

Archdiocese of Boston
Transition Assistance Program Summary Description

Human Resources Office
66 Brooks Drive
Braintree, MA 02184
Phone: (617) 746-5736 Fax: (617) 746-5754

Eligible Population

Lay staff with one year or more of continuous service who work at least 20 hours per week (schools/other 10-month assignments require 24 hours per week) in parishes, Corporation Sole entities, and other enrolled Archdiocesan entities, who are not covered by Massachusetts unemployment compensation insurance.

Participating Events

A qualified involuntary job loss is any separation initiated by the employing unit except for gross and/or willful misconduct, or by reason of death, disability, or retirement. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, reduction in force, job restructure/elimination, institution closing, and termination due to performance issues other than gross or willful misconduct. Gross and/or willful misconduct is defined as violation of written and/or normative standards of conduct. Examples include, but are not limited to, theft, destruction of organization property, sexual or racial harassment, insubordination, reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs, engaging in felonious activity, falsification of records, serious policy violations, etc.

Benefit Level

50% of base weekly wage* to a maximum adjusted annually to reflect the Massachusetts unemployment benefit maximum. Benefits are payable bi-weekly for a maximum duration of 30 calendar weeks. FICA, Medicare, Federal and State taxes are withheld. Voluntary deductions (*i.e.*, health benefits, 401(k), etc.) are not available. W-2 forms are issued at year's end. Effective March 1, 2016, outplacement benefits are also available (see details below).

When Benefits are Payable

Benefits are not automatic. A Notification of Separation/Application for Benefits form must be filed with Human Resources. All claims are subject to review and approval by the Plan Administrator.

There is a Waiting Period for TAP benefits. The Waiting Period commences on the Termination Date and ends (but excludes) the first Sunday following the expiration of 7 calendar days after the Termination Date. Benefits will also be delayed to take into account other payments, including, but not limited to, payouts for unused vacation, severance benefits, or other contractual payments. In cases where severance payments have been made to a Participant, TAP benefits will begin immediately following the expiration of the severance payment period. In schools or other environments with a shortened work year, benefits are generally not payable until the beginning of the next work year, usually after September 1.

Continued payment is contingent upon periodic verification of an active job search. Benefits will cease when the participant fails to meet the active job search requirements, verified through bi-weekly submission of a completed affidavit OR when the participant obtains comparable employment. It is the responsibility of the participant to notify Human Resources upon obtaining employment. In the event employment is accepted that is not comparable to previous employment, the participant may be eligible for pro-rated benefits. Earnings exclusions up to the weekly benefit rate may be applied. (Note: Payments made under the TAP program are not applied in calculating income or service credit for Pension purposes.)

* Base weekly wage calculation is based on the reported annual salary divided by 52 weeks.

RCAB Transition Assistance: Outplacement Sessions with Success Associates Career Services

TAP Participants are eligible for outplacement counseling services, as described below, as soon as their TAP waiting period begins. To access these services, which are confidential and free of charge, contact Larry Elle at Success Career Associates, Tel. (617) 325-4521 Email: lelle@ix.netcom.com. Success Associates is located at 97 Bright Road, Belmont, MA 02478.

Session One: In the first session, the focus will be on helping the client assess their readiness, practically and emotionally, to search for work. Each client will be helped to clarify their career direction. We will also look at any emotional barriers to reemployment, *i.e.*, issues of confidence, self-esteem, cognitive attitudes that can impede a successful job search.

A resume preparation form will be provided to help clients create a resume. A *Job Search Status Survey* is available to assess where a client will need help in their job search. Online career interest and skill assessments are also available to those seeking to move into a different job function and/or industry. This initial session will also help a client identify their “unique special advantage” and introduce them to PAR Statements, which help job applicants demonstrate their value to an employer.

Readings and helpful exercises will also be provided from the Career Success Binder of materials and the book *Secrets and Strategies for Success in An Uncertain World*, by Martin Yate. Goals will be set each week to encourage accountability, and clients will be encouraged to integrate stress management and confidence building activities into their job search routine.

Session Two: In this session, the client’s resume will be reviewed and suggestions made for improvement. Each client will also be given instructions about how to prepare a LinkedIn Profile, if appropriate. Teachers will be provided with detailed information about the specifics of applying for teaching work in the state of Massachusetts. Clients will also be instructed in how to compose Cover and Thank You letters to employers. Each session ends with goal setting for the next meeting. Readings and helpful exercises will be provided around networking from the Career Success Binder and textbook to help the client prepare for the third session.

Session Three: In this session, clients will develop a working “value statement” or “Elevator Speech” to be used when networking and interviewing, with practice time spent delivering their speech with the counselor. The mechanics of networking will be explained and information about local networking groups and professional societies provided. Clients will be encouraged to utilize state funded One-Stop Career Centers and to join job search support groups. For those using LinkedIn, their profile will be reviewed and instructions provided on how best to use social media to “be found” by employers and to research potential employers and networking contacts. Goals will be set for the fourth session. Readings and helpful exercises around interviewing will also be provided from the Career Success Binder and textbook to help the client prepare for the fourth session.

Session Four: This session will focus on developing each client’s interviewing and self-presentation skills. Typical interview questions and answers will be discussed, practice time provided, and attention paid to how someone answers a question as well as to what they say. Measures to bolster confidence and self-esteem will be discussed with helpful activities assigned to reinforce job search resiliency. We will also discuss the roadblocks a person is encountering and propose ways to overcome those obstacles. Clients will leave with a Job Search Action Plan outlining the steps they need to take to land a job.

Each client will be asked to complete an evaluation form to provide feedback to Success Associates and the TAP Plan Trustees about the effectiveness of our program and to suggest ways to improve delivery of services.

Clients will be encouraged to participate in upcoming Job Search Success Teams for those who may want additional time and support for their job search.