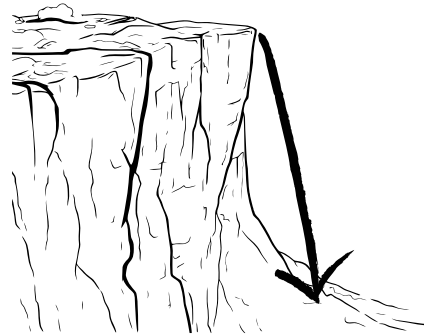


# BENEFIT CLIFFS CREATE A DISJOINTED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EARNINGS AND WORK

West Virginia's population is 1,775,156, and almost 318,000 (17.9%) are in poverty. Many West Virginians rely on benefits to meet basic needs like food, healthcare, and childcare.

**A benefit cliff is when someone loses benefits because their income increased, but the benefits they lose are worth more than the additional income they've gained.**

**SMALL SALARY INCREASE**



**BIG BENEFIT DECREASE**

**For a single mother with two kids...**

## Medical Benefits



When her gross earnings rise from \$33,944 to \$34,444 annually...



Her medical benefits decrease \$13,807 to \$7,151.

## Childcare Benefits



When her gross earnings rise from \$45,944 to \$46,444 annually...



Her childcare benefits decrease \$12,227 to \$0.

## Food Assistance



When her gross earnings rise from \$29,444 to \$29,944 annually...



Her food benefits decrease \$1,445 to \$114.

**“Faced with that sharp of a contrast and that vast of a gap, we must be honest with ourselves, disincentives to work exist in West Virginia. The scope and interactions of the myriad disjointed assistance programs for our fellow Mountaineers facing economic hardship send a message.**

**For the statistically representative individual receiving assistance, that message is essentially, ‘It’s not worth your time and energy to earn more than \$30,000.’”**

**-Dr. Jessi Troyan, Director of Policy & Research at the Cardinal Institute**

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