



Trade Adjustment Assistance

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Benefits for workers who lose their jobs due to international trade

Many manufacturing and timber jobs affected in Washington

Each trade-related layoff must be certified, then a wide array of benefits becomes available

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is a federal reemployment-benefit program established under the Trade Act of 1974. The program helps U.S. workers become re-employed after losing their jobs due to international trade. Certified workers may receive help looking for and relocating to a new job, as well as training for a new occupation.

Retooling Washington's work force

The most recent trade-related dislocations in Washington have been in the manufacturing and timber sectors, where older workers occupy most of the positions, some even nearing retirement. Many workers obtained these jobs right out of high school and must think about a new career for the first time in their lives. The comprehensive benefits provided by the Trade Act make a new career a viable choice.

Benefits

Job-search allowance ~ Travel costs to find a job in another community are covered at 90 percent up to \$1,250, when suitable employment isn't available in the commuting area.

Relocation allowance ~ Ninety percent of necessary moving expenses are covered if it's determined that there is no reasonable chance of finding a job in the commuting area and if the participant has obtained suitable employment in a new location. An additional lump-sum payment of up to \$1,250 also may be available to defray moving expenses. A relocation allowance may be granted only once.

Training assistance ~ A participant may attend up to 130 weeks of post-high-school training for a new occupation or industry. Approved training costs (up to a maximum of \$22,000 for a community- or technical-college degree and \$25,000 for an undergraduate or graduate degree) are covered in Washington state if funding is available.

Income support ~ Through a combination of unemployment insurance and Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA), participants may receive benefits for up to 130 weeks through the following:

- Unemployment insurance, generally up to 26 weeks
- Basic TRA, for 52 weeks minus weeks of unemployment insurance received.
- Additional TRA, up to 65 weeks.
- If needed to complete training, TRA for up to 13 additional weeks.

Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) ~ This is a wage-supplement program for workers age 50 and older who are deemed eligible. To qualify, workers must be earning a lesser wage in their new job than they were earning in their pre-

layoff jobs. ATAA covers half the difference between their wages in the new job and the wages earned at the time they were laid off, for up to two years and a maximum of \$10,000. The worker's new wages can't exceed \$50,000 per year.

Application and certification

Within one year after a layoff or company closure, a petition must be filed with the U.S. Department of Labor and the Governor's representative to be eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance. Petitions may be filed by:

- The state Dislocated-Worker Unit within the Employment Security Department,
- WorkSource or WorkSource affiliates,
- A minimum of three affected workers,
- An official of a recognized union or other employee representative, or
- The employer or management of the affected business.

The Department of Labor investigates and issues a certification or denial for the affected workers. A certification covers workers laid off up to one year before the petition is filed and for up to two years after the certification is issued. The Department of Labor notifies the state, the company and employee petitioners of its decision and publishes a notification in the Federal Register and Department of Labor's TAA on-line database

(http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/taa/taa_search_form.cfm).

Results in Washington

During the July 2012-June 2013 state fiscal year, 2,715 Washington residents received Trade Act services. Of them, 2,198 received job retraining.

Employment outcomes for claimants are determined by cross-referencing employer tax-and-wage records. Due to lag times in reporting, it can take up to a year to verify employment results for participants. Of those exiting the program from July 2011 through June 2012, some 69 percent of participants obtained new jobs. On average, their new jobs paid 83 percent of what they earned before being laid off.

Funding

For the October 2013-September 2014 federal fiscal year, the U.S. Department of Labor allocated \$15.1 million to Washington state to pay for TAA services..

**More than 2,700
participants in
FY 2012-13**

**\$15.1 million for
FFY 2013-14**

Contacts

*Bill Tarrow, deputy communications director, 360-902-9376
Sue Keltner, state TAA coordinator, 360-902-9738*