

What Happened With Child Care During the 2025 Legislative Session?

Published: Thursday, 23 January 2025 14:39

Written by: Jenna Williams



This 2025 session, supporting families with young children remained a top policy priority of Voices for Utah Children. The urgent need to address families' critical child care needs remained at the forefront of our advocacy efforts.

[REDACTED]

Voices for Utah Children held two successful lobby days during the 2025 session, sent hundreds of emails to lawmakers in support of child care, and saw more child care bills introduced than ever before—thanks to your advocacy!

[REDACTED]

What Happened With Child Care During the 2025 Legislative Session?

Published: Thursday, 23 January 2025 14:39

Written by: Jenna Williams

Child Care Priorities

[HB 382: Child Care Amendments](#)

[HB 461](#) passed, making child care workers eligible for [child care subsidies](#) regardless of income, mirroring Kentucky's [successful initiative](#). This helps child care owners cover the costs of providing a child care benefit and helps staff keep more of their paycheck. However, its passage did not include funding, delaying implementation. This 2025 bill and appropriations request will allocate \$3M per year in dedicated funding for the initiative and clarifies that the Department of Workforce Services will initiate it by October 1, 2025. When implemented, the program is [2,200](#) [Flier available for printing and sharing here](#)

[here](#)

PRIORITY

NEVER GIVEN PUBLIC HEARING

[SB 221: Child Care Safety and Licensing](#)

[SB221 S02: Child Care Revisions](#) will require that people providing childcare for between five and eight unrelated children to register with the state, complete a background check, be CPR and First Aid trained, and act as mandatory reporters for child neglect and abuse. They also must inform parents that they are not licensed or certified by the state. While this is not as protective as a return to the full residential care certificate, it offers more protections to children than current state law.

[Senate Committee](#)

[Senate](#)

[House](#)

PRIORITY

School Readiness Pre-School Program Funding, Sen. Lincoln Fillmore

What Happened With Child Care During the 2025 Legislative Session?

Published: Thursday, 23 January 2025 14:39

Written by: Jenna Williams

[Promise Partnership Utah](#)
([fact sheet here](#))

[Monday, Feb 3rd](#)

Position: PRIORITY

Outcome: PARTIALLY FUNDED

Other Child Care Legislation & Funding Requests

[HB 106](#) (was [HB 316: Child Tax Credit Expansion](#)), Rep. Mark Strong

Utah's non-refundable [Child Tax Credit](#)

[We advocate that the CTC must also be refundable](#)

[House Committee](#)

[House](#)

[HB](#)

[106](#)

[opposes](#)

SUPPORT

Outcome: PASSED

[SB 189 S01: Child Care Services Amendments](#), Sen. Luz Escamilla & Rep. Karianne Lisonbee

This bill creates an employer-based, state-assisted child care capacity expansion program to retrofit one obsolete state-owned building—ideally in a rural community—into a child care facility at the state's expense. Under this program, a private employer (or a cooperative group of employers) will lease the renovated state-owned child care space. The program requires that 50% of the child care slots be reserved for leasing employer(s) employees, while the remaining 50% be allocated to community members (limited to someone who resides within 30 miles of the facility, works within 15 miles of the facility, is a state employee, a member of the

What Happened With Child Care During the 2025 Legislative Session?

Published: Thursday, 23 January 2025 14:39

Written by: Jenna Williams

National Guard, or a member of the armed forces). Additionally, the child care program must accept DWS childcare subsidies, have at least one infant room and one toddler room, and must participate in the high-quality rating system. In the original version of this bill, the state would cover the cost of the lease for free, and in return, the employer would have been required to offer reduced-cost child care for their employees and community members. The original version also granted admission to the program to economically disadvantaged children. Changes were made in the House. This bill is supported by the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity. This bill passed the [Senate Committee](#) unanimously, passed the [Senate](#) with a 17-7 vote, and passed the [House Committee](#) with a 6-5 vote. During the House debate, Rep. Nicholeen Peck, of Tooele, dismissed Utah's child care crisis through a racist, offensive claim—[see our official statement here](#).

SUPPORT

Outcome: FAILED

[HB 410: Child Care Amendments](#), **Rep. Tracy Miller & Sen. Wayne Harper**

This bill counts preschool teaching in child care as equivalent to school teaching for educator licensing. It allows local governments to use up to 1% of housing and transit reinvestment zone funds to expand child care facilities. [The Utah Private Child](#)

[Care Association](#)

[House Committee](#)

[House](#)

[Senate Committee](#)

[the Senate](#)

SUPPORT

Outcome: PASSED

[HB 106 \(was HB 389: Child Care Business Tax Credit\)](#), **Rep. Jason Thompson & Sen. Ann Millner**

The bill establishes a business tax credit to encourage Utah employers to construct a child care center for employees. It allows employers to claim a nonrefundable credit—20% for costs of construction or expansion of the facility. The employer can also qualify for a credit—10% for the costs of operating that facility—if they qualify for the 20% construction credit. The employer must qualify for and claim the federal employer-provided child care tax credit to be eligible. While we support efforts to improve access to child care, [past experience shows](#) similar tax credits have been ineffective and underutilized. Additionally, linking child care benefits to [employment](#) may inadvertently lock parents into inflexible job situations, and efforts like this tend to favor larger employers and higher-paid employees. We share

What Happened With Child Care During the 2025 Legislative Session?

Published: Thursday, 23 January 2025 14:39

Written by: Jenna Williams

these concerns not to dismiss the bill but to emphasize that it should not be seen as a comprehensive solution to all child care challenges, and stakeholders should proceed with caution. This bill passed the [House Committee](#) with a 8-3 vote.

[HB 106](#)

[opposes](#)

SUPPORT

Outcome: PASSED

[HB 264: Higher Education Certification Amendments](#), **Sen. Luz Escamilla & Rep. Melissa Ballard**

This legislation would create the Child Care Center Business Management Certificate Program at Utah State University, teaching best practices in child care center management. The curriculum would cover licensing requirements, curriculum development, and business management skills. This is not a bad proposal, but it is duplicative of services already available to many childcare professionals statewide, through private associations and public education entities. Additionally, providers who work 10 hour days while caring for their own families rarely have time to pursue extra credentials—especially if there is no positive impact of their earning potential. This bill passed the [Senate Committee](#), [Senate](#) unanimously but failed in the [House Committee](#).

Outcome: FAILED

[HB 373: Service Marketplace Platforms Amendments](#), **Rep. Jason Thompson & Rep. Ronald Winterton**

This bill allows childcare workers to participate in a "service marketplace platform"—specifically, in this case, the Utah-based app Upkid—as independent contractors or as employees. While we don't know a ton about how well Upkid works to help families in Utah who are seeking childcare, we do know that finding substitute teachers is difficult for childcare providers. This may limit capacity in licensed childcare spots that can only be filled if there are enough teachers on site. We are also encouraged that childcare workers who register to use the app are required to have background checks and basic safety training. It is unclear if this will offer any benefit to Utah's hundreds of home-based childcare programs, as it appears largely center-focused. This bill passed the [House Committee](#), [House](#), [Senate Committee](#), and [Senate](#) unanimously.

What Happened With Child Care During the 2025 Legislative Session?

Published: Thursday, 23 January 2025 14:39

Written by: Jenna Williams

Outcome: PASSED

[H.B. 542 Economic Development Amendments](#), Rep. Jon Hawkins & Sen. Chris Wilson

In the final hours of the last night of the session, the legislature voted to repeal the [Women in the Economy Subcommittee](#) housed within the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity. In recent years, this subcommittee has been the leading public body advocating for child care reform. In December, the commission published an 84-page "[Childcare Solutions and Workplace Productivity Plan](#)."

[House Committee](#) and [House](#) unanimously [Senate Committee](#) with a 3-1 vote and [Senate](#) [House](#)

Outcome: PASSED

[TANF Motion](#): "The Legislature authorizes the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) to expend available "reserve" funds for the TANF program for the provision of child care services for TANF-eligible families at DWS discretion and in accordance with Federal laws and regulations applicable to TANF."

The Legislature authorized the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) to use TANF reserve funds for child care services for TANF-eligible families. Utah's Office of Child Care (OCC) [requested](#) annual transfers from the TANF reserve to support child care subsidies, with a focus on increasing reimbursement rates, which currently sit at the 50th percentile despite the federal recommendation of the 75th percentile. OCC's top priority is implementing 12-month eligibility to prevent families from losing benefits during temporary lapses in child care use, addressing a current non-compliance issue with CCDF regulations. This is a good step forward, however, lawmakers' [Child Care Solutions and Workforce Productivity Plan](#) recommended the Legislature increase the TANF reserve fund, which is a state policy, not a federal requirement. Since Utah's TANF caseload has dropped by [50%](#), there's a strong argument to revisit the reserve policy and potentially use more TANF funds for child care. The state could also do more by shifting how funds are allocated, providing more flexibility and impact. We are unable to confirm how much additional funding will be allocated, but [budget documents](#) suggest an additional \$3,652,800 for OCC.

SUPPORT

What Happened With Child Care During the 2025 Legislative Session?

Published: Thursday, 23 January 2025 14:39

Written by: Jenna Williams

Outcome: PASSED

[here](#)

This blog will be updated as information becomes available. Last updated 3/20/25.