

## **ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY**

**Program Name:** Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

**Policy Number:** VR-13.4-v2

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2008

**Last Revision:** October 25, 2024

**CHAPTER 13:** Assistive Technology Services

**Section 13.4:** Home Modification

### **I. Policy Statement**

This policy provides guidance on home modification services which are only to be provided to allow the client to obtain, advance, and/or retain competitive integrated employment.

Home modifications include non-structural and structural alterations in the home, allowing greater accessibility for the client.

### **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 CFR §§:
  - 361.5 (c)(44) and (45), Applicable definitions,
  - 361.48 (b)(2) and (17), Scope of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities,
  - 361.54 (b)(1-2) and (3)(i)(G), Participation of individuals in cost of services based on financial need, and
  - United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Policy Directive RSA-PD-16-04, Other Service Data Elements XIV (C).
- Arizona Revised Statutes:
  - § 23-502, and
  - § 23-503.
- Arizona Administrative Code, Title 6, Chapter 4:
  - R6-4-201 (A)(1)(j), General considerations, and
  - R6-4-402 (B)(1)(c)(ii), Service and provider standards, service authorizations, equipment purchasing.

### **III. Applicability**

This policy applies when a client has existing barriers in their home and a home modification may be needed to achieve a successful employment outcome. The client must continuously engage in VR services and ensure the home modification is necessary to obtain the specific employment outcome listed in their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

### **IV. Standards**

- A. Home modifications may only be provided to remove barriers to the client's existing home that impede employment and must be directly related to achieving a specific employment outcome in the client's most recent and approved IPE.
- B. VR support for home modifications is not based on economic need.
- C. Comparable benefits are not required for home modifications.
- D. Home modifications are allowed only once a lifetime per client, regardless of the number of times the client's case is opened and/or moves from the documented primary residence to another.
- E. Additional home modification(s) in rare circumstances may be allowed for a client when a new disability-related reason is identified.
- F. VR will not pay for home modifications that:
  - 1. Do not meet the functional needs of the individual,
  - 2. Involve construction or movement of exterior walls,
  - 3. On a property that has a lien against the property,
  - 4. Include the purchase of a swimming pool, heated pool, jacuzzi, whirlpool tub, or sauna, or
  - 5. Consists of installing an elevator lift.
- G. The purchase of permanent structures, add-ons to structures, enclosed carports, or other major constructions including the removal of load-bearing walls are not permitted.
- H. A room addition may be allowable when it is determined to be the least expensive home modification.
- I. Home modifications to rental housing must have written permission from the landlord/owner/lien holder before any work is performed on the property.
- J. The selected contractor and client must agree with the planned modifications before construction begins.

- K. Supervisory approval is required for the total cost of the home modification before the authorization of VR funds.
- L. VR is not responsible for any additional costs above the original cost of the home modification price proposal should the client choose to utilize an alternative contractor.
- M. In instances where unexpected changes arise during a home modification construction that impacts the original cost of the home modification, the VR Counselor must verify and forward the additional cost proposal before making any changes to the client's IPE and authorization.
- N. After completion of home modification, the client, VR Counselor, and contracted vendor must inspect the client's residence to ensure the client's accessibility needs are met.

**V. Procedure**

- A. The client or their legal guardian must:
  - 1. Sign the Home Modification Letter of Understanding,
  - 2. Ensure the property owner signs the Permission to Renovate form in instances in which the client is renting the residence,
  - 3. Sign the AT-Home Modification Completion Report when the home modification is satisfactory and completed as per approved specifications, and
  - 4. Restore the rental residence to its original structure (if applicable) in circumstances when the client must move to another location.
- B. The Home Modification Letter of Understanding must be signed before the start of any home modifications.
- C. An evaluation and prescription, or written recommendations/assessments addressing the client's barriers and service needs for a home modification must be obtained from a licensed physical or occupational therapist.
- D. The home modification assessment must have supervisory approval before moving forward with the home modification process.
- E. The VR Counselor sends the Request for Project Pricing form to contracted vendors within the applicable county for a competitive bidding process.
- F. The VR Counselor will present and review all contracted vendors' project specifications and proposals so that the client can exercise informed choice.

- G. The VR Counselor must complete the agency Referral for Services form for the following services upon IPE approval: AT: Home Modification Assessment and AT: Home Modification.
- H. The VR Counselor must task the Purchasing Specialist to create RSA Purchase Authorizations for the necessary services.
- I. The Purchasing Specialist must submit the RSA Purchase Authorization for each necessary service along with the referral information to the providers.
- J. 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.
- K. Upon receipt of the provider's invoice for the modification, the VR Counselor must ensure that the home modifications are complete and approve the provider's invoice for payment.
- L. The VR Counselor must obtain the Home Modification Completion report from the contracted vendor after the project is complete.
- M. Refer to RSA Allowable Services Document, Contracts, or Provider Requirements as applicable.
- N. Refer to Standard Work, if available.

## **VI. Documentation Requirements**

- A. The client's electronic case file shall include the following:
  - 1. Signed (by the client or their legal guardian) Home Modification Letter of Understanding,
  - 2. Documentation from a licensed physical or occupational therapist (such as evaluation and prescription or assessment/recommendations), and
  - 3. The following vendor reports:
    - a) AT-Home Modification Assessment form,
    - b) Project Pricing Form, and
    - c) Home Modification Completion Report.