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**Workforce Solutions**

**Outplacement Standards and Guidelines**

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# Standard

Workforce Solutions helps employers when they face layoffs, downsizing or closings. We work with employers, employer associations, local elected officials, and community partners to reduce the impact of a layoff or closing on the local economy and on the affected workers. When appropriate, Workforce Solutions can suggest and support layoff aversion strategies to avoid or lessen the severity of a layoff.

We work for the following results from outplacement activities:

* Ensuring workers affected by a layoff, downsizing or closing can transition into new jobs
* Ensuring employers are aware of and can take advantage of technical assistance, community resources, or other strategies to avoid or reduce the impact of a layoff, downsizing or closing.

# Overview

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board Employer Service staff oversees Workforce Solutions efforts to respond to layoffs, downsizings or closings. Our staff includes an account executive who coordinates service.

At a minimum, we offer outplacement to employers:

* In the event of mass layoffs and plant closings involving 50 or more workers as well as smaller events affecting less than 50 workers
* When a company files a WARN (Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notice) with a local chief elected official and the Texas Workforce Commission
* When a company or a company’s workers or representatives file a Trade Act petition requesting trade readjustment allowances or trade adjustment assistance.
* When the employer asks us for help or an employee tells us a company is laying off or closing
* If we see a newspaper or media release announcing a layoff or closing
* If a natural disaster in our region results in an employer or employers laying off workers.
* If an employer or employer association or economic development organization contacts Workforce Solutions seeking advice and assistance on averting a layoff.

At a minimum, our service includes:

* Consultation with the employer to assess the employer’s wants and needs, including strategies to avert or reduce the impact of a layoff
* Information sessions and practical job search seminars for workers at an employer’s site, community location, or career office
* Job search and career counseling and planning for workers, including relevant labor market and career information
* Immediate matching to suitable open jobs for workers, including promoting workers to employers who are hiring for similar skills or job duties
* Scholarships for upskilling, career changes, or education as a part of career plans to ease workers’ transitions to new jobs
* Financial aid and information about other community resources and support for workers
* Access to the full range of service available through Workforce Solutions and our career offices

Workforce Solutions can and will conduct outplacement activities and events at an employer’s site, in a community location convenient to workers, and in our career offices.

# Process

Workforce Solutions can begin outplacement before we receive or are aware of a WARN. (See II. Overview above).

## First Action: Introduction

* + 1. When the Board Account Executive receives notice of a layoff, downsizing or closing. The Account Executive will contact the employer, introduce Workforce Solutions, schedule an onsite meeting to market our service, and ask for information to complete the Workforce Solutions Layoff Notification/Action form.
		2. When a Employer Service staff member becomes aware of a layoff, downsizing or closing. The staff member will market Workforce Solutions outplacement to the employer, schedule an onsite meeting to further develop service options, ask for information to complete the Workforce Solutions Layoff Notification/Action form, and notify the Board Account Executive.
		3. When a career office, financial aid payment office, financial aid support center, adult education provider, youth project, vocational rehabilitation service, or Board staff member becomes aware of a layoff, downsizing or closing. The staff member will contact the Board Account Executive or another Employer Service representative with the notice.

## Second Action: Onsite Management Meeting

During the onsite meeting, the Board Account Executive or Employer Service staff representative will:

* + 1. meet with employer representatives and representatives of the affected workers if possible (including union representatives).
		2. ask the reason for the layoff:
			1. identify if it involves TAA
			2. identify if layoff intervention is possible
			3. suggest alternative plans to closure and job loss such as on the job training, shared work and any current initiatives available
		3. discuss other services that may help the employer, including other businesses that may be willing to hire their transitioning employees
		4. discuss the full range of Workforce Solutions service for workers including: immediate matching of workers to open jobs suitable to their skills; traditional outplacement job search seminars, career planning, and counseling; financial aid for education/training scholarships and other needs; access to the career office network
		5. set up a time to have the Talent Development Team come onsite to present to employees

After the onsite meeting, the Board Account Executive is responsible for sending a completed Layoff Notification/Action form to the Texas Workforce Commission layoff.notificationcentral@twc.state.tx.us which generates a Rapid Response Control number for data entry in TWIST.

TWC will then generate a letter to the company and send a copy to the Account Executive.

## Third Action: Orientation Event Preparation and Presentation

### Preparation

Employer Service staff must send out an outplacement event notice and agenda to the entire outplacement team a minimum of five calendar days before an orientation meeting.

The team consists of the Board Account Executive, TWC Regional Unemployment Field Specialist, Employer Service Strategic Projects Manager, and the Talent Development Team. The Board Account Executive or Strategic Projects Manager may add members to the team.

The Talent Development Team will reach out to the system for assistance with facilitating the Trade Act orientation portions of the information sessions.

The Talent Development Team must also create complete outplacement packets by including a description of Workforce Solutions including locations for career offices, the U.S. Department of Labor red booklet, FINRA brochure, and TWC’s At a Glance Benefits brochure.

### Presentation

The outplacement orientation should last between 60 and 90 minutes depending on the arrangements made with the employer.

The orientation presentation consists of the following components:

* Signing In
	+ Employee sign in sheet provided by the Talent Development Team or a copy of a company sign in sheet as a record of attendance
* Workforce Solutions PowerPoint
* Assisting employees with completing the TWIST registration form
* UI Information
	+ PowerPoint on unemployment insurance and Q&A’s is presented by TWC Regional Unemployment Field Specialist only.
	+ If not available, the TWC UI phone number is given to customers to address their questions.
* Collecting TWIST registration forms and checking them for errors or omissions

Following the orientation, the Outplacements Coordinator and Talent Development Team will have a follow up conference with the team to discuss:

* Dispersing TWIST registration forms for TWIST data entry
* Engaging companies that can hire the employees
* Planning a job fair or hiring event
* Following up with the company about the services they received
* Recruiting for the company, following up on hires and reporting appropriate information in WIT

## Fourth Action: Administrative Duties

At the end of all outplacement orientations, the following actions must be completed:

* Talent Development Team collects and secures the completed TWIST registration forms following PII requirements.
* Talent Development Team sends the completed TWIST registration forms to appropriate offices using DocuWare.
* TWIST data entry must be completed within 45 days of the outplacement meeting.

The Outplacements Coordinator must:

* Update the layoff notices log that keeps a running total for the calendar year.
* Complete a quarterly update and reconciliation of the TRACCS report received from TWC.
* Adjust layoff numbers in the layoff notices log as appropriate based on data in the TRACCS report.

## Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Activation

TAA is activated when a petition identifies a worker group at a specific firm or subdivision and covers all individuals in that group. A group of workers may be eligible for TAA if their jobs are lost or threatened due to trade-related circumstances as determined by the DOL investigation.

Circumstances may include:

* + Increased imports of either articles or services;
	+ A shift in production to or an acquisition of services or articles from any foreign country by a worker's company;
	+ A worker's employer's loss of business from a customer with TAA-certified workers; or
	+ A worker's employer is identified as trade-injured by the International Trade Commission (ITC).

### Outplacements Coordinator Duties for TAA

The Outplacement Coordinator must update the TAA log, report monthly contacts, and receive / process TAA petitions from TWC’s Trade Unit, an employer, or three employees of the TAA company.

### TAA Orientation

The TAA orientation follows the same guidelines as other outplacement orientations (Section III, C) with the addition of a designated TAA representative from a Workforce Solutions career office presenting the TAA orientation information, inviting customers to visit their local career office to file a TAA claim, and distributing TAA brochures.

# Forms

The following documents are part of the Outplacement process:

1. Rapid Response Layoff Notification Action form
2. Outplacement Agenda format
3. TWIST Registration form
4. TAA Petition form