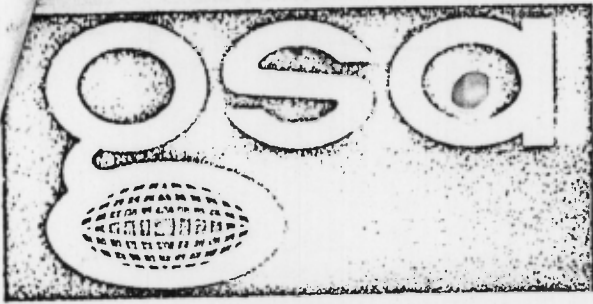


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GSA #5888

GSA Secures Landmark EEO

Compliance Plan from AT&T

The U.S. General Services Administration said today it has secured from American Telephone and Telegraph Co. "one of the farthest reaching equal employment opportunity programs in American business."

Arthur F. Sampson, head of GSA, made the statement after he and AT&T President Robert D. Lilley had approved the new EEO program. The agreement was reached after eight months of discussion.

"AT&T's affirmative action and transfer plan," Sampson said, "follows to the letter President Nixon's directives to assure that every American has a fair and equal chance to realize his potential and to progress to the limit of that potential along any career path he may choose."

"This model master plan will give more than one million AT&T employees in over 700 establishments the opportunity to choose their careers and to advance as far as their skills and ambitions will take them."

According to Lilley, "More than 50,000 qualified women are expected to move into higher-paying jobs, 10 percent of which will be within management. Some 6,600 qualified minority men are expected to move into better jobs. Over 12 percent of these will be within management."

The plans approved by GSA's Office of Civil Rights, which is responsible for ensuring that telephone companies meet equal opportunity standards as Federal contractors, call for Bell Telephone Companies to seek qualified women to fill openings in technical jobs such as telephone installer, line worker and cable splicers' helper, as well as technical jobs inside telephone central offices. Similarly, Bell will seek qualified men to fill vacancies as clerks and telephone operators.

This means that the Bell System is committed to seek 6,600 women to move into positions traditionally held by men and to make jobs

The General Services Administration is responsible to see that such equal employment opportunity is met in a total of 15 major industries containing more than one million establishments and 20,400 of them having major government contracts.

"This new plan will have a domino effect on other major corporations and industries. It represents such a major milestone for the civil rights movement in this country that its philosophy will have impact throughout American industry," Sampson said.

Some of the other major features of the model upgrade and transfer plan are:

- It will be open to every employee, along with a basic description of every nonmanagement job in the company, and the qualifications for each job.

- Employees can request consideration for any job, and can submit applications for more than one job at any time.

- All requests, including those which the immediate supervisor does not support, will be reviewed by a centralized placement bureau.

- The centralized placement bureau is responsible for processing employee requests and matching qualified employees with available opportunities.

- All relevant experience will be considered.

- Reemployment rights of any employee on military or maternity leave, or other types of leave of absence, are fully protected.

- The promotion-from-within policy is strengthened and reaffirmed to assure that all who are qualified are considered for available jobs.

- Opportunities to become acquainted with job-sequence patterns and optimal career paths are increased and uncertainty about advancement opportunities is reduced.

- An employee who does not like his or her new job, or who cannot handle it, can return to the old job within a stated period.