



OFFICE OF THE CHAIRPERSON

October 1, 2022

America celebrates National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) every October. Each year, the Department of Labor selects an NDEAM theme, highlighting an aspect of disability employment. The 2022 theme is “Disability: Part of the Equity Equation,” recognizing the important role people with disabilities play in a diverse and inclusive American workforce.

The U.S. AbilityOne Commission is proud to embrace that theme and honor employees with disabilities, including the approximately 40,000 people who are blind or have significant disabilities employed through the AbilityOne Program. Furnishing nearly \$4 billion in products and services to the Federal Government annually, and working at approximately 450 nonprofits in communities from coast to coast, AbilityOne employees are truly essential workers.

As we celebrate NDEAM, the Commission continues to assess how AbilityOne can more fully become part of the equity equation. Several recent actions advance this objective:

- October 19, 2022, is the effective date of the Commission’s recently issued final rule [“Prohibition on the Payment of Subminimum Wages Under 14\(c\) Certificates as a Qualification for Participation as a Nonprofit Agency Under the Javits Wagner O’Day Act.”](#) With this rule, the Commission demonstrated its commitment to moving beyond AbilityOne’s legacy culture and parameters to a future grounded in disability rights. Wages send a message of how work is valued, and work performed by people with disabilities should be valued equally with that of others.
- The Commission is also currently focusing on the implementation of its [FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#), the roadmap for accomplishing the Commission’s priorities over the next five years. The new plan lays out the framework for a transformed and modernized AbilityOne Program that will be guided by the value of equity.
- The new Strategic Plan incorporates the remaining recommendations of the [2017 NDAA Section 898 Panel on Department of Defense and AbilityOne Contracting Oversight, Accountability and Integrity](#), which released its final report to Congress in January.

The Commission looks forward to making further progress in transforming the AbilityOne Program to achieve equity for all employees who are blind or have significant disabilities.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

Jeffrey A. Koses

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Jeffrey A. Koses

Chairperson and Presidential Appointee



COMMITTEE FOR PURCHASE FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR SEVERELY DISABLED
An Independent Federal Agency

