

## Chapter 12 - Job Search Allowances

The Section 12-1: Job Search Allowance Overview portion of this section provides guidance applicable for all TAA Laws (TAA of 2002, TGAAA of 2009, TAAEA of 2011, and TAARA of 2015). Each subsequent section (12-2 thru 12-5) outlines Job Search Allowance requirements specific for each law. The rules that apply to all TAA laws include:

- \*Application Requirement and Deadlines.
- \*Determination of Eligibility Criteria and File Requirements.

### Section 12-1: Job Search Allowances Overview – Applicable to each TAA Law

Job Search Allowances (20 CFR 617.30) may be provided to adversely affected workers who seek to secure suitable work outside of the normal commuting area by allowing a total or partial reimbursement of pre-approved job interview expenses. Suitable work is defined as at least 70 percent of the rate of pay for which the adversely affected worker received at the certified employer. As of December 5, 2018, the normal commuting area is defined as five miles or more from the adversely affected worker's home to the location where the job interview will be held. The amount of Job Search Allowance approved will be dependent upon the TAA law for which the adversely affected worker is certified.

### Job Search Allowances – Application Requirement and Deadlines

Application for Job Search Allowances may be conducted by the completion of Form TAA-401: *Request for Job Search Allowance* or a locally developed form at any time, regardless of whether a certification covering the worker has been made. The job search may not be approved until after the adversely affected worker is covered under a certification and has a qualifying separation.

The following requirements apply to all requests for Job Search Allowances:

- The Form TAA-401: *TAA Request for Job Search Allowances* application or locally developed form is filed before the job interview takes place and within the designated time limits:
  - The latter of the following: Before the 365<sup>th</sup> day after the date of the certification or the 365<sup>th</sup> day after the date of the adversely affected worker's last total separation; and/or
  - Before the 182<sup>nd</sup> day after the concluding date of TAA-approved training (see the TAA of 2002 exclusion below).

**Please Note:**

TAA of 2002 – Adversely affected workers can apply for Job Search Allowances within:

\*365 days from the later of the certification date or the last qualifying separation date, or

\*182 days from the conclusion of TAA-approved training IF a Waiver of Training Requirement was not received.

(If a Form TAA 802: *Waiver of TAA Training Requirement* is issued, the adversely affected worker is not eligible for Job Search Allowances after the conclusion of training).

TGAAA of 2009, TAAEA of 2011, and TAARA of 2015 – Adversely affected workers can apply for Job Search Allowances within:

\*365 days from the latter of the certification date or the last qualifying separation date, or

\*182 days from the conclusion of training.

Job Search Allowance includes reimbursement for travel, meals, and lodging expenses. For the maximum monetary amount of reimbursement allowed for job searches, refer to the following sections of this chapter that are applicable to the TAA law for which the adversely affected worker is certified.

### Job Search Allowances – Determination of Eligibility Criteria and File Requirements

Subsequent to the application of Job Search Allowances within the above-mentioned application deadline requirements, the MWAs determine eligibility for Job Search Allowances, issue denials when appropriate, and issue payments.

Job Search Allowances may be approved once the MWA has considered the application deadline requirements and has determined that each of the following has been met and documented in the case file:

- 1) The Job Search Allowance application has been received in accordance with the application deadlines outlined in the previous subsection; and
- 2) The adversely affected worker has no reasonable expectation of securing suitable work within the commuting area; and

**Acceptable Source Documentation:** The MWA may verify this requirement by documenting proof of job search logs or declining LMI.

- 3) There is a reasonable expectation of obtaining suitable, long-term work in the area where the job search will be conducted; and

**Acceptable Source Documentation:** A comparison of the wages of the potential employment to the wages earned at the certified employer are required to ensure suitable work would be obtained.

- 4) The job search must be completed within 30 days from the day on which the job search began. A job search is completed when the adversely affected worker either secures suitable work or has interviewed with the employer(s) as planned; and

**Acceptable Source Documentation:** An official confirmation from the potential employer including the date and time of the interview. Examples: email confirmation, letter from potential employer, etc.

- 5) The job search must be located outside of the normal commuting area; and

**Acceptable Source Documentation:** The address of the adversely affected worker and the address of the job interview site must be present. A mileage calculation using an online mapping tool is recommended.

- 6) For lodging and meals, receipts must be submitted; and

**Acceptable Source Documentation:** For payment of lodging and meals, receipts for each transaction must be submitted to the MWA for review. If a receipt is not provided, reimbursement may not be paid to the adversely affected worker. The adversely affected worker has the right to appeal the denial of lodging and meals due to the absence of receipts.

- 7) Mileage may be calculated in accordance with the [GSA Website](#).

## **Section 12-2: Job Search Allowances–TAA of 2002**

Adversely affected workers deemed eligible for TAA of 2002 benefits must apply for Job Search Allowances at their local MWA prior to the scheduled job interview.

The TAA of 2002 Job Search Allowance benefit includes reimbursement to the adversely affected worker of 90 percent for travel, meals, and lodging expenses, up to a maximum amount of \$1,250 regardless of the number of job searches undertaken.

The MWAs may advance an adversely affected worker up to 60 percent of the estimated amount of the Job Search Allowance, up to \$360, within five days before commencement of the approved job search. Advances are deducted from payment of the total Job Search Allowance. The adversely affected worker certifies on forms furnished by the MWA that a job interview(s) occurred, and to the amount expended daily for meals, lodging, and transportation. Receipts must be submitted for meals, lodging, and transportation expenses (excluding mileage).

Job Search Allowance is reduced by any amount the adversely affected worker is entitled to be paid or reimbursed for such expenses from any other source.

### **Transportation Expenses**

Payment amount for travel allowance may not exceed the lower cost of the following:

- 1) The actual cost of a round trip by the most economical public transportation the adversely affected worker can reasonably be expected to take from the adversely affected worker's residence to the area of the job search.
- 2) The prevailing mileage rate authorized by federal travel regulations for round-trip travel between the adversely affected worker's residence and the area of the job search.

Time spent on travel may be used as justification for allowing the adversely affected worker to travel with their own vehicle (using the prevailing mileage rate authorized by federal travel regulations) if the cost comparison is not exceptionally varied from public transportation.

### **Lodging and Meal Expenses**

Payment amount for lodging and meals may not exceed the lower cost of the following:

- 1) The actual cost to the adversely affected worker for lodging and meals while engaged in the job search.
- 2) Fifty percent of the prevailing per diem allowance rate authorized under federal travel regulations for the locality where the job search is conducted.

If air travel is necessary, the MWAs must include, at a minimum, three quotes for airfare.

### **Section 12-3: Job Search Allowances–TGAAA of 2009**

Adversely affected workers deemed eligible for TGAAA of 2009 benefits must apply for Job Search Allowances at their local MWA prior to the scheduled job interview as outlined in Section 12-1: Job Search Allowance Overview.

The TGAAA of 2009 Job Search Allowance benefit includes reimbursement to the adversely affected worker for 100 percent for travel, meals, and lodging expenses, up to a maximum amount of \$1,500 regardless of the number of job searches undertaken.

The MWAs may advance an adversely affected worker up to 60 percent of the estimated amount of the Job Search Allowance, up to \$360, within five days before commencement of the approved job search. Advances are deducted from payment of the total Job Search Allowance. The adversely affected worker certifies on forms furnished by the MWA that a job interview(s) occurred, and to the amount expended daily for meals, lodging, and transportation. Receipts must be submitted for meals, lodging, and transportation expenses (excluding mileage).

Job Search Allowance is reduced by any amount the adversely affected worker is entitled to be paid or reimbursed for such expenses from any other source.

#### **Transportation Expenses**

Payment amount for travel allowance may not exceed the lower cost of the following:

- 1) The actual cost of a round trip by the most economical public transportation the adversely affected worker can reasonably be expected to take from the adversely affected worker's residence to the area of the job search
- 2) The prevailing mileage rate authorized by federal travel regulations for round-trip travel between the adversely affected worker's residence and the area of the job search.

Time spent on travel may be used as justification for allowing the adversely affected worker to travel with their own vehicle (using the prevailing mileage rate authorized by federal travel regulations) if the cost comparison is not exceptionally varied from public transportation.

#### **Lodging and Meal Expenses**

Payment amount for lodging and meals may not exceed the lower cost of the following:

- 1) The actual cost to the adversely affected worker for lodging and meals while engaged in the job search.
- 2) Fifty percent of the prevailing per diem allowance rate authorized under federal travel regulations for the locality where the job search is conducted.

If air travel is necessary, the MWAs must include, at a minimum, three quotes for airfare.

## **Section 12-4: Job Search Allowances–TAAEA of 2011**

Adversely affected workers deemed eligible for TAAEA of 2011 benefits must apply for Job Search Allowances at their local MWA prior to the scheduled job interview as outlined in Section 12-1: Job Search Allowance Overview.

The TAAEA of 2011 Job Search Allowance benefit includes reimbursement to the adversely affected worker for 90 percent for travel, meals, and lodging expenses up to a maximum amount of \$1,250 regardless of the number of job searches undertaken.

The MWAs may advance an adversely affected worker up to 60 percent of the estimated amount of the Job Search Allowance (up to \$360) within five days before commencement of the approved job search. Advances are deducted from payment of the total Job Search Allowance. The adversely affected worker certifies on forms furnished by the MWA that a job interview(s) occurred, and to the amount expended daily for meals, lodging, and transportation. Receipts must be submitted for meals, lodging, and transportation expenses (excluding mileage).

Job Search Allowance is reduced by any amount the adversely affected worker is entitled to be paid or reimbursed for such expenses from any other source.

### **Transportation Expenses**

Payment amount for travel allowance may not exceed the lower cost of the following:

- 1) The actual cost of a round trip by the most economical public transportation the adversely affected worker can reasonably be expected to take from the adversely affected worker's residence to the area of the job search.
- 2) The prevailing mileage rate authorized by federal travel regulations for round-trip travel between the adversely affected worker's residence and the area of the job search.

Time spent on travel may be used as justification for allowing the adversely affected worker to travel with their own vehicle (using the prevailing mileage rate authorized by federal travel regulations) if the cost comparison is not exceptionally varied from public transportation.

### **Lodging and Meal Expenses**

Payment amount for lodging and meals may not exceed the lower cost of the following:

- 1) The actual cost to the adversely affected worker for lodging and meals while engaged in the job search.
- 2) Fifty percent of the prevailing per diem allowance rate authorized under federal travel regulations for the locality where the job search is conducted.

If air travel is necessary, the MWAs must include, at a minimum, three quotes for airfare.

## **Section 12-5: Job Search Allowances – TAARA of 2015**

Adversely affected workers deemed eligible for TAARA of 2015 benefits must apply for Job Search Allowances at their local MWA prior to the scheduled job interview as outlined in Section 12-1: Job Search Allowance Overview.

The TAARA of 2015 Job Search Allowance benefit includes reimbursement to the adversely affected worker for 90 percent for travel, meals, and lodging expenses up to a maximum amount of \$1,250 regardless of the number of job searches undertaken.

The MWAs may advance an adversely affected worker up to 60 percent of the estimated amount of the Job Search Allowance (up to \$360) within five days before commencement of the approved job search. Advances are deducted from payment of the total Job Search Allowance. The adversely affected worker certifies on forms furnished by the MWA that a job interview(s) occurred, and to the amount expended daily for meals, lodging, and transportation. Receipts must be submitted for meals, lodging, and transportation expenses (excluding mileage).

Job Search Allowance is reduced by any amount the adversely affected worker is entitled to be paid or reimbursed for such expenses from any other source.

### **Transportation Expenses**

Payment amount for travel allowance may not exceed the lower cost of the following:

- 1) The actual cost of a round trip by the most economical public transportation the adversely affected worker can reasonably be expected to take from the adversely affected worker's residence to the area of the job search.
- 2) The prevailing mileage rate authorized by federal travel regulations for round-trip travel between the adversely affected worker's residence and the area of the job search.

Time spent on travel may be used as justification for allowing the adversely affected worker to travel with their own vehicle (using the prevailing mileage rate authorized by federal travel regulations) if the cost comparison is not exceptionally varied from public transportation.

### **Lodging and Meal Expenses**

Payment amount for lodging and meals may not exceed the lower cost of the following:

- 1) The actual cost to the adversely affected worker for lodging and meals while engaged in the job search.
- 2) Fifty percent of the prevailing per diem allowance rate authorized under federal travel regulations for the locality where the job search is conducted.

If air travel is necessary, the MWAs must include, at a minimum, three quotes for airfare.