

News Release



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Hunt Forest Products agrees to pay \$300,000 to female and African American applicants for hiring discrimination *Company also will hire 24 previously rejected applicants*

NATALBANY, La. – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) today announced that Ruston, La.-based Hunt Forest Products Inc. has agreed to settle findings of hiring discrimination against 128 rejected female and 170 African American applicants for the position of utility worker.

The agreement settles the department’s allegations that Hunt Forest Products, a manufacturer and seller of southern yellow pine plywood, veneer and hardwood lumber in Natalbany, La., engaged in hiring discrimination against females and African Americans from January 2004 to August 2005.

“This administration is committed to ensuring that all Americans are hired, promoted and compensated fairly, without respect to race, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or veteran status,” said OFCCP Deputy Assistant Secretary Charles E. James Sr. “This settlement of \$300,000 in back pay on behalf of these female and African American applicants should put all federal contractors on notice that the Labor Department is serious about eliminating systemic discrimination.”

Under the terms of the agreement, Hunt Forest Products will pay the 298 applicants a total of \$300,000 in back pay and interest, and will provide 24 utility worker positions to the class members. The company also has agreed to undertake extensive self-monitoring measures to ensure that all hiring practices fully comply with the law and immediately correct any discriminatory practice. Additionally, Hunt Forest Products agreed to ensure compliance with Executive Order 11246 recordkeeping requirements.

“We strongly encourage other employers to take proactive steps to come into compliance with the law to prevent workplace discrimination,” said OFCCP’s Southwest and Rocky Mountain Regional Director Joan Sessoms Ford.

OFCCP, an agency of the Labor Department’s Employment Standards Administration, enforces Executive Order 11246 and laws that prohibit employment discrimination by federal contractors. The agency monitors federal contractors to ensure that they provide equal employment opportunities without regard to race, gender, color, religion, national origin, disability or veteran status.

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