



**U.S. AbilityOne Commission Awards Contract
for Developing AbilityOne Program Career Planning Support Resources,
Celebrates 50th Anniversary of Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 27, 2023 – The U.S. AbilityOne Commission has awarded the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) a \$350,000 contract to develop and recommend career planning support resources for nonprofit agencies participating in the AbilityOne Program.

“The Commission joins the nation in celebrating the 50th anniversary of the historic Rehabilitation Act of 1973,” said Jeffrey A. Koses, Commission Chairperson. “In conjunction with that milestone, the Commission is pleased to announce the award of this important contract to APSE. Developing and recommending career planning supports is in keeping with the Act, and is aligned with the Commission’s vision of creating quality employment opportunities across all economic sectors for people who are blind or have significant disabilities.”

The contract also supports governmentwide goals of building and using evidence to improve policy, program, budget, operational, and management decision-making.

Chai Feldblum, Commission Vice Chair, said, “The Commission’s vision of creating excellent jobs for individuals who are blind or have significant disabilities is dependent on AbilityOne employers gaining access to the best guidelines and support available for career development for people with disabilities. Whether an employee advances their career within the AbilityOne Program or outside the Program, APSE’s expert knowledge will assist every AbilityOne employer to meet the vision of the Commission.”

The Commission’s Executive Director, Kim Zeich, said, “The Commission is working hard to modernize the AbilityOne Program. This effort is a key part of our continuous outreach and engagement with experts and advocates across Government and the broader disability community to deliver the best results for individuals who are blind or have significant disabilities.”



The scope of the “AbilityOne Career Planning Support” contract includes developing the necessary components of the employment supports of job individualizations, employee career plans, and career advancement programs. The work will also include identifying qualified professionals, funding streams, and community partners to provide assistance to the participating nonprofit agencies. The Commission will use this information in developing policies, procedures, recommendations, and/or information around job supports.

The contract supports central tenets of the Commission’s [Strategic Plan for FY 2022-2026](#), particularly its focus on increasing the number of “good jobs.”

The Commission defines a “good job” in the AbilityOne Program as having 4 attributes:

1. Individuals with disabilities are paid competitive wages and benefits;
2. The job matches the individual’s interests and skills (“job individualizations”);
3. Individuals with disabilities are provided with opportunities for employment advancement comparable to those provided to individuals without disabilities; and
4. Individuals are covered under employment laws.

The Commission will use the deliverables developed by the contractor to assist nonprofit agencies in creating and sustaining “good jobs,” including through support that will be provided by the central nonprofit agencies designated by the Commission to help administer the Program.

About the U.S. AbilityOne Commission

The AbilityOne Program is administered by the U.S. AbilityOne Commission, the operating name of the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled. The Commission is an independent Federal agency composed 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.

About the AbilityOne Program

The AbilityOne Program facilitates the use of government procurement to provide employment in the United States for people who are blind or have significant disabilities. More than 36,000 individuals, including more than 2,500 veterans, are employed nationwide at approximately 450 nonprofit agencies. AbilityOne provided nearly \$4 billion in products and services to approximately 40 Federal government agencies in FY 2022.

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