



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORMER IBM WORKERS ELIGIBLE FOR TRADE BENEFITS

Special Status Granted to Laid-off Employees by U.S. Department of Labor

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK (May 9, 2008) – Former employees of International Business Machines (IBM) Corporation in Tulsa, Okla. have been ruled eligible for the Trade Readjustment Assistance (TRA) program by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). TRA provides assistance to those who lose jobs or significant work hours because of increased imports or a shift in production out of the country. TRA-certified workers can access services such as income support, relocation and job search allowances, and health coverage tax credits. Those that need retraining for suitable employment may receive occupational training. The goal is to reconnect laid-off workers with suitable employment quickly.

In a recent ruling, the USDOL found that former IBM workers in Tulsa, Okla. meet all requirements to receive TRA according to the Trade Act of 1974 (19 USC 2273). There are three criteria to qualify for TRA. First, workers must be laid off or threatened with layoff. Next, employer sales or production must decrease. Finally, increased imports of products like or directly competitive with the firm's products must contribute to layoffs or the threat of layoffs. Once certified, TRA recipients must enroll in training, although the state can waive this requirement in certain cases.

The USDOL report concludes "all workers of International Business Machines Corporation, Tulsa, Okla., who became totally or partially separated from employment on or after November 26, 2002, through on or before May 2, 2009, are eligible to apply for Trade Adjustment Assistance..." Separated employees who want to apply for TAA benefits should contact their nearest Workforce Oklahoma Center at 1-888-980-WORK (9675).

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