

Corporate Spotlight - Best Practices List

Corporations strive to adopt personnel policies and practices that attract and retain competent and loyal employees. During the last few years, many employers have revised their Human Resources policies and benefits packages as they adapt to more diversity in the workplace, including significant increases in the numbers of unmarried and single employees.

Flexible and inclusive workplace policies, which are fair and equitable to all employees regardless of marital status, are good for employee morale. Higher productivity results from unmarried workers who are aware that their employer has chosen to accommodate their needs and concerns. This results in an increase in profits and excellent employer-worker relations.

AASP has been monitoring the policies of large employers. Based on what we have learned from published news stories, as well as from corporate responses to our Fortune 500 Survey on Unmarried Employees, we have assembled the following "Best Practices" list:



Awareness of Marital Status

Knowing how many employees are unmarried can help a company revise its employment practices, including its benefits package. Such data helps to more precisely address the needs of single and unmarried workers. The following companies have informed AASP that they track this information: **Autozone, AFLAC, Delta Airlines, Cendant, Fifth Third Bancorp, PPL Corporation, Nationwide Insurance.**

THE DOCUMENT COMPANY



Marital Status in EEO Statement

Large companies have adopted an Equal Employment Opportunity Statement, indicating that the company treats its employees equally and without regard to personal characteristics, such as race, religion, sex, etc. This affirmation is essentially a promise of fairness on which employees and potential

employees can rely. The following companies have informed AASP that marital status is part of their EEO Statement: **Viacom, Xerox, Fifth Third Bancorp, Kellogg Company, Praxair, Cendant.**



Fifth Third Bank

Gender-Neutral Partner Benefits

A growing number of employers now offer benefits to domestic partners of employees. Some companies limit benefits to same-sex couples. However, many employers have adopted gender-neutral benefits plans which include same and opposite-sex domestic partners. Inclusive benefits programs, which do not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or marital status, are always the best practice, especially for companies which respect diversity. The following companies have stated that they offer benefits to domestic partners regardless of gender: **Southwest Airlines, America West Airlines, National Airlines, Bank One, Xerox, Fifth Third Bancorp.**



Household Benefits to Employees

Some employers have gone further than domestic partner benefits and now allow an employee to choose one adult household member to receive workplace benefits. The beneficiary can be a spouse, a domestic partner of either sex, or a blood relative such as an adult child, parent, or a sibling. These broad and inclusive programs are laudable and help make benefits compensation equitable to a larger segment of the workforce. The following companies have reported they have adopted extended family benefits or household benefits programs: **Bank of America, Nationwide Insurance, Merrill Lynch, American Century Investment, Citi Group, Fleet Boston Financial.**



Fleet Boston Financial



Singles-Friendly 401k Plan

Many employers have adopted retirement savings plans which treat all employees alike, regardless of marital status. Employer contributions to these 401k plans become vested in the employee, either immediately or after a short time. This contrasts with many traditional pension plans where unmarried workers forfeit the employer's contributions if the employee dies prior to retirement, although a married worker can leave those assets to a surviving spouse. The following employers have informed AASP that their 401k plans treat married and unmarried employees the same: **America West Airlines, National Airlines.**



National Airlines
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Sharing Information About AASP

In an effort to maintain positive relations with their unmarried employees, these companies have expressed willingness to share information about groups such as the American Association for Single People that deal with issues of concern: **Viacom, Praxair, AFLAC, Kellogg Company, Cendant.**



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AASP commends the employers listed on this page for adopting one or more of the best practices in their personnel policies or benefits programs.

Not only are these practices good for unmarried and single employees, they are also good for the employers in terms of recruitment and retention of productive workers. In the end, such practices increase profits and are good for company shareholders as well.

Let us know if you are aware of other companies we should feature in a future corporate spotlight news story. **AAA**