

# Washington State Trade Adjustment Assistance Policy

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**Policy Number:** 3005, Revision 3 (2015)

**Policy Title:** Relocation Allowance

**Effective Date:** September 21, 2020

## 1. **Purpose:**

To communicate guidance on relocation allowances for workers eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for petitions certified under 2015 rules.

## 2. **Background:**

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) published the TAA Final Rule at 20 CFR part 618 on August 21, 2020. Through this rulemaking, the Department modernized the TAA Program, provided additional flexibility to states, and consolidated all applicable program regulations into a single section of the Code of Federal Regulations and continued to align the program with WIOA.

The Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization Act (TAARA) of 2015 was signed into law on June 29, 2015. The TAARA reauthorized the TAA program through the June 30, 2021, sunset provision.

The 2015 amendments changed the group eligibility requirements and individual benefits and services available under the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program. The 2014 Reversion was also retroactively modified, providing a 90-day transition period for Reversion 2014 program participants to move to the 2015 program.

## 3. **Policy:**

Certified workers who apply for TAA services may be eligible for relocation allowances. Relocation allowances are reimbursements for moving expenses to participants who successfully obtain suitable employment within the United States but outside their normal commuting area.

### a. **Maximum Allowance**

Participants may receive one (1) relocation for not more than 90 percent of the reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in transporting themselves and their families, if any, and household effects to the area of relocation, plus a lump sum equal to three times the worker's average weekly wage, not to exceed \$1,250.

## b. Conditions and Requirements

- i. A worker may request relocation allowance after the petition for Trade Adjustment Assistance has been certified. However, the case manager must not reimburse any expenses until the participant is determined eligible under that certification and all other conditions for approval have been satisfied.
- ii. Assessments and Individual Employment Plans (IEP) must be completed prior to the approval of the relocation allowance request.
- iii. The local commute distance for relocation allowance is 25 miles one way.
- iv. Participants must file a Relocation Allowance Request no later than:
  - 425 days after the date of the certification they are covered; or
  - 425 days from their last total separation, or
  - 182 days after the completion of an approved training program
- v. Participants must request relocation allowances in writing prior to their relocation.
- vi. Participant must be totally separated from the trade affected employer.
- vii. Participants must begin the relocation within 182 days from the date on the request form.
- viii. Only one relocation allowance is allowable per certification.
- ix. Participant cannot receive a relocation allowance to pay for relocation expenses paid by the prospective employer or other partner programs.
- x. Relocation and a job search allowance are not allowed at the same time; however, a participant may receive a relocation allowance after receiving job search allowance.
- xi. Participants must provide original itemized receipts for reimbursement as evidence of actual costs.
- xii. Participants must verify that they have obtained a bona fide offer of suitable employment or employment that pays a wage of at least the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of national wages (as determined by the [National Occupational Employment Wage Estimates](#)), in the area for which they are relocating.
- xiii. Participants enrolled in training are not eligible for relocation assistance until they complete their training and obtain suitable employment or bona fide offers of suitable employment. Participants must begin relocation no later than 182 days after the conclusion of an approved training program.
- xiv. Use of a commercial carrier requires at least three competitive bids or other adequate justification for the cost. Except for extenuating circumstances, participants must accept reimbursement at the lowest bid on a move by a commercial carrier.
- xv. Participants are required to submit a completed Relocation Final Statement of Cost Form with **all original itemized receipts** to their TAA case manager within 30 days of completing their relocation.

- xvi. Payment must be made within 15 days after the relocation has been completed, and final statement of cost and documentation from the participant has been received.

**c. Travel Reimbursement**

The number of allowable days for travel will be calculated by dividing the mileage of the relocation by 425 miles (this is the expected mileage for a worker to travel in one day). This will determine the number of days that will be allowed for travel.

- i. The amount allowable for transportation will not exceed 90 percent of the cost per mile at the [prevailing federal mileage rate](#) for the most direct route from the place of residence to the place of relocation.
- ii. Two privately-owned vehicles can be moved by the most direct route at 90 percent of the prevailing federal mileage rate provided that:
  - Participants and/or their dependents travel to the new location in such vehicles;
  - The vehicles are driven rather than towed;
  - There are no other claims under this move for transportation costs for such workers and/or dependents.

The case manager may approve family member(s) who need to travel separately to their new home, if requested for a reasonable purpose. Reasonable purpose could include;

- Family members health, schooling, job or economic circumstances.
- Suitable housing is not available in the area of relocation.
- Ability to sell or resolve the situation with their current residence.

**d. Lodging and Meals**

The amount allowable for lodging and meals will be limited to the number of days reasonably necessary to travel to the new location or actual days traveled, whichever is less. If more than one day of travel is necessary, 425 miles per day is the standard. When traveling by commercial air, one day is normally allowed for travel. The amount of reasonable days is calculated by dividing the total mileage by 425 miles.

Lodging and meals will not exceed the lesser of:

- i. Not more than 90 percent of the actual cost for lodging and meals while traveling; or
- ii. 50 percent of the [prevailing federal rate](#) for lodging and meals, based on the locality of the relocation.

Lodging and meals at the new location may be authorized for a reasonable period when circumstances warrant. Invoices and receipts that document expenses must be submitted by participants, even when the federal rate for lodging and meals is used.

**e. Moving household goods**

The amount allowable for moving household goods of participants and their family by commercial carrier, trailer or rental truck, or moving a mobile home to the new location shall not exceed 90 percent of the cost of transporting 18,000 pounds.

- i. Participants must pay charges for weight of more than 18,000 pounds.
- ii. Commercial carriers may include the cost of insurance for the household goods for their actual value or \$40,000, whichever is less.
- iii. Case managers may provide direct payment to the commercial carrier for 90 percent of the moving costs.
- iv. The following items are excluded from coverage, which means participants must assume costs for and personally arrange for transportation of:
  - Items of high intrinsic or sentimental value
  - Jewelry, collector's items, etc.
  - Animals
  - Boats or personal watercraft
  - Airplanes
  - Camping vehicles
  - Farming vehicles
  - Explosives or dangerous goods
  - Outside fuel tanks or similar non-household articles
  - Cord wood and building materials
  - Perishable foods subject to spoilage; and
  - Mobile/manufactured homes (unless it is the primary residence of participant)

**Note:** Recreational vehicles, including those with two or three wheels may be shipped as household goods. The weight of these vehicles will count against the 18,000-pound limit for which reimbursement is available. A participant must pay 100 percent of the associated costs for the weight of household goods in excess of the 18,000-pound allowance.

**f. Temporary Storage**

Temporary storage for up to 60 days at either the origin or destination, but not both, is allowed at 90 percent of the total cost. The request for storage must be approved prior to the move and the cost for storage must be identified.

**g. Advance Payment**

Case managers may authorize payment of an advance of up to 90 percent of the actual approved cost of the move. The case manager must not give this advance to the participant no earlier than 10 days prior to the scheduled departure date.

**h. Documentation Requirements**

All required relocation allowance forms will be uploaded in the management information system. Case note documentation will begin with the initial assessment and end at the time of program exit. Information about participant health issues and

sensitive personal and confidential information will not be documented in the management information system.

i. **Veteran's Priority of Service**

The Trade Adjustment Assistance program will comply with the Jobs for Veterans Act, enacted into Public Law 107-288 on November 2, 2002. Covered veterans determined eligible for the TAA program must receive priority over non-veterans for the receipt of appropriate services provided under the TAA program.

**4. Definitions:**

Suitable Employment - Work of a substantially equal or higher skill level than the worker's past adversely affected employment (as described for the purposes of the Trade Act of 1974, P.L. 93-618), and wages for such work that are not less than 80 percent of the worker's average weekly wage. Part-time, temporary, short-term, or threatened employment is not suitable employment.

**5. References:**

- [TAA Final Rule 20 CFR part 618.](#)
- [National Occupational Employment Wage Estimates](#)
- [U.S. General Services Administration - Prevailing Federal rates for reimbursement](#)

**6. Supersedes:**

TAA Policy Number 3005 – Relocation Allowances effective December 21, 2018

**7. Website:**

[Workforce Professionals Center](#)

**8. Action:**

Employment Security Regional Directors and WorkSource Administrators must distribute this policy broadly throughout the system to ensure that WorkSource System staff are familiar with its content and requirements.

**Direct Inquiries To:**

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