



Oversight and Compliance Directorate Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the AbilityOne Program?

The AbilityOne Program is one of the largest sources of employment in the United States for people who are blind or have significant disabilities. Approximately 45,000 people who are blind or have significant disabilities, including approximately 3,000 veterans, are employed at approximately 500 nonprofit agencies (NPAs) nationwide, across 15 time zones, from Maine to Guam. AbilityOne provided nearly \$4 billion in products and services to the Federal government in Fiscal Year 2019. The Program operates at more than 1,000 locations, representing 40 government agencies, including more than 150 Base Supply Centers at military and government installations.

Full compliance with the AbilityOne Program requirements is expected of every participating NPA. This means that participating NPAs are expected to achieve full compliance with all statutory and regulatory requirements set forth in 41 U.S.C. §§ 8501-8506, also known as the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act. Program participants are expected to conduct all business ethically and lawfully. AbilityOne-participating NPAs are qualified to compete for government contracts and provide products and services that are Federally approved and registered.

2. What is the U.S. AbilityOne Commission?

The AbilityOne Program is administered by the U.S. AbilityOne Commission (Commission), the operating name of the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled. The Commission is an independent Federal agency comprised of 15 Presidential appointees: 11 represent Federal agencies, and four serve as private citizens who are knowledgeable about employment barriers facing people who are blind or have significant disabilities. The Commission designates Central Nonprofit Agencies (CNAs) to facilitate the employment of people who are blind or have significant disabilities.

3. What is the mission of the Oversight and Compliance Directorate?

The mission of the Oversight and Compliance Directorate is to monitor and promote compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies and enhance overall program integrity, working with CNAs and NPAs participating in the AbilityOne Program.

4. What are the responsibilities of the Oversight and Compliance Directorate?

The Directorate's responsibilities include issuing and monitoring policy and procedures guidance, technical assistance and training to program participants; conducting routine inspections; reviewing and addressing mandatory disclosures and complaints; performing comprehensive reviews of Annual Certifications; reviewing proposed additions of products and services to the Procurement List for NPA qualification and capability; and providing support to the Office of Inspector General and/or the Department of Justice as needed for investigations. See 41 C.F.R. 51-2.2 (h)(i) which can be found online at https://www.abilityone.gov/laws_regulations_and_policy/code.html.

5. Where do I find the Compliance Manual?

The Commission's informal Compliance Manual is no longer in use. It has been rescinded and replaced with these Frequently Asked Questions and Compliance policies and procedures that can be found on the Commission's website at https://www.abilityone.gov/laws_regulations_and_policy/commission_policy_51_400.html.

6. Where do I find Compliance policies and procedures?

Compliance policies and procedures can be found at https://www.abilityone.gov/laws_regulations_and_policy/commission_policy_51_400.html.

7. What potential questions could I be asked on a Compliance Inspection?

For information regarding the Commission's Compliance inspections, please refer to Policy 51.404, which can be found online at https://www.abilityone.gov/laws_regulations_and_policy/commission_policy_51_400.html.

Each NPA is encouraged to contact its CNA for assistance such as preparation for the questions that may be asked during a Technical Visit in accordance with the CNAs' Cooperative Agreements.

8. Where can I find information about the Individual Employment Evaluation (IEE) form?

For information regarding the Individual Employment Evaluation (IEE) form, please refer to Policy 51.405, which can be found online at https://www.abilityone.gov/laws,_regulations_and_policy/commission_policy_51_400.html. **(Coming Soon)**

9. Can a Nurse Practitioner or Physician Assistant provide medical documentation?

Medical documentation from a Nurse Practitioner or Physician Assistant may be acceptable, when those professionals have the qualifications to diagnose the type(s) of medical conditions experienced by the employment candidate. NPAs should always refer to State guidance regarding who can make a medical diagnosis in the State that the NPA is operating its contracts. The NPA is responsible for ensuring the authenticity of the medical documentation received from potential AbilityOne Program participants.

10. How do I know whether the Social Security Administration (SSA) documentation is authentic when it does not have a signature?

The following link offers information on authenticity of documents from SSA <https://secure.ssa.gov/poms.nsf/lnx/0900601003>.

11. Is a Certificate of Eligibility emailed from a State agency acceptable medical diagnosis?

Yes, when the NPA has verified the authenticity. The NPA should ensure that the sender address matches the State agency office. The document itself must be legible. The certificate must show a diagnosis of at least one significant disability that impacts at least one of six functional limitations in the Commission's regulation at 41 CFR 51-1.3.

No, if the certificate does not clearly state a diagnosis of a significant disability, it cannot be verified as coming from a State agency and/or is illegible.

12. Where can I find a local participating NPA in the AbilityOne Program?

NPAs participating in the AbilityOne Program can be found online at https://www.abilityone.gov/abilityone_network/nonprofit.html.

13. How do I contact the staff for more information?

For questions about Compliance please contact complianceinfo@abilityone.gov.