



SPONSOR: Sen. Gay

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
152nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 16

DIRECTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PREPARE REPORTS ON DEMOGRAPHIC DATA IN EARLY CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION POPULATIONS.

1 WHEREAS, the Purchase of Care (POC) Program in Delaware is a subsidy that provides support for early
2 childhood and after-school education for children from birth through age 12 living within 200 percent of the Federal
3 Poverty Limit; and

4 WHEREAS, funding for POC comes from federal and state sources, which help low-income families pay for their
5 child care so that parents or guardians can work or receive workforce training; and

6 WHEREAS, the Delaware Division of Social Services (DSS) is responsible for setting the standards and
7 distributing this benefit to Delawareans; and

8 WHEREAS, having accurate data is integral to determining appropriate funding for the POC program as well
9 assisting in formulating policy to smartly build and expand the program.

10 NOW, THEREFORE:

11 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 152nd General Assembly of the State of Delaware that the Secretary of
12 the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) is directed to provide a report on or before December 1, 2023, March
13 1, 2024, and June 1, 2024 on Delaware POC that details the number of individual children served each month in Fiscal
14 Years 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023, the total amount of money spent on POC in Fiscal Years 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022
15 and 2023, and what portion of the funds came from State, federal, or one-time stimulus sources, parent co-pays, and any
16 other sources. For federal funding sources, DHSS shall provide a breakdown including, but not limited to, CCDF, TANF,
17 SSBG, SNAP, and any other funding source and whether those funds are one time funded. DHSS shall report any funding
18 allocated to POC each year that did not go directly to fund POC. The report must include the following information, if
19 available:

20 1. Utilization data, including children billed for half day and full day rates, school age only children, school age
21 summer only children, number of children enrolled and a percentage of children who use the POC program compared to the
22 percentage of children who never utilize the POC service, and attendance of children by month.

23 2. Utilization data in 2022 and 2023 during the months of September through May, including school age children
24 billed part day, number of children enrolled, and a percentage of school age children who use POC compared to the
25 percentage of utilization data 2022 and 2023 during the months of July and August, including full time school age children
26 only, number of children enrolled, and a percentage of school age children who use POC.

27 3. The demographics of children and their families that utilize POC, including race, household income range by
28 percentage of the federal poverty line, and household type.

29 4. A report on Fiscal Year 2024, broken down by state and federal funding, on spending to date by quarter,
30 anticipated spending by quarter, the number of children anticipated to attend each month, and anticipated remaining
31 funding at the end of Fiscal Year 2024, including an assessment of what portion of the budget is being held in reserve in the
32 event attendance increases or for any other purposes.

33 5. A report, which documents assumptions and inputs made, to calculate monthly cost increases in POC for:

34 a. Kent and Sussex provider rates of 50% parity, 75% parity, and 100% parity to the level of New Castle
35 County.

36 b. All statewide provider rates of the basic cost of care and cost of quality, according to the DSS Cost
37 Estimator Model report issued March 1, 2022.

38 6. Any anticipated and enacted changes in the reporting period to policies including co-payments, absence days,
39 and other changes.

40 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DSS, in consultation with members of the Delaware Early Childhood
41 Council, shall consider the following policies and definitions starting in August 2023 and circulate their findings for public
42 comment by January 10, 2024 to reflect future fiscal years and federal plans. The policies that shall be considered are:

43 1. Attendance for partial time (fewer than 5 days a week).

44 2. Unenrollment.

45 3. Allowance for centers to close for up to 10 holidays and professional development days and include those in
46 POC billing.

47 4. Allowance for inclement weather closures included in POC billing.

48 5. Policies relating to private pay rates.

49 6. Update the POC handbook.

50 7. Clarification that up to 10 holidays of the providers choice may be covered through POC payments.

51 8. Definition of “enrollment”.

52 9. Definition of “utilization”.

53 10. Definition of “attendance”.

54 11. Definition of “program”.

55 12. Definition of “part-time care”.

56 13. Definition of “full-time care”.

57 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DHSS shall report and summarize progress on data collection for the new
58 alternative methodology for rate setting, known as “cost estimation modeling,” which shall be included in the new quarterly
59 reports.

60 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DHSS shall update their POC policy to be funded the full amount of the POC
61 subsidy, providers must charge a private pay rate equal to or greater than the POC rate. However, providers may implement
62 sliding scale fee models or financial aid for some families.

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DHSS and the Department of Education (DOE) shall include an alternative
64 cost estimation model in the 2024 rate analysis. DHSS and DOE shall present to the Delaware Early Childhood Council at
65 its bimonthly meetings on data collection and implementation, and the gap between current rates and actual costs to meet
66 state requirements.

67 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that by January 1, 2024, the DOE shall report funding sources for and how many
68 children are served by the following programs, broken down by age and county, including eligibility thresholds, percentage
69 of eligible children served, and percentage of applications funded with funds available from the following:

70 1. ECAP.

71 2. Redding.

72 3. Head Start.

73 4. Early Head Start.

74 5. Purchase of Care for children who may also receive funding with ECAP, Redding, Head Start, or Early Head
75 Start, to the extent such information is available to DOE.

76 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that DOE shall collect all of the following information during the annual licensing
77 visit, broken down by child care centers and family child-care centers:

78 1. Annual enrollment, enrollment average per county, enrollment by setting type, and the percentage of capacity
79 enrolled.

80 2. Potential facility capacity based on classrooms and licensing ratios.

81 3. Whether a POC program has a waiting list, staffing shortage or both.

82 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that that any report discussed herein must be submitted to the Controller General,
83 the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Co-Chairs of the Joint Finance Committee, and the Delaware
84 Early Childhood Council.

SYNOPSIS

This resolution directs the Department of Health and Social Services to prepare reports on the Purchase of Care Program and directs the Department of Education to prepare reports on child care capacity.

Author: Senator Gay