

MEMORANDUM

To: Subscribers to *Pratt's Human Resources Practice and Compliance Guide for Bankers*

From: A.S. Pratt & Sons

Subject: Highlights

Enclosed is your current update to *Pratt's Human Resources Practice and Compliance Guide for Bankers*. Highlights include the following:

- **Supreme Court Sets Time Limit for Filing Pay Discrimination Claims.** Employers received two victories when the United States Supreme Court dramatically limited the time period for filing Title VII charges related to pay discrimination. The issues concerned allegedly discriminatory pay decisions made in the past, the effects of which are continuing to be felt in the present. (See Chapter 4.)
- **Trends in Health Care Costs.** In 2007, total health benefit cost rose by 6.1 percent. This duplicates the acceleration of healthcare cost that occurred in 2006 according to Mercer's *National Survey of Employer-Sponsored Health Plans*, released in March 2008. This an average cost of \$7,983 per employee. New information in this update reviews how employers are taking measures to reduce their healthcare costs. (See Chapter 11.)
- **EEOC Issues Final Rules on Coordination of Retiree Health Benefits.** In December of 2007, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued its final rules for employers who provide health plans to allow exemptions from the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA). Employers now can coordinate employee retiree health benefits with Medicare coverage. (See Chapter 11.)
- **Sarbanes-Oxley Creates Potential Criminal Liability for Public and Nonpublic Companies Alike.** Most bankers perceive the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (SOX) as applying only to publicly traded companies. Don't let that fool you though. Congress didn't leave nonpublic companies out of the laws reach for potential criminal penalties. (See Chapter 13.)
- **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).** The Department of Labor issued final regulations for plan years beginning on January 1, 2008, for wellness programs under HIPAA. The new regulations coordinate well with the ADA restrictions for wellness programs. Some of the areas addressed are privacy, security rules, and nondiscrimination rules. (See Chapter 14.)