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**TITLE: U.S. ABILITYONE COMMISSION MEETINGS**

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**1. PURPOSE.**

This policy addresses the procedures for scheduling and conducting U.S. AbilityOne Commission (Commission) meetings, to include oral presentations, and also establishes Commission policy on the use of cameras and recording devices.

**2. APPLICABILITY.**

The policy applies to all Commission members and staff, other Federal employees, National Industries for the Blind (NIB), NISH, nonprofit associations (NPAs), contractors, and visitors participating in Commission meetings.

**3. AUTHORITY.**

- (a) 41 U.S.C. 8503, Duties and powers of the Committee
- (b) 41 CFR 51-2.9, Oral presentations by interested persons at Committee meetings

**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.**

- (a) The Executive Director shall develop the proposed agenda for meetings based on items requiring Commission consideration. Commission members wishing to include an item on the agenda shall advise the Executive Director.
- (b) The Chairperson shall review and approve the Commission agenda not later than seven (7) days before the meeting occurs. Commission staff shall transmit notice of the meeting to members in advance of the meeting together with a copy of the agenda, the minutes of the previous meeting, and background information on the agenda items as appropriate.

**6. POLICY.**

- (a) Attendance in person or by teleconference by more than one-half of the appointed Commission members constitutes a quorum.
- (b) Regular Commission meetings shall be held on a quarterly basis; however, special meetings may be called by the Chairperson at any time. Requests for special meetings may be made to the Chairperson by any Commission member or the Executive Director.



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- i. Items usually considered at meetings are of an informational or policy nature. Routine operational matters are normally processed by written vote; however, decisions on these matters may be made at a Commission meeting.
  - ii. Meetings shall normally be held at the Commission's office; however, the Executive Director may change the place of the meeting.
  - iii. The date and time of scheduled meetings shall be established by the Executive Director and indicated on the agenda.
- (c) Matters being considered for a Commission decision require a majority vote by members attending a meeting in which a quorum is present.
- i. Only Commission members may vote.
  - ii. The Chairperson shall announce his or her vote after the other members have voted.
  - iii. On significant matters, the Chairperson may require that a decision at the Commission meeting be confirmed by the written vote of all the Commission members.
- (d) Commission meetings shall be open to the general public.
- i. The CEOs and Board Chairs of NIB and NISH are routinely invited to participate as observers at open meetings of the Commission.
  - ii. Members of the general public attending Commission meetings will not be permitted to make comments or to participate in the Commission's discussions unless called upon by the Chairperson.
  - iii. At the discretion of the presiding Chair or Vice Chair, a portion of the meeting may be closed to the public to address specific issues. Although not controlling, the Commission will use the criteria in 5 U.S.C. 552b (a) as a guide when deciding to close a portion of the meeting.
  - iv. Requirements and procedures for appearance of interested persons at Commission meetings are set forth in the Commission regulations at 41 CFR 51-2.9, Oral presentations by interested persons at Commission meetings. As outlined in the regulation, and if permitted by the Chairperson at his or her discretion, appearances will normally be limited to one spokesperson per interested party, whose remarks and handouts must be limited to issues the party already raised in written comments. Details can be found in Section 8, Procedures, of this policy.
- (e) No cameras or recording devices of any kind are permitted in the AbilityOne office, nor are they permitted during Commission meetings.
- i. The purpose of this policy is to avoid disruption and maintain decorum, to prevent unauthorized disclosure and release (either by camera or recording) of proprietary and/or official use only information, and to respect the privacy of Commission members, employees, contractors, and visitors, and any other sensitivity that the agency deems confidential.

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- ii. Commission members may attend a meeting via teleconference, but the prohibition of recording applies.
- (f) The minutes of the Commission meetings shall consist of a summary of the discussion and conclusions reached by the Commission, a record of any motions made, and the results of Commission votes.

**7. EXCEPTION TO POLICY.**

- (a) The Executive Director is authorized to grant exceptions to this policy.
- (b) Exceptions apply if a recording device is used as assistive technology or if the capability is integral to standard office equipment or other devices such as cell phones or Blackberry devices.
- (c) Members or staff may seek an exception to the prohibition of cameras and recording devices for ceremonies, awards, and other appropriate reasons with prior approval by the Executive Director.

**8. PROCEDURES.**

- (a) When interested persons have received permission to appear before the Commission on a particular matter, the following procedure shall normally apply:
  - i. The Chairperson summarizes the issues before the Commission and introduces the person or persons to speak.
  - ii. Each spokesperson presents an oral statement.
  - iii. The Commission members may ask questions during or following each presentation with a view to developing pertinent facts in the case.
  - iv. When spokespersons have presented opposing views, the Chairperson may, at his or her discretion, permit the persons concerned a brief period for rebuttal.

**9. SUPERSESSION.**

This policy supersedes Administrative Policy Memoranda Number 2, Committee Meetings dated June 8, 1993 and Number 10, No Cameras or Recording Devices Policy dated March 22, 2006 in their entirety.



**APPROVED:** *E. Ballard*  
**E. Ballard**  
**Executive Director**

**Date:** *Aug 9, 2012*