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**TITLE: ABILITYONE PROGRAM POLICY SYSTEM**

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**1. PURPOSE.**

This document establishes and updates the AbilityOne<sup>®</sup> Program Policy System, defines staff roles and responsibilities, and delineates the structure for all AbilityOne Program policies, procedures, manuals, forms, and other issuances.

**2. APPLICABILITY.**

The policies prescribed herein apply to all nonprofit agencies participating in the AbilityOne Program, National Industries for the Blind (NIB), NISH, the U.S. AbilityOne Commission, and Federal agencies.

**3. AUTHORITY.**

- (a) 41 U.S.C. 8501 – 8506, Javits-Wagner-O’Day (JWOD) Act
- (b) 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 51-2.2, Powers and Responsibilities
- (c) FAR 6.302-5 Authorized or Required by Statute
- (d) FAR 8.7 Acquisition from Nonprofit Agencies Employing People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled

**4. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS.**

Definitions, abbreviations, and acronyms frequently used throughout this policy system are provided in Policy 51.102, Definitions. Terms unique to a specific subject matter will be defined in the associated policy and/or procedure.

**5. RESPONSIBILITIES.**

The enactment of the JWOD Act established the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled (operating as the U.S. AbilityOne Commission). The Commission is composed of fifteen (15) members appointed by the President. Eleven of the members are senior executives of Federal agencies and four (4) members are private citizens who are cognizant of the employment challenges of people who are blind or significantly disabled. The Commission is a Federal agency responsible for administering the congressionally-mandated program, now known as the AbilityOne Program.

The mission of the AbilityOne Program is to create employment opportunities for people who are blind or who have significant disabilities. This is accomplished in the manufacture and delivery of products and services to the Federal Government.

- (a) The U.S. AbilityOne Commission staff shall promulgate AbilityOne Program policy in furtherance of the JWOD Act and its implementing regulations.



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- i. Commission staff directors and/or functional managers shall develop, revise, and ensure currency of policy and procedures within their functional areas.
  - ii. Staff Directors shall coordinate on all policy and procedures.
- (b) The Director, Policy and Programs, shall oversee the Policy Program and act as the agency principle proponent to ensure currency, compliance with established policy and procedures, and coordinate on all policy and/or procedure issuances.
- (c) The Deputy Executive Director, General Counsel, and Director, Policy and Programs shall coordinate on all program policy issuances.
- (d) The Executive Director shall approve all policy issued pursuant to the authority delegated by the Commission Chairperson and necessary to perform the day to day operations of the Commission.
- (e) The Commission Chairperson shall approve all policy not included in paragraph (d). The designees in paragraph (c) coordinate on policy developed for the Chairperson and the Executive Director shall approve and coordinate with the Chairperson policy requiring the Chairperson’s signature.

**6. POLICY.**

The agency shall maintain the necessary system of policies and procedures to ensure effective management of the AbilityOne Program.

- (a) Types of issuances governed by this regulation include Commission policies, procedures, manuals, and forms. Other issuances will be defined and/or promulgated as needed.
- (b) All agency issuances shall be reviewed and/or updated every 5 years or as otherwise required by changes in statute, regulation, or policy.
- (c) All Directors shall be responsible for the policy content within their respective functional areas.

**7. EXCEPTION TO POLICY.**

None

**8. PROCEDURES.**

- (a) Policy Steering Group. All program policy shall be developed in a collaborative fashion and reviewed by the Policy Steering Group, which shall be composed of the Deputy Executive Director; General Counsel; Director, Policy and Programs; Director, Business Operations; Director, Compliance; Deputy Director, Compliance; Chief of Staff; Deputy Director, Business Operations (Pricing and Information Management); Chief Information Officer; Director, Communications; and the Manager for Legislative Affairs.
- (b) Numbering System and Version Control. The policy numbering convention identifies the functional area, policy and/or procedure number, and the effective date.
  - i. Each policy shall have a prefix of “51”.

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- ii. The policy functional area is aligned with the regulatory structure of 41 CFR 51 sections (Sections 1 – 10) as follows:
    - a. 51.100 series is reserved for General Commission policy.
    - b. 51.200 series is reserved for Commission Administrative policy.
    - c. 51.300 series is reserved for Central Nonprofit Agency policy.
    - d. 51.400 series is reserved for Nonprofit Agency Compliance policy.
    - e. 51.500 series is reserved for AbilityOne Program Procurement List Operations policy.
    - f. 51.600 series is reserved for AbilityOne Program Procurement List Pricing policy.
    - g. 51.700 – 51.1000 series are reserved.
  - iii. The policy number is three (3) to four (4) digits, assigned by adding 00 and increasing the number consecutively for each section number (for example, 41 CFR 51-1 is assigned as 51.100, 51.101, and so forth).
  - iv. Version control is achieved by using effective date of the issuance to identify the most recent and current policy and by identifying policy superseded by the most recent and current policy.
  - v. Associated procedures are identified by adding “-01” to the policy number and are assigned in numerical order. (for example, a procedure for 41 CFR 51-1 is assigned 51.100-01)
- (c) Review, analysis, revision, cancellation. All policy issuances shall be reviewed in accordance with the requirements of this Policy and/or other applicable review and analysis requirements as necessary in accordance with Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review and Executive Order 13563, Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review. Functional analysis is the responsibility of the functional Director(s). Upon the effective date of the new issuance, the prior policy shall be superseded and/or cancelled as appropriate.
- (d) Coordination. All policy issuances must be coordinated on by the members of the Policy Steering Group as delineated in this Policy. Coordination by the Deputy Executive Director, General Counsel, and Director, Policy and Programs is mandatory for all policy issuances prior to submission to the Executive Director for review and/or approval. The Chairperson or the Executive Director may require coordination by others on a case-by-case basis (for example, Commission subcommittee Chairperson, CNAs or other agencies). All substantive comments must be addressed and/or resolved prior to proceeding to the next level of review, coordination, or approval.
- (e) Federal Register Publication Requirements. Any policy and/or issuance that may impose requirements on the public, other federal agencies, or that has an impact on the public shall be reviewed by the General Counsel to determine whether they must be published in the Federal Register in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act.

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- (f) Forms. All agency forms developed subsequent to the effective date of this policy and identified and/or required by a specific policy issuance, shall be numbered in accordance with the associated policy number and indexed in numerical order if multiple forms are required by a single issuance. The effective date shall also be included on the form. For example, a new form required under Commission policy 51.301 would be identified as Form 51.301-01, and the subsequent form would be numbered Form 51.301-02.
- (g) Distribution. All policy issuances shall be distributed electronically and will be available at [www.abilityone.gov](http://www.abilityone.gov).

**9. SUPERSESSION.**

This policy is applicable to all AbilityOne Program policies executed subsequent to the effective date of this issuance. Administrative Memorandum Number 1, Numbered Memoranda, dated September 15, 1993, shall remain in effect until all existing program policy memoranda are cancelled and/or superseded.



APPROVED: *E. Ballard* Date: *8/23/2012*  
E. Ballard  
Executive Director