

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Program Name: Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

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CHAPTER 13: Assistive Technology Services

Section 13.3: Vehicle Modification

I. Policy Statement

This policy includes guidance for providing Vehicle Modifications which are prescribed modifications to change the mechanical or structural components of a vehicle and may include Mobility Equipment Installation, Structural Vehicle Modification and High Tech Driving Systems Installation in accordance with the National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA) and its Quality Assurance Program (QAP) as per a Vehicle Modification Prescription to a passenger car, van, SUV, or other motor vehicle.

The Vehicle Modification Prescription provides detail that describes how an individual with a disability may safely drive or ride as a passenger in their own or a family member's vehicle to go to work. Consideration for vehicle modification may proceed after all other transportation options as per Section 12.1 of this manual have been explored and determined unavailable.

II. Authority

Authority for policies contained in this document includes the following:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), 29 U.S.C. § 3101 et seq.
- Title IV Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.
- State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, 34 C.F.R. §§:
 - Applicable definitions 361.5 (c)(6), (44) and (45)
 - Scope of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities 361.48 (b)(17)
 - Comparable services and benefits 361.53 (b)(5)
 - Participation of individuals in cost of services based on financial need 361.54 (b)(1-2) and (3)(i)(G)
 - United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Policy Directive RSA-PD-16-04, Other Service Data Elements XIV (C)

- Requirements for vehicle modifications to accommodate people with disabilities, 49 C.F.R. §§: 595.7
- A.R.S. §§ 23-502 and 503
- Arizona Administrative Code, Title 6, Chapter 4.
 - General considerations R6-4-201 (A)(1)(j)
 - Economic need and similar benefits R6-4-403 (A)(1)(a)(v) and (B)(2)(a)(vi)

III. Applicability

A client interested in obtaining vehicle modification services must:

- A. Have completed an adaptive driving assessment which resulted in a Vehicle Modification Prescription.
- B. Meet economic need.
- C. Actively engage in VR services.
- D. Possess a current and valid state driver's license or a learner's permit if they are to be a driver of the vehicle.
- E. Demonstrate that vehicle modifications are necessary for the client to enter into, obtain, and maintain employment and no other transportation alternatives are available to achieve an employment outcome consistent with the client's current and approved IPE.
- F. Provide a plan for how they will use current and future resources to fund vehicle loan payments, insurance coverage, extended warranty coverage, ongoing maintenance and repair of the vehicle and modifications as applicable.
- G. Obtain and maintain ongoing vehicle insurance coverage at all times that is adequate to cover replacement loss for both the vehicle and subsequent modifications.
- H. Establish alternative transportation methods to be utilized during the timeframe when the vehicle is being modified as it cannot be released once the modification process has been initiated.
- I. Must pursue the appeals process as outlined in Chapter 15 of this manual when they disagree with an RSA decision.

IV. Standards

- A. The VR Counselor must refer the client to complete an Adaptive Driving Evaluation to assess their ability and potential to become a safe and independent driver or passenger in accordance with Section 13.2 policy prior to proceeding with the Vehicle Modification process.

- B. The Adaptive Driving Evaluation service must be on the client's current and approved IPE in order to obtain and complete a Vehicle Modification Prescription.
- C. Only a Certified Driving Rehabilitation Specialist (CDRS) with credentials issued by Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (ADED) must conduct the Adaptive Driving Evaluation to complete a Vehicle Modification Prescription and provide the final report to VR.
- D. A driver evaluation team must be established to consist of the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC), CDRS, installer, Assistive Technology (AT) Coordinator for an initial review and discussion pertaining to the feasibility of vehicle modification for the client.
- E. The Driver Evaluation team must meet with the client for a Vehicle Modification planning meeting to review the Vehicle Modification quote(s), costs, insurance requirements, and project timeframes after the Vehicle Modification Prescription is completed and received by VR.
- F. The VR Counselor must provide the client with an informed choice of available contracted installers to select from to obtain a Request for Project Cost Proposal for the Vehicle Modification Prescription.
- G. The Vehicle Modification planning meeting must also identify the contracted installer selection and the logistics of vehicle delivery to the installer location prior to start of project and to client upon completion of modification.
- H. The Vehicle Modification Agreement form must be signed at the Vehicle Modification Planning meeting.
- I. Vehicle modifications authorized by VR are limited to items/services that are included in a Vehicle Modification Prescription completed by the CDRS.
- J. VR will not guarantee vehicle modification on vehicles purchased that do not meet the minimum specifications required for vehicle modifications prior to the completion of the Vehicle Modification Prescription.
- K. The Vehicle Modification Prescription must:
 - 1. Directly relate to improving or ameliorating the client's disability-related functional limitations regarding transportation to work.
 - 2. Be a complete plan for all the minimum modifications necessary to meet the individual's disability and employment related needs.
- L. Vehicle modifications are not to be provided for the sole purpose of increasing independent living opportunities.
- M. The Vehicle Modification Prescription for a specific make/model/year vehicle must include an expiration date of up to one year and must be provided after the CDRS has completed their review of vehicle specifications and literature.

- N. The Vehicle Modification Prescription must include any necessary follow up fittings and recommendations for Adaptive Driver Training upon the completion of the modifications in accordance with Section 13.2 of this manual.
- O. Prior to vehicle purchase and/or modification, all new and used vehicles with 0-50,000 miles must be assessed by the driver evaluation team to ensure the vehicle is in good working order and requires no major repairs.
- P. VR reserves the right to require an inspection by an Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified mechanic if there are concerns for vehicles with 0-50,000 miles.
- Q. Vehicles that will be modified must be registered to, owned by or have an auto loan repayment status in good standing (if applicable) by the client or client's family member.
- R. Leased vehicles are not allowable for modification.
- S. Used vehicles for modification and or installations:
 - 1. Must have an odometer reading of 50,000 miles or less.
 - 2. With odometer readings greater than 50,001 miles to 75,000 miles must be inspected and documented by an ASE certified mechanic to certify the vehicle is in good working order and requires no major repairs.
 - 3. With odometer readings greater than 75,000 miles shall be considered for Vehicle Modification Prescriptions written only for mobility equipment installation.
- T. One prescribed vehicle modification is allowed per client. Repeat vehicle modifications may be considered only if the client's disability has changed significantly and new equipment is needed in order for the client to continue to maintain their employment.
- U. VR may cover:
 - 1. Vehicle modification upgrades only if due to a medically documented change in client's status or function that necessitates a change in driving equipment while currently employed.
 - 2. Vehicle modification repairs only if the repair is outside of warranty coverage.
 - 3. Vehicle modifications up to the least expensive and minimum equipment needed to safely operate the vehicle in accordance with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) standards in conjunction with NMEDA QAP guidelines.
 - 4. Vehicle modifications for either the driver's or the passenger's side, not both.

- V. Policy exceptions must be pursued for vehicle modifications for both driver's and passenger's side if it is determined necessary.
- W. The following are not covered by VR:
 - 1. Installation of non-essential equipment or options such as entertainment or burglar alarm systems, insulation, or tinted windows,
 - 2. Installation of standard equipment or customary optional equipment that is ordinarily available with vehicles such as automatic transmission, power steering, power brakes, automatic speed control, air conditioning, heavy duty alternators and power windows, and
 - 3. Vehicle modification repairs if the malfunction of the current system is due to client negligence and lack of maintenance of the equipment.
- X. When a vehicle modification has started, the vehicle will not be released to the client during the process.
- Y. The Driver Evaluation team must meet at the contracted installer facility upon the vehicle modification completion to inspect the vehicle, to confirm that the equipment installation is consistent in accordance with the Vehicle Modification Prescription and the client must complete a check-out drive to ensure safe operation of vehicle prior to release of vehicle to client.

V. Procedure

- A. Refer to IV. A, B, D-H, O, U, and X above.
- B. Refer to Standard Work (if available).
- C. Refer to RSA Allowable Services Spreadsheet, Contracts, Provider Requirements as applicable.
- D. The client's IPE must be amended with the agreed upon Vehicle Modification and associated costs that will be paid by each party including other funding sources.
- E. The VR Counselor must complete the agency Referral for Services forms for the following services: adaptive driving assessment, vehicle modifications (as per Vehicle Modification Prescription) and adaptive driving training and follow up services upon IPE approval.
- F. The VR Counselor must task the Purchasing Technician to create RSA Purchase Authorizations for the services listed on V. E above.
- G. The Purchasing Technician must submit the RSA Purchase Authorization for each service listed in V. E along with the referral information to the providers.
- H. Upon receipt of the provider's assessment report, the VR Counselor must review the report for completeness, approve the provider's invoice and process for payment after confirming that the reporting documentation is complete.

- I. Upon receipt of the provider's invoice for the installation (vehicle modification) the VR Counselor must ensure that the conditions listed in IV.Y are met and approve the provider's invoice for payment.

VI. Documentation Requirements

The client's electronic case file shall include the following:

- A. Vehicle Modification Prescription and Addendums, Driver Evaluation report (if applicable), and Project Cost Proposal(s),
- B. Current driver's license (unless the modification is for a passenger),
- C. Current car insurance of the vehicle to be modified,
- D. Financial plan to maintain insurance and subsequent repairs after warranty expiration,
- E. Vehicle Modification Planning Meeting notes,
- F. Identification of other funding sources, if applicable,
- G. IPE amendment justification discussing client's vehicle modification, why other transportation methods are unavailable, disability related need(s), and impact on employment written by VRC,
- H. Signed IPE amendment for vehicle modification and associated costs, and
- I. The following vendor forms:
 1. Vehicle Modification Summary and Understanding form,
 2. Vendor Receipt of Client Vehicle, and
 3. Vehicle Modification Inspection and Acceptance form on completion of vehicle discharge to client.