

***NH Department of Health and Human Services  
Plan to Close the Cliff Effect for Individuals and Families  
who Receive Public Benefits Working Group  
Meeting Minutes***

Monday, February 10, 2020

**I. Call to order**

Lisa English called to order the meeting of the Cliff Effect Working Group meeting at 3:00PM on Monday, February 10, 2020 at NH Employment Security (45 S. Fruit Street, Concord, NH)

**II. In Attendance**

- Chris Santaniello
- Lisa English
- Gene Patnode
- Christina Lachance
- Allison Joseph
- Susan Huard
- Representative Mary Jane Wallner
- Will Arvelo
- Deputy Commissioner Rich Lavers
- Commissioner George Copadis
- Anna Hamel
- Dee Pouliot
- Donnalee Lozeau
- Associate Commissioner Chris Tappan
- Senator Cindy Rosenwald
- Kim Runion
- Rebecca Lorden
- Adam LeCain
- Christine Brennan
- Representative Joelle Martin

Quorum is present

Guest Speakers: Rebecca DeJoseph (Econsult Solutions, Inc.); Ethan Conner-Ross (Econsult Solutions, Inc.); Seth Hartig (National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP))

- The members of the workgroup approved the minutes from the January 30, 2020 meeting.

**III. Around the Table** – Introduced guest speakers from Econsult/NCCP and asked them to discuss their approach to the economic analysis of the cliff effect and how their work is progressing.

- Gave background information and an overview of their companies and the work they have done and how they came together to collaborate on this project
- Shared PowerPoint presentation with the group to outline their work to date
- Currently are six weeks into data collection. Data is coming directly from DHHS and Employment Security
- Projected outcomes
  - Identify the specific benefit cliffs in New Hampshire
  - The economic & fiscal impacts those cliffs have on the shortage of eligible workers in the state
  - What policy recommendations can they recommend which would help to alleviate the cliffs (which would include ideas/input from the various Cliff Effect workgroups)
  - Identify social vulnerability geographically
- Questions / Suggestions
  - Discussed the federal poverty level guidelines and how adjustments to the calculation may affect families.
  - Could there be some sort of net benefit tool or a decision tree from the employers' view identifying how redirecting training or other supports could benefit both individual/employer
  - The data may help to identify that we may need to target different people and look at different supports when creating projects around new job training funds
  - Have there been policies identified and enacted which had unidentified negative consequences? Could a change in one program have unknown consequences in another?

#### **IV: Finalize Interim Report on the Plan to Close the Benefits Cliff**

- Cover letter will be created on letterhead which will include member names
- Briefing document
- Summary document (PowerPoint)
  - Slide #4 change sub-group boxes to bullets to make it more legible
  - Will create a membership slide which can be pulled based upon target audience
  - Slide #8 spell out NCCP and add an outline of New Hampshire within the intersection of Venn diagram and identify they are part of Bank Street College, possibly as separate partnership slide which could also be pulled depending on viewing audience
  - Add a family quote within the summary document
- Timeline
  - Clarified that the work of Econsult & NCCP is addressed in the row: “Economic Analysis.”
  - Think about how round table discussions, pilot testing, forecasters can be added, as they did not fit in a specific box at this time
  - Add “Initial Work” to the heading
  - Suggest future versions include additional pages that add detail to the work – either by component or by quarter.
- Plan Grid
  - Add a segment for Activities which would include evaluate sustainability and upkeep of economic analysis
- Group agreed to delegate Lisa and Donnalee authority to make changes to documents as discussed without waiting until next meeting to review.
- Chris Santaniello motioned to adjust document with changes as discussed, Will Arvelo seconded the motion and motion passed unanimously

#### **VI: Impacts of the Benefits Cliff on Upward Economic Mobility**

- Begin to look at programs and which training programs can support policy and program recommendations. Look at trainings as vignettes or models

- Worthwhile to know how many families are impacted by training opportunities. Are they employer driven; do they isolate skills?
  - Possible work for the employer sub-group

## **VII: Next Steps**

- Asked members to identify individuals who could come to our meetings and share their stories about how they have faced a cliff and how they have been impacted by the policies we currently have.
- This about communication and the benefits of engaging with a diverse audience. Asked all members to think about how we want to gather information, link, and leverage information. Our governmental planning efforts need to be mapped clearly. Potentially there is overlapping work being done and we want to make an effort to connect with work being done in other forums. Think about the groups you are involved with, any upcoming events, programs, initiatives, listening tours etc. and we can catalog all the organizations. Please send contact and group information to Maureen DiTomaso ([maureen.ditomaso@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:maureen.ditomaso@dhhs.nh.gov)) and she will gather for our next meeting. If you do not know a contact, we can research it.
- Next quarterly report to the Governor and legislative leadership is due June 1, 2020
- Updates will be shared with this group on the work of the NH Chapter sub-groups and how this group can assist them going forward

## **VIII: Adjournment and Next Meeting**

- Group agreed to meeting once a month and Mondays work best
- Doodle poll will be sent to identify date which will work best for majority

*Minutes submitted by: Maureen DiTomaso*