

FOCUS

Stowe Associates Insurance and Compliance Tips Newsletter



Experience and Expertise in Employee Benefit Solutions

www.stoweassociates.com

Learn about our suite of services available at no additional cost!

During the economic downturn and resulting budget cuts, many employers are having difficulty funding all of their Risk Management and Human Resources functions and services. In this era of ever increasing employer liability it is more important than ever to comply with government regulations. Stowe Associates offers many complimentary compliance assistance services.

For more information or to request a no obligation demonstration contact your Stowe Associates representative or Alison Smith at asmith@stoweassociates.com or 770-451-6222.

Justice Department Reaches Americans with Disabilities Act Settlement with Wells Fargo

The Justice Department announced recently a comprehensive settlement agreement under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with Wells Fargo & Company to ensure equal access for individuals with disabilities to Wells Fargo's services nationwide, including its nearly 10,000 retail banking, brokerage and mortgage stores, over 12,000 ATMs, and its telephone and website services.

The agreement resolves numerous ADA complaints filed by individuals who are deaf, are hard of hearing or have speech disabilities who allege that Wells Fargo would not do business with them over the phone using a telecommunications relay service. Instead, the individuals were directed to call a TTY/TDD line that asked them to leave a message, which went unanswered. Wells Fargo started addressing these customers' concerns before the Justice Department investigation began. Once the department opened an investigation, Wells Fargo worked cooperatively to achieve a comprehensive settlement addressing all ADA issues in its retail banking and financial services.

Wells Fargo will pay up to \$16 million to compensate individuals harmed by certain violations of Title III of the ADA. The department will be administering a claims process to distribute these funds. Wells Fargo will also pay a \$55,000 civil penalty to the United States. In addition, Wells Fargo affirms its commitment to advancing the interests of individuals with disabilities by paying a total of \$1 million in charitable donations to non-profit organizations that will assist veterans with disabilities resulting from injuries sustained while serving in Iraq or Afghanistan to live independently in the community.

Finally, the agreement requires Wells Fargo to take the following steps to improve access for customers with disabilities:

Remove physical barriers to access, as required, at its retail stores across the nation and remedy all other instances of discrimination under Title III of the ADA that are identified during the claims process.

(Continued on page 2)

