

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) T-TAP Technical Assistance

What is T-TAP?

T-TAP stands for **Training and Technical Assistance to Providers**. T-TAP is a five-year project funded by the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) / US Department of Labor (DOL) designed to improve employment outcomes for people with disabilities who are currently in segregated or non-work options. The primary goal of the project is to increase the number of individuals in community-based employment making at or above minimum wage. The intended outcome is to decrease the number of people with disabilities in segregated work environments that are paid sub-minimum wage. One strategy to accomplish this outcome is to provide technical assistance and support to Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) who provide employment support to individuals with disabilities.

Who can apply?

Any Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP) currently using DOL 14 (c) Sub-minimum Wage Certificates in its employment services for people with disabilities.

What is a DOL 14 (c) Waiver?

A DOL 14 (c) waiver authorizes employers, after receiving a certificate from the Wage and Hour Division, to pay special sub-minimum wages. This wage would be less than the Federal minimum wage for the work being performed by workers with disabilities. Often, this work is done in sheltered workshops or in group or enclave settings.

How do I know if my organization has a DOL 14c Waiver?

If your agency currently pays workers with disabilities sub-minimum wages, it must have a DOL 14 (c) waiver. If you are not sure, the accountant or payroll person at your organization should be able to tell you.

How many organizations will be selected?

Five organizations will be selected to participate each year. Five CRPs were selected in 2003, the first year of the project. In 2004, we will select an additional five recipients. A total of twenty CRPs will receive this direct TA from T-TAP.

What is Technical Assistance?

Technical Assistance (TA) is similar to consulting in that it gives operational or management assistance to a nonprofit organization. The technical assistance provided by T-TAP can include program planning, marketing, budgeting, staff development and financial planning, and other aids to management. The TA will be individualized to the specific needs of the CRP receiving the assistance.

Will we receive any money for participating in this project?

No, your organization will not receive any money for participating in the project. However, there is no charge for the services and supports that you will receive from the project staff and consultants.

If my organization is selected, what will we receive?

Each selected site will receive:

- Individually developed Technical Assistance (TA) plan;
- Assignment of a mentor organization from the CRP Leadership Network,
- On-site consultations with T-TAP's Technical Assistance staff;
- Phone and email support; and
- Staff training including the opportunity to participate in online courses, live Webcasts, conference calls, and discussions with other providers.

Through the Technical Assistance activities, participating organizations will receive assistance in:

- Redesigning their service system,
- Restructuring customer supports,
- Connecting to employers utilizing affirmative techniques, and
- Linking consumers to jobs of their choice that offer competitive wages, benefits and opportunities for career advancement.

If my organization is selected, what are our responsibilities?

The five organizations selected commit to participation in the project for a two-year period. Participation includes the following.

- Host on-site technical assistance visits from the T-TAP technical assistance staff and the Mentor CRP.
- Provide up to three days release time and participate in travel funding for one or more staff to visit the CRP agency that is assigned as your mentor.
- Support project data collection efforts including demographic and outcome data for a sample of consumers, qualitative interviews with key stakeholders to document the planning and change process, and data on staff time allocation. This data will be collected 4 times during your relationship with T-TAP.
- Providing release time for staff to participate in online courses, live Webcasts, and other training as agreed to in your technical assistance plan.

How will TTAP staff protect the identities of individuals from whom they collect information?

In order to understand the change process that goes on in agencies as people move into community employment, and how the change process affects those receiving services, the T-TAP project will collect information both from an organizational and individual perspective. This information will also be used to inform the training and technical assistance received. Information will only be presented in summary form, and no names

or identifying information will be used in presentations, trainings, or in written products resulting from the project. Data will only be collected from individual consumers with their consent.

How will the five organizations be chosen?

All grants will be reviewed by a panel and scored according to the information outlined in the grant application packet. General selection considerations will include the CRP's need for technical assistance, the identified potential of the CRP to benefit from technical assistance, a demonstrated commitment to change, and that the TA would impact the organization to make substantial changes. In making selections, geographic distribution and organizational characteristics (including rural, suburban or urban settings, size of organization and populations served) will be considered.

Where can I get help with my application?

You can contact Colleen Condon at colleen.condon@umb.edu or 617-287-4369.