

## THE UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FEDERALLY EMPLOYED WOMEN (FEW) and THE FEDERAL WOMEN'S PROGRAM (FWP)

### The Federal Women's Program

The Federal Women's Program (FWP) was established in 1967 when President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Executive Order 11375 that added sex as a prohibited form of discrimination. The Federal Women's Program (FWP) has a primary responsibility to identify barriers to the hiring and advancement of women and seeks to enhance Federal employment opportunities for women in every area of federal service. It is administered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and is an integral part of the overall Civil Rights/Equal Opportunity program.



Each Federal agency has at least one Federal Women's Program Manager (FWPM), and many agencies have established an FWP network of managers, representatives and committees throughout their headquarters and field locations. The FWPM acts as the agency's contact point, source of information, and as an advisor to the head of the agency in matters involving the employment and career advancement of women. In field locations, FWPMs may also be appointed and serve in a similar role or as an extension of the National FWPM on a regional or local level. All federal employees are served by the Federal Women's Program and there is no formal membership.

### Federally Employed Women

Federally Employed Women is a private, non-profit membership organization, and is concerned with many of the same issues that are administered and addressed by the Federal Women's Program.

FEW and FWP are not in conflict because their mutual goals and objectives are formulated to eliminate sex discrimination and address issues impacting the career advancement of women in federal service.



Anyone may join FEW as a member by paying annual dues. FEW has local chapters around the world and is governed by a National Board of Directors elected by the membership.

As a private organization, FEW works as a constructive pressure group to improve the status of women employed by the federal government. This includes lobbying on Congressional legislation, and meeting with management officials in all agencies to demonstrate support of the FWP, encourage officials to support the program, and to obtain insight on the effectiveness of the agency's FWP at the national and local levels.

FEW is not a labor organization and does not "represent" employees. However, FEW officers can meet with management officials to discuss matters that fall within their field of expertise.

Managers and EEO officials may join FEW and may hold chapter, regional or national office. There is no conflict between being an employee of the Federal government, automatically covered by the FWP, and joining FEW. In fact, many find membership in professional organizations like FEW to be a career-enhancing affiliation.

**Together**

National FEW, through its Executive Committee, maintains a relationship with OPM, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and Department and Agency Heads providing input as requested or appropriate on all personnel policies and affirmative actions to promote equal employment. The most important relationship is the one with the Federal Women's Program. FEW was the major pressure group for the implementation of this program in the Federal Government. In 1970, only six agencies had full time Federal Women's Program Managers, even though the program was begun in the Federal Government in 1967. A relationship agreement signed by the FEW National President and the Director of OPM describes the objectives and goals as being in concert.

Because of their common mission and vision, employees charged with FWP responsibilities have good reason to work with FEW officers and members to develop goals and objectives for agency implementation of Affirmative Employment Plans and other program initiatives designed to meet the agency's unique needs and ensure equality of opportunity for women.