**Purpose:**

To document the policy and related procedures that will guide Sphere Manufacturing Group, (Sphere) in making all of the programs and services it offers to the public accessible to Ontarians with disabilities.

This document contains the information that Sphere must provide to meet its obligation under the Customer Service Standard, the first of four standards designed to make all Ontario workplaces fully accessible to Ontarians with disabilities by 2025. The other three standards are:

• Information and Communication

• Employment

• Built Environment

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is Provincial Legislation with the purpose of developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025.

Ontario Regulation 429/07 entitled "Accessibility Standards for Customer Service" came into force on January 1, 2008 and applies to all employees as of January 1, 2012. This regulation establishes accessibility standards specific to customer service for public sector organizations and other persons or organizations that provide goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

This policy is in accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Ontario Regulation 429/07 and addresses the following:

• The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities

• The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities

• The use of service animals by persons with disabilities

• The use of support persons by persons with disabilities

• Notice of temporary disruptions in services and facilities

• Staff training

• Feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities

• Notice of availability and format of documents and meetings

**Responsibility:**

This Policy applies to all Sphere internal and external customers. Customers include employees and volunteers, contractors, service providers, and visitors, including invitees, guests or persons who have no ongoing connection to Sphere but who use Sphere facilities (Service Providers).

It is the responsibility of the CEO to ensure adherence to the policies and procedures herein.

**Definition:**

The definition of disability under the AODA is the same as the definition of disability in the Ontario Human Rights Code. This is the definition of disability that applies to the customer service standard.

(a) 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,

(b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,

(c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,

(d) a mental disorder, or

(e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

**Commitment:**

 Sphere strives at all times to provide its goods and services (collectively "Services") in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our Services and allowing them to benefit from the same Services, in the same place and in a similar way as other individuals.

 Sphere is committed to excellence in serving all individuals 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.

We will train staff who communicate with individuals on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

**2. Telephone services**

We are committed to providing accessible telephone service to all individuals we deal with. We will train staff to communicate over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly, as might be required.

We will offer to communicate with individuals by email if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

**3. Assistive devices**

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our Services. We will ensure that our staff is trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by individuals with disabilities while accessing the Services we provide.

**4. Receipts/Invoices**

We are committed to providing accessible receipts/invoices to all clients. For this reason, invoices will be provided in the following formats: hard copy, large print, e-mail.

We will answer any questions individuals may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or 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 other third parties. We will also ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are 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 's premises that are open to the public with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person to be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises.

**6. Training**

 Sphere will provide training on the Policy and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service to all employees and Service Providers as soon as can be reasonably expected after their hiring or engagement. The primary reasons for this are to create awareness and to ensure compliance with the Policy and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. Training will be on an ongoing basis as changes occur to the Policy and/or to the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

The training includes but is not limited to:

Why the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 was implemented;

The requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service under the Act;

How ’s policy and its procedures and practices are to direct the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities, as explained in the Training;

How to interact and communicate with persons with a range of disabilities;

How to handle situations where a person with a disability has difficulty accessing ’s services;

How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices, or require assistance from a support person or service animal; and;

Any equipment or devices available on premises that may help serve persons with disabilities.

Sphere’s Human Resources Manager will maintain written training records, that include the date training was provided, the type of training, and the name of trainees.

**7. Notice of temporary disruption**

 Sphere will provide individuals 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 a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed at any public entrances on our premises. It will also be available in other formats if requested.

Emergencies: Service Providers must be familiar with emergency procedures. They must know the best and most appropriate ways to assist customers or staff that need assistance during an emergency.

**8. Feedback process**

The ultimate goal of Sphere is to meet and surpass expectations while serving individuals with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way Sphere provides services to people with disabilities can be made by e-mail or verbally. All feedback will be directed to Daniela Sartori, Human Resources Manager. Individuals can expect to hear back in 10 (10) business days.

**9. Modifications to this or other policies**

We are committed to developing disability 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. Any policy of Sphere that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

**10. Questions about this policy**

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to individuals with disabilities. Anyone with a complaint, question, concern or compliment about the Policy, Training Materials or Protocol may contact ’s Sphere’s CEO, in person, in writing, by e‐mail, or by telephone:

Aly Rahemtulla

2053 Shirley Drive

Kitchener, ON N2B3X4

519-885-2910

c/o dsartori@spheremanufacturing.ca

 Sphere will acknowledge your correspondence and will provide a written response, together with the findings, within fourteen (14) business days of receiving your correspondence.

This Protocol is available in an alternative format, upon request, to accommodate a person with a disability.

**Documents:**

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005