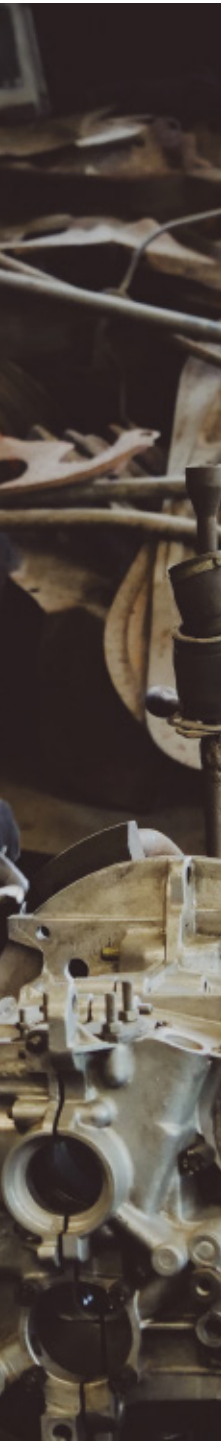
Missouri Trade Adjustment Assistance

TRADE REVERSION 2021

WORKER GUIDE



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DIVISION OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

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THE TRADE ACT PROGRAM

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 trade-affected workers with opportunities to obtain the skills, credentials, resources, and support necessary to become reemployed.

In Missouri, the Trade Act Program is jointly administered by the Office of Workforce Development (OWD) and the Division of Employment Security (DES). The Trade Act Program has three components: Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA), and Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA).

COMPONENTS OF THE TRADE ACT PROGRAM

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

provides opportunities to obtain the skills, credentials, resources, and support to become reemployed. TAA is administered by the Office of Workforce Development through Missouri Job Centers. Trade Representatives and Trade Navigators in Missouri Job Centers are responsible for providing TAA services and making TAA determinations.

Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA)

is a monetary benefit similar to Unemployment Insurance (UI) that is only available to trade-affected workers who meet specific criteria. The Division of Employment Security (DES) is responsible for making determinations and issuing TRA payments.

Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA)

is a monetary subsidy for workers aged 50 and older. ATAA is designed to help bridge a salary gap between a worker's trade-affected employment and new employment. DES is responsible for making determinations and issuing ATAA payments.

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA)

The goal of TAA is to help trade-affected workers return to suitable employment. Benefits and services available under TAA include (1) Job Search Allowance, (2) Relocation Allowance, and (3) Training – Classroom and/or Distance Learning/Online, On-the-Job, and Apprenticeship.

TAA Job Search Allowance

Funding may be available for trade-affected workers who are unable to obtain suitable employment within their commuting area. Job Search Allowance is limited to the United States. When requesting TAA Job Search Allowance,

- The request must be made prior to participating in approvable job search activities. Job search activities must be verified by an employer, Missouri Job Center staff, or a workforce professional.
- The request must occur within specified timeframes.

Workers may be reimbursed for 90 percent of all job search expenses up to a maximum amount of $1,250. Eligible expenses include transportation, lodging, and/or meals.

TAA Relocation Allowance

Trade-affected workers who find suitable employment outside their commuting area may receive Relocation Allowance to assist with the cost of moving to the new area of employment. Relocation Allowance is limited to the United States. When requesting TAA Relocation Allowance,

- The request must be made prior to moving, and the new job must meet the definition of suitable employment.
- The request must be made within specified timeframes.

Workers may be paid for 90 percent of relocation expenses including moving costs, transportation, lodging, and/or meals. Workers are eligible to receive a lump sum up to $1,250 to pay toward additional relocation expenses (e.g. deposit on apartment, utilities, etc.).

TAA Training

Workers unable to find suitable employment may be eligible for TAA Training including Classroom and/or Distance Learning/Online, On-the-Job; and/or an Apprenticeship. Any requests for training must be supported by Labor Market Information (LMI) that shows occupational growth and opportunities for employment.

Training requests must be approved by the Missouri Job Center Trade Representative or Trade Navigator prior to starting training. Workers are limited to one training plan per Trade Act petition. Training progress and attendance will be monitored.

TAA TRAINING

TAA Classroom Training

Classroom Training is normally conducted in a classroom setting, but can include vocational, distance, and/or online education. Eligible training includes:

- Remedial education courses, such as Adult Education and Literacy, High School Equivalency (HSE) Prep, or English as a Second Language, that provide fundamental skills necessary to become reemployed. TAA may fund examination costs such as HiSET/HSE or General Education Diploma (GED).
- Prerequisite Training coursework required by a training facility to be **completed prior** to entry into courses for specific training programs.
- Skills Training that leads to a credential and provides skills needed for a specific profession or job.

TAA On-The-Job Training (OJT)

TAA On-the-Job Training is an incentive that benefits both workers and employers. While workers obtain employment and opportunity to learn new job skills, employers are reimbursed 50 percent of wages during the training period. The maximum length of a TAA OJT cannot exceed 104 weeks. TAA OJT approval is required prior to the employment start date.

The employer must have an existing job vacancy and commit to continue employment of the trade-affected worker once training is complete. Workers who participate in TAA OJT outside their commuting area may be eligible for transportation or subsistence allowance.

TAA Apprenticeship Training

TAA Apprenticeship program is an industry-driven partnership with educators offering a balance of on-the-job learning and classroom instruction. Workers who participate in Apprenticeship training are limited to 130 weeks of on-the-job learning, but the classroom instruction is not limited and is based on each individual occupation. TAA Apprenticeship approval is required prior to the employment start date.

CRITERIA FOR TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (TAA) TRAINING APPROVAL

A Trade Representative and/or a Trade Navigator must approve TAA Training prior to the training start date. The goal of TAA Training is to assist workers in finding suitable employment. However, for TAA Training to be approved, it must lead to sustainable employment. Funding will be provided only when the following criteria are met:

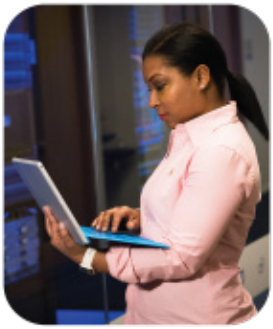
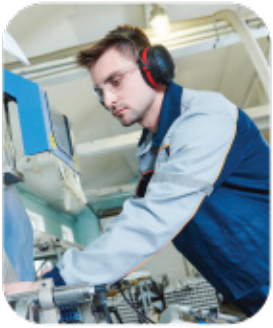
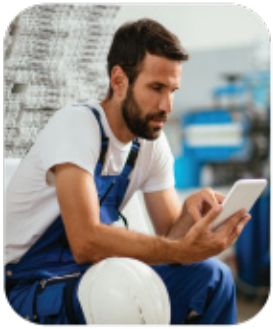
1. Suitable employment is not available and/or training is needed for suitable employment.
2. Workers must have the capabilities to undertake and successfully complete training programs that will give the skills needed to qualify for suitable employment. A credential from the training program must be earned.
3. Job-specific training must be supported by Labor Market Information (LMI) and show reasonable expectation that employment will be obtained.
4. Training is reasonably available from public or private training providers.
5. Financial support is available during training. Sources of support include Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA); other options can be discussed with a Trade Representative or Trade Navigator.
6. Training is suitable and available at a reasonable cost.

Other Considerations For TAA Training Include:

- Workers may participate in either full-time or part-time classroom training (includes distance learning/online training).
- Workers who participate in classroom and/or distance learning/online training must participate in 60-day benchmark reviews, make documented satisfactory progress, and remain on target to complete the training plan.
- Workers who participate in classroom and distance learning/online, on-the-job, and/or Apprenticeship training outside the commuting area may be eligible for transportation or subsistence allowance.

To Access TAA Benefits, Workers Should

1. File a Trade Act Claim with a Division of Employment Security Regional Claims Center. (See Trade Act Worker Responsibilities section.)
2. Visit *jobs.mo.gov* to locate the nearest Missouri Job Center.
3. Schedule an appointment with a Job Center Trade Representative or Trade Navigator to access TAA benefits and services.

WHAT IS TRADE READJUSTMENT ALLOWANCE (TRA)?

TRA is a monetary benefit similar to Unemployment Insurance (UI) that is only available to trade-affected workers who meet specific criteria. TRA is administered by the Division of Employment Security (DES).

To Be Eligible For TRA, Workers Must

1. Have earned at least $30 per week in 26 of the last 52 weeks at a trade-affected employer.

2. Be issued a waiver or be enrolled or participating in TAA-approved training by either
   - 8 weeks after the petition certification date; or
   - 16 weeks after the worker's last qualifying separation date from the trade-affected employer, whichever date is later.

Three Types Of TRA:

1. **Basic TRA**
   Workers can draw Basic TRA while on a waiver or enrolled or participating in TAA approved training. Workers may receive **up to** 52 weeks of monetary benefits – a combination of Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Basic TRA.

2. **Additional TRA**
   Workers may receive **up to** 65 weeks of Additional TRA while participating in TAA approved training after eligibility to Basic TRA is exhausted.

3. **Completion TRA**
   Workers may receive **up to** 13 weeks of Completion TRA after exhausting Additional TRA and within 20 weeks of completing training. Workers must be participating in TAA classroom and/or distance learning/online training and meet benchmark requirements.

WAIVER FROM TRAINING

Eligible workers may be issued a waiver from training to receive or preserve Basic TRA. Waivers can only be issued to workers who have the goal of attending TAA approved training or have a health issue preventing participation in TAA training. In most cases, workers on waivers must continue to job search in order to draw Basic TRA. Waivers must be reviewed at least once every 30 days.

Workers May Be Waived From Training If

1. Unable to participate in or complete training due to a health condition but able and available for work.
2. An enrollment in training is not immediately available.
3. No training program is available.

EARNINGS DISREGARD

Eligible workers who qualify for weekly payments under the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program are only allowed a 20 percent earnings disregard.

UI Example

- The eligible worker receives $320 in UI per week.
- 20 percent of $320 is equivalent to $64.
- The eligible worker may work and earn up to $64 per week before any funds will be deducted from his/her UI.

WHAT IS ALTERNATIVE TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE (ATAA)?

Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) is a wage subsidy designed to help bridge the salary gap between the TAA worker's trade-affected employment and reemployment.

- Workers who return to the Trade Act certified employer, firm, and/or subdivision from which they were separated **are not** eligible for ATAA
- Workers must be at least 50 years of age and reemployed to draw ATAA.
- The new annualized wage must be $50,000 or less.
- Workers must be reemployed full-time (or multiple part-time jobs equivalent to full-time hours), as defined by the Division of Employment Security.
- A worker can receive benefits for up to two years **or** a maximum of $10,000.
    - Re-employment must be found within 26 weeks of workers last qualifying separation date from the trade-affected employer
    - Worker must choose between ATAA and TRA/TAA. If a worker chooses ATAA, he/she is still eligible for Relocation Allowance.

WHAT IS HEALTH COVERAGE TAX CREDIT (HCTC)?

Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) is a federal tax credit that pays 72.5 percent of qualified health insurance premiums for the eligible workers and families. The IRS administers the HCTC program and determines month-to-month eligibility.

To be eligible for HCTC, a worker must receive at least one of the following payments each month:

- Unemployment Insurance (UI) and be eligible for TRA;
- Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA); or
- Alternative Trade Adjustment Allowance (ATAA).

For more information about HCTC, including qualifying insurance criteria, visit *https://www.irs.gov/HCTC*.

TRADE ACT WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

The Division of Employment Security is responsible for making individual Trade Act program eligibility determinations. Eligible workers interested in participating in the Trade Act Program are responsible for meeting deadlines that apply to each TAA benefit and service.

1. File a Trade Act Claim with the Division of Employment Security (DES) by calling a Regional Claim Center (RCC):

St. Louis..... (314) 340-4950
Kansas City..... (816) 889-3101
Jefferson City..... (573) 751-9040
Springfield ..... (417) 895-6851
Toll Free..... (800) 320-2519
Or, by accessing *https://uinteract.labor.mo.gov/*

For more information, visit *https://labor.mo.gov/DES*

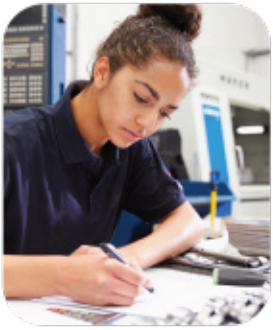
2. Apply for TAA benefits and services at the nearest Office of Workforce Development, Missouri Job Center. To locate a Missouri Job Center, visit *https://jobs.mo.gov/findcenter.*

Trade Act benefits and services can be accessed anywhere in the United States. To access TAA benefits and services outside of Missouri, visit the U.S. Department of Labor's website to find a TAA contact for the appropriate state. *https://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/contacts.cfm*

3. Research training options and Labor Market Information (LMI)

- *https://jobs.mo.gov/jobseeker/training-and-education*
- *https://www.meric.mo.gov*
- *https://www.onetonline.org/*

4. Contact the Trade Representative at least once every 60 days if participating in TAA classroom and/or distance learning/online training. Contact the Trade Representative prior to making decisions impacting your TAA benefits or services.



LIST OF TERMS

8/16 Week Criteria: To be eligible for TRA, a worker must be issued a waiver or be participating in TAA approved training within eight weeks of the petition certification or 16 weeks of the separation date from the trade-affected employer. In rare circumstances, a 45-day waiver is available.

Additional TRA: After exhausting Basic TRA, a worker may be eligible for up to 65 weeks of Additional TRA. Additional TRA can only be drawn if the worker is participating in TAA-approved training.

Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA): A wage subsidy program for trade eligible workers who are at least 50 years old and who find qualifying reemployment.

Apprenticeship: Training that offers employment, on-the job learning, and related classroom training/instruction.

Basic TRA: When combined with Unemployment Insurance (UI), a worker may be eligible for up to 52 weeks of UI and Basic TRA. Basic TRA can be drawn while on a waiver, enrolled in TAA-approved training, or participating in TAA-approved training.

Commuting Area: The area in which a worker would be expected to travel to and from his/her residence to participate in TAA benefits and services on a daily basis. In Missouri, the commuting area is 10 or fewer miles from worker's residence.

Completion TRA: After exhausting Additional TRA, a worker may be eligible for up to 13 weeks of Completion TRA. Completion TRA can only be drawn if the worker is participating in TAA-approved training. Completion TRA can only be drawn when the worker is within 20 weeks of the end date of his/her scheduled TAA training.

Distance Learning/Online Training: Training classes available online, via satellite, pre-recorded, per video, etc.

Division of Employment Security (DES): The agency responsible for making individual Trade Act program eligibility determinations and issuing payments for TRA and ATAA. The Regional Claim Centers (RCCs) are a part of DES.

Enrolled: A worker is considered enrolled in TAA-approved training when his/her training request has been approved and (s)he is within 30 days of the start date of training.

Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC): A federal tax credit that pays 72.5 percent of qualified health insurance premiums for the eligible worker and his/her family.

Job Search Allowance: A 90 percent reimbursement to the worker that covers travel expenses associated with approved job search activities for suitable employment held outside the worker's commuting area. The worker must request this allowance prior to participating in Job Search Allowance.

Labor Market Information: Includes all data and analysis related to employment and the workforce.

Missouri Job Centers: Located statewide, centers are staffed by workforce specialists, including designated Trade Representatives and Trade Navigators, who provide personalized employment-related services for job candidates and businesses.

MOScores: The Missouri Economic Research and Information Center's online training provider search tool that allows individuals to research Missouri's educational institutions and programs. The MOScores can be found at *https://scorecard.mo.gov*

Office of Workforce Development (OWD): The agency responsible for staffing Trade Representatives and Trade Navigators in Missouri Job Centers statewide. OWD is responsible for providing TAA services and making TAA determinations.

On-the-Job Training (OJT): Training in a business environment that provides worker with a wage and leads to suitable employment. The employer is provided partial reimbursement of worker's wage while the worker is trained for the new job.

Prerequisite Training: Coursework required by a training facility to be completed prior to entry into courses for specific training programs.

Relocation Allowance: A 90 percent payment of moving expenses to cover the worker and his/her household. Worker must request this allowance prior to moving and participating in Relocation Allowance.

Regional Claim Center (RCC): Call Center operated by the Division of Employment Security.

Remedial Training: Training that provides fundamental skills workers must have to become reemployed.

Skills Training: Training held at an approved training facility that provides job specific skills and leads to an approved credential.

Suitable Employment: Employment that 1) has a skill level that is equal to or higher than that of the trade-affected employer; 2) has a wage of at least 80 percent of wage received at Trade-affected employer; and 3) is full-time, long-term duration (not temporary).

Sustainable Employment: Employment where economic, social, and environmental conditions are satisfied and that allows the worker to support him/herself and family.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA): A portion of the Trade Act Program that provides opportunities to obtain the skills, credentials, resources, and support to become reemployed. TAA is administered by the Office of Workforce Development through the Missouri Job Centers.

Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA): A monetary benefit similar to Unemployment Insurance (UI) that is only available to trade-affected workers who meet specific criteria. TRA determinations and payments are made by the Division of Employment Security (DES).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Missouri Division of Employment Security Regional Claims Centers

Jefferson City	573-751-9040
Kansas City	816-889-3101
Springfield	417-895-6851
St. Louis	314-340-4950
Outside Local Called Area	800-320-2519
Fax Number	573-751-9730

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DIVISION OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

Missouri Office of Workforce Development Job Centers

888-728-JOBS
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https://jobs.mo.gov/trade-adjustment-assistance

For additional information about Missouri Office of Workforce Development services, contact a Missouri Job Center near you. Locations and additional information are available at jobs.mo.gov or 1-888-728-JOBS (5627). The Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Missouri Relay Services at 711.

DWD-TRADE-06 (07-2021)