

# Assistance with Layoffs/Plant Closures

## The Trade Adjustment Assistance Program

### Overview and Petition Process

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program is a federal entitlement program that assists U.S. workers who have lost or may lose their jobs as a result of foreign trade. This program seeks to provide adversely affected workers with opportunities to obtain the skills, credentials, resources, and support necessary to become reemployed. Since 1975, the TAA program has served more than 2 million U.S. workers.

The first step to receiving TAA benefits and services is to file a petition on-line or by mail with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Petitions are available on-line and may also be obtained at American Job Centers. The petition may be filed by:

- Three or more workers in the same firm or subdivision;
- The workers' employer;
- A union official or other duly authorized representative of such workers; or
- American Job Center operator (VT Department of Labor) (including state workforce agencies and dislocated worker units)

Upon receiving a petition, USDOL initiates an investigation to determine whether the circumstances of the layoff meet the group eligibility criteria established by the Trade Act of 1974, as amended.

### Program Eligibility

A petition identifies a worker group at a specific firm or subdivision and covers all individuals in that group. Generally, if a worker is laid off, a petition must be submitted within one year of the layoff for that worker to be covered by the petition and the certification if DOL grants the petition.

A group of workers may be eligible for TAA if their jobs are lost or threatened due to trade related circumstances as determined by the USDOL investigation. While the latest information regarding program eligibility is available on the USDOL website at [www.doleta.gov/tradeact](http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact), these circumstances may include:

- Increased imports;
- A shift in operations to certain countries;
- Supply or downstream production to certain companies with TAA-certified workers

After the investigation, USDOL determines group eligibility to apply for TAA benefits and services. Workers in a certified group will be notified by their state, at which time they may apply for individual eligibility for benefits and services.

## Benefits and Services

If a worker is a member of a worker group certified by USDOL, that worker may be eligible to receive the following benefits and services of a local American Job Center – Vermont Department of Labor Career Resource Center.

<b>Employment and Case Management Services</b>	Skills assessments, individual employment plans, career counseling, supportive services, and information on training, labor markets and more (through TAA or other American Job Center Programs)
<b>Training</b>	Occupational skills training, on-the-job training, customized training designed to meet the needs of a specific employer or group of employers, apprenticeship programs and more.
<b>TRADE Readjustment Allowances (TRA)</b>	Income support available in the form of weekly cash payments to workers who are enrolled in a full-time training course and have exhausted their unemployment compensation benefits. Up to 104 weeks of cash payments may be available for eligible workers.
<b>Job Search Allowance</b>	Reimbursement for costs of seeking employment outside of the worker's commuting area.
<b>Relocation Allowance</b>	Reimbursement for relocation costs for employment outside of the worker's commuting area.
<b>Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA)</b>	A wage subsidy for up to two years that is available to re-employed older workers (50 years of age or older) and covers a portion of the difference between a worker's new wage and their old wage (up to a specified maximum amount).

The Vermont Department of Labor – Career Resource Center offers services including information about employment and training opportunities, skills assessments, job placement, job counseling and other supportive services.

It is important to maintain contact with your local Career Resource Center to meet required deadlines, ensure proper understanding of the rules and receive guidance on benefits and services available to workers.

Related Link: <http://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/>