

Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) Information

The Trade Act of 1974 established the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program for workers who lose their jobs or have their hours and wages reduced as the result of import competition, or a shift in production to another country. The TAA program provides federal training/retraining benefits and services to trade impacted workers.

The Trade Reform Act of 2002 revised the Trade Act program to include an alternative TAA program for older workers. The Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) program is intended to serve individuals who are at least 50 years old, and for whom training/retraining may not be appropriate.

Trade impacted workers, age 50 or older, who become re-employed full time in a different occupation, within 26 weeks of their qualifying layoff, may be eligible for the ATAA program. Workers earning less in their new job than they were earning in adversely-affected employment are eligible to receive one-half the difference between the ATAA qualifying wage and the new wage, as long as the new wage is less than \$50,000 a year. The ATAA wage subsidy payments are payable for up to two years from the first qualifying re-employment or \$10,000, whichever comes first.

Participants in the ATAA program are eligible for Relocation Allowances, but are not eligible for other Trade Act benefits available under the TAA program (i.e., retraining, Job Search Allowances, and Trade Readjustment Allowances [TRA]).

You may participate in either the ATAA program, or the TAA program, but you cannot participate in both. While workers are seeking employment (to qualify for the ATAA program), actions should be taken to ensure regular TAA deadlines are met and program options preserved. If you select the TAA program, you must be enrolled in and attending an approved training/retraining program to be eligible for extended federal weekly income support (TRA benefits). To qualify for TRA benefits, under the TAA program, you must be enrolled in and attending an approved training/retraining program within:

- 8 weeks following the week the Trade Act petition was certified by the Secretary of Labor, or
- 16 weeks following the week the worker was laid off from trade affected employment, or
- Have applied for and received a training waiver during the same 8/16 week timeframe.

To receive the last 52 weeks of the extended weekly UI benefits the worker must have made a bona fide application for training within 210 days of the certification date of the petition, or layoff date from trade affected employment.

Up to the point you receive your first ATAA payment, or enroll in a TAA approved training program, you still have the option of changing programs.

The Internal Revenue Service does consider payments made on the ATAA program as taxable income.

Please **do not delay**, contact your local Workforce Services TAA specialist today to set up an appointment to discuss either/both programs and your options.