



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

May 21, 2009

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Dear Pennsylvania Employer,

Changes to the federal Trade Act may be of benefit to your company.

No business ever wants to lay-off its workers. In fact, the commonwealth has many programs intended to help you avoid making the difficult choice to furlough your employees. I hope you will explore these opportunities at **www.newpa.com**.

However, even with all the help that is available in these extraordinarily difficult economic times, companies are sometimes forced to make difficult decisions. If you've been detrimentally affected by foreign imports of goods or services, your employees may be entitled to Trade Adjustment Assistance benefits. This program offers 100 percent federally funded financial assistance, in addition to a high quality set of retraining and education services. As of May 18, 2009, service sector employers and employees will be eligible for this program for the first time.

Information regarding eligibility and how to access these services is included on the back of this letter. I hope that you and your employees never need these services, but if you do, please contact us. We can help make a painful experience easier for your employees.

Sincerely,

Sandi Vito
Secretary

Changes to the Federal Trade Act under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act

Under the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, the Trade Adjustment Assistance program has been **expanded to include service sector and public agency employers**, and your company's workers may now be eligible for certification on petitions filed with the U.S. Department of Labor on or after May 18, 2009.

The TAA program helps workers find suitable employment when they have lost, or may lose, their jobs or hours of work and wages as a result of foreign competition.

Benefits and services to eligible workers include: job training, cash Trade Readjustment Allowances, or TRA, job search and relocation allowances, a tax credit to help pay the costs of health insurance premiums, and a wage supplement to workers 50 years of age and older.

Your firm, workers, or worker representatives may want to consider the possibility of petitioning for TAA certification if foreign competition was an important factor in the decline of your sales, production or provision of services, and to your workers' loss or threat of loss of employment. A petition can also be filed if your firm's production or supply of services has been shifted to a foreign country with the same negative effects described previously.

TRA payments **are not** charged to employers and do not affect the employer's Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund experience rating.

Most questions on TAA and the ARRA changes, including how to file a petition for certification, are answered at **www.doleta.gov/tradeact**. If you have additional questions, please visit the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry website at **www.dli.state.pa.us**, or call 1-866-858-2753.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR FIRMS

The Trade Adjustment Assistance for Firms (TAA) program provides technical assistance to eligible businesses that have lost employment and sales or production due to increased foreign competition. The Mid-Atlantic Trade Assistance Coordination Center can provide assistance to a firm in preparing its petition for eligibility certification, determining its strengths and weaknesses, and developing and implementing an Adjustment Proposal. Contact the Mid-Atlantic TACC at 800-566-7522; **<http://www.mataac.org>** on the Web; or via email at **info@matacc.org**.

The Steel Valley Authority provides a variety of services to assist businesses in their efforts to regain competitiveness in the global marketplace. Services include: financial restructuring, assistance with new business plans, labor-management relation services, cost management services and technological assistance. In some cases some services are offered to small/"middle-market" firms employing 25 to 500 workers at no cost to the firm. Contact the Steel Valley Authority in western Pennsylvania at (412) 342-0534 or 1-866-782-8832; and in eastern Pennsylvania at 717-920-7095 or 1-800-932-0635 ext. 8844.

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*Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.
Equal Opportunity Employer/Program*