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## STATE INSTRUCTION NUMBER 25-03

**To:** Local Workforce Area Signatory Officials  
Local Workforce Area Board Chairs Local  
Workforce Area Administrators  
DEW Area Directors  
DEW Regional Managers  
TAA Workforce Consultants

**Subject:** TAA Allowances and Reimbursement Rates

**Issuance Date:** September 25, 2025

**Effective Date:** Immediately

**Purpose:** To provide guidance on the allowance and reimbursement rates pursuant to job search allowances, relocation allowances, and supplemental assistance under the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program. **This policy guidance replaces State Instruction 18-07.**

**References:**

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Public Law 113-128
- The Trade Act, Public Law 93-618
- 20 CFR Part 618
- Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs) 1-19; 10-23, Change 2
- State Instruction Letters 12-02; 20-07

**Revisions:** This state instruction revision removes the exact numerical amount for the federal mileage rate, with the understanding that the rate is updated annually. It also expands on reimbursement and allowance rates for all activities within the TAA program.

**Background:** The TAA Program provides trade-affected workers with opportunities to obtain the skills, credentials, resources, and support necessary to become reemployed in a good job. TAA Program benefits and services include employment and case management services, training, out-

of-area job search and relocation allowances, and income support through Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA).

The TAA Program permits allowances or reimbursements pursuant to job searches, relocation, subsistence, and transportation when the activity is outside of the participant's commuting area but within the United States.

*Commuting Area.* As defined in 5 CFR § 550.703, the area surrounding a work site where people live and reasonably can be expected to travel back and forth daily to work. This includes all destinations that can be reached via a commuting trip that is not significantly more burdensome than a current commuting trip.

**Policy:** Allowances and reimbursements must be made in accordance with 20 CFR part 618, which sets the conditions and procedures under which a trade-affected worker may apply for and receive training and assistance to help secure reemployment.

To receive reimbursement for any TAA activity, the TAA Program follows the rate set by the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR). Increases to the standard mileage rate take effect on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each new year. The per diem rate for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses for each Federal fiscal year are typically announced in mid-August. The current rates for transportation and per diem can be found here: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-a-trip>.

**NOTE:** Participants can travel by alternative means than their own vehicle (such as a ride share app); however, the same FTR rate for privately owned vehicles applies for reimbursement.

A participant who receives any form of assistance that includes an allowance or reimbursement must provide receipts for all transportation expenses, lodging, and meals.

### **Job Search Allowance**

*Travel.* A participant's allowable travel expenses may not exceed 90% of the cost per mile based on the privately owned vehicle mileage reimbursement rate. This allowance is for round trip travel from the participant's home to the job search area.

*Lodging and Meals.* A participant's allowable costs cannot exceed the lesser of:

- The actual cost for lodging and meals while engaged in the job search
- 50% of the lodging and meal per diem allowance under the FTR for the job search area

*Limit.* The total job search allowance may not exceed \$1,250, no matter how many job searches are undertaken. If a participant is entitled to be paid or reimbursed by another source for travel,

lodging, and/or meals, the TAA Program must reduce the job search allowance by the amount of the payment or reimbursement.

## **Relocation**

*Travel.* A participant's allowable travel expense may not exceed 90% of the cost per mile based on the privately owned vehicle mileage reimbursement rate. Travel of family who, for good cause and with approval, must travel separately to their new home, may also be reimbursed at the same rate as the participant.

*Lodging and Meals.* A participant and their family may be reimbursed for 90% of lodging and meal expenses while in transit, but costs may not exceed the lesser of:

- The actual costs to the participant and their family while traveling
- 50% of the lodging and meal per diem allowance under the FTR for the relocation area for those days while the participant and their family are traveling

*Movement of Household Goods.* A participant may be reimbursed for 90% of the allowable costs for moving goods and personal effects. Stipulations to receive moving reimbursement can be found at 20 CFR § 618.455(a)(3).

*Lump Sum.* As part of the relocation allowance, a participant receives a lump sum equivalent to three times their average weekly wage, not to exceed \$1,250.

## **Supplemental Assistance**

Subsistence and transportation payments must be provided to a participant whose training program has been approved in accordance with State Instruction 20-07, *Trade Adjustment Assistance Occupational Skills Training Approval Policy*.

This assistance is to defray reasonable subsistence and transportation expenses while a participant attends training at a facility outside their commuting area. The need for such payments must be documented on the participant's individual employment plan (IEP), if available, or in their case file.

*Subsistence.* Subsistence payments must be made for the reasonable costs of meals and incidental expenses under the FTR, as well as for the maintenance of temporary living quarters when the training facility is located outside of the participant's commuting area. The stipulations to receive this supplemental assistance include the following:

- Participants must only be reimbursed when they are not receiving similar payments from another source.

- Payment must not be made for any day that participants receive a daily commuting transportation payment, except as specific in 20 CFR § 618.640(e).
- Any day of unexcused absence from the training program, as certified by the training provider, must not be reimbursed.

*Transportation.* A participant must be reimbursed for transportation expenses when commuting to and from a training facility located outside their commuting area. Payments may not exceed the cost per mile based on the privately owned vehicle mileage reimbursement rate. Mileage eligible for reimbursement is round-trip from the first mile outside the boundary of a participant's commuting area to the location of the training facility.

Transportation payments must not be paid when:

- Transportation is arranged and paid for by South Carolina for one or more participants
- Payments are provided under any other law
- A participant is paid or reimbursed for such expenses from any other source

*Payment Amounts.* Transportation payments may not exceed the amount of a daily subsistence payment if the worker resided temporarily in the area of the training. Subsistence payments may only be for the lesser of:

- A participant's actual per diem expenses for subsistence
- 50% of the lodging and meal per diem allowance rate authorized under the FTR for the location of the training facility

*Payment Timing.* Supplemental assistance payments must be made promptly after completion of a week of approved training, but at a minimum, monthly. Payments may be made in advance to facilitate the participant's attendance at the training.

*Payment of Subsistence and Transportation.* A participant may receive both forms of supplemental assistance only under the following circumstances:

- At the beginning and end of the training when the participant must travel back to their commuting area.
- If the participant fails, for justifiable cause as described in 20 CFR § 618.780(b)(3)(iii), to complete the training outside of their commuting area, and must return home before the scheduled end of the training.

**Action:** Please ensure that all appropriate staff receive and understand this policy.

**Inquiries:** Questions may be directed to [WorkforcePolicy@dew.sc.gov](mailto:WorkforcePolicy@dew.sc.gov).

*Nina Staggars*

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