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|  | **WS 18-13** |
|  | **July 23, 2018** |
|  | **Financial Aid** |
|  | **Expires: Continuing** |
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# To: Career Office Contractors

# Financial Aid Support Center

From: Mike Temple

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Subject: Procedures for Trade-Affected Customers

##### Purpose

To update procedures for helping customers eligible for financial aid using Trade Act resources [Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA)] and to update forms.

This issuance replaces Issuance WS 16-11 - Procedures for Trade-Affected Customers

Changes are incorporated in the Trade Adjustment Act Procedures guide.

* Page 13 –– Changes the definition of the “local commuting area” from 50 miles one-way to 25 miles.
* Page 13 –– Increases the reasonable cost of training threshold from $17,000 to $25,000.
* Page 41 –– Removes the requirement to enter a Service 21 - Case Management when waivers are approved or extended.

##### Background

The federal Trade Act provides money to help workers who have lost their jobs due to adverse effects of foreign trade. The U.S. Department of Labor is responsible for determining if a company’s workers are eligible for assistance and for providing funds to the states and workforce boards. In Texas, the state and Workforce Solutions are responsible for delivering service to eligible workers.

Trade Act financial aid comes in two forms: Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), and

Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA). TAA consists primarily of financial aid grants for education expenses (tuition/fees, books), out-of-area job search travel, and relocation expenses. TRA is a stipend, paid to an individual customer through the Unemployment Insurance system, after regular UI compensation has been exhausted.

The Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2015 (TAARA 2015) was signed into law on June 29, 2015 The new law continues the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program for six years and changes group eligibility requirements and individual benefits and services available under the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program, retroactive to January 1, 2014. All certified petitions numbered 85,000 and above will fall under the provisions of TAARA 2015. TAARA 2015 reinstates:

* 26-week waiver/in training deadline date
* Part-time training

Our procedure provides background information and the processes for tracking services.

Customer Service

Career office staff members work with customers who ask us about benefits available through the Trade Act. The Trade Adjustment Act Procedures document details the service process for staff to use to assure our customers get what they want and need. This document as well as other guidance, forms and letters are at <http://www.wrksolutions.com/staff-resources/system-resources/trade-act-rules-and-procedures>.

Every customer who has any interest in services available under the Trade act must get a Workforce Solutions Orientation Packet that includes at least:

* Explanation of Services Form – English or Spanish as appropriate
* Job Search Seminars description sheet
* Rebranding Your Skills Tip Sheet

These documents are available at this link: <http://www.wrksolutions.com/staff-resources/system-resources/trade-act-rules-and-procedures>

Action

1. Make sure all staff members understand the procedures and know their role in helping customers get the service and benefits they want and need.
2. Ensure changes are implemented effective Monday, July 23, 2018.

Questions

Staff should ask questions of their supervisors and managers first. Direct questions for Board staff through the electronic Q&A available for new issuances on <http://wrksolutions.com>.