

## 1.0 PURPOSE

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Ardent Industries is committed to providing persons with disabilities the same opportunity to access our resources and services, in a manner consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not to the goods themselves.

## 2.0 STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

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Ardent Industries is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner and will do so by removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

## 3.0 SCOPE

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This policy applies to all current employees and applicants for employment at Ardent, including full-time, part-time, temporary and contract staff as well as people who work to gain experience such as interns, apprentices, and students. This policy applies to all organizational locations.

## 4.0 DEFINITIONS

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<b>Accessible Formats:</b>	refers to materials that have been converted to accessible formats which include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio, and electronic formats, braille, and other formats usable by a person with disabilities.
<b>Accommodations:</b>	the special arrangement made, or assistance provided so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities. Accommodation shall vary depending on the person's specific accessibility needs.
<b>Assistive Device:</b>	is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

<b>Communication Supports:</b>	methods and aids that facilitate effective communications with persons with disabilities that include, but is not limited to, captioning, alternative, and augmentative communication supports, plain language, and sign language.
<b>Disability:</b>	the term disability as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, refers to: any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device; a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability; a learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language; a mental disorder; or an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.
<b>Redeployment:</b>	means the reassignment of workers to other departments or jobs within the organization as an alternative to layoff when job or department has been eliminated.
<b>Service Animal:</b>	as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if: it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
<b>Support Person:</b>	as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services.

## 5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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### 5.1 Ardent

- .1 Eliminate barriers that prevent people from accessing or being included in the workplace.

### 5.2 Partner Experience (Human Resources)

- .1 It is partner experiences responsibility to review this policy as required in the event of legislative changes to ensure on-going compliance with regulated accessibility standards and legislated obligations.
- .2 It is partner experiences responsibility to monitor practices to ensure compliance.
- .3 It is partner experiences responsibility to provide and facilitate training.
- .4 It is partner experiences responsibility to submit the required compliance reports per government of Ontario requirements: [Completing your accessibility compliance report | ontario.ca](#)

### 5.3 Leaders

- .1 It is the responsibility of the leader to ensure that they and their workers under their supervision are familiar with this policy.
- .2 It is the responsibility of the leader to monitor practices to ensure compliance.

### 5.4 Employees

- .1 It is the employee's responsibility to self-identify if there is a disability for which they require assistance in accessing Ardent Industries' service and communicating such to the appropriate Ardent Industries personnel.
- .2 It is the employee's responsibility to participate in training and comply with the requirements of this policy.

## 6.0 MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

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Each Ardent Industries business division shall create a multi-year Accessibility Plan outlining a phased-in approach to prevent and remove barriers and address the current and future requirements of the AODA. The plan shall be reviewed and updated at least every five years or as required.

## 7.0 THE PROVISION OF GOODS AND SERVICES TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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Ardent Industries will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity by:

- ensuring that all customers receive the same value and quality.
- allowing customers with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing goods and services as long as this does not present a safety risk.
- using alternative methods, when possible, to ensure that customers with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner.
- taking into account individual needs when providing goods and services; and
- communicating in a manner that considers the customer's disability.

## **8.0 ASSISTIVE DEVICES**

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Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing goods or services provided by Ardent Industries.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure the access of goods and services.

In addition, a general, emergency evacuation process shall be in place for any facility that may have visitors with disabilities that require further assistance. This process shall be communicated to all workers.

## **9.0 SERVICE ANIMALS**

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Ardent Industries is committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties and where the animal is not excluded by law. While visiting Ardent Industries it is the responsibility of the person with the service animal to control the animal at all times. We will ensure that all staff are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal. Ardent Industries reserves the right to request a letter from a medical professional certifying that the use of the animal is medically necessary.

## **10.0 SUPPORT PERSONS**

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Ardent Industries is committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Persons with a disability will be allowed to enter Ardent Industries with their support person and at no time will they be prevented from having access to their support person while on our premises. The support person will be bound by all confidentiality agreements in the same manner that the customer is bound by them.

## **11.0 NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION**

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Ardent Industries will make reasonable effort to provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and the description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

## **12.0 FEEDBACK PROCESS**

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The ultimate goal of Ardent Industries is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Feedback regarding how Ardent Industries provides good and services to people with disabilities can be made by email, telephone, or mail.

7825 Springwater Road  
Aylmer, Ontario N5H 2R4  
519-765-2244

inquiries@steelway.com

Ardent Industries will respond to all feedback received in a timely manner and make any necessary changes to policies or procedures to ensure that customers with disabilities are treated with dignity and respect.

## **13.0 TRAINING**

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### **13.1 Training will be provided to**

Ardent Industries will provide training to employees, volunteers, and other staff members on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Training will be provided in a way that best suits the duties of employees, volunteers, and other staff members.

### **13.2 Training Provisions**

Ardent Industries shall provide access to or prepare for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist, make information about the availability of accessible materials publicly available, and provide the information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request.

As reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, regardless of the format, training will cover the following:

- A review of the purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- A review of the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person
- How to use any assistive devices available on any of Ardent Industries premises that may help with the provision of goods or services to people with disabilities.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Ardent Industries goods or services
- Ardent Industries policies, practices, and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

### **13.3 Training Schedule**

Ardent Industries will provide training as soon as practicable. Training will be provided to new employees, volunteers, agents and/or contractor who deal with the public or act on our behalf during orientation. Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures and/or practices.

## **13.4 Record of Training**

Ardent Industries will keep a record of training that includes the dates training was provided and the number of employees who attended the training.

## **14.0 NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY AND FORMAT DOCUMENTS**

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Ardent Industries shall notify customers that the documents related to the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service are available upon request and in a format that takes into account the customer's disability. Notification will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place owned and operated by Ardent Industries website and/or any other reasonable method.

## **15.0 RECRUITMENT, ASSESSMENT, AND SELECTION**

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Ardent Industries will notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for job applicants who have disabilities. Applicants will be informed that these accommodations are available, upon request, for the interview process and for other candidate selection methods. Where an accommodation is requested, Ardent Industries will consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation.

Successful applicants will be made aware of Ardent Industries' policies and supports for accommodating people with disabilities.

## **16.0 ACCESSIBLE FORMATS AND COMMUNICATION SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES**

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Ardent Industries will ensure that employees are aware of our policies for employees with disabilities and any changes to these policies as they occur.

If an employee with a disability requests it, Ardent Industries will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for the following:

- Information needed in order to perform their job; and
- Information that is generally available to all employees in the workplace.

Ardent Industries will consult with the employee making the request to determine the best way to provide the accessible format or communication support.

## **17.0 WORKPLACE EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION**

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Where required, Ardent Industries will create individual workplace emergency response information for employees with disabilities. This information will consider the unique challenges created by the individual's disability and the physical nature of the workplace and will be created in consultation with the employee.

This information will be reviewed when:

- The employee moves to a different physical location in the organization.

- The employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed.
- Ardent Industries reviews general emergency response policies.

## **18.0 INDIVIDUAL ACCOMMODATION**

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Ardent Industries will also develop and have in place documented, individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. Refer to the Ardent Accommodation Policy and Procedure.

## **19.0 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT, CAREER DEVELOPMENT, AND ADVANCEMENT**

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Ardent Industries will consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities when implementing performance management processes, or when offering career development or advancement opportunities. Individual accommodation plans will be consulted, as required.

## **20.0 RETURN TO WORK**

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Ardent Industries will develop and implement return to work processes for employees who are absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodation(s) in order to return to work.

The return-to-work process will outline the steps Ardent Industries will take to facilitate the employee's return to work and shall use documented individual accommodation plans (as described in section 28 of the regulation). Refer to the Early & Safe Return to Work Policy.

## **21.0 REDEPLOYMENT**

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The accessibility needs of employees with disabilities will be considered in the event of redeployment. Individual accommodation plans will be created, as required.

## **22.0 ADMINISTRATION**

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Ardent Industries is committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities.

This policy and its related procedures will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes.

## **23.0 REFERENCES**

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- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Blind Person's Rights Act, 1990
- Dog Owners' Liability Act, Ontario
- Food Safety and Quality Act 2001, Ontario Regulation 31/05
- Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562
- Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990
- Ardent Early & Safe Return to Work Policy
- Ardent Accommodation Policy & Procedure

## **24.0 REVISION HISTORY**

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<b>Rev #</b>	<b>Rev Date</b>	<b>Description of Change</b>
Release		Initial release 2011
Revision 1	August 30, 2023	Expansion of: Purpose, Scope, References Addition of: Statement of Commitment, Definitions, Roles & Responsibilities, Revision History