**WorkforceGPS**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Trade Adjustment Assistance Outreach Letters Using Behavioral Insights**

**Thursday, March 18, 2021**

*Transcript by*

*Noble Transcription Services*

*Menifee, CA*

JON VEHLOW: Welcome back to "TAA Outreach Letters, Overview, Trial Status and Next Steps." Without further ado, I'd like to kick things off to our moderator today, Susan Worden, supervisory analyst, performance management and data reporting for the Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance. Susan?

SUSAN WORDEN: Thanks, Jon. Hello. As Jon just said, my name is Susan Worden and I'm the head of the performance management and data reporting division of OTA. Helping to develop data-driven policy is a big part of my job, and this is nowhere more important than in the area of program outreach. Outreach in TAA is critical. You'd think having a program with such abundant benefits and services would be an easy sell, but of course not. We are challenged with a lot of complexity, and complexity could hinder access. That's why OTA is constantly scouring for new methods and strategies to share with our state coordinators that are proven to work based on proven results.

Today, we're going to briefly review some of the key components of TAA program outreach before zeroing on particular facets we're going to discuss today. We'll take a brief look at our current success rate for uptakes based on different data models and remind you why it's never been more important to our mission to identify and connect with eligible workers.

I'll then pass it over to Nick Adamopoulos, who will provide a detailed explanation of the outreach products that are the subject of today's presentation, including the research that underpins the study and that assesses the value of the products. We'll close out the presentation with an open invitation for additional states to join our study. We'll close out today's webinar with the usual information about contacts, resources, and upcoming events.

So when we look at outreach, two groups stick out as the most important. The first is employers. I've slotted two specific boxes underneath this group. The first is petition filing. Petitions may be filed by a variety of different groups, including workers, unions, and One-Stop staff. But the optimal choice is a company official who represents the worker group's employer, because they are the vital information link in terms of providing the information that OTA investigators need to verify group eligibility, and they can also provide the information regarding the individuals in the worker group.

Unfortunately, in many cases, the employer is not engaged in petition filing; and despite the best efforts of OTA investigators, may be less than enthusiastic and in participating in an investigation to determine eligibility. That can make the state task of communicating with the company to collect worker information an uphill battle.

The second most important group for targeting for outreach is the workers themselves. Once group eligibility has been established and the worker group information is available, individuals within the worker group are notified of their eligibility to apply, ideally. It can be very challenging to get workers in the door through a letter, especially when there is so much information to share about the program. Thus, exploring how to make these letters both informative and engaging is crucial to get them in the door for those initial orientation sessions and VRI sessions that precede participation.

The red squares in this slide focus on the components of outreach we'll be discussing today; that is, the letters sent to employers to collect worker lists and the notification to workers.

The bottom line is the working theory is the less we focus on government-speak in these letters and the more we focus on engagement, the more likely we are to have a response. As an additional persuasion -- wait, let's see, let's see.

OK. So for today's webinar, the purpose of today's webinar is to share the data that underpins the letter that we're testing in this study to describe the features of the letter and to encourage other states to join in the study, to get the benefit of having a modified set of letters personalized for their state. As an additional persuasion, I really encourage you to go on to WorkforceGPS in the TAA community to read a letter from Oregon's Laura Lausmann, who is participating in the study and talks about the benefits of that participation.

OK. Last, not least, I'm going to leave you with some data. One of the things that we look for determining the success of outreach is called the take-up rate, or alternately, the uptake rate, which is how we're going to refer to it in the remainder of this presentation. Ideally, this number represents the percentage of people who apply for the program out of the total number who are determined group eligible. Now, given the variables involved, this can be a challenging number to achieve with certainty.

But using four distinct methods and overlapping datasets, we have come up with results that are remarkably similar. Based on these four calculation methods, we determined that approximately 11 to 12 percent of those eligible become participants at a national level.

Now, individual states can vary dramatically from this national percentage. Much do -- many do significantly better. We firmly believe that nationally we can all do better.

And with that I'm going to hand it over to my OTA colleague Nick Adamopoulos, who is the point of contact for this outreach study. Nick, take it away.

NICK ADAMOPOULOS: Thanks, Susan. Hello, everybody. As Susan mentioned, I'm leading this project -- the behavioral insight project -- the point of contact for the states and dealing with the people we collaborate, which I'll get into in a moment.

Today's topic is how TAA is using behavioral insights to improve TAA outreach letters. The collaboration, which I just mentioned, is with the Department of Labor's Chief Evaluation Office, who handles research topics and studies for the whole department. And contractors for this particular project is Mathematica and American Institutes for Research. The study commenced in early 2020, but had some delays, unfortunately, due to COVID, as I imagine everyone can relate to.

I will now give you a little insight about our trials. The BI trial, or behavioral insight trial, is focused on improving employer responsiveness to document requests, as Susan mentioned. We're applying behavioral science to TA outreach materials.

Among other goals, this trial is aiming to increase the TAA uptake rate, among other things, by increasing employer responsiveness to document requests using behavioral science techniques. A separate trial is also being conducted by six states and is focused on improving state outreach to workers.

As I mentioned, both of those started approximately the same time with currently approximately 11 states during the worker list trial and six states, as I mentioned, on the outreach to workers.

What is behavioral science? If you are a geek like me, you probably believe behavioral science is a hot topic. But what is this startling new science, and what is it all about?

Behavioral science is a multidisciplinary field that offers more realistic models of human decision making. For example, people don't always act rationally, especially in context of scarcity. Most of us have seen this happen during the pandemic perhaps, where toilet paper runs out, water runs out, gloves ran out, Clorox wipes ran out. This can be predicted by behavioral science.

What they do is irrationally act in predictable ways. For example, some of you who live in a city have -- might have seen a gym on a second floor of a building. You would assume people who are going to work out at the gym would take the stairs up to the gym, but due to behavioral science, an escalator most likely appears going up to the gym and people taking that escalator go to the gym to workout.

Doesn't necessarily make sense if you're going to work out. You want to start your workout and take those steps up, get some extra steps in for your workout. But that doesn't necessarily happen due to behavioral science predicting that people will not act always rationally and take the escalator or the elevator up to the second floor.

So what do these insights do? Well, they can be used to design smarter policies that improve outcomes and reduce burden on frontline staff, among other things.

For example, retirement savings. Those of you in the government have a TSA account perhaps. Previously, you had to opt in to receive TSA, but studies were done that, if you are automatically enrolled in TSA, more people will retire with savings. They'll be automatically enrolled and have the option to opt out if they don't wish to partake into retirement savings, which is not the best outcome. So now, they're opting you in. So this is one example of that.

Unfortunately, there's other examples which businesses and companies also use, such as the opting out for marketing purposes. You might have seen that. That is something that companies do, which is a type of behavioral science as well.

The uptake rate behavioral insight trial that we're going to use in an example here happened in Michigan some years ago, a similar trial conducted in a government sector. And we're going to get into that now a little bit briefly.

It aimed to improve uptake rates. Fewer than half of the unemployment insurance claimants assigned to the Reemployment Eligibility Assessment Program in southwest Michigan scheduled their first REA session.

So what do they do? They've tested email reminders, a simple tweak to send out a reminder by email to the participants to inform them that they have to visit.

So what does this email have? It has a personal and empathetic tone. It emphasizes the benefits of participation. It provides a clear deadline, not a vague promise just to stop in whenever you're available, concisely lists the next steps, and reduces hassles by adding a Google map link to the location. These are behavioral insights.

And what did the studies show? As you can see, quite impressive results just by a reminder email of behavioral insight technique being used. It was a quick experiment, randomized controlled trial to measure the impacts of simple emails. And there was a 15 percent point increase in REA session scheduling rate being increased and 14 percentage point increase in REA program completion rates. So behavioral insights works, in short.

If you would like to read this feedback from the MichiganWorks! Southwest manager, it's available there. Generally, the understanding is that taking a step back sometimes can help you see the whole forest and not only the individual trees. This is related to processes as well, taking a step back and changing an approach to get better results.

Now, I will go over the behavior insight trial we are currently conducting.

Up to this point, any questions from anybody about behavioral science or the background I just gave you before we get into it? OK.

So what are the reasons for the trial? There's many reasons, as Susan mentioned. The uptake rate, but in addition to that, there's lack of employer responsiveness in providing worker lists limits the TAA staff's ability to conduct proper outreach on program services and constrains the reach and take-up of the TAA program. We've established that.

But also delays in employee response mean that workers don't learn about the program early on in the displacement and, therefore, may not have the opportunity to reap its full benefits. And we know statistics show that delays in receiving TAA benefits and services decreased performance results, something we definitely don't want.

So what does the BI trial aim to do? It aims to speed up employer provision of worker lists to improve information provided to employers about TAA. It aims to improve TAA staff's ability to conduct outreach. It also helps workers learn about the program early in their displacement. Additionally, it also increases the number of workers who apply, helps ensure workers apply earlier, as we mentioned, and, hopefully, uptake rate will also show increases in our program as well.

How were the BI trials designed? So in the beginning, contractors reviewed numerous states' materials using the structured template with the behavioral insight lens to assess whether they attract strong initial engagement, make requirements easy to understand and remember, if they motivate action, and have a clear, easy step on how to respond.

Common areas for improvement were identified as well as effective practices worth replicating. So, in short, each state sent in their current outreach letters and contractors and the TAA staff analyzed and identified areas of improvement. Contractors and TAA staff share their edits with the states and inserted behavioral insight techniques to the letters, working closely with the states' suggestions and incorporating into new letters.

The main goal was to attract strong initial engagement, make requirements easy to understand, motivate action, and have clear, easy steps on how to respond.

So after we identified these common areas for improvement and effective practices worth replicating, we made sure to tailor those letters to each state's unique system and requirements, which I'm sure you can relate to. Each state is quite different and their legal processes are quite different and their requirements are quite different.

Key findings from the review of the state materials. As you can imagine, most materials had room for improvement. Most of the emails were one-pagers, though, but common problems included there were bureaucratic and personal tone, opening content, not informative or compelling. They were hard to skim with no simple, clear, early explanation of TAA benefits and services.

Beneficial impacts of TAA participation on workers' employment outcomes were not mentioned. Deadlines were not clear or prominent, and, frequently, they required readers to calculate deadlines, not provide them for them, which is problematic. Variation in the clarity of action steps presented often lists in the second half of the letter.

Using behavioral insight design principles for outreach. The prototype principles we used for the outreach included developing templates to states that can customize, included placeholders for common features states tend to include, accounts for states' varying contexts and resources, and allow for variation in the help/follow-up assistance that states can offer.

Additionally, it proposed potentially effective elements that seem feasible based on the review of the state materials.

I will next go over what we used for the worker list request.

Any questions at this point for anybody? Please feel free to mention them in the comments and we can address them now or at the end of the presentation.

Here is the bird's eye view of the prototype letter. Don't try to squint and see that. It's purposely a bird's eye view. You can't see the details of it in this letter. This is just the full one-page letter, how it typically would look like from a little distance.

And a few things you can see in the bird's eye view, though, is the blue bold on the bottom which lists the benefits and services available for trade. And I'm going to break down the letter for you in the next couple slides so you can see in detail what it entails.

But, basically, it's informative, motivating title. You can see that kind of pop out in the beginning. Easy to skim. The bullets allow for easy navigation, and the supplemental information is in the box on the bottom with a different color, as I mentioned about the benefits and services for trade.

This is the introduction of the letter -- the prototype letter. It starts off with the title, which uses the phrase "your colleagues" to create a sense of kinship and responsibility. It provides, if possible, personalized greeting, which uses the phrase "your help" to create warmth and foster engagement.

It also highlights the stakes involved, paid training, help finding new jobs, financial support, et cetera. It emphasizes the rich, effective services available.

The body of the letter in more detail provides personalization, "your prompt attention." It emphasizes ease/key elements of required action, "contact eligible workers quickly." It involves the ease of it. It only requires three steps, with three being underlined.

It encourages partner states to create a spreadsheet table, if they don't supply one already. It says, "fill in the basic information," number two. That lack of step that the customer has to do provide less roadblocks for them to enter.

It also provides clear instructions on each step, number three. Here's the email address where you can email it.

The closing section. Has a clear deadline. It maintains emphasis on helping through good will rather than using strict compliance language, which is very common in most of the letters we've seen originally. It reinforces a sense of responsibility to the peer group, "helping your colleagues." It allows for partial completion as a first step, which encourages timely action. It also provides clear contact information and a warm sign off.

Finally, at the bottom of the letter is the supplemental information, which, again, is in a different colored box, blue in this particular case. Provides the benefits kind of cleared out, some icons, bolded text, which makes benefits easy to skim, while the remaining text provides enough detail on the rich supports in plain language to motivate action.

And what is the behavioral insight trial process? So after the project team customizes the letters -- reviews the letters and customizes them, the project team then assigns all certified petitions to one of two groups. One is business as usual outreach, and the other one will receive the modified outreach with behavioral insight.

Others will receive the project team and OTA communicates the assignments before the outreach materials are sent out. So, basically, it's an email that says these get the regular letters, these get the need letters. Most of the participants, as Susan mentioned previously with the blog post from Oregon, they relayed to us that it's an easy lift. It's not very technical. It just provides minimal recordkeeping into an Excel-like sheet. So it's not a high-tech process you have to learn.

The states aren't too overwhelmed by that process, I imagine. It's not too difficult to learn a new program or anything like that. It just has been cumbersome due to the COVID crisis, unfortunately, when staff is overwhelmed sometimes. But in short, it's just basically sending out one letter or the other one and recording it. That is what the trial entails.

We have a question here, which I'll read now from Janice Garza.

"I am curious about the use of subpoena with the delay in obtaining information from the employer. 618 made it so this would be expressed rather than implied for states. In the spirit of transparency, how can this be incorporated without sounding bureaucratic?"

That's a great question and --

MS. WORDEN: I have a thought, Nick.

MR. ADAMOPOULOS: Yeah. Go ahead.

MS. WORDEN: Yeah. I would say that the goal is to have an open overture that's going to assume compliance and that the subpoena enforcement would be something that you would do as a follow up.

We have a similar procedure in the national office with regard to getting response to some of the forms that we have for investigations. And we start off as -- with requested deadline and a straightforward assumption that the person is going to comply. And if they don't within a certain number of days, then we have a follow-up letter that basically is a little bit more firm and makes them aware of subpoena powers as a follow-up.

So that two-tier approach might be the best way to get at what you're looking to get for, which is basically trying to be open and friendly but back it up with some enforcement, if, in fact, the delay in collecting the information becomes evident, if that helps.

MR. ADAMOPOULOS: Thanks, Susan. Yeah. I would just like to add, similar to the preview that I gave here earlier about the reminder emails, it goes along with what Susan is saying, what they've tested there in Michigan.

Sometimes some letters, subpoena information, has to be bureaucratic. Certain information has to be conveyed, but a follow-up letter or a follow-up email can be using some of these techniques more easily, perhaps. So that might be a good approach to take. Hope that answers your question.

Tracking results. So, as I mentioned, this is done in Excel format, and we measure whether the new materials lead to faster response. It tracks how long it takes firms to provide lists of eligible workers for one of the trials. Web interface, as I mentioned, includes date when outreach is sent, date when employer responds, and the number of workers listed in each response. Data collection mode and frequencies tailored to each state's typical practices.

Next steps. Early results of the pilot, unfortunately, are too early to convey at this point. We, ourselves, even in the trade office, do not have them. Behavioral insight efforts seem to be effective from the early insights we're getting from the contractors who manage the data. But due to randomized controls and making the result statistically significant, we are unable to provide any early results at this point.

That is something we're excited to get our hands on as well. I know a lot of the states have been asking us questions about that as well. One good thing, if you are a participating states, you might have some internal results from your own outreach, which you're tracking for the project. That is something you could probably look at yourselves and see what your state is doing regarding the results, if you have enough results, perhaps as an early gauge.

But, unfortunately, more time is needed to gather data and more states to participate could help expedite the completion of the trials. We do have a couple states that are joining us soon, and that's one of the reasons why we decided to do this presentation, because we've had some people talking about the behavioral insight study and wanting to learn more about it and interested and to participate, perhaps.

So we thought we were just kind of let everybody know kind of an update of where we are at this point and just to provide more information for the states. As I mentioned, OTA will share the results of the trials once they are complete and provide best practices, lessons learned to all the states. As a starting point, those letters we previously just gave you can be used as a guide, perhaps, to be used as well.

If you believe your state might be interested in participating in the BI trial and leverage the consultants assistance in updating the state's outreach, you can always contact us to learn more. And it's better to use, obviously, experts who have been doing these kind of studies for years now to take a look at these examples, as the previous example with subpoena letters.

We're not experts on behavioral science. We're working in the trade office who have had some experience with behavioral insights and behavioral science. But the true experts are the contractors, the PhDs that we've contracted who are doing these projects for us. So they would be the best people to look at those letters and analyze them properly.

As I mentioned, we have a question here of the success rate for the BI letters versus the usual letters was a question we received.

Unfortunately, as I mentioned, we don't have those results available to share. Even internally in our office, we don't have those results. The contractors are collecting the data. We've received less data than we've expected at this point because of the COVID crisis, and the updating of the spreadsheets hasn't happened thoroughly at this point from all the states.

So we're still gathering information, and once those numbers are updated and data starts to come in, we will have those results and we will be sharing those results when we do have them. We hope with a few new states participating, we will expedite the completion of this trial in some months' time. So stay tuned, and we definitely will have more information for you shortly.

MS. WORDEN: I'm just going to give it a couple more minutes, Nick. It looks like we've got at least one person question -- typing in questions, and we've got some extra time.

MR. ADAMOPOULOS: Yeah, Janet, I hope that answered your question, unless you were referring to the Michigan uptake study, which showed the results of 15 percent with an uptake rate increase and the 14 percent of the completion rate. So that is one kind of basis maybe you could reference for the validity of the study and how it can help improve. But for our current project, we don't have those results. Hope that clears it up.

OK. Other questions at this point? Please feel free to type them in. We have a few minutes to answer more questions and entertain any other questions you may have on this topic. I see some questions coming in now.

MS. WORDEN: Question number three, the 11 to 12 percent uptake rate, that's actually -- there is not one fixed timeframe. We actually did multiple timeframes, given the fact that we have to line up the very long certification period. And, therefore, workers can be coming in that were laid off anywhere between, generally, one year before the petition filing out through two years from the certification.

We actually use multiple timeframes in coming up with that calculation -- in coming up with that result. Having said that, we used multiple methods with different timeframes and different data sets and surprisingly came up with a fairly consistent number across all four of the projections.

MR. ADAMOPOULOS: OK. Another question we received, "What is the timeline of the letters?" from Terry Bohannan (sp).

The timeline of the letters, I assume you mean the length of the trial. As I mentioned, hopefully, in the next few months we'll have a better understanding of where we are and how much additional data we will need.

But at this point, we're still a bit away from being able to estimate that because, as I mentioned, we have -- a lot of the states have actually sent out the letters, the business-as-usual letters versus the new behavioral insight letters. But they haven't been updating the spreadsheet to let us know and the contractors know how many people and when they responded.

So once we start getting that data filled in in the spreadsheets and that's relayed back to us, we'll know how many data points we have and be able to kind of estimate how much longer we'll need to carry on the study and how many more letters or data points we're going to need. I hope that answers your question, Terry.

And we had another question. "Sometimes the company is completely shut down by the time of the petition is certified. How is that factored into this study?"

We are aware of companies shutting down this period as well in our office, trying to finish petitions for trade adjustment assistance. Obviously, that happens more so over this period than previously. And, as I mentioned, this is a randomized control study, which sends out randomly to companies different types of letters.

So, for example, some of the letters that have behavioral insights, they're going to be sent to companies that are shut down. Some of the letters that are business as usual letters are going to be sent to companies that are shut down.

So that randomizes that kind of outreach. So there's -- they should be standardized for both the letters. It might be one or two variations between the letters, timing due to the shutdown. But over a large number of data points, it shouldn't make too much of a difference. That's why it's randomized.

That's why we need enough data points to gather this information. We can't just do a short and quick study. We need to have it over a long period of time to kind of even out all the variables that go into sending out these letters. I hope that answers your question, Maureen.

Great. OK. Any other questions about anything we've talked about today? Still have some time for questions. So feel free to type in questions.

MS. WORDEN: While folks are typing in, Nick, I just want to reemphasize that, again, outreach is probably one of the most, if not the most important aspect of our program right now. If we can't get petitions filed, if we can't get folks in the door, then we can't serve workers.

And, basically getting workers -- identifying eligible worker groups and developing a rapport with the key stakeholders, which include the employers and, of course, the workers themselves is obviously everything to getting folks served. And so really just want to double down on what you said earlier about folks being willing to reevaluate what they may be doing as the status quo.

And despite any negative expectations you may have that this will not make a difference, to just be willing to mix it up a little bit and give it a try and collaborate with us in participating in the study and seeing what happens, because no one comes to work for this program for the money. So we're all mission focused. So we ask you to kind of stretch outside your comfort zone and consider joining us in the study.

MR. ADAMOPOULOS: And just to to add, Susan, that, as we had a previous question about subpoenas, we have processes and other letters in our office that are quite bureaucratic as well that we're hoping to edit perhaps in the future.

So what we learn from this project and behavioral insights could go a long way at looking at other problems and other kind of roadblocks that we come across with our outreach other letters that we have in our office. So it's really a good learning point and a learning project.

We have another question from Robin. "Has anyone thought of sending a survey to clients about why they do or do not respond?"

Susan, do you have any insight on that? I don't know. There's a lot of questions --

MS. WORDEN: Yeah. I think that's an interesting piece of feedback that we could certainly take into consideration. I know that, generally, we do have states that are currently -- on a broader level, are exploring reasons why participants who are notified of their eligibility do not follow up. Not necessarily specific to this study, but there are efforts underway in different states to follow up with participants who are made aware of their eligibility as to why they're not following up and also developing mechanisms to double back to them to basically ensure that they really understand what it is that they're ignoring or turning down.

So it's an interesting piece of feedback. I know that there are efforts underway generically to address folks who don't respond to notifications to apply, but I don't think that we have anything, particularly for this study, in place right now.

But, again, it's an interesting piece of feedback, given the fact that it is something that we -- that states are looking at and we are supporting best practices for that particular segment of the population. And I hope to have more about that down the line through best practice technical assistance webinars.

MR. ADAMOPOULOS: More of a comment from Oregon, it seems here, James. "Oregon has been on this test for about a year. It's very easy to implement, for your information."

Thanks for the feedback, James. Appreciate that. I definitely think you were one of the first states to enter our trial, actually. So you've been on the longest. So I appreciate the feedback.

Next question is, "The study assigns the new or usual letter when the petition is certified. Is this done equally one for one?"

The contractors develop which letters should be sent, and they notify the states which should be sent out. But, generally, it is -- yes -- one for one. It usually rotates one letter -- behavioral insight letter to one company, one company gets the business as usual. So that's typically how it works. And as I mentioned, I'm not a data scientist, but randomized studies typically work in that fashion.

We have a couple people typing in the chat here. So please, we definitely have more time, so please feel free to let us know if you have any questions or comments about anything on this topic.

Good point, Beth. I see you mentioned here, "I wonder if they would even respond to a survey, if they don't respond to a letter."

Good point. I guess if they're not responding to letters, they're not going to probably respond to a survey as well. So that would be hard to kind of gather information on or data from probably.

A comment from Laura Osmond from Oregon. You want to handle that, Susan?

MS. WORDEN: Yeah. I was actually just going to follow up with that, but, obviously, it's all the more effective coming from the state practitioner is Oregon does -- they complete their outreach calls to the employers and workers once letters have been sent. It's a braided strategy, regardless of type of letter sent.

And I think that's a great approach to basically start off with a letter, but basically follow up with another communication channel to basically double down and make sure that the participant is aware of what they've been sent, because, obviously, if folks are like me, they have to go through a lot of junk mail in the course of receiving their daily mail. And it's an effective way to help make sure that what you've delivered has landed. Thanks, Laura.

And, Beth, it looks like you also use an alternate strategy. Once you've sent out the letters, you follow up with an email. That's great. That's in Massachusetts.

MR. ADAMOPOULOS: Ruben Pachay (sp) had a comment. Good point, Ruben. "A survey to the customers that responded may help to highlight what triggered him or her to engage."

Very good point. Getting additional feedback, information why they responded. Was it because they wanted to help their fellow colleagues? Did they think it was from the government, and they kind of were more apt to respond to assist us? That would be a good question, aa good survey, perhaps. Definitely we'll make a note of it.

Still have a bit of time. So keep those questions coming, if you have anything you would like to comment on or share or any questions about anything.

MS. WORDEN: So, yeah. I'll take that on, Nick.

It says, "Has anyone had any success adding TAA information to UI claim determinations that are sent after a UI claim is filed?"

I am aware of states that have a unified system for filing UI claims where a flag is triggered, basically. When somebody is filing for UI, they're made aware of their eligibility for trade as a part of the UI claim filing.

I'm not aware specifically of a state that is following up with a filed UI claim with a TAA letter. And if there's anybody here in the audience that works in a state that does that, please feel free to pitch in. But it's an interesting idea.

So, yeah. So New Hampshire is the one that I was referring to, where, basically, they have an automated system, an electronic system for filing UI claims where, basically, they automatically notified of their trade eligibility as part of the UI filing process.

And Massachusetts has something that works in tandem with UI claims as well, I believe. Beth, you're on the line. You're on the webinar, if you want to pitch in to say what you do in Massachusetts. Beth Gogin (sp) Or Susan Zabrack (sp) who's also representing Massachusetts on the webinar.

MR. ADAMOPOULOS: Looks like we have a question from Laura. "If I remember correctly, the first meetings to get started in the pilot were not very long, just in case you [inaudible] staff time. I don't think it was a large amount; is that correct?"

James, looks like from Oregon as well, "That is correct, Laura."

So, yeah. You both remember correctly. We kind of initiated with the presentation about the behavioral insight trials, which is pretty much what we went through today. A little bit different, but pretty much the same background information. So you can check that box off, I guess.

Other than that, it was just kind of sending the letters that they currently use and kind of a few back-and-forths there via email to discuss the template for the changes of the letters.

So it doesn't take too much to get started, too much staff time, in my opinion. And thanks for confirming that, James and Laura. It is pretty much an easy lift at that point especially and just kind of editing the letters and agreeing to the letters. Yeah. And as I mentioned, tracking sheet is just an Excel style format. So there's no really technical support or training that's required for that.

Susan in Massachusetts. "When a claimant files a UI claim, the claimant is notified of a potential eligibility."

Thank you for sharing that, Susan. So that is it looks like what Massachusetts does. Something to note, perhaps.

And I see just a few more slides. I don't know if you want to go through this, Susan, the resources that are available.

MS. WORDEN: Sure. Yeah. So, basically, just to remind folks of the TAA community, which is a cornucopia of resources, including blogs, technical assistance webinars, materials, state best practices. If you haven't already accessed it or exhausted all of it, please do.

We mentioned, again, today's webinar featured a new blog from Laura Lausmann of Oregon that we just posted just this week. So please take advantage of that resource. We're always looking to add to it, and we're always looking for suggestions for additions that you may feel would be helpful for yourself or your state peers.

Upcoming technical assistance. We will be doing a follow on to Tuesday's Work-Based Learning webinar that was conducted on Tuesday, and this one will be -- the first one was a kind of structured presentation. We had six different sets of presenters on different work-based learning models.

This follow on will actually be a panel discussion, which will be a little bit looser but equally as meaty, which will give you a chance to kind of hear from the experts on what's worked for them with regard to implementing work-based learning strategies in their states.

The contacts are listed on this next slide, and I would really encourage just to follow on one last time for any states that are interested that are not already participating in the study that was discussed today, to reach out directly to Nick Adamopoulos, who is the point of contact. He is the -- kind of the liaison between the contractors and OTA for the purpose of modifying and maintaining this study.

So please do reach out directly to Nick, if you'd like to participate. We'd really welcome your participation and we think it will be to your benefit to collaborate with us and also help the larger program mission. Nick, does that express it fulsomely, or is there anything else you wanted to add?

MR. ADAMOPOULOS: Sure. Just to add, it looks like Janice Garza had a question to Susan Zabrack in Massachusetts.

She asked, "How do you follow up regarding the UI claim and potential eligibility of TAA?" I don't know if Susan is still on the call.

MS. WORDEN: I think -- yeah. So, Susan, how do you follow up? And, Janice, I hope I just addressed your question, which was, "How do you follow up?" I'm assuming is how do you follow up in terms of wanting to participate in the study? And if not, please type it into the chat.

MR. ADAMOPOULOS: I think she was asking Susan how they follow up with claimants for UI, if I'm not mistaken. Perhaps, I don't know if Susan is on the -- it looks like Susan is still on the chat. She might let us know soon.

MS. WORDEN: Aw, the other Susan. Sorry. I misunderstood. Too many Susans in today's meeting, I guess.

It looks like Susan Zabrack is online, perhaps. So she might let us know soon, if she can assist you, Janice, on that question.

Susan responded, "The claimant is given instructions to contact their career center."

Janice, you can always feel free to provide your email, and Susan can reach out to you and talk about it in more detail. Thank you. Great. We love to connect and share best practices as best we can. That's the goal. So we are happy to see that happen.

MS. WORDEN: OK, Nick. I think that's it. Yeah. I'm good, if you're good.

MR. ADAMOPOULOS: OK. Great. Well, thanks, everyone, for joining us today. Hope you learned something, you got something out of the presentation, and you can always reach out to us in the future, if you need anything additional from us. Thank you.

MS. WORDEN: Thanks, everyone.

(END)