

For: State and County Offices

**Instructions for Handling Pending Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers (TAAF)
Application Events, Disapproval Letters, and Notifications Before True-Up Processing**

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A Background

A “True-Up” process will be performed by FAS that will allow FSA County Offices to disburse additional payments to eligible applicants who received payments for years during which proration occurred. This process will also be used for determining unused funds that will eventually be de-obligated and returned to Treasury.

Only FAS will have authorization to update TAAF applications and event statuses **after** “True-Up” has been run. An additional notice will be issued to notify State and County Offices when the “True-Up” process is initiated by FAS.

Before the “True-Up” process can be run, all TAAF applications and events must be in a final status (Approved, Disapproved, Special Handling, or Claim Waived for Travel Reimbursement). Only FAS has access to change applications to Special Handling status. Based on reports received from the TAAF software, several TAAF application events are still in “Pending” or “Pending by FAS” status for:

- Application Review
- Initial Training
- Intensive Training
- Travel Reimbursement
- Initial Business Plan
- Long-Term Business Plan.

Note: These pending events must be updated to a final status before “True-Up” can be performed.

Disposal Date	Distribution
August 1, 2014 3-20-14	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

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1 Overview (Continued)

B Completion Date

All TAAF applications and events must be in a final status (Approved, Disapproved, Special Handling, or Claim Waived for Travel Reimbursement) **by COB, Friday, April 4, 2014.**

C Purpose

This notice provides State and County Offices with instructions and guidance for handling the following:

- pending applications and events
- disapproval letters
- TAAF notifications.

2 TAAF “Pending” Events Requiring Action

A Updating TAAF Applications

Because of termination of the data exchange with the Center for Farm Financial Management (CFFM), external CFFM event updates will **not** automatically update the application events. FSA County Office users will have access to update events 1 through 6 to “Approved”, “Refer to FAS”, or “Claim Waived” for Travel Reimbursement, depending on whether or not the applicant has completed each applicable event.

Note: When events 4, 5, and 6 are approved, the respective travel reimbursement or business plan payment will be triggered automatically and sent to NPS.

Additional instructions for updating TAAF applications and events are provided in Notice PS-716.

B Application Review (Event 1)

For applications that must be approved, County Offices must review the application, answer the review questions, and check eligibility for the “Application Review” status to change to “Approved”. After the County Office has approved the TAAF application, the application status will be updated accordingly. The Initial Training event is then automatically triggered and will be displayed in the list of application events as “Pending”.

For applications that are **not** approved and no payments are due, County Offices must change the application status to “Refer to FAS” and generate disapproval letters according to instructions provided in subparagraph 3 B.

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2 TAAF “Pending” Events Requiring Action (Continued)

C Initial Training (Event 2)

Based on reports generated from the TAAF software, a number of Initial Training events remain in “Pending” status. Disapproval letters may **not** have been generated or mailed for applicants who did **not** attend the required Initial Training.

If the applicant attended the required Initial Training, the County Office must change the Initial Training event to “Approved”. After the County Office has approved the Initial Training event, the Intensive Training and Travel Reimbursement event is then automatically triggered and will be displayed in the list of application events as “Pending”.

If the applicant did **not** attend the required Initial Training, then the County Office must change the Initial Training event to “Refer to FAS” and generate disapproval letters according to instructions provided in subparagraph 3 B.

D Intensive Training (Event 3)

If the applicant attended the required Intensive Training, the County Offices must change the Intensive Training event to “Approved” and proceed to the Travel Reimbursement event.

If the applicant did **not** attend the required Intensive Training, the County Office must change the Intensive Training event to “Refer to FAS” for disapproval and generate disapproval letters according to instructions provided in subparagraph 3 B.

E Travel Reimbursement (Event 4)

For Travel Reimbursement events that must be approved, County Offices shall follow instructions provided in Notice PS-718, subparagraph 7 A. Travel expense reimbursement policy and procedures are provided in 1-SP, paragraph 74.

To be able to re-use the funds during the True-Up process, any unused Travel Reimbursement funds must be identified as “Claim Waived”. Therefore, **all approved** TAAF applications, for which applicants did not submit travel vouchers for reimbursement, must have their Travel Reimbursement event status updated to “Claim Waived”. If travel expenses have already been processed and paid, then no further actions are required for that application.

Notes: Except for applications in Special Handling, once the Travel Reimbursement status is set to “Claim Waived”, changing the event’s status will require that the status be returned to “Pending”.

No Travel Reimbursement events can remain in “Pending” status.

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2 TAAF “Pending” Events Requiring Action (Continued)

E Travel Reimbursement (Event 4) (Continued)

If the applicant’s submission of the Travel Reimbursement claim was not timely filed, County Offices should answer “**No**” to question 2 of the review questions when processing the travel claim. County Offices must then change the status to “Refer to FAS” for disapproval and generate the disapproval letter accordingly.

Note: Additional instructions for processing Travel Reimbursement claims and disapproval letters are provided in Notice PS-718.

F Initial Business Plan (Event 5)

The Initial Business Plan event is automatically triggered and displayed in the list of events when the Travel Reimbursement status is updated. The status of the automatically triggered event will default to “Pending”.

Any “Pending” Initial Business Plan events that must be approved must be updated by the County Office to “Approved” status. After the the Initial Business Plan event has been approved, the application event status will be updated accordingly.

If the applicant did **not** complete the requirements for the Initial Business Plan, the County Office must change the event status to “Refer to FAS” for disapproval and generate the disapproval letter according to instructions provided in subparagraph 3 B.

Note: No Initial Business Plan events can remain in “Pending” status.

G Long-Term Business Plan (Event 6)

The Long-Term Business Plan event is automatically triggered and will be displayed in the list of events when the Initial Business Plan status is changed to “Approved”. The status of the automatically triggered event will default to “Pending”.

Any “Pending” Long-Term Business Plan events that must be approved must be updated by the County Office to “Approved” status. After the County Office has approved this event, the Long-Term Business Plan application event status will be updated accordingly.

If the applicant did **not** complete the requirements for the Long-Term Business Plan, the County Office must change the event status to “Refer to FAS” for disapproval and generate the disapproval letter according to instructions provided in subparagraph 3 B.

Note: No Long-Term Business Plan events can remain in “Pending” status.

3 Handling Disapproval Letters and Notifications

A Notifications

FSA county and FAS National Office users receive e-mail notifications of status changes through the TAAF software. TAAF notifications are viewable by FSA county and FAS National Office users. County Offices will need to process applications and events according to instructions provided by FAS through the notifications process. County Offices can access and review these notifications in sequential order, by date, under the TAAF Notifications menu tab, located on the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers (TAAF) Welcome Page.

For additional instructions on handling TAAF notifications, see Notice PS-709.

B Disapproval Letters

After FAS disapproves the event, providing a date for the disapproval letter, the County Office will receive notification through the TAAF software and shall generate disapproval letters **immediately**, according to instructions provided by FAS. To provide appropriate appeal rights to applicants, these letters must be processed as soon as possible since the date of the letter will begin the 30-calendar-day appeal window.

Important: No action shall be taken for any disapproval letters that have already been mailed.

For additional instructions on:

- processing disapproval letters, County Offices shall see instructions provided in Notice PS-710, subparagraphs 3 J and K
- reprinting disapproval letters, County Offices shall see Notice PS-711.

Note: County Offices must ensure that disapproval letters that have already been sent are not resent.

4 Action

A State Office Action

State Offices shall ensure that County Offices are aware of the contents of this notice.

B County Office Action

County Offices shall comply with the instructions provided in this notice.

C Contact

For additional information or questions about this notice, State Offices shall contact Stacy Carroll, PSD, by either of the following:

- e-mail at **stacy.carroll@wdc.usda.gov**
- telephone at 202-690-8037.

For questions about TAAF policy, State Offices shall contact Danielle Cooke, PSD, by either of the following:

- e-mail at **danielle.cooke@wdc.usda.gov**
- telephone at 202-720-1919.