-12 yrs		
	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease	2022-2024	2024-2025	Increase/Decrease
Weekly	\$186	\$195	\$9	\$176	\$186	\$10	\$175	\$184	\$9	\$158	\$165	\$7
Daily	\$39	\$41	\$2	\$37	\$39	\$2	\$35	\$37	\$2	\$35	\$37	\$3
Part-day	\$26	\$27	\$1	\$25	\$26	\$1	\$23	\$25	\$2	\$23	\$25	\$2

*The enhanced rate for legally-exempt child care providers is paid to legally-exempt child care providers who have obtained 10 hours of training within one year prior to the date that the legally-exempt enrollment application is submitted.

Analysis of Actual Child Care Costs

Based on the information in the tables above all payment schedules for day care centers and school-age child care programs stayed the same.

The payment schedules for registered family day care homes showed an increase in payments. For children 2 years and under, a 5% increase each in the weekly, daily and part-day rate, 5% for children 2 years of age for the weekly and 6% for both the daily and part-day. For children 3 -5 years, the weekly rate increased by 5%, and 6% for both the daily and part-day. For children 6 and 12 years the weekly rates increased by 5% and 6% in both the daily and part-day.

The payment schedule for group family child care homes showed an increase in payment. For children under 2 years the weekly, daily and part-day rate each increased by 5%. For children 2 years the weekly rate increased by 5%, the daily and part-day rate each increased by 6%. For children between the ages of 3 and 5 years the weekly rate increased by 5% and the daily and part-day rate increased by 6%. For children between 6 – 12 years the weekly rate increased by 5% and the daily and part-day rate increased by 6%.

The payment schedule for legally-exempt child care homes showed an increase in payment. For children under 2 years, the weekly rate increased by 5% and daily rate increased by 6% with the part-day rate increasing by 4%. For children 2 years the weekly rate increased by 5%, with the daily rate increasing by 6% and the part-day rate increased by 4%. For children 3 to 5 years the weekly rate increased by 3% and daily increased by 3% and part-day rate increased by 10%. The weekly rate for children 6 to 12 years increased by 5% and the daily rate increased by 3% and part-day by 10%.

The payment schedule for the enhanced rate for legally-exempt child care homes showed in payments. For children under 2 years the weekly and daily rate each increased by 5%, the part-day rate increased by 4%. For children 2 years the weekly rate increased by 6%, the daily rate increased by 5% and part-day rate increased by 4%. For children 3 – 5 years, the weekly rate increased by 5%, daily increased by 6% and part-day increased by 9%. For children 6 -12 years, the weekly rate increased by 4%, daily increased by 6% and part-day increased by 9%.

Infants

In most cases Infant slots demand the highest payment, as infants require the greatest amount of care and have the lowest adult/child ratio requirement.

The average weekly rate for placing an infant in a day care center is 27% higher than placing an infant in a registered or licensed family child care home and 94% higher than placing an infant in a legally-exempt child care program.

Toddlers

The average weekly rate for placing a toddler in a day care center is 20% more than placing a toddler in a registered or licensed family child care home and 98% higher than placing a toddler in a legally-exempt child care program.

Preschool-age Children

The average weekly rate for placing a pre-school aged child in a day care center is 15% more than placing a pre-school aged child in registered or licensed family child care home and 87% more than placing a child in a legally-exempt child care program.

School-age Children

The average weekly rate for placing a school-aged child in a School-Age Child Care (SACC) program or a day care center is approximately 14% higher than placing a school-age child in a registered or licensed family day care home and 76% higher than placing a child in a legally-exempt child care program.

Conclusion

Analyzing child care costs for all types of programs reveals that the more regulations a child care program has to comply with the greater the cost of care to the parent. Regulations exist to set a minimum health and safety standard for children being cared for in a child care program. Without regulations there would be less quality child care programs available to parents. Quality child care is vital to the health and well-being of all children. When looking for a child care program it is

important to learn as much information as you can about each type of child care program to determine which type of care best meets your family's individual needs. The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) program can assist parents in obtaining information on all types of child care. Parents should visit each child care program in which they are considering enrolling their child to see what the program has to offer and to assess the quality of the program. It is a good idea to ask each child care provider for references and to check those references. For more information on what to look for when choosing a quality child care program please visit the Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara website at: <http://www.childcareofniagara.com/parents>.

This report is an analytical report and is provided for informational purposes only. The Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara does not warrant the information regarding any child care provider or program nor do we license, endorse or recommend any child care provider or program. Only a parent can decide if the quality of care is right for his/her child.