



## **ST. DAVID'S HYDROPONICS LTD.**

### **Accessibility Policy & Statement of Commitment**

**Revised Oct 25, 2023**

#### **Our Commitment**

St. David's Hydroponics Ltd strives at all times to provide goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities, and continues to work at removing and preventing barriers to accessibility in a timely manner. We are committed to giving people with disabilities an equal opportunity to access our goods, services and employment opportunities, in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We are committed to enabling them to benefit from the same opportunities, in the same place and in a similar way as other employees, applicants and customers, as mandated under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

#### **ACCESSIBILITY POLICIES:**

##### **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

St. David's Hydroponics Ltd is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities, and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

##### **1. Communication**

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

##### **2. Telephone Services**

We are committed to providing accessible telephone service to our customers with disabilities. We will communicate over the phone with customers with disabilities in clear and plain language and speak clearly and slowly. If requested we will use a computer device with a sign language interpreter.

##### **3. Assistive Devices**

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. We will ensure that our staff is familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods and services.

##### **4. Order Acknowledgements and Invoices**

We are committed to providing accessible order acknowledgements and invoices to all of our customers. For this reason, order acknowledgements and invoices will be available in the following formats upon request:

hard copy, large print, email or other as is reasonably possible. We will answer any questions customers may have about the content of an order acknowledgement or invoice in person, by telephone or by email.

## **5. Use of Service Animals and Support Persons**

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public, and where it is permitted in accordance with food safety guidelines. We will ensure that all staff is properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter our premises with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises.

## **TRAINING FOR STAFF**

We will provide training to all employees who interact with customers on accessible customer service, and how to interact with people with different disabilities.

Training will be provided during the hiring process for all employees. All staff must read our policies, practices and procedures and sign confirming they have read and understood them. Training records will be maintained.

Training will include the following:

- Our policies, practices and procedures relating to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard.
- 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 a support person
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our goods and services

All staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Staff will be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.

## **EMPLOYEES**

### **Information and Communication**

Our Company Health and Safety bulletin boards are in high traffic areas where any necessary policies or notices are posted for all Employees, including emergency evacuation procedures. If an employee with a disability requests to receive this information by an alternate means, it will be provided to them in a timely manner. We have created a safety video in English & Spanish to provide an alternative means of communication

## Employment

To ensure that St. David's Hydroponics is compliant with the legislation with regard to accessibility for disabled persons a commitment is made as follows:

1. When hiring new employees, advertisements will specify that accommodations will be made for disabilities; the hiring Manager will advise/discuss, in appropriate ways, accommodation commitment with potential candidates. Employees will be advised of this process.
2. Upon receiving notice that an employee requires information about accommodation the employee's Manager will discuss with the employee to understand the need, then seek out the requested information and provide it to the employee in an appropriate manner.
3. The Human Resources Coordinator will, on an ongoing basis, consider the needs of employees with disabilities and ensure that a process is in place to provide information in appropriate ways; understandable, verbal/written/brail, font size of printed matter, job coaching, and means of requesting support by employees.
4. Employee training will continue as provided in the initial policy document.
5. Any employee with a disability who requires a support person to accompany them while employed at St. David's Hydroponics Ltd may have the support person accompany them at all times. This decision to allow a support person will be based on consultation with the person with a disability to understand their needs, health and safety reasons, and if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises. Similarly service dogs will be permitted, in areas where permissible under food safety guidelines.
6. We have a return-to-work policy in place for staff members that have been absent and will accommodate them with modified work upon return if required.

## FEEDBACK PROCESS

St. David's Hydroponics Ltd has an ongoing commitment to remove any barriers for people with disabilities under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. Our office staff have been trained to assist in welcoming customers/staff with disabilities, should they require assistance in assessing our goods and services or facilities. We are continuously improving our website and welcome any feedback through our website, telephone, letter or email on any ways to improve our customer service. Our greenhouse is not open to the public, due to food safety guidelines.

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about this policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to the General manager. This policy is available to the public at all times.



Toine Van der Knaap  
Vice President and General Manager

Date: Oct 25 2023