

Scope of Work

A. General Statement

1.0 Purpose

Florida's Division of Early Learning is engaging a University Contractor to conduct an evaluation of the Career Ladder Identifier and Financial Forecaster (CLIFF) tool. This tool was developed by The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta and Career Source Florida and is currently being piloted by Career Source Florida. Frontline staff conducting employment and career counseling services will be piloting this tool with public assistance participants (i.e. TANF) to help them determine how future earnings will impact their benefits.

2.0 Project description

Some working families experience financial barriers to economic mobility. One significant barrier occurs when career advancement puts a family above the income eligibility threshold for the School Readiness program. Due to the sudden loss of this assistance, career advancement opportunities can result in the family being financially worse off (a benefits cliff) or no better off (a benefits plateau) than before the wage increase.

This loss of childcare assistance is an effective marginal tax rate on income gains. High effective marginal tax rates mean that some workers have a financial disincentive to invest in their own human capital and advance from lower-wage work to jobs that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

To better support families in understanding benefits cliffs and how they potentially impact them, the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta partnered with CareerSource Florida, Inc. to create a Career Ladder Identifier and Financial Forecaster (CLIFF) tool. This customizable tool shows benefits cliffs by career path and employee benefits packages to improve families' comprehension of how these cliffs may be relevant to their specific careers and income. Key stakeholders in the workforce development system will use this information to support workers and job seekers in exploring career advancement opportunities.

The CLIFF Dashboard is an informational dashboard that shows how public assistance losses intersect with local in-demand career paths. The dashboard shows the financial tradeoffs associated with career advancement and the net gains to the taxpayer when workers advance. For some of our partners, it also simulates policy and programmatic solutions.

The Division of Early Learning's Contractor will conduct an evaluation of the current pilot project implementing CLIFF throughout local Career Source Florida Centers. The evaluation will include descriptions of local implementation and client and staff perspectives on efficacy of the CLIFF tool.