
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
Program Funding
for
TAA Services

Request for Application



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity

OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING
Bruce Rauner, Governor

Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program Funding for TAA Services

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. **Grantor Agency:**

The U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) designates and grants authority to the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's (Commerce) Office of Employment and Training to administer the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Training Program in the State of Illinois.

B. **Project Goal:**

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce) is issuing this Request for Application (RFA) to identify qualified organizations to assist with the administration of TAA programs in Cook County, Northeast Region in Illinois. Commerce will designate a qualified organization to assist with the trade program administration to provide TAA services to workers impacted or at-risk of being impacted by foreign trade, and will provide grant funding to support allowable TAA activities based on the level of TAA Program activities during the grant period. Grantees will provide trade-affected workers with opportunities to obtain the skills, resources, and support they need to become reemployed. Grantees will be primarily responsible for providing TAA services to eligible workers in Cook County as directed by the Department. The Grantee may also be required to support the Department in the regional coordination of the TAA Program in Illinois' Northeast Economic Development Region including Lake, McHenry, DuPage, Kane, DeKalb, Kendall, Grundy, and Kankakee Counties.

C. **Funding:**

1. The TAA program activity will be assigned on an as-needed basis driven by the level of trade program activity during the grant period. Funding for allowable TAA program activities will be provided based on the level of trade program activity following the general guidelines outlined in the Department's Trade Program funding policy (see <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/Resources/Pages/WIA-WIOAPolicies.aspx>).
2. Funding to support the TAA Program activities outlined in this RFA will come from the United States Department of Labor under Award Number TA-26722-15-55-A-17 (in the amount of \$5,742,609). Commerce may award other funding sources as appropriate. The grant funds awarded by Commerce are subject to state and federal appropriation.
3. Grant funds will be provided to support allowable TAA Program activities for TAA Petition Certifications, authorized under the applicable regulations outlined below:
 - Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2015 (TAARA 2015), Title IV of the Trade Preferences Act of 2015, Public Law (P.L.) No 114-27;
 - Trade Adjustment Assistance Reform Act of 2002 (P.L. No 107-210);
 - Trade Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. No. 93-618, as amended);
 - Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act (TGAAA) of 2009 (Division B, Title I, Subtitle I of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, (P.L. No 111-5);
 - Trade Adjustment Assistance Extension Act of 2011, Title II, (P.L. No. 112-40); and
 - 2 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 200 and the US Department of Labor exceptions outlined at 2 Code of Federal Regulation, Part 2900.

D. Eligible Respondents:

Commerce will accept applications from organizations with the administrative capacity and a history of successfully running the TAA Training Program at the local or regional level. Organizations are required to be in good standing and pass a pre-award risk assessment in accordance with the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA).

E. Eligible Project Participants:

Grant must be targeted to workers whose employment is adversely affected by increased imports or by a shift of production to a foreign country and meet the eligibility requirements of the TAA Program that have been certified eligible to apply. For more information on TAA Program Requirements in Illinois, visit

<https://www2.illinoisworknet.com/LayoffRecovery/Pages/TradeLayoff.aspx>.

F. Project Location:

Project activities will take place in Cook County and the Northeast Economic Development Region as directed by Commerce.

G. Requirements:

1. All applications must be sent electronically to the Illinois Department of Commerce to be considered for funding. Applications must be submitted to Patrick.Campbell@illinois.gov. Applicants must submit one complete PDF document; additional documents that are not included in the PDF file will not be accepted as part of the application. The deadline to be considered for the Federal Program Year 2016 grant is September 19, 2016. Any application received after this deadline may be considered for review at the discretion of Commerce.
2. All applications must fully address the requirements listed in this RFA, and must submit all appropriate forms and attachments according to the instructions.
3. All respondents must be in compliance, or agree to comply, with the following federal and state laws and related regulations in order to be considered for an award, including but not limited to:
 - a. Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2015 (TAARA 2015), Title IV of the Trade Preferences Act of 2015, Public Law (P.L.) No 114-27;
 - b. Trade Adjustment Assistance Reform Act of 2002 (P.L. No 107-210);
 - c. Trade Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. No. 93-618, as amended);
 - d. Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act (TGAAA) of 2009 (Division B, Title I, Subtitle I of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (P.L. No 111-5);
 - e. Trade Adjustment Assistance Extension Act of 2011, Title II, (P.L. No. 112-40);
 - f. Uniform Administrative Requirements found at 2 CFR Part 200 and the US Department of Labor Exceptions found at 2 CFR Part 2900;
 - g. Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA), (30 ILCS 708/1 et seq);
 - h. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (Public Law 113-128);
 - i. Equal Employment Opportunity / Nondiscrimination Provision and will comply with the physical, programmatic and accessibility requirements;
 - j. Protection of Personally Identifiable Information;
 - k. Jobs for Veteran Act (Public Law 107-288);

- l. Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 as amended (42 U.S.C 4001);
- m. Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 as amended (42 U.S.C. 4151);
- n. Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. 702 et seq., and 2 C.F.R. § 182);
- o. Hotel Motel Fire Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2225a);
- p. Buy American Act (41 U.S.C 10a);
- q. Copeland "Anti-Kickback" Act (18 U.S.C. 874 and 40 U.S.C. 276c);
- r. Davis-Bacon Act, as amended (40 U.S.C. 276a to a-7);
- s. Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. 327-333);
- t. Rights to Inventions Made Under a Contract or Agreement;
- u. Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), as amended;
- v. Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352);
- w. Applicable State of Illinois Laws; and
- x. State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Policies.

H. Schedule:

All qualified applications submitted prior to September 19, 2016 will be considered for funding. Any application received after this deadline may be considered for review at the discretion of the Department of Commerce.

I. Agency Contact:

Patrick Campbell

Patrick.Campbell@illinois.gov

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Office of Employment and Training

100 West Randolph, Suite 3-400

Chicago, IL 60601

II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A. Background:

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program was first established at the United States Department of Labor by the Trade Act of 1974, and has been amended several times. The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) provide aid to workers who have become unemployed as a result of increased imports from, or shifts in production to, foreign countries. The TAA program is also a required partner in the one-stop delivery system, established under Section 121 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

TAA offers a very specific list of benefits and reemployment services to assist these trade-affected workers to prepare for and obtain suitable reemployment. To obtain Trade reemployment services and benefits, a petition must be filed with the U.S. Department of Labor's Division of Trade Adjustment Assistance requesting certification for workers adversely affected by foreign trade. If the worker group meets the necessary group eligibility criteria, a certification will be issued.

After a worker group certification is issued, each worker in the group may then apply for individual services and benefits. Individual workers who meet the qualifying criteria may receive the following:

- Income support in the form of Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA);
- Job Training assistance;
- Out-of-area job search and out-of-area relocation assistance;
- Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) (as determined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS));
- A wage supplement in the form of RTAA for workers age 50 and older;
- Case Management; and
- Travel-to-Training Reimbursements.

B. State Program Administration:

The TAA Program is jointly administered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity that provides the training, job search and relocation allowances, and the Illinois Department of Employment Security that provides the income support.

Funding: To pay for the individual services and benefits, the Office of Employment and Training receives an allocation to be used in the administration of the Trade program. This allocation is distributed to sub-grantees throughout the state based on the level of TAA Program activity. As there is no way to determine when a worker group may be adversely affected, the State has the responsibility to ensure the funding resource for Trade-certified workers is distributed fairly and equitably. To be considered for funding, the grantee must follow the general funding procedures outlined in Trade Policy Letter No. 13-TAA-01 to utilize the application process for funding, and comply with restrictions imposed on requests for and utilization of trade funds.

Reporting: The Grantees are required to submit quarterly program and financial reports in the format provided by Commerce. Reporting is the responsibility of the grantee. Following notification by Office of Employment and Training staff, the grantee must enter participant info in the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS). Fiscal data must be reported in the

Department's Grantee Reporting System (GRS). Accrued expenses and obligations must be reported monthly.

All programmatic activities must be reported in the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS) within thirty days of the client related occurrence. The Grantee must report quarterly to Commerce through a file import process into IWDS the quarter's Expenditures for Training, Out-of-Area Job Search and Relocation by TAA Program participant. These amounts must reconcile to the aggregate quarterly expenditures posted into the Grant Reporting System by the Grantee.

Program Administration: The TAA Program must be administered following the federal program regulations and the State of Illinois Trade Program policy and procedures. All activities must be pre-approved and documented by state Merit Staff prior to participant activity. WIA Notice No. 10-NOT-46 provides Illinois' Merit Staffing Procedures for 2002 and 2009 Trade, and details can be accessed at:

https://www.illinoisworknet.com/DownloadPrint/10NOT47_Attachment_DRAFT_Illinois_Merit_Staffing_LWIA_Procedures.pdf.

Monitoring: The TAA Program regulations require periodic monitoring and reviewing of customer files for compliance with Trade Act rules and regulations and state policies and procedures. Grantees are required to perform internal monitoring for quality control. The State of Illinois will formally monitor this grant on a periodic basis.

C. Grant Activities:

Grant funds awarded under this RFA will support the allowable Trade Adjustment Assistance Training Program activities outlined below:

Provide Trade-Allowed Services to Clients

Funding will be provided to support the TAA Program services for eligible workers as detailed in the applicable law, regulation, and TAA Program administrative procedures. These services may include:

- Establishment of Outreach and Rapid Response activities, notifying at-risk and laid off workers of benefits, rights, and participation obligations.
- Establishment and maintenance of eligibility;
- Case Management and Co-enrollment, as required per 13-TAA-01;
- Providing eligible workers job retraining and related expenses including tuition, supplies, training related consumables;
- Providing eligible workers transportation and/or subsistence assistance; and
- Providing eligible workers job search allowances and/or relocation allowances for eligible participants as outlined in state workforce policy posted at: https://apps.il-worknet.com/Policies/13-TAA-01/version_0/13-TAA-01_-_Trade_Funding_Procedures_w_Attachs.pdf.

Provide Payment Processing Services

The Grantee will facilitate the issuance of payments for allowable TAA Training Program activities. This will involve the recording and payment of the following activities:

- Training Provider Invoices;
- Book/Supply Payments Invoices and Reimbursements;

- Transportation/Subsistence Reimbursements;
- Out-of-Area Job Search Reimbursements; and
- Out-of Area Relocation Reimbursements.

The Grantee will be responsible for keeping records and reporting on grant expenditures. Grant funds will support the administrative payment processing activities.

Provide Program Reporting

Payments will be processed on a periodic basis as directed by Commerce. The funds that are required to make payments will be drawn directly from the Illinois Grantee Reporting System (GRS). The Grantee will implement a payment processing workflow that:

- Ensures secure, accurate, and efficient administration of all payments;
- Enables compliance with grant requirements through financial reporting;
- Enables the issuance of payments to training providers, vendors, and/or participants; and
- Reporting on program activity to the Department via online grant reporting methods.

III. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

A. Project Integration:

Applicants must work with the local partners and Commerce to implement the project in coordination with TAA Program regulations and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

B. Period of Performance:

The purpose of this RFA is to identify qualified organizations to assist with the administration of the Trade Program over the next federal fiscal year. The grant period of performance will be established through a Grant Agreement with an October 1, 2016 start date. The Department may award additional grants in subsequent fiscal years based on program activity and performance.

C. Allowable Costs:

The TAA program activity will be assigned on an as-needed basis driven by the level of trade program activity during the grant period. Funding for allowable TAA program activities will be provided based on the level of trade program activity following the general guidelines outlined in the Department's Trade Program funding policy. Costs that are reasonable and allowable based on the activity contained in the scope of work and in accordance with the program regulations will be considered allowed costs. Funding for the activities outlined in this RFA will come from federal funds and is subject to state and federal legislative appropriation.

D. Project Reporting:

Successful applicants will be required to submit regular reports to document the progress of the project as part of the grant requirements; in addition to reports required in Section II, on page 5.

E. Pre-Award Review:

Applicants that are selected as finalist for an award are subject to a Pre-Award review of the applicant's fiscal and administrative procedures conducted by Commerce. The review will be completed prior to the grant being issued as required by the Uniform Administrative Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200.

F. Monitoring:

Applicants funded through this RFA are subject to fiscal and programmatic monitoring visits by Commerce and the U.S. Department of Labor. The successful applicant must have an open door policy allowing periodic visits by Commerce and U.S. Department of Labor monitors to evaluate the progress of the project, and provide documentation upon request of the monitor.

IV. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

A. **Submittal of Grant Application:**

All applications must be sent electronically to Commerce to be considered for funding. Applications must be submitted to Patrick.Campbell@illinois.gov. The final date for application submittal to be considered for a grant is September 19, 2016. Applications received after this final date for application submittal may be considered at the discretion of Commerce.

B. **Application Format:**

Each applicant must provide a technical proposal that responds to the following requirements that pertain to the grant application. Please note that the Executive Summary and Technical Proposal are to be submitted as attachments to the “Standard” Department of Commerce Application.

A. **Executive Summary**

Provide a one page summary of the applicant organization and the technical proposal.

B. **Technical Proposal**

Provide a technical proposal that responds to the following requirements that pertain to the grant application.

Applicant Capacity and Expertise

- Provide information about the applicant’s size and structure, as well as the length of time in business.
- Provide information regarding the applicant’s expertise in administering the TAA Training Program legislation and regulations.
- Provide information regarding the applicant’s expertise in administering the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Applicant Experience in Administering the TAA Program

- Provide information that demonstrates knowledge of the State of Illinois TAA Program policy and procedures.
- Provide information on how program staff will address Rapid Response in accordance with federal and state Rapid Response and Trade Program regulations.
- Describe any innovative projects that you have administered serving dislocated workers that have resulted in the permanent employment of participants including:
 - The types of training and the method of delivery that will be implemented including priority On-the-Job Training and Apprenticeship projects.
 - The quality of the training providers and training outcomes (industry recognized skills, certifications).
 - Explain how these strategies will be used in serving TAA Program customers under this grant.
- Describe the organization’s ability to assist with the implementation of the TAA requirements at the state and local levels in Illinois. Include specific examples of previous projects.

- Provide a list of the project staff, including sub-contractor personnel, to be assigned to the project. Describe the role each staff person will fulfill. Indicate the number of hours each staff will be assigned to the project. Provide resumes for all project staff. Indicate, at a minimum, their positions and total years in the organization, education, and relevant work experience.
- Provide a summary of reports of projects recently completed or underway that required skills and experience similar to those required for this proposed project. Provide contact information for references.

Program Coordination

- Describe the historic connection to the population targeted in the application.
- The applicant's connection to the population (program participants), demand occupations, and schools targeted in this application.
- Identify the organization's strategy to cooperate and coordinate with the other TAA service areas in the Northeast Region.

C. Required Attachments:

- Department of Commerce Grant Application
- Executive Summary
- Technical Requirement Proposal
- Resumes of Program Staff
- Grantee Information
 - Copy of the organization's 501(c) 3 approval letter (if applicable)
 - W-9 Form

D. Related Links and Resources:

Information regarding the Illinois Trade Adjustment Assistance Program is posted on Illinois workNet at <https://www2.illinoisworknet.com/LayoffRecovery/Pages/TradeLayoff.aspx>.

- TAA and ATAA Eligibility
https://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/pdf/Benefits_Services_Factsheet.pdf
- TAA and ATAA Services and Benefits
https://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/pdf/Benefits_Services_Factsheet.pdf
- TAA Funding Procedure
https://apps.il-work-net.com/Policies/13-TAA-01/version_0/13-TAA-01_-_Trade_Funding_Procedures_w_Attachs.pdf
- TAA Operating Instructions
https://apps.il-work-net.com/Policies/08-NOT-37/version_0/08-NOT-37AttachmentATEGL22-08.pdf
- 2 CFR Part 200
http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=9ea46bc2cce2c68028df9f3db9cf599b&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5#se2.1.200_10

V. REVIEW & SELECTION PROCEDURES

The applications will be reviewed by a team of Department of Commerce staff using the criteria listed below. Decisions to award grants and the funding levels will be determined per application based upon compliance with the requirements of this RFA. The final decision to make a grant award will be made by the Department of Commerce.

Applicant Capacity and Expertise (40%)

- The applicants' capacity to successfully complete the project tasks within the proposed grant period.
- The qualifications of the applicants' staff to be assigned to the project.
- The applicants' knowledge of the TAA federal legislation and regulations in the area of compliance with applicable provisions of the TAA regulations.
- The applicants' knowledge of State of Illinois WIOA, Rapid Response and TAA Program policy, procedures, and reporting systems.

Applicant Experience (50%)

- The related experience of the applicant staff, sub-contractors, and partners in administering the TAA program in Illinois.
- The proposed method of delivery of Rapid Response services and the degree of alignment with federal and state Rapid Response and Trade Program regulations.
- The innovative projects and approaches that serve dislocated workers that result in the permanent employment of participants.
 - The types of training and the method of delivery that will be implemented including priority On-the-Job Training and Apprenticeship projects.
 - The quality of the training providers and training outcomes (industry recognized skills, certifications).
 - How these strategies will be used in serving TAA Program customers under this grant.
- The applicants' ability to assist with the implementation of the TAA requirements at the state and local levels.
- The overall feasibility and quality of the work plan.

- **Program Coordination (10%)**

- Demonstrated historic connection to the population targeted in the application.
- The applicant's connection to the population (program participants), demand occupations, and schools targeted in this application.
- The organization's strategy to cooperate and coordinate with the other TAA service areas in the Northeast Region.

The Office of Employment and Training reserves the right to request additional information from applicants during the scoring process if the project information provided is unclear to the review team. The Office of Employment and Training at its sole discretion, reserves the right to reject all applications; to reject individual applications for failure to meet any requirement; to award in part or total; and to waive minor defects and non-compliance. Submission of an application confers no right to an award or to a subsequent grant agreement. All decisions of the Office of Employment and Training on behalf of the Department of Commerce are final.