



OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3000

ACQUISITION
AND SUSTAINMENT

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDER, UNITED STATES CYBER
COMMAND (ATTN: ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE)
COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS
COMMAND (ATTN: ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE)
COMMANDER, UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION
COMMAND (ATTN: ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE)
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
(PROCUREMENT)
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
(PROCUREMENT)
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
(CONTRACTING)
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: 2024 National Disability Employment Awareness Month Observance and the AbilityOne® Program

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is observed each October and honors workers with disabilities who bring talent to America's workplaces and contribute to the strength of our Nation's economy. This year's Federal theme is "Access to Good Jobs for All." One of the ways the Department of Defense (DoD) creates jobs and advancement opportunities for the disabilities workforce is by supporting the AbilityOne Program, which is the largest source of employment for individuals who are blind or have significant disabilities.

DoD contracting and purchasing workforce supports the AbilityOne employment mission by procuring products and services in compliance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) subpart 8.7, and by making purchases in the Base Supply Centers. The Department is the lead customer of the Program and in FY 2024 procured \$2.66 billion of products and services from AbilityOne nonprofit agencies. The AbilityOne nonprofit network is a vital segment of the defense industrial base with locations in communities across the country.

DoD senior leaders, the acquisition workforce, and contracting professionals are critical to increasing business with AbilityOne that creates and sustains jobs for the AbilityOne workforce. There are numerous opportunities to engage and support the Program.

- **AbilityOne Representative (ABOR) Program:** The most significant steps the Department has taken to increase AbilityOne business is the establishment of a DoD-wide ABOR Program and a procurement participation pledge to increase AbilityOne spend to one percent of the total DoD obligations in FY 2027. To achieve this pledge, I ask contracting professionals to work with their Component ABORs to help match customer requirements with AbilityOne capabilities. In addition to pursuing the traditional contract spending categories with AbilityOne, to grow the DoD and

AbilityOne partnership it is important to identify new product lines and services for the Procurement List that meet mission requirements.

- **Training:** The Defense Acquisition University (DAU) collaborates with my office and the U.S. AbilityOne Commission to offer a quarterly webinar series. In recognition of NDEAM, DAU will host a webinar “Subcontracting with AbilityOne,” on October 10, 2024 (<https://www.dau.edu/events/subcontracting-abilityone>). Additionally, the Continuous Learning Module 023, “DAU AbilityOne Training,” provides an introductory overview of the program for acquisition professionals at all stages of their careers.
- **Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) clause 52.208-9:** As prescribed in FAR 8.005, contracting professionals shall insert clause 52.208-9, Contractor Use of Mandatory Sources of Supply and Services, in solicitations and contracts, which will require a contractor to obtain certain supplies or services for government use from AbilityOne nonprofit agencies.
- **FAR subpart 39.2:** Procurement requests (PRs) for Information and Communication Technology acquisitions shall address accessibility standards as required by FAR subpart 39.2, which implements section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. If the PR includes a written confirmation for an exception (ref 39.204(b)) or a written determination for an exemption (ref 39.205(c)) the contracting officer shall maintain this documentation in the contract file. It is critical that the acquisition workforce comply with the accessibility requirements of section 508 for employees who are blind or have low vision to work in knowledge-based jobs.
- **Contract Management Support (CMS) Program:** The Procurement List includes a DoD AbilityOne CMS Services contract, HQ0034-21-D-0011, that provides administrative contract closeout services to assist DoD customers in meeting the requirements of FAR subpart 4.8. The CMS Program sustains jobs for 173 individuals who are blind, have low vision, or have significant disabilities. For more information and a point of contact for the CMS Program please visit https://www.abilityone.gov/procurement_list/services_cms_services.html.
- **AbilityOne website:** For more information about the U.S. AbilityOne Commission, the Procurement List, the Central Nonprofit Agencies (National Industries for the Blind and SourceAmerica), and AbilityOne Program laws, regulations, and policies, please visit <https://www.abilityone.gov/index.html>.

In observance of NDEAM, I express my appreciation to the AbilityOne workforce for their dedication and contributions to military readiness. I also commend the DoD senior leaders who are Presidential appointees serving on the U.S. AbilityOne Commission, the DoD contracting workforce actively collaborating with AbilityOne, the contracting professionals administering and managing the CMS Program, and the ABORs, for their exceptional leadership in creating new and innovative prime and subcontracting opportunities with AbilityOne.

Through your efforts, the AbilityOne Program will continue to thrive resulting in access to good jobs and careers for more individuals who are blind or have significant disabilities. All of us must remain committed to providing an inclusive workforce where all individuals are valued for their abilities and have an opportunity to work, serve, and support the defense mission.

For questions concerning AbilityOne procurement policy, please contact my senior staff lead, Ms. Susan Pollack at osd.pentagon.ousd-a-s.mbx.asda-dp-c-contractpolicy@mail.mil, or visit the AbilityOne webpage on the Defense Pricing, Contracting, and Acquisition Policy website <https://www.acq.osd.mil/asda/dpc/cp/policy/abilityone.html>.

Sincerely,

John M. Tenaglia
Principal Director,
Defense Pricing, Contracting, and
Acquisition Policy