

**Committee for Purchase
From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled**

**Fiscal Year 2027
Congressional Budget Justification**



An independent Federal agency responsible for administering the
Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act and the AbilityOne Program

Operating as the U.S. AbilityOne Commission



OFFICE OF THE CHAIRPERSON

March 30, 2026

Dear Member of Congress,

The U.S. AbilityOne Commission is pleased to submit its fiscal year (FY) 2027 budget justification for \$13,124,000 including not less than \$3,150,000 for the Office of Inspector General (OIG).

This justification reflects the Commission's unwavering commitment to its theme of "Driving Value, Efficiency, and Accountability" as it oversees the nationwide public-private AbilityOne Program, which creates private sector jobs for people who are blind or have significant disabilities.

In FY 2027, the Commission will continue to enhance stewardship, implement executive orders, execute a new strategic plan aligned with Administration priorities, and partner with Federal agencies to expand employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Private sector jobs in AbilityOne grew 4% to approximately 41,000 in FY 2025 – a 5-year high. That growth follows a 7% increase in FY 2024. Veterans held approximately 2,800 jobs.

Direct labor hours worked increased by 8% in FY 2025 to approximately 48 million – a significant measure of employment growth because not only are more workers working, they are also working more hours.

AbilityOne delivered more than \$4.7 billion in products and services to the Federal government in FY 2025, a 5% increase. Employment on AbilityOne Federal contracts draws discouraged workers into the U.S. labor force and supports their ongoing workforce participation, increasing economic independence and self-sufficiency.

The AbilityOne mission is to tap the underutilized workforce of people with significant disabilities to deliver high quality, mission-essential products and services to Federal agencies. The agency directly supports efforts to rebuild the American industrial base through the Program's role as a trusted source of supply and services for Federal customers.

This budget request outlines major actions taken by the Commission and planned actions to maintain focus on modernization, stewardship, and engagement with stakeholders. Through such actions, the Commission will continue to support an effective and accountable government that delivers results for all Americans.

The Commission’s “Report to the President 2025” highlighted progress in the following key areas:

Drawing “discouraged workers” into the labor force

On Day 1 of his Administration, President Trump directed Federal agencies to “create employment opportunities for American workers, including drawing discouraged workers into the labor force,” as part of his memorandum titled “Delivering Emergency Price Relief for American Families and Defeating the Cost-of-Living Crisis.”

The President’s guidance underscores the value of the AbilityOne Program, whose mission is creating private sector jobs for Americans with significant disabilities – a historically discouraged and underutilized workforce with the lowest employment rate of any segment of U.S. society. AbilityOne increases private sector labor force participation by working with private sector nonprofit agencies to create real employment opportunities for these citizens as well as serving as a springboard to a wide range of jobs in the broader economy, whether in manufacturing, skilled trades, professional services, or other industries.

National security, military readiness, and the defense industrial base are all strengthened through AbilityOne’s domestic manufacturing and delivery of mission critical Made in America products and services. At the same time, citizens with disabilities earn income through AbilityOne Program jobs in the private sector to pursue their share of the American dream.

Intensifying focus on Made in America products

Prioritizing Made in America products is fundamental to the Commission’s work. The agency is committed to executing its statutory mission in a manner that fully supports the Made in America Office within the Office of Management and Budget, and aligning and advancing our mutual goals throughout the AbilityOne Program.

In FY 2025, the Commission Chairperson issued the directive “Strengthening and Ensuring Consistency of AbilityOne Program Compliance with Domestic Sourcing Laws,” applicable to AbilityOne Central Nonprofit Agencies (CNAs) and AbilityOne Federal contractors.

The directive reaffirmed the Commission’s commitment to supporting President Trump’s America First Trade Policy by clarifying the Commission’s position regarding AbilityOne Program compliance with domestic sourcing laws. It clearly communicated that AbilityOne contractors must commit to providing products that are compliant with the Buy American Act of 1933 and the Make PPE in America Act, unless valid exceptions apply.

As a result, the CNAs conducted extensive supply chain reviews across the AbilityOne network and initiated regular reporting to the Commission on their technical assistance and progress in ensuring all AbilityOne products will meet the statutory requirements.

AbilityOne American Manufacturing Study Group

In FY 2026, the Commission will establish an AbilityOne American Manufacturing Study Group composed of leaders from across the Commission, CNAs, and AbilityOne Federal contracting community to highlight and advance domestic manufacturing in the Program. The study group will identify and disseminate best practices, share feedback with the Commission, and provide peer-to-peer assistance to AbilityOne Federal contractors in the manufacturing line of business.

Strengthening the U.S. industrial base, national security, military readiness

Part of the backbone of the U.S. industrial base, AbilityOne bolsters national security and military readiness with a nationwide infrastructure of wide-ranging capability and capacity.

Domestic manufacturing of AbilityOne products fortifies the defense industrial base, including clothing and textiles production. AbilityOne is the sole manufacturer of chemical protective suits for the U.S. military, as well as other complex garments and equipment. AbilityOne manufacturers of military clothing and equipment meet Berry Amendment standards (100% domestic production, including raw materials). Examples include uniforms, extreme cold weather clothing systems, fire-retardant personal protective gear, medical kits and supplies, and food items.

AbilityOne supports the Department of Homeland Security at dozens of Customs and Border Protection stations on both U.S. borders, providing cleaning and groundskeeping services at many locations, as well as providing all disposable gloves for the Transportation Security Agency. AbilityOne services also include reliable onshore contact centers that support citizen needs, including U.S. passport applicants nationwide and callers to the National Lead Information Center hotline.

Ensuring accountability of AbilityOne Federal contractors

Increasing accountability of AbilityOne Federal contractors in 2025 included training, testing, and initial implementation of a modernized compliance inspection process, and converting to digital collection of key Program data. Holding AbilityOne Federal contractors accountable is central to the Commission's work and its initiatives on contracting integrity, performance, and quality.

Implementing second-generation Cooperative Agreements with Central Nonprofit Agencies

As part of increasing AbilityOne Federal contractor accountability, the Commission signed second-generation Cooperative Agreements in FY 2025 with National Industries for the Blind and SourceAmerica, the two CNAs designated by the Commission to help administer the AbilityOne Program. The agreements reflect the governing relationship, roles, responsibilities, key expectations, and guidance for the Commission and CNAs in implementing and managing the AbilityOne Program.

These agreements strengthen governance by incorporating lessons learned and best practices, as well as promoting more efficient performance and aligning resources to Program priorities.

Implementing competition in the AbilityOne Program

The Commission is making good on its promise to implement competition in the AbilityOne Program, delivering on one of the top priorities of the Section 898 “Panel on Department of Defense and AbilityOne Contracting Oversight, Accountability, and Integrity” created by the 2017 NDAA.

Commission publication of its final rule “Supporting Competition in the AbilityOne Program” in 2024 responded to longstanding Federal customer interest in using competition as a tool to improve contract performance and customer satisfaction.

In April 2025, the Commission issued a framework for competition within the AbilityOne Program to provide best value for American taxpayers and the Federal government – i.e., Policy 51.301-04, “Competitive Distribution of Orders to Nonprofit Agencies for New and Existing Services on the Procurement List.”

The Commission approved the first competition under the new policy after convening an internal ad hoc AbilityOne Competition Subcommittee to consider competition requests from Federal customers.

Competition will spur private sector innovation; enhance training, placement, and employment opportunities for AbilityOne-participating employees at a competitive price; and further drive value, efficiency, and accountability.

Increasing operational efficiency

The Commission is increasing operational efficiency throughout the agency and its programs. Key measures include:

- Supporting approximately 41,000 jobs with an agency budget of less than \$10 million (not including the Office of Inspector General (OIG) budget).
- Restructured staff – Compared to 2025, the Commission now has 26% fewer FTEs as a result of voluntary attrition and implementing the agency’s Merit Hiring Plan.
- Moving to a smaller office space in 2026 to achieve a 16% reduction in square footage and up to 20% rent savings annually.
- Reducing travel expenses by leveraging front-line compliance partners and maximizing use of videoconferencing, aiming for at least 30% savings.
- Building on the first phase of IT systems modernization, completed in 2025, to continue automating routine business processes.

- Implementing updated data collection forms.

The Commission and CNAs have examined their shared business practices and are implementing several recommendations, such as streamlining process steps and eliminating redundant reviews to make the AbilityOne Program more efficient and easier for Federal customers and contractors to use.

The Commission will continue to work closely with the Office of Inspector General (OIG) to improve economies and efficiencies, enhance confidence in the Program, and promote Program growth through reports, audits, alerts, and other actions. In addition, the OIG guards against fraud, waste, and abuse by providing vital oversight to deter and detect bad actors.

Driving value for Federal customers

The Commission continues to drive value for Federal customers, including by supporting AbilityOne Representatives, increasing customer satisfaction by emphasizing quality performance and “best value,” enhancing customer engagement, and other initiatives described in this justification.

Maintaining the pace of progress

The AbilityOne mission answers the President’s call to bring “discouraged workers” into the labor force. People who are blind or have significant disabilities historically experience the lowest employment rate of any segment of U.S. society. AbilityOne is an engine of economic opportunity and empowerment with the potential to launch AbilityOne workers into private sector jobs both within the Program and throughout the American economy.

On behalf of the U.S. AbilityOne Commission and the individuals employed nationwide through the AbilityOne Program, thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Christina Brandt

Christina Brandt
Chairperson and Presidential Appointee

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1.0 Program and Budget Justification Summary

1.1 Overview

The U.S. AbilityOne Commission FY 2027 budget request funding levels are: ¹

Agency	\$9,974,000
Office of Inspector General (OIG)	\$ 3,150,000
Total	\$13,124,000

Table 1. FY 2027 Budget Request (in \$ millions)

Category	FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024 Enacted	FY 2025 Enacted	FY 2026 Enacted	FY 2027 Request
Personnel	5.215	5.260	5.364	4.865	5.092
Benefits	1.600	1.654	1.702	1.570	1.612
All Other	3.159	3.060	2.908	3.539	3.370
OIG	3.150	3.150	3.150	3.150	3.150
Total	13.124	13.124	13.124	13.124	13,124

The requested funding is needed for the Commission to fulfill its mission of tapping America's underutilized workforce of individuals who are blind or have significant disabilities to deliver high quality, mission-essential products and services to Federal agencies in quality employment opportunities. In doing so, the Commission increases the number of taxpayers, reduces the demand for benefits payments, and creates pathways to employment in the broader economy.

The Commission administers and oversees the AbilityOne Program, which creates private-sector jobs in every state for approximately 41,000 Americans who are blind or have significant disabilities. Through domestic manufacturing and delivering mission-critical services, the AbilityOne Program strengthens national security, military readiness, and the defense industrial base.

The AbilityOne Program is important to America because it employs people who are blind or have significant disabilities – a group that has historically experienced the lowest employment rate of any segment of U.S. society.² AbilityOne increases private-sector labor force participation by providing these citizens with employment as well as serving as a springboard to a wide range of jobs in the broader economy, whether in manufacturing, skilled trades, professional services, or other industries.

1.2 Benefits of Investments in the Commission

Continued investments will sustain and further the Commission's significant progress in driving value, accountability, efficiency, and results aligned with the agency's statutory mission and strategic plan, Administration priorities, Congressional mandates, Federal customer feedback, and input from the disability community and other key stakeholders.

In addition to achievements outlined in the Chairperson's cover letter for this justification, and addressed in our Report to the President 2025,³ major steps forward in priority areas include:

Return on investment (ROI) to the U.S. economy and U.S. Treasury

Wages earned by AbilityOne employees increased 9% to \$893.7 million in FY 2025.

AbilityOne jobs also increase tax revenues. In 2023, the research and data analytics consultancy Mathematica was commissioned by the CNAs to do a study on the economic impact of the AbilityOne Program.⁴ The report estimated that every dollar that Congress and Federal agencies invest in the Program results in an ROI to the Treasury of \$2.31 due to savings realized by reduced reliance on public programs as well as increased tax revenues from the employment of people who are blind or have significant disabilities. In addition, the study found multiplier effects on the surrounding economies. This is an excellent example of the AbilityOne Program driving value for the country.

Increasing customer satisfaction by emphasizing quality performance and best value

Strong contract performance – quality, dependability, consistency, and timely delivery – is the foundation of the Program's ability to meet Federal customer requirements. Quality performance showcases the work of AbilityOne in a competitive market, strengthens relationships between Federal agencies and the Program, results in increased customer satisfaction and better mission outcomes, and supports expansion into new markets.

The Commission continues to update its guidance to emphasize performance excellence and provide the best value for the Federal government and American taxpayers. Recent topics include the process for selecting and recommending AbilityOne Federal contractors (also known as AbilityOne-participating nonprofit agencies, or NPAs) to perform work on AbilityOne contracts, and creating a framework for competition within the AbilityOne Program.⁵ These efforts advance the Commission's priority to ensure contract performance accountability, drive cost savings, and foster high levels of customer satisfaction.

Emphasis on subcontracting to increase the quantity and diversity of employment options

In FY 2027, the Commission will build upon updated subcontracting guidance issued in FY 2026 and facilitate engagement with commercial industry as appropriate to foster innovation, secure highly technical expertise where needed, and build pathways from AbilityOne employment to jobs in the broader economy. At the same time, the Commission will ensure the necessary

guardrails are in place to maintain alignment with the purpose of the AbilityOne Program and prevent misuse.

In most cases, NPAs are able to identify qualified workers from the pool of significantly disabled and blind individuals able and willing to work. Other times, however, NPAs will need to engage one or more subcontractors to contribute niche, technical, or specialized skills to satisfy requirements under a Federal contract.

Within available resources, the Commission continues to meet all Executive Branch and Congressional mandates, including:

- Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, requirements for Commission to (1) establish Cooperative Agreements to govern its relationship with the CNAs, and (2) establish an OIG.
- National Defense Authorization Act, 2017, Section 898 “Panel on Department of Defense and AbilityOne Contracting Oversight, Accountability, and Integrity” recommendations.
- Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requirements for IT and cybersecurity.
- Executive Orders and memoranda issued by OMB and/or the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), particularly related to workforce reshaping and reporting requirements.

Commission continues to modernize its IT and strengthen cybersecurity (see Section 3.2, Information Technology (IT) Requirements).

Commission continues to enhance financial stewardship and Enterprise Risk Management (see Section 4.3, Strategic Objective 3).

1.3 Current challenges

- Executing mission with staff 23% smaller than 2024, following voluntary attrition and implementation of the Agency’s Merit Hiring Plan.
- Meeting Congressional and Executive Branch mandates within resource limitations.
- Implementing Commission’s second-generation Cooperative Agreements with the CNAs, signed in December 2024.
- Finalizing and implementing the Commission’s 2026-2030 Strategic Plan.
- Addressing the OIG’s annual Top Management and Performance Challenges Report.
- Continuing the Commission’s paradigm shift for the AbilityOne Program to become a pathway to careers in upwardly mobile positions both within and outside AbilityOne.
- Updating IT infrastructure. *(See Section 3.2, Information Technology (IT) Requirements.)*

- Scaling and attaining the numerous and complex requirements of the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) as a small Federal entity.

2.0 Background

2.1 Legal Authority, Mission, and Vision

The legal authority for the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, which operates as the U.S. AbilityOne Commission, is established in the Javits-Wagner-O’Day (JWOD) Act of 1971, codified at 41 U.S.C. §§8501-8506 and implemented through 41 C.F.R. Chapter 51.

The Commission is an independent Executive Branch agency, with exclusive responsibility for administering the JWOD Act and AbilityOne Program, which is responsible for employing approximately 41,000 Americans who are blind or have significant disabilities.

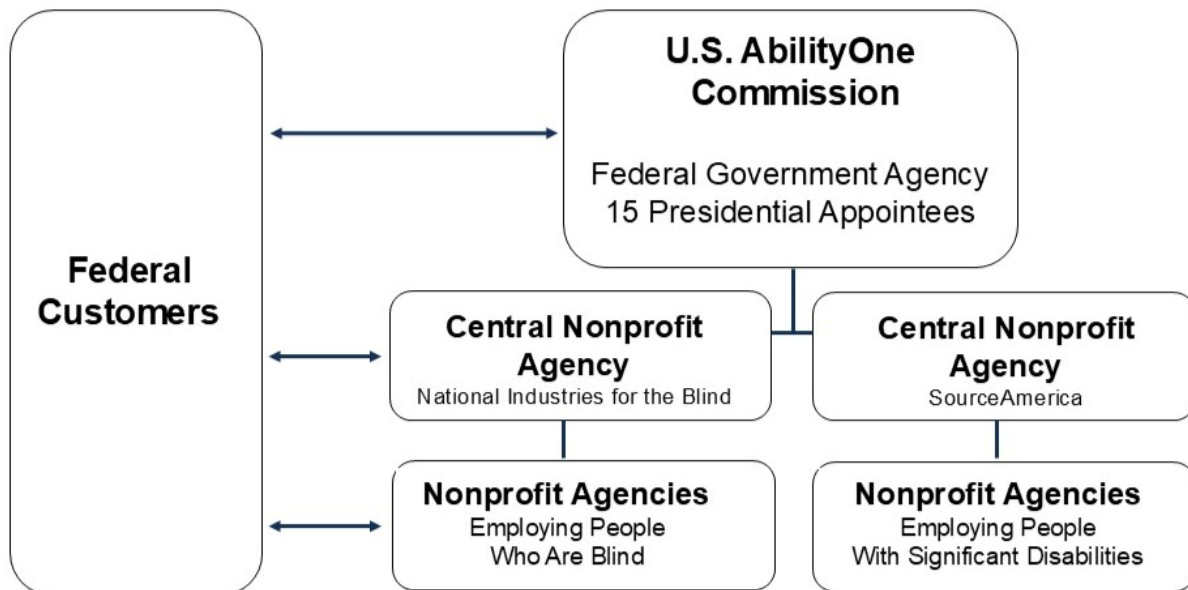
Mission

To tap America’s underutilized workforce of individuals who are blind or have significant disabilities to deliver high quality, mission-essential products and services to Federal agencies in quality employment opportunities.

Vision

Remain a trusted source of supply and services for Federal agencies while creating quality employment opportunities across all economic sectors for people who are blind or have significant disabilities.

2.2 Program Structure and Responsibilities



Presidential appointees

The Commission is authorized 15 Presidential appointees: 11 Federal agency members and 4 private citizen members who represent the employment concerns of people who are blind or have significant disabilities.

Presidential appointees on the Commission bring extensive expertise and tested judgement that promote the effective implementation of the JWOD Act, the operational efficiency of the Commission and AbilityOne Program, and the interests of people who are blind or have significant disabilities.

Each appointee representing a Federal government agency is a senior procurement official with decades of experience in acquisition and procurement, a senior official knowledgeable on personnel issues, or a disability employment policy expert responsible for related programs in their own agency. Each private citizen appointee is an individual with broad knowledge of the employment problems facing people who are blind or have significant disabilities.

Commission members meet monthly, hold quarterly public meetings, and visit and engage with AbilityOne Federal contractors to promote an ongoing dialogue with stakeholders and ensure a shared and current understanding of Program issues. They also participate in Commission subcommittees on Regulations and Policy, Enterprise Risk Management, and Performance Management.

In 2026, retirements and the change of Administration leave the Commission with 8 vacancies (Agriculture, Air Force, Army, Education, Navy, Veterans Affairs, and 2 private citizens).

The Commission's 7 current members are from the Departments of Commerce, Justice, Labor, War (Defense Logistics Agency), the General Services Administration, and 2 private citizens.

Commission staff

The Commission staff (currently 23 FTEs) maintains agency operations and prepares materials required by law, regulation, and policy to inform the decisions made by the Presidential appointees. The Commission also has an OIG (currently 8 FTEs).

Central Nonprofit Agencies

In accordance with the JWOD Act, the Commission has designated two Central Nonprofit Agencies (CNAs) – National Industries for the Blind (NIB) and SourceAmerica – to facilitate the distribution of orders and assist the approximately 400 AbilityOne Federal contractors participating in the AbilityOne Program as of FY 2025.

3.0 Analysis of Resources Required

3.1 Personnel Requirements

Table 2. Agency FTE Positions (projected as of October 1, 2026)

Role / Responsibility	FTEs	Mission / Value
Program Oversight (includes and aligns NPA compliance, Cooperative Agreements between the Commission and CNAs, and Federal customer satisfaction)	6	Promotes oversight and integrity across AbilityOne Program by ensuring compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies. Includes NPA compliance with all AbilityOne requirements, including Workforce Development; routine administration of Cooperative Agreements that govern the relationship between the Commission and CNAs; AbilityOne Representatives support; and customer experience with AbilityOne contract performance. <u>AbilityOne Program Oversight currently has 5 FTEs and plans to hire an additional 1 FTE by Oct 1, 2026.</u>
Business Operations	4	Manages Procurement List’s approximately 15,000 products and 4,000 services that create employment for people who are blind or have significant disabilities. Manages Fair Market Prices for AbilityOne products and services. Responsible for upgrades to the Procurement List Information Management System (PLIMS). <u>AbilityOne Business Operations currently has 3 FTEs and plans to hire an additional 1 FTE by Oct 1, 2026.</u>
Information Technology	4	Supports agency and OIG operations and mission through modernizing data platforms and cybersecurity, and providing Federal customers, CNAs, and NPAs with enhanced user experience for Commission’s digital backbone – the Procurement List Information Management System (PLIMS). <u>AbilityOne IT currently has 3 FTEs and plans to hire an additional 1 FTE by Oct 1, 2026.</u>
Office of the General Counsel	3	Provides statutory and regulatory interpretation and advice; provides legal review and advice for agency’s business decisions; supports agency’s defense in litigation; and manages agency Ethics Program. <u>AbilityOne OGC currently has 3 FTEs and plans to hire an additional 1 FTE by Oct 1, 2026.</u>
Contracting, Purchase Card, and Travel Program Support	2	Provides guidance and support services to agency employees; serves as business advisor to fulfill the agency’s contract requirements; also provides Program customers with technical assistance related to contract administration.
Office of the Chief Financial Officer	2	Manages Commission’s budget formulation, financial management, audit liaison functions, Management Internal Controls Program, and Enterprise Risk Management Plan.
Executive Leadership Team	6	Provides agency leadership and strategy. Executive Director; Deputy Executive Director; Chief of Staff; Assistant Chief of Staff; Senior Advisor, Communications and Government Affairs; and support staff.
TOTAL	27	

3.2 Information Technology (IT) Requirements

Table 3. Information Technology (IT) Summary Table

Category	(BY) FY 2023 Enacted	(BY) FY 2024 Enacted	(BY) FY 2025 Enacted	(BY) FY 2026 Enacted	(BY) FY 2027 Request
Personnel and Contractors	8 FTE	7 FTE	7 FTE	7 FTE	7 FTE
IT Management	\$225,823	\$242,475	\$249,551	\$253,434	\$306,298
Network Maintenance and Help Desk Support	\$386,264	\$468,347	\$399,374	\$477,000	\$570,000
PLIMS 2.0 Operations and Maintenance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$300,000
Cyber Support	\$348,000	\$506,483	\$544,017	\$557,186	\$542,146
Hardware	\$89,705	\$99,447	\$55,825	\$64,062	50,000
Software	\$28,788	\$32,690	\$134,820	\$265,200	\$266,800
New IT Investments (PLIMS 2.0 support)	\$125,000	\$219,875	\$917,000	\$570,000	\$950,000
Communications (Data & Internet)	\$85,400	100,851	\$100,851	\$105,000	\$46,000
Total	8 FTE \$1,288,970	7 FTE \$1,670,168	7 FTE \$2,401,438	7 FTE \$2,291,882	7 FTE \$3,031,244

Information Technology Requirements

Consistent with the President’s Management Agenda, the Commission views modernizing its IT infrastructure as a top priority and crucial driver of value and mission. Upgrades to the Commission’s essential business system – the Procurement List Information Management System (PLIMS) 2.0 – are already delivering increased accountability, some much-needed efficiencies, and heightened security in agency and Program operations.

The first stage of the PLIMS 2.0 upgrade was completed in FY 2025. It deployed the system’s core functionality and transitioned from a legacy software platform to an interoperable, accessible, cost-effective Microsoft Power Platform that operates in the cloud while retaining the functionality of the previous system. These improvements were critical to ensuring the

Commission's continued ability to manage the Procurement List while decreasing the system's vulnerability to threats.

The second stage of PLIMS 2.0 modernization is scheduled for completion in FY 2026. Building on the first stage, this second stage is expanding the system's core functionality by increasing the number and types of transactions it handles to maintain the Procurement List. This stage is leveraging automation to streamline processes, verify data, and pre-populate certain Commission notices or forms. Additional development work in this stage will improve the interoperability of PLIMS 2.0 with key business partners and expand both the on-demand and ad hoc reporting functions. These features will enable the Commission staff to manage its current and projected workload with fewer human resources.

The Commission is requesting \$950,000 in FY 2027 as a capstone investment in PLIMS 2.0 modernization, to enable the agency to fully realize and maximize its earlier investments. While the first two phases of PLIMS modernization have and will continue to deliver many important benefits, the Commission is tracking more than 80 unmet requirements to further improve PLIMS 2.0. These needs include the full integration of numerous compliance-related business processes that will enable more efficient and effective monitoring of compliance assessments, corrective action plans, and enforcement actions.

The Commission will also use the requested funding for PLIMS 2.0 to enhance the user interface for the AbilityOne Program's Federal customers, such as improving its responsiveness to natural language queries to identify products or services on the Procurement List. Additionally, the final phase of PLIMS modernization will enable the Commission to better leverage the capabilities of the Microsoft Power Platform, such as using Power BI to cleanse and transform large data sets into interactive reports that can highlight trends and support the Commission in making faster, data-driven decisions.

Completing the PLIMS 2.0 modernization in FY 2027 will provide the following technical benefits:

- Improve acquisition transparency and effective planning by ensuring that Federal customers have more access to the AbilityOne Program information.
- Facilitate greater interoperability with the systems of Federal and non-Federal business partners and stakeholders via the Microsoft Power Platform.
- Ensure that the process of making changes to the Procurement List can be completed in an expedited fashion to meet customers' needs.
- Provide a more effective means for data exchange with AbilityOne operational stakeholders, especially the CNAs, to better support Commission oversight and accountability.

Why continued PLIMS modernization is needed:

- PLIMS is the digital backbone of the Commission – the core software connecting the Commission with the CNAs.
- All AbilityOne products, services, and prices are managed through PLIMS – approximately 2,000 business transactions annually.
- PLIMS provides real-time customer-facing information and a distributed workflow for business transactions to maintain the PL. It also serves as an official records repository.
- The PLIMS solution going forward will include more capabilities and tools that remedy current shortfalls – e.g., the legacy PLIMS system provided little to no interoperability between the Commission, Federal customers, and AbilityOne Federal contractors. The modernized system will increasingly support this interoperability.
- The Commission will be able to seek additional data from AbilityOne Federal contractors about their provision of employment, professional development, and opportunities for career mobility.
- Cybersecurity upgrades are imperative for securing PLIMS data.

IT and Cybersecurity

Commission IT and cybersecurity specific priorities are:

1. Enhance cybersecurity continuous monitoring and vulnerability assessment software tools to monitor protection controls (*for details, see costs in Table 3*).
2. Protect and modernize the PLIMS application.
3. Maintain cloud service to support off-site contingency operations (FISMA alternative work-site requirement), data back-up and recovery activities, and Office 365 email services (contractor support).
4. FISMA-required IT and cybersecurity training for key personnel to identify, protect, detect, respond and recover from cybersecurity incidents.
5. Continue to hire an independent FISMA Annual Assessment Provider (contractor) to facilitate successful FISMA audit outcomes.
6. “Remote Equipment Initiative” funding to provide hardware and software to enable Compliance inspectors conducting on-site NPA assessments to enter data directly into handheld devices.

7. Invest in scheduled enterprise computer hardware and software refresh in order to improve reliability and reduce the risk of equipment and mission failure.
8. Evaluate Commercial-Off-The-Shelf (COTS) application for agency records management.
9. Provide total IT and cyber support to the OIG and ensure OIG-unique hardware and software requirements are fully integrated and operational.

The Commission continues to conduct a broad IT system assessment to identify weaknesses, and necessary investments and opportunities for greater efficiencies. Table 3 reflects the current IT enterprise.

The Commission’s IT infrastructure is a hybrid that is mostly cloud-hosted within the Microsoft Azure environment, ensuring agility, scalability, and resiliency.

IT resource statements

The Commission’s Acting CIO has reviewed and contributed to the agency’s IT investments as described in this budget justification. The Acting CIO routinely reviews and submits the planned IT support for AbilityOne Program objectives, as does the Chief of Staff. The statement attesting to these facts is in Appendix 1.

Cybersecurity

The Commission has an interagency agreement with the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) in the Department of Homeland Security. Under this agreement, DHS provides consolidated intrusion detection, incident analysis, vulnerability monitoring with AI capabilities, and cyber response capabilities in the protection and defense of the Commission’s external access points and network.

3.3 Budget Request by Object Class

Table 4. FY 2027 Budget Request by Object Class (in \$ thousands)

	FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024 Enacted	FY2025 Enacted	FY2026 Enacted	FY2027 Request
Salaries	\$5,215	\$5,241	\$5,364	4,865	\$5,092
Benefits	1,600	1,648	1,702	1,570	\$1,612
Travel	120	100	50	50	50
Rent & Communications	444	479	470	352	326
Printing	55	45	40	45	48
Services	2,388	2,119	1,468	2,142	1,523
Supplies	50	55	63	46	46
Equipment	102	287	917	904	1,276
TOTAL AGENCY	\$9,974	\$9,974	\$9,974	\$9,974	\$9,974
Office of Inspector General	3,150	3,150	3,150	3,150	3,150
GRAND TOTAL	\$13,124	\$13,124	\$13,124	\$13,124	\$13,124

Object Class Narrative for FY 2027 Request

Salaries and Benefits - \$6,704,000. Salary and benefits represent approximately 70% of the agency budget (excluding OIG funding). This amount primarily funds a total of 27 agency FTEs. It also includes the salary and benefits for four (4) private citizen Commission members who are appointed by the President to represent the interests of individuals who are blind or have other significant disabilities, in accordance with the JWOD Act. As Special Government Employees, these private citizen members are paid at the Executive Level IV rate on a per-diem basis when conducting Commission business.

Travel - \$50,000. The Commission's travel-related resources support information-gathering of NPA activities; oversight visits that include audits of compliance reviews conducted by the CNAs and independent inspections, as needed; and mission-essential conferences and training.

The Commission continues to conserve meeting-related travel dollars wherever possible and will continue to leverage telephone or video conferencing for training and other subject matter expertise requirements. This budget line also includes travel by any private citizen Presidential Appointees serving as Commission members, and any travel support required as reasonable accommodations for appointed private citizens with disabilities.

Rent and Communications - \$326,000. The Commission has programmed \$280,000 for the cost of leasing office space. The agency worked with GSA for more than two years to find and secure a smaller, cost-effective space for itself and the AbilityOne Office of Inspector General (OIG). However, the intended space became unavailable with only a few months left before the Commission's lease was set to expire. The Commission was unable to find an alternative space that could continue to accommodate both the agency and the OIG without incurring excessive costs to customize the space to meet OIG requirements. For that reason, the OIG identified acceptable shared space for its staff at a nearby location. The agency will continue to pay for the OIG's leased space, and still anticipates a net reduction in overall costs.

This category also includes \$43,000 in annual charges for IT and telecommunications services.

Printing - \$48,000. In accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, the agency continues to have printing costs associated with publishing Federal Register notices. This fulfills legal requirements and promotes transparency. In FY 2027, the Commission will continue its routine publishing cycle for announcing its quarterly public meetings as well as Procurement List additions and deletions, and anticipates increased publishing for proposed updates to the Code of Federal Regulations. Based on recent years' billing, we anticipate that \$48,000 will cover these costs. The Commission does not intend to use such funding to print informational materials or collateral that can be disseminated electronically.

Services - \$1,523,000. The Commission’s request for resources in this budget object class reflects approximately \$256,000 allocated for intragovernmental agreements with Federal government agencies for force protection, financial management and payroll, human resources, employee assistance program, background checks, and travel system support. Furthermore, to maximize its productivity, the agency anticipates spending \$927,300 on service contracts to provide agency support for its annual cybersecurity assessment, strategic communications, and IT support for network maintenance and Help Desk support. The network maintenance and Help Desk support reflects the Commission’s need for higher skill sets to support the Agency’s cloud computing. The amount also includes \$300,000 for PLIMS 2.0 maintenance, which is ongoing and separate from development costs.

Supplies and Materials - \$46,000. The Commission continues to minimize expenses for office supplies and operating materials. The primary expense in this object class is a subscription for the Westlaw legal research service and online database for our Office of General Counsel. Additionally, funding in this object class covers replacement of peripheral IT components to keep laptops and desktops operational and connected.

Equipment - \$1,276,000. The Commission uses government-wide contract vehicles or other government discounts to obtain the lowest available prices in this category for hardware purchases and software. \$950,000 is allocated to continue investment in PLIMS 2.0. The agency anticipates an annual cost of \$150,000 based on expected cloud usage. Migrating to the cloud has eliminated capital asset refresh costs for network servers and significantly improves disaster preparedness capability. Approximately \$98,000 is also allocated to support the network operating system and data management licenses.

4.0 Performance Goals, Measures, and Indicators

Information on agency priority initiatives and programs is contained in this section and organized according to the agency’s Strategic Plan. This section also refers to related topics and/or additional details contained in Section 1.2, Benefits of Investments in the Commission, and Section 1.3, Current Challenges.

The Commission continues to modernize and transform the AbilityOne Program as it implements the FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan and the following Strategic Objectives:

1. Transform the AbilityOne Program to expand competitive integrated employment (CIE) for people who are blind or have significant disabilities.
2. Identify, publicize, and support the increase of good jobs and optimal jobs in the AbilityOne Program.
3. Ensure effective governance and results across the AbilityOne Program.

4. Engage in partnerships to increase employment for people who are blind or have significant disabilities within and beyond the AbilityOne Program.

Strategic Plan outcome goals, strategies, and performance measures clearly communicate the Commission's direction and resource prioritization.

Key achievements in implementing the FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan include:

- Ended payment of subminimum wages on AbilityOne contracts
- Updated all Commission compliance policies
- Developed new data collection system to meet Program needs
- Implemented competition in the AbilityOne Program
- Established 2nd generation Cooperative Agreements with CNAs
- Implemented AbilityOne Representatives (ABORs) program
- Created Commission Enterprise Risk Management system
- Modernized IT infrastructure to meet Program needs

The status of all performance measures in the Strategic Plan is in the Commission's FY 2025 Performance and Accountability Report (PAR).⁶

More information on agency performance can be found in the PAR⁷ and the Commission's most recent Report to the President.⁸

4.1 Strategic Objective 1: Transform the AbilityOne Program to expand competitive integrated employment (CIE) for people who are blind or have significant disabilities.

The Commission sent three legislative proposals to Congress on April 13, 2023, to amend the JWOD Act.⁹

The Commission is committed to working effectively with Congress to amend the JWOD Act to support CIE for people who are blind or have significant disabilities. However, to achieve that goal fully, Congress must amend the JWOD Act to enable all AbilityOne Federal contractors to offer CIE to employees.

4.2 Strategic Objective 2: Identify, publicize, and support the increase of good jobs and optimal jobs in the AbilityOne Program.

The Commission defines a "good job" in the AbilityOne Program as having four attributes:

1. Individuals with disabilities are paid competitive wages and benefits.
2. The job matches the individual's interests and skills ("job individualization").
3. Individuals with disabilities are provided with opportunities for employment advancement comparable to those provided to individuals without disabilities.
4. Individuals are covered under employment laws.

The Commission believes there are such jobs currently within the AbilityOne Program and that the number of such jobs should be increased.

The Commission defines an “optimal job” as one that includes the four attributes of a “good job,” but also allows AbilityOne employees to work side-by-side with employees without disabilities doing the same or similar work. That is obviously harder, and frequently not possible, to achieve given the direct labor hour ratio mandated by the JWOD Act. Nevertheless, the Commission is aware of several examples in which such workplaces have been achieved in the AbilityOne Program.

As part of the focus on good and optimal jobs, the CNAs in early 2026 completed the first-ever assessment of placement and training programs across the AbilityOne network. This effort yielded valuable insights into the state of professional development in the AbilityOne Program, including in the areas of resources, activities, personnel, and credentials. The information gathered will help to identify where additional resources are needed to enhance consistency and effectiveness, as well as inform the Commission’s policy decisions.

Emphasis on subcontracting to increase the quantity and variety of employment options

As ways to increase integration leading to “optimal jobs,” the Commission has recently emphasized subcontracting, as well as other approaches to collaborating with industry. (For more details, see “Emphasis on subcontracting to increase the quantity and diversity of employment options” in Section 1.2.)

4.3 Strategic Objective 3: Ensure effective governance and results across the AbilityOne Program.

Commission commitment to closing open audit recommendations

Closing open audit recommendations is a high priority for the Commission. The OIG or an independent auditor has sole responsibility for closing open audit recommendations, not the agency. The Commission has corrective action plans in place for all open recommendations and continues to implement those plans.

In FY 2026, the agency is tracking 24 unique open audit recommendations.

- Of those 24 recommendations, one (1) is awaiting review by the independent financial auditor of record for a determination regarding closure. Three (3) are awaiting review by the independent FISMA auditor.
- The remaining 20 recommendations with corrective action plans are related to Enterprise Risk Management, strategic planning, compliance, business operations, and Cooperative Agreements and/or Program Fees. The actions taken in response to these recommendations will be shaped by the Strategic Plan, which the Commission continues to implement.

- Responsiveness to audits: In FY 2025, closed 39 financial and program audit recommendations.

Chief Financial Officer advancing effective stewardship

- Maintains financial processes and controls for funds management, obligations, and payments.
- Completed Management Internal Control Program in accordance with the Federal Managers’ Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA); submitted FY 2025 Annual Statement of Assurance.
- Conducted an FY 2025 Management Control Review of 85 of more than 200 Agency controls and determined Agency internal controls were effective.
- Conducts quarterly enterprise risk management assessments of risk mitigation plans; closed four (4) open risk mitigation plans during the fiscal year; eight (8) plans remain open.

Issuing updated data collection forms

The Commission received OMB clearance in March 2025 to begin using three new data collection forms that collectively represent groundbreaking improvements in efficiency, accountability, and transparency throughout the Program.¹⁰ The forms are:

- Disability Qualification Determination (DQD) Form (previously titled Participating Employee Eligibility Form)
- Participating Employee Information (PEI) Form
- AbilityOne NPA Annual Representations and Certifications (ARC) Form

The new Disability Qualification Determination Form for the first time allows AbilityOne Federal contractors to use documentation of disability from other Federal agencies to qualify an individual to participate in the AbilityOne Program.

The new forms also enable the Commission to better assess compliance, demonstrate value, and ensure that individuals employed on AbilityOne contracts have qualifying disabilities and receive appropriate accommodations and job supports; that AbilityOne Federal contractors meet applicable laws; and that AbilityOne provides on-time delivery of quality, mission-critical products and services.

The CNAs launched new or updated systems in October 2025 to begin collecting data in accordance with the new forms.

Updating AbilityOne program guidance

Modernizing AbilityOne Federal contractor compliance to align with Program requirements is central to the FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. To provide transparency and obtain feedback that can inform its decisions, the Commission has consulted regularly with Program stakeholders during the development of guidance documents and published draft guidance documents on the Commission website for public feedback.¹¹

(For details, see the Commission’s webpage “Compliance Policy Modernization.”¹²)

Compliance

Table 5. AbilityOne Federal Contractors in Compliance with 75% Overall Direct Labor Hour Ratio Requirement

	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
AbilityOne Federal contractors in compliance / Total AbilityOne Federal contractors ¹³	402/469	353/450	313/443	344/424	348/405	349/394
Percentage of AbilityOne Federal contractors in compliance	86% ¹⁴	78% ¹⁵	71% ¹⁶	81% ¹⁷	86%	89%

In FY 2024, the Commission modernized virtually all its AbilityOne Federal contractor compliance policies. Among other changes, CNAs are required to provide technical assistance to, and conduct compliance inspections of, their AbilityOne Federal contractors.

A key AbilityOne Program compliance metric is that people who are blind or have significant disabilities must provide at least 75% of an AbilityOne Federal contractor’s overall direct labor hours worked during the fiscal year (referred to as the 75% Overall Direct Labor Hour Ratio Requirement).

In FY 2021 and FY 2022, AbilityOne Federal contractor compliance with this key requirement was lower than in previous years due to pandemic impacts. Responding to the unique

circumstances presented by the pandemic, and consistent with agency practice relating to emergency responses, the agency expanded exceptions to its Direct Labor Ratio Requirements for FY 2020, FY 2021, and FY 2022.¹⁸

Improving customer satisfaction

Increasing Federal customer satisfaction with AbilityOne products and services is a Commission priority, reflected in the Strategic Plan – i.e., “Support the mission of the Federal customer by providing best value through contract performance.”

In FY 2025, the Commission strengthened its emphasis on customer satisfaction, including through the following initiatives:

Supporting Competition in the AbilityOne Program

The Commission is making good on its promise to implement competition in the AbilityOne Program, delivering on one of the top priorities of the 898 Panel.

In FY 2024, Commission publication of its final rule “Supporting Competition in the AbilityOne Program”¹⁹ responded to longstanding Federal customer interest in using competition as a tool to improve contract performance and customer satisfaction. In FY 2025, the Commission issued Policy 51.301-04, “Competitive Distribution of Orders to Nonprofit Agencies for New and Existing Services on the Procurement List,”²⁰ an interim framework for competition within the AbilityOne Program to provide best value for the Federal government and American taxpayers. Also in FY 2025, the Commission convened an ad hoc AbilityOne Competition Subcommittee to consider competition requests and approved the first competition under the new policy.

Competition will spur private sector innovation; enhance training, placement, and employment opportunities for AbilityOne-participating employees at a competitive price; and further drive value, efficiency, and accountability.

Strengthening Contract Performance

Good contract performance is essential to customer satisfaction – an area the Commission has repeatedly emphasized to the CNAs and AbilityOne Federal contractors, including at the agency’s quarterly public meetings, participation in conferences, and in the “Chairperson’s Intent” statement issued in April 2025.²¹

Supporting AbilityOne Representatives (ABORs)

ABORs play a key role in ensuring Federal agency customer satisfaction with the AbilityOne Program by serving as an essential communication channel between their agencies and the Commission and CNAs.²² Each ABOR advocates for utilization of AbilityOne products and services in accordance with mandatory source contracting procedures, engages with the workforce to build use of the Program, and offers feedback to the Commission to improve the value of the Program.

More than 120 ABORs have been appointed in more than 20 agencies, including nearly all the CFO Act agencies. Additionally, ABORs represent 10 Department of War components, including the military services. The Commission hosts monthly ABORs meetings, creating a community of practice that builds awareness of AbilityOne capacity within Federal agencies, creates new business opportunities, and resolves concerns with contract implementation.

Implementing 898 Panel Recommendations

Achieving customer satisfaction through improved contract performance was part of every 898 Panel Annual Report to Congress from 2017 through 2021.

The Panel issued 24 recommendations in its Fourth and Final Report to Congress.²³ Of these recommendations, the Commission has now successfully closed out all action items under its control (21 of 24 recommendations). The remaining recommendations require legislative action.

Issuing an Open Data Plan

The Commission published an Open Data Plan²⁴ on July 15, 2025, in accordance with OMB Memorandum M-25-05²⁵ and the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018. The agency has named a Chief Data Officer.

Complying with OMB guidance on Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The Commission published a “Compliance Plan for OMB Memo M-25-21: Accelerating Federal Use of AI through Innovation, Governance, and Public Trust” on September 29, 2025.²⁶ The agency has named a Chief AI Officer.

Increasing public trust and confidence in the Commission through greater transparency and expanding public engagement

The Commission is committed to maintaining its public engagement across a range of activities including rulemaking, policy updates, public meetings, and conferences.

Expanded public engagement has significantly boosted participation by, and input from, key stakeholders including advocates from the disability community. The Commission’s virtual quarterly public meetings facilitate attendance and participation by hundreds of stakeholders, and routinely feature one or more topics for public feedback or discussion. Federal Register notices of Commission quarterly public meetings promote transparency and public engagement by posing questions for discussion, soliciting written statements to the Commission, and encouraging verbal presentations and exchanges between the public and Commission members.

The Commission receives valuable responses during these public meetings and uses the input to inform decision-making. These frank and productive exchanges create the shared awareness and understanding that are essential to the success of the Commission and Program. *(For details, see Appendix 2, “FY 2025 Quarterly Public Meeting Engagement Topics.”)*

4.4 Strategic Objective 4: Engage in partnerships to increase employment for people who are blind or have significant disabilities within and beyond the AbilityOne Program.

Employment growth

Jobs reached a 5-year high in AbilityOne during FY 2025, growing 4% to approximately 41,000 private-sector jobs for people who are blind or have significant disabilities.

Direct labor hours worked increased by 8% in FY 2025 to approximately 48 million – a significant measure of employment growth because not only are more workers working, they are also working more hours.

Table 6. AbilityOne Program Key Metrics

	FY 2024	FY 2025	Change
Employees	39,247	40,663	4%
Direct Labor Hours	44.2 million	47.8 million	8%
Promotions	2,398	2,322	-3%
Wages	\$821 million	\$894 million	9%
Average Hourly Wage	\$18.58	\$18.71	1%
Sales	\$4.47 billion	\$4.7 billion	5%

For additional data, see “AbilityOne at a Glance – FY 2025” before Section 1.0.

Growth in jobs and sales through innovative policy implementation

Increased accountability through Commission policy action doubled AbilityOne Federal contractor purchases of AbilityOne products to support AbilityOne service contracts – \$12.7 million in FY 2025 compared to \$6.3 million in FY 2024.

The increase results from a 2022 Commission policy requiring NPAs to buy products from each other, which creates and sustains jobs.²⁷ In addition, this policy means that both Federal agencies and AbilityOne Federal contractors are now required to purchase and use AbilityOne products – a change that also provides more feedback to AbilityOne manufacturers about product performance and price.

Growth in jobs through subcontracting

See “*Emphasis on subcontracting to increase the quantity and diversity of employment options*” in Section 1.2.

5.0 Office of Inspector General’s Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Request

The Inspector General Reform Act (Pub. L. 110-409) was signed by the President on October 14, 2008. Section 6(f)(1) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, 5 U.S.C. app., was amended to require certain specifications concerning Office of Inspector General (OIG) budget submissions each fiscal year.

Each Inspector General (IG) is required to transmit a budget request to the head of the establishment or designated Federal entity to which the IG reports specifying:

- the aggregate amount of funds requested for the operations of the OIG;
- the portion of this amount requested for OIG training, including a certification from the IG that the amount requested satisfies all OIG training requirements for that fiscal year;
- the portion of this amount necessary to support the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE); and
- any comments of the affected IG with respect to the proposal if the IG concludes that the budget submitted by the President would substantially inhibit the IG from performing the duties of the OIG.

The OIG has had an increase in hotline complaints which has resulted in increases of investigation activities and reports. In addition, the OIG has increased its output of audits and evaluations. The recent OIG products have resulted in the Commission revising its contract policies and procedures and assisted the Commission in retaining relevant information from its Program partners in FY 2026. The output increases have also resulted in the need for additional staff and office space. The OIG included the salary and benefit increases in its project budget, but this is an estimate given uncertainty related to office space costs in the 4th quarter of FY 2026 and all of FY 2027.

Staffing

The Inspector General Act requires the OIG to have an Inspector General, Counsel, Assistant Inspector General for Audits, and Assistant Inspector General for Investigations. Currently the OIG is missing 2 required positions. In FY 2025, the OIG lost 4 staff members: the Inspector General, Deputy Inspector General / Head of Investigations and Audits and Evaluations, an Auditor, and an Investigation Counsel. Two auditors and one administrative counsel were added to the staff in January 2025. The OIG anticipated having 11 staff members but since May 2025, the OIG has had 8 permanent staff members. The OIG revised its staff structure to remove the head of Audits and Deputy position. The Assistant Inspector General of Evaluation assumed a dual role and is now head of both Audits and Evaluation. The Counsel to the OIG now has the dual role of head Counsel and head of investigation. The Counsel also assumed the role of the Acting Inspector General. This resulted in the OIG having only one investigative counsel to handle all of investigation.

The OIG anticipates at the end of FY 2027 that the OIG will have 9 or 10 permanent staff members. OPM approved the OIG to hire an Inspector General and a Senior Investigative

Counsel in FY 2026. The Commission Chair will lead the effort in finding a permanent Inspector General. The salary of the OIG will come out of the OIG budget. The OIG anticipates at least one to two additional staff hires in FY 2027 to be compliant with the Inspector General Act and to ensure OIG reports are conducted in a timely manner.

As a result of the new hiring, the OIG will have to increase its budget spending on salaries in FY 2027 due to the increase in staff, and 3 current staff members will be eligible for step increases or promotions. The OIG anticipates awarding all step increases or promotions to ensure staff stability and to reward staff for their great work. The former Inspector General was paid until December 2025 and their salary was expensed in FY 2026 and included in the FY 2027 budget. Thus, the OIG estimates an increase in salary and benefit distribution of no less than \$200,000 in FY 2026 and additional \$350,000 in FY 2027.

Office Space and Equipment

The OIG will be incurring additional expenses in the third quarter of FY 2026 that will continue through the foreseeable future. The lease for the AbilityOne Commission and OIG office space lapsed in March 2026. The Commission selected an office space that did not fit the OIG requirements per the Inspector General Act. As such, the OIG had to find office space at a separate location. Per the Inspector General Act, the Commission will pay the rent for the OIG. However, the OIG now has to incur additional expenses for the shared building space and security, which will increase its operations budget. The OIG has not signed a lease, and exact figures have not been provided; however, this amount will be an additional expense in FY 2027. Also, the OIG laptops will be over 5 years old in FY 2027, and the OIG anticipates having to replace at least half of the staff laptops.

The OIG may decrease some of its other expenses to pay for the increase anticipated in FY 2027. Accordingly, the U.S. AbilityOne OIG requests an appropriation of \$3,150,000 for FY 2027 within the U.S. AbilityOne Commission. This amount includes:

- \$3,117,000 for OIG operations;
- \$20,000 for OIG training; and
- \$13,000 to support the CIGIE.

OIG Summary of Outstanding Audit Recommendations

The Good Accounting Obligation in Government Act requires each agency to include, in its annual budget justification, a report that identifies each public recommendation issued by the agency's inspectors general (IGs) which has remained unimplemented for one year or more from the annual budget justification submission date. Accordingly, the OIG reports a total of 20 open recommendations (older than one year) with the FY27 budget request.

The OIG issued the required semiannual reports to Congress, in accordance with the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended.

Through March 30, 2026, the Commission took corrective actions to implement 15 recommendations. The OIG verified these actions met the intent of the recommendations and “closed”¹ them, bringing the number of open audit recommendations to 24 as of March 30, 2026, which includes 4 new recommendations. The Commission reported the remaining 24 recommendations were categorized as “CAP in Place.”² The following table provides an overview of the recommendations status as of March 30, 2026.

Fiscal Year 2026 (as of March 30, 2026)

Total Open Recommendations	24
Total Open Recommendations (Older than One Year)	20
Total Closed Recommendations	15

The OIG closed more recommendations as a result of actions taken by the Commission. A listing of the current open recommendation status for the AbilityOne Commission can be found online at <https://www.oversight.gov/reports/recommendations> for all government, and specifically for the U.S. AbilityOne Commission at this link: https://www.oversight.gov/reports/recommendations?search_api_fulltext=&field_report_date_is_sued_rec%5Bmin%5D=&field_report_date_issued_rec%5Bmax%5D=&agency-reviewe-investigated-rec%5B%5D=42&items_per_page=25

Carla Smith, Acting Inspector General
U.S. AbilityOne Commission

¹ OIG considers a recommendation “Closed” when: (1) the responsible office completes actions necessary to implement the recommendation and provides OIG with evidence of the final completed actions or other justifications; and (2) OIG or the delegated IPA reviews the evidence provided and determines that no additional action is required.

² OIG categorized a recommendation as “CAP in Place” when the Commission has a corrective action plan in place that meets the intent of the recommendation.

6.0 Combined Agency-Related Appropriation Language (including OIG)

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

For expenses necessary for the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled (referred to in this title as "the Committee") established under section 8502 of title 41, United States Code, \$13,124,000:

Provided, That in order to authorize any central nonprofit agency designated pursuant to section 8503(c) of title 41, United States Code, to perform requirements of the Committee as prescribed under section 51-3.2 of title 41, Code of Federal Regulations, the Committee shall enter into a written agreement with any such central nonprofit agency:

Provided further, That such agreement shall contain such auditing, oversight, and reporting provisions as necessary to implement chapter 85 of title 41, United States Code:

Provided further, That such agreement shall include the elements listed under the heading "Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled-Written Agreement Elements" in the explanatory statement described in section 4 of Public Law 114-113 (in the matter preceding division A of that consolidated Act):

Provided further, That any such central nonprofit agency may not charge a fee under section 51-3.5 of title 41, Code of Federal Regulations, prior to executing a written agreement with the Committee:

Provided further, no less than \$3,150,000 shall be available for the Office of Inspector General.

(Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2027)



Appendix 1

Statement of Acting Chief Information Officer

March 30, 2026

I affirm that as the Acting Chief Information Officer of the U.S. AbilityOne Commission, I played a significant role in reviewing and recommending planned IT support and increases in IT resources for the agency for the submission of the FY 2027 budget request. There have been limited IT investments in equipment and cloud storage. The Commission has received Technology Modernization Fund support to upgrade the agency's Procurement List Information Management System (PLIMS) and will identify internal funding to buy IT equipment and software licenses for new employees.

E. Ricardo Newman

E. Ricardo Newman
Acting Chief Information Officer

Appendix 2

Quarterly Public Meeting Engagement Topics

The Commission’s quarterly public meetings in FY 2025 and 2026 were announced in Federal Register notices that solicited input from attendees about the following public engagement topics:

- October 24, 2024: “The public engagement session will address ‘Data Collection Through Updated Compliance Forms.’”²⁸
- January 23, 2025: “The public engagement session will discuss... ‘Employee Career Development.’”²⁹
- April 24, 2025: “The public engagement session topic is ‘How the AbilityOne Program Contributes to the Domestic Industrial Base.’”³⁰
- July 24, 2025: “The public engagement session will discuss the Commission’s draft Strategic Plan for FY 2026-2030. ...Additionally, the Commission will discuss, to the extent it relates to the AbilityOne Program, the initiative to streamline and simplify the Federal Acquisition Regulation—i.e., the ‘Revolutionary FAR Overhaul’....”³¹
- October 23, 2025: *The meeting was not held, due to the lapse in Federal appropriations.*
- January 28, 2026: “The public engagement session will explore nontraditional and emerging service capabilities, including in the professional services category, that the Commission and AbilityOne Program participants might explore to create new employment opportunities for Americans who are blind or have significant disabilities.”³²

Endnotes

¹ The U.S. AbilityOne Commission is the operating name of the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, an independent Federal agency hereafter referred to as “Commission.”

² For recent data see Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Persons with a Disability: Labor Force Characteristics – 2025” <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/disabl.pdf> (retrieved March 13, 2026). See also Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy, Disability Employment Statistics <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/research-evaluation/statistics> (retrieved March 13, 2026).

³ See U.S. AbilityOne Commission “Report to the President,” December 18, 2025, at <https://www.abilityone.gov/documents/U.S.%20AbilityOne%20Commission%20-%20Report%20to%20the%20President%202025%20-%2020251218%20Final.pdf>

⁴ See “Socioeconomic Impact Analysis Evaluation Report,” Mathematica, June 15, 2023, a study sponsored by National Industries for the Blind and SourceAmerica, at <https://www.sourceamerica.org/sites/default/files/2023-06/socioeconomic-impact-analysis-evaluation-report.pdf>

⁵ See “Reference Documents, U.S. AbilityOne Commission Quarterly Public Meeting - April 24, 2025, Three Forms for Data Collection, Three Policies for Central Nonprofit Agencies” at <https://www.abilityone.gov/documents/AbilityOne%20Commission%20-%202023%20Forms%20for%20Data%20Collection%202023%20Policies%20for%20Central%20Nonprofit%20Agencies%2020250423a.pdf>

⁶ See Appendix 1 of the “U.S. AbilityOne Commission FY 2025 Performance and Accountability Report,” March 16, 2026, at <https://www.abilityone.gov/commission/documents/U.S.%20AbilityOne%20Commission%20FY25%20PAR%2016Mar2026a%20updated%20signed.pdf#page=68>.

⁷ See “U.S. AbilityOne Commission FY 2025 Performance and Accountability Report,” March 16, 2026, at <https://www.abilityone.gov/commission/documents/U.S.%20AbilityOne%20Commission%20FY25%20PAR%2016Mar2026%20signed.pdf>

⁸ See U.S. AbilityOne Commission “Report to the President,” December 18, 2025, at <https://www.abilityone.gov/documents/U.S.%20AbilityOne%20Commission%20-%20Report%20to%20the%20President%202025%20-%2020251218%20Final.pdf>

⁹ The Commission is reviewing the legislative proposals.

¹⁰ See “Reference Documents, U.S. AbilityOne Commission Quarterly Public Meeting - April 24, 2025, Three Forms for Data Collection, Three Policies for Central Nonprofit Agencies” at <https://www.abilityone.gov/documents/AbilityOne%20Commission%20-%202023%20Forms%20for%20Data%20Collection%202023%20Policies%20for%20Central%20Nonprofit%20Agencies%2020250423a.pdf>

¹¹ See “Nonprofit Agency Compliance Policy (51.400 series)” at https://www.abilityone.gov/laws_regulations_and_policy/commission_policy_51_400.html.

¹² See “Compliance Policy Modernization” at <https://www.abilityone.gov/commission/draftcompliancepolicies.html>.

¹³ Data in Table 1 is based on the Annual Representations and Certifications form completed by AbilityOne Federal contractors.

¹⁴ This FY 2020 percentage is lower than previous years due to the impact of the pandemic.

¹⁵ This FY 2021 percentage is lower than previous years due to the full-year impact of the pandemic.

¹⁶ This FY 2022 percentage is lower than in many previous years due to the full-year impact of the pandemic.

¹⁷ This FY 2023 percentage is lower than in many previous years due to the impact of the pandemic.

¹⁸ See “AbilityOne Flexibilities Related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Emergency and Recovery for the Duration of Fiscal Year 2022” at <https://www.abilityone.gov/commission/documents/FY22%20ODLH%20Exception%20Memo%20Signed%20Apr2022.pdf>. See also earlier memos on this subject on the pandemic page of the Commission website at <https://www.abilityone.gov/covid19.html>.

¹⁹ See “Supporting Competition in the AbilityOne Program,” Federal Register, 89 FR 20324, March 22, 2024, at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/22/2024-05717/supporting-competition-in-the-abilityone-program>.

²⁰ See Commission Policy 51.301-04, “[Competitive Distribution of Orders to Nonprofit Agencies for New and Existing Services on the Procurement List](#),” effective May 1, 2025.

²¹ See “Chairperson’s Intent,” April 23, 2025, at <https://www.abilityone.gov/documents/Chairperson's%20Intent%20-%20AbilityOne%20Commission%20-%2020250423%20signed-a.pdf>

²² See Office of Management and Budget, Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP), Memorandum on “Increasing the Participation of Americans with Disabilities in Federal Contracting,” October 30, 2020, at https://www.abilityone.gov/media_room/documents/Increasing-the-Participation-of-Americans-with-Disabilities-in-Federal-Contracting.pdf

²³ See “FY 2017 NDAA Section 898 Panel on Department of Defense and AbilityOne Contracting Oversight, Accountability, and Integrity, Fourth and Final Report to Congress” at [https://www.acq.osd.mil/asda/dpc/cp/policy/docs/a1/4%20-%20Fourth%20and%20Final%20Sec%20898%20Panel%20RTC%20\(Dec%202021\).pdf](https://www.acq.osd.mil/asda/dpc/cp/policy/docs/a1/4%20-%20Fourth%20and%20Final%20Sec%20898%20Panel%20RTC%20(Dec%202021).pdf).

²⁴ See “Data” webpage at <https://www.abilityone.gov/data.html>.

²⁵ See OMB Memorandum M-25-05, “Phase 2 Implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018: Open Government Data Access and Management Guidance” at <https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/M-25-05-Phase-2-Implementation-of-the-Foundations-for-Evidence-Based-Policymaking-Act-of-2018-Open-Government-Data-Access-and-Management-Guidance.pdf>.

²⁶ See “Artificial Intelligence (AI)” webpage at <https://www.abilityone.gov/ai.html>.

²⁷ See Commission Policy 51.542, “Nonprofit Agency Use of AbilityOne Products in the Performance of AbilityOne Service Contracts,” October 1, 2022, at [https://www.abilityone.gov/laws_regulations_and_policy/documents/Policy%2051.542%20\(final%20version\).pdf](https://www.abilityone.gov/laws_regulations_and_policy/documents/Policy%2051.542%20(final%20version).pdf)

²⁸ See Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, “Quarterly Public Meeting,” Federal Register, 89 FR 77110, September 20, 2024, at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/09/20/2024-21592/notice-of-meeting>.

²⁹ See Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, “Quarterly Public Meeting,” Federal Register, 89 FR 100984, December 13, 2024, at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/12/13/2024-29426/notice-of-meeting>.

³⁰ See Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, “Quarterly Public Meeting,” Federal Register, 90 FR 13352, March 21, 2025, at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/03/21/2025-04856/public-meeting>.

³¹ See Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, “Quarterly Public Meeting,” Federal Register, 90 FR 26276, June 20, 2025, at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/06/20/2025-11393/public-meeting>.

³² See Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, “Quarterly Public Meeting,” Federal Register, 91 FR 1755, January 15, 2026, at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/01/15/2026-00656/public-meeting>.