

The Connection: The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. • AbilityOne® Program • SKILCRAFT® • National Industries for the Blind (NIB)

The AbilityOne Program originated in 1938 as the Wagner O'Day Act, (renamed to the Javits-Wagner O'Day Act in 1971) and is administered by the U.S. AbilityOne Commission, an independent federal agency, whose statutory name is the Committee for Purchase from People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled. It is one of the largest sources of employment in the United States for individuals who are blind and or have significant disabilities, employing approximately 45,000 people, including approximately 3,000 veterans, and 30,000 AbilityOne employees work on Department of Defense contracts.

National Industries for the Blind (NIB) administers the AbilityOne federal contracts and partners with nearly 100 independent nonprofit agencies who manufacture products and/or provide knowledge-based professional services throughout the United States. The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. is an NIB-affiliated agency and manufactures products and services through the AbilityOne Program.

The products that employees who are blind make under the AbilityOne Program receive the SKILCRAFT brand, which is owned and licensed through NIB. Customers can find SKILCRAFT products online, in AbilityOne Base Supply Centers (BSC), military commissaries and exchanges, and through hundreds of AbilityOne authorized distributors. The SKILCRAFT line includes thousands of offerings from office supplies and hardware to knowledge-based professional services that meet or exceed exacting government standards, including the rigorous requirements of the U.S. military.

The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. operates eleven AbilityOne Base Supply Centers (BSCs) and BSC supporting offices and

warehouses up and down the West Coast of the United States, which offer one-stop shopping to military personnel and federal employees who require federally compliant supplies. Located primarily on military bases, BSCs sell SKILCRAFT products made by Lighthouse employees, as well as by other NIB-affiliated agencies, by people who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities. The competitive pricing for items offered by the BSCs (prices are benchmarked and fall within GSA Schedule pricing) comply with FAR Subpart 13.202.

Products typically available include:

Office Products

- **Computer Accessories**
- **Desk Supplies**
- **Shipping Supplies**
- **Printing Supplies**

Cleaning & Janitorial Supplies

- **Environmentally “Green” Cleaners/Detergents**
- **Disposable Paper Products**
- **Food Service Supplies**

Individual Equipment Element

- **Organizational Clothing**
- **Individual Equipment**
- **DLA items**

Unique Military Items

- **Tactical Gear**
- **Office Furniture**
- **Space Planning & Installation**
- **Special Orders**

Contract Management Services (CMS)

Photo with caption: A Lighthouse CMS employee inspects documents with a magnifier in San Diego

Another job source under the AbilityOne Program are knowledge-based professional managed services such as Contract Management Support (CMS), procured by government entities through NIB, or directly with an associated agency.

Currently, the Lighthouse operates three established CMS facilities located in San Diego, CA and Redstone, AL. The Lighthouse is currently closing out contracts for NAVSUP Fleet Logistics Command and SPAWAR in San Diego, and for U.S. Army Contracting Command in Redstone Arsenal, Alabama.

Contract Management Services capabilities include:

- Research and analysis to ensure all requirements for closing contracts are complete; presenting ready-to-close contracts to government contracting officers**
- Contract closeout document preparation;**
- Online document management; data entry**
- Contract and billing reconciliation**
- Document destruction**
- General administrative services in support of contract completion and closeout**

For more information on what The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. provides, visit: LHBlind.org • BaseSupply.com