

Real-World Outreach Strategies

This attachment contains resources that have been developed and implemented in states to engage workers regarding the TAA Program. Although some of these resources are restricted to TAA, much of what is presented below reinforces categories of allowable outreach that were outlined in [TEGL No. 03-23](#). The list below expands beyond “what” is allowed to real-world examples of “how” different outreach methods have been employed by TAA staffs across the country.

Thanks to TAA state staffs applying new methods to alert, notify, and engage workers, the TAA Program enjoys hundreds of new enrollments each quarter. In many cases, this success is attributable to a reach-back approach that relies on using a variety of new materials and methods to effectively connect with workers, often years after non-response to initial notification using traditional approaches. The results of successful enrollments based on a *second* round of outreach demonstrates that creative strategies have a positive impact on engagement.

The list below provides:

- Outreach Strategies – Descriptions of outreach strategies including featured state examples.
- Related content – Each numbered heading is a hyperlink to related material. An expanded index is also available as a link at the bottom of this document.
- Contacts for follow up on related content – a link to state TAA coordinators contact information is provided to allow for convenient follow up on learning more about strategies that are posted.

Examples

1. [Social Media/Geofencing](#) – Social media can be a very effective tool for creating brand awareness and educating the public about the existence of the TAA Program. Indiana conducted an inexpensive geofencing strategy that employs social media (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube) posts that are deposited into feeds of those who live or travel to geographical areas where layoffs occur to alert workers of the program and its benefits. An analysis of data showed dramatically better results than in outreach efforts using more traditional methods.
2. [In-Person Events/Related Incentives](#) – In-person events can be an effective way to engage participants. In one example, the state of Indiana uses gas cards as a very successful incentive to encourage eligible workers to attend orientations to learn about the program and apply.
3. [Multi-Prong Outreach](#) – This involves using multiple approaches to educate and engage individual workers. The state of Oregon ties together successive outreach attempts to alert a worker as to the next communication (interweaving auto-dialer, person to person calls, emails, and letters), which has been proven to lower barriers to trust and increase receptivity. The state of Pennsylvania has adopted a “three touch strategy” which looks thoughtfully at

successive outreach engagements with participants in a manner that measures what works and what doesn't in various outreach "campaigns".

4. **Use of UI claimant and/or Labor Exchange Data** – Leverages UI claimant and Wagner-Peyser data for the purpose of identifying workers laid off by employers of eligible worker groups. Cross matching UI system and Wagner-Peyser data to update contact information from past worker lists can also alert staff to new workers that were not provided by the employer in the initial worker group list.
5. **English Language Learners** – Providing effective outreach to worker groups that have limited English can present special problems, especially in situations where there are multiple primary languages spoken. The state of Maine recently presented a webinar that summarized successes and lessons learned from conducting program orientations for a large multi-language worker group.
6. **Peer Advocacy** – One highly effective strategy that is helpful in large layoffs involves hiring workers from within the worker group to conduct outreach to their peers, helping to demystify the application enrollment and boost the credibility of program participation. The states of Maine and Oregon have used this method successfully.
7. **Computer Assessment** – Access to computer and internet, as well as the computer skills necessary to utilize them, can make all the difference in successful program outreach and engagement. This applies to meaningful connection in all geographies and populations, but especially in rural areas and among underserved communities. By understanding the extent that workers can access and use technology, TAA can more effectively assess needs to support effective outreach communications and supports. The state of Oregon has comprehensively addressed this need in the development of an IT Pilot designed to equip participants with training and access to internet and computers to provide critical computer literacy skills.
8. **Mobile Units** – Mobile units can greatly extend flexibility to provide outreach to areas across the state, including rural areas. The state of Tennessee has a very mature model for this strategy.
9. **Partnerships** – One of the cornerstones of a successful workforce program lies in its ability to collaborate with partner programs and other organizations that share our mission to attract, engage, and support workers in a timely fashion with the skills and resources needed to meet employer needs. Below are *some* of the partners that can provide critical linkages in serving that mission.
 - a. Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) – This recently expanded ETA funded program is designed to provide a link for UI claimants to reemployment, including serving as a liaison for workforce programs in identifying workers' reemployment needs. Several TAA state programs partner closely with RESEA through worker orientations and other opportunities for engaging laid off workers with an eye to minimizing the period of unemployment.

- b. Rapid Response – Intended to be the original vanguard for all ETA workforce programs, Rapid Response is tasked with both responding to layoffs and conducting ongoing layoff aversion activities to prevent or minimize layoffs.
 - c. Unions – Unions are very useful stakeholders in networking to support worker engagement, as they have long established ties with both employers and workers. The state of Washington is a leader in Trade Program/Union partnership through the state’s Labor Council.
10. **Printed Materials** – Used for different audiences, well-designed flyers can provide scannable, easy to consume formats for program orientation and steps to learn more about applying. The power of print materials can be extended in a number of ways, including QR codes on T-shirts and other items. The reach of print advertisements can be extended to the sides of buses, inside metro trains, as well as roadside billboards.
11. **Eligibility Notifications** – Effective notifications, such as those provided by the state of Colorado, include upfront information on benefits and services, simplified language with distinct hyperlinks to “learn more” about program benefits, program application, and contact information.
12. **Radio and TV Spots** – TV and Radio spots that promote program awareness must be short to be economical. But as seen by the example of a radio spot by Indiana, even a 30 second spot can be memorable and impactful.
13. **Videos** – As demonstrated in one-minute videos produced by the state of Arizona, video program overviews can also be surprisingly short but effective in providing “brand awareness” with contact information to find out more. In other cases, videos can be used to provide more in-depth overviews (such as those developed by the states of Connecticut and Maryland) or to provide snapshots of various program benefits and services (as seen in videos from the state of Massachusetts) in a manner that is more engaging than a similar depth of material provided in print. Once hosted on public platforms like YouTube, videos can be embedded to help enliven and enhance a variety of outreach materials. Time increments are provided for context on depth of content. Success stories are another way to engage participants in understanding the process and impact of the program from a personal perspective. Brief but authentic testimonials from real participants, such as those developed by the states of Kansas and Michigan, can establish an initial sense of identification with the program, which is key to worker engagement.
14. **Website** – Most workforce programs have websites that contain comprehensive information about what they have to offer, how to apply, etc. Sometimes the challenge is to provide an interface that is not so full of information that it can be difficult to navigate. The state of Nebraska provides a streamlined web-page format that provides easy access to program information and collection of initial intake information. For more complicated web pages, tools such as chatbots, as seen in the state of Minnesota, can be used to respond and direct users to appropriate resources.

15. Person-to-Person Engagement – Direct contact with eligible workers is unquestionably the most promising path to successful engagement, but only if it is handled with the necessary sensitivity. For example, reaching out to workers via phone about their program eligibility can be just such an outreach opportunity. However, “cold-calling” workers can be misinterpreted in a manner that can result in workers not taking the call seriously or even worse, in a way that makes the worker fearful or hostile. The state of Oregon has developed a series of simple scenarios of typical issues that arise during outreach calls that can be used for training staff to support positive outcomes. This category can also include coaching staff on face-to-face engagement, which is equally important to handle with care.

A consolidated list of links to resources may be found [here](#) on the TAA WorkforceGPS website.

Contact information for State Trade Coordinators who can be references for additional information on posted content is [here](#).