

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

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EEOC AND CBS SETTLE SEX BIAS SUIT FOR \$8 MILLION

Class of 200 Women At TV Stations From New York to Los Angeles to Receive Monetary Relief

NEW YORK - The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) today announced the settlement of a major sex discrimination lawsuit against CBS Broadcasting, Inc., for \$8 million in financial compensation for approximately 200 female workers, along with wide-ranging injunctive relief to be monitored by EEOC over the duration of the four year Consent Decree. The suit charged CBS with subjecting a class of female technicians to a pattern and practice of discrimination in regard to salary, over time, promotions, and training; creating a hostile work environment that included sexual harassment; and retaliating against female employees for complaining about the discrimination.

"This settlement will have a national impact on the broadcasting industry and further EEOC's efforts to shatter the glass ceiling that hinders the progress of working women," said EEOC Chairwoman Ida L. Castro. "Employers must have zero tolerance for sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and retaliation, which poisons the work environment, hurts employee morale, and negatively affects the bottom line."

The Commission's legal action parallels a Consent Decree also being filed today in the District of Minnesota in a private lawsuit which was certified as a class action after EEOC issued a reasonable cause finding in October 1999. The classes in both suits consist of all female employees who have been or will be employed by CBS at WCCO-TV (Minneapolis) and all women technical workers in the Engineering and Operations departments, or similarly-titled departments, at the following CBS television stations: WCCO, KCBS (Los Angeles), WCBS (New York), WBBM (Chicago), WFRV (Green Bay), and WWJ (Detroit). The private suit, Beckmann, et. al. v. CBS, Inc., was filed by the Minneapolis office of Sprenger & Lang in 1996.

EEOC General Counsel C. Gregory Stewart said, "In addition to providing a substantial amount of economic relief to the victims, the settlement puts in place extensive mechanisms to help prevent discrimination at CBS in the future. By monitoring CBS for the next four years, the Commission will be in a position to act quickly should discrimination or retaliation occur again."

EEOC's lawsuit and Consent Decree were filed simultaneously with the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The settlement provides for significant monitoring of CBS by EEOC, including a posting a Notice of Non-Discrimination; adopting a new non-discrimination policy and distribution of such policy; significant company-wide training; adoption of improved detailed procedures for posting of vacant positions and opportunities for overtime and special assignments; distributing a survey to technicians so that they can indicate whether they are interested in promotion, special assignments, and training; detailed reporting to EEOC of promotions, assignments, and overtime; and detailed reporting to EEOC of sex discrimination complaints.

Remarking on the cooperation between EEOC and private counsel in prosecuting the suit, Katherine E. Bissell, Acting Regional Attorney of EEOC's New York District Office, said: "The Commission congratulates the employees in the private lawsuit and their counsel for having worked toward this satisfactory resolution. EEOC looks forward to assisting both class counsel and CBS in implementing the monetary and injunctive relief adopted by both Consent Decrees."

Spencer H. Lewis, Jr., Director of EEOC's New York office, added: "EEOC is pleased that CBS agreed to put into place significant mechanisms to allow female employees greater opportunities in the workplace. We believe that CBS is committed to a policy of non-discrimination and, during the next four years, we will work with CBS to ensure that the procedures put in place by this Consent Decree will be administered properly."

In addition to enforcing Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin, EEOC enforces the Equal Pay Act; prohibitions against discrimination affecting individuals with disabilities in the federal sector; sections of the Civil Rights Act of

1991, the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in the private sector, state and local governments; and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act. Further information about the Commission is available on its Web site at www.eeoc.gov.

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