

## Frequently Asked Questions: Efforts to Improve Outcomes

**Q1:** *Is reporting “Efforts to Improve Outcomes” required?*

**ANSWER:** Yes. The Trade Adjustment Assistance Reauthorization Act (TAARA) of 2015, sec. 239(j)(1)(C) requires states to provide “a description of efforts made to improve outcomes for workers under the trade adjustment assistance program that promote efficiency and effectiveness.”

**Q2:** *How does the Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance (OTAA) use this information?*

**ANSWER:** *Efforts to Improve Outcomes* are used to identify and highlight successful state practices, including the use of case management funds and innovative outreach strategies. The identification of these practices helps the Department determine which states to reach out to for webinars, conferences, peer collaboration, and feedback on planned Departmental changes. One best practice is selected to be highlighted in the [Quarterly Workforce System Results](#).

**Q3:** *Where is this information shared?*

**ANSWER:** In addition to locations noted in Q2, *Efforts to Improve Outcomes* are made publically available on the [TAA Participant Reporting page](#).

**Q4:** *What information is included?*

**ANSWER:** The narrative must include information on at least one of the following:

- strategy(ies) to improve outcomes and why it is expected to result in improved outcomes;
- an update on the progress of a previously discussed strategy; or
- steps taken to overcome barriers to improvement.

Some common strategies to improve outcomes include the use of case management funds, innovative outreach strategies, upcoming trainings, participations in roundtables, improved program information provided to workers, and new or improved relationships with partners (e.g. WIOA Dislocated Worker, Apprenticeship, etc.).

If an update is being provided on a strategy being employed, it must discuss what the strategy being implemented is, what the progress is, and what adjustments have been made.

For discussions of barriers that are being overcome, *Efforts to Improve Outcomes* must clearly articulate the specific barrier being addressed and the steps being taken to overcome it.

**Q5:** *What information may not be included?*

**ANSWER:** The following may not be included:

1. Notes about PIRL submission or data issues. Issues with submission mechanics should be submitted through the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS). Notes on missing or incorrect data should be sent to your Regional Coordinator and Reporting Lead.
2. Analysis of TAA Data Integrity (TAADI) issues. TAADI discussions are captured through TAADI report cards, as explained in [TEGL 01-19](#).
3. Success Stories. Success stories are important, but they need to be submitted to Regional Coordinators. Success Stories require specific information and documentation. For questions regarding Success Stories, reach out to your Regional Coordinator.
4. Personally Identifying Information (PII). There is no need for PII in reporting *Efforts to Improve Outcomes*.
5. Placeholder words/phrases, such as “Report” or the quarter of submission (e.g. “Submission FY18Q2”). *Efforts to Improve Outcomes* is a required field, so some states attempt to bypass including a narrative by using one of these placeholders. However, a narrative must be included. See Q4 above for what information must be included in the narrative.

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**Q6:** *What are good examples of “Efforts to Improve Outcomes” responses?*

**ANSWER:** See below.

**Example #1:**

The state of \_\_\_\_\_ has increased its staff of Trade Navigators that are tasked with conducting TAA Program outreach to the public, local companies, and training providers. This focused effort with key business and community stakeholders has led to the development of better coordinated training strategies that are customized to support employer engagement with TAA. This has led to increases in on-the-job training opportunities, and associated training plans for TAA workers tailored to meet local labor needs. This strategy has also had a significant impact in increasing the number of TAA petitions filed on behalf of worker groups, which will increase the potential for serving more TAA eligible workers within the state.

**Example #2:**

The state of \_\_\_\_\_ has conducted annual monitoring of TAA files in local areas to improve quality assurance and compliance. They implemented a new program management system to ensure all requirements for the TAA Program are met, with TAA files being reviewed across the state. They have also initiated multiple staff training meetings to help with sharing of best practices and proper and effective coordination with TAA, TRA, Rapid Response and the Labor Council teams to ensure early petition filing when layoffs occur in order to improve participant outcomes.

**Example #3:**

As part of its efforts to educate workers, companies, and other stakeholders about the TAA Program, the state of \_\_\_\_\_ has developed 13 outreach videos. With a two to three-minute length, and a highly visual format, these professionally-produced videos have been posted to YouTube, and provide quick reference to key program information. Video topics include individual and group eligibility processes, and specific benefits and services. The TAA “overview” video is available in four languages to ensure that the program is reaching as wide an audience as possible. These videos may be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLGapH16HpIgYUKWf8amnVujDGQWWG1mvN>

**Example #4:**

\_\_\_\_\_ launched a new online system known as the “TAA Eligibility Table” that makes it easier to track TAA company separation lists for TAA-certified workers. The system streamlines \_\_\_\_\_’s process by utilizing a single-point, on demand access for TAA-eligible worker documentation to better coordinate efforts for Business Services and the TAA Program. The electronic tracking by categories for workers allows staff at the state level to tailor communications, provide follow-up services, and increases participation of eligible worker groups. This will yield meaningful results in serving the most workers with the greatest efficiency.

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**Q7:** How do I report “Efforts to Improve Outcomes” in the PIRL?

**ANSWER:** In the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS), the certification of the TAA Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) includes an “Additional Comments” field. This field must be used to report your Efforts to Improve Outcomes.

You may draft the Efforts to Improve Outcomes and then click ‘SAVE’ to save the comments if you are not yet ready to certify. When you certify the QPR, the comment is stored and cannot be changed without resubmitting.

The screenshot shows the WIPS system interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with icons for HOME, FILE UPLOAD, EDIT CHECK RESULTS, MY REPORTS (highlighted), and MY WIPS PROFILE. Below the navigation bar, there is a table with the following data:

Category	Value	Percentage
3. Covered Entrants Who Received a Staff-Assisted Service During the Entry Period	12	95.5%

Below the table, there is a section titled "Common Exit Programs: Please indicate by checking the box below each program below that utilizes a common exit policy with this program in this state." This section contains a table with the following columns:

Program	Wagner-Peyser	Adults, Dislocated Workers, Youth	TAA	Job Corps	National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP)	Indian and Native American Program (INA)	Reentry Employment Opportunities (Adult)	Reentry Employment Opportunities (Youth)	YouthBuild	H-1B
Common Exit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Below the table, there is a section titled "ADDITIONAL COMMENTS". It contains a text area for "Report Comments" with the instruction "Users type comments here and then select SAVE." The text area is currently empty. Below the text area, there is a character count "1454 /1500". At the bottom right, there are two buttons: "SAVE" and "CERTIFY". At the bottom left, there is a "CANCEL" button.

**NOTE:** This update rescinds the previous instructions that *Efforts to Improve Outcomes* should be reported through EBSS.