



MANATŪ HAUORA

Equipment and Modification Services

Funding Guidelines


Vehicle Purchase and Modifications

ABOUT THIS MANUAL

This manual outlines the access and eligibility criteria, funding guidelines, roles and responsibilities, processes to be used when considering applications for assistance towards the purchase of vehicles and funding for modifications which are funded by the Ministry of Health. This support is part of Equipment and Modification Services (EMS), which also includes equipment and housing modifications. Specific information about equipment and housing modifications is provided within separate manuals.

This Manual is for:

- EMS Assessors who complete assessments for disabled people and submit applications for vehicle purchase and or modifications on the person's behalf.
- Disabled people, their families/whānau and advocates who wish to understand more about this service.



Throughout this Manual the term 'person' refers to the disabled person

This Manual is divided into 2 parts

PART ONE:

- An overview of Equipment and Modification Services funded by the Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Health guidelines for the provision of vehicle purchase and/or modifications
- Roles and responsibilities of different parties throughout the assessment, application and approval process.

PART TWO:





An outline of the processes that are managed by the Ministry of Health's contracted Equipment and Modification Services' providers for applications requesting funding towards vehicle purchase and/or modifications.

This manual, forms and templates and any updates are available at the following web addresses:







www.enable.co.nz
www.accessable.co.nz
www.disabilityfunding.co.nz

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

<p><i>The text/content of the Manual is found on the left hand side of each page and is categorised by Chapter names and numbered sequentially for easy reference.</i></p>	<p>Chapter Name</p> <p>Content...</p> <p>This Manual is for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EMS Assessors who complete assessments for disabled people and submit applications for equipment on their behalf. • Disabled people, their family or whānau who wish to understand more about this service. 	<p>PART 1</p> <p> Definition</p> <p> Note</p> <p> Example</p> <p> Reference</p>	<p>Vehicle Manual Part Number - indicating the main sections of the manual.</p> <p>Further explanations to the text contained on the page are provided in boxes as aids to the content and identified using consistent icons throughout the manual.</p>
<p><i>Date page created or amended allowing for accurate version control of this publication.</i></p>	<p>August 2010 Vehicle Manual</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Vehicle Manual sequentially numbered for faster and easier referencing.</p>
	<p><i>Note: This Manual has been formatted for double sided printing.</i></p>		

Key To Symbols Used Throughout The Manual:

Symbol	Meaning	Explanation
	Definition	<i>Definitions of terminology used in the text are explained as well as having a full glossary of terms.</i>
	Note	<i>This icon highlights important notes in the text and to provide further direction and instruction.</i>
	Example	<i>This is an opportunity to further illustrate the content of the text with useful examples for comparison.</i>
	Reference	<i>This is an opportunity to direct readers to alternate sources of information or relevant websites.</i>

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1. INTRODUCTION TO EQUIPMENT AND MODIFICATION SERVICES

1.1 WHAT ARE EQUIPMENT AND MODIFICATION SERVICES?

Equipment and Modification Services (EMS) are one of the many services funded by the Disability Services Directorate, Ministry of Health. The purpose of Equipment and Modification Services is to help people with disabilities, and their families, to live as independently and safely as possible.

The overall purpose of Ministry of Health funded Equipment and Modification Services is that they should make a significant, consistent and reasonable contribution to enabling people with disabilities to participate (if and when they want to) in activities inside and outside their home, and in their local communities.

To ensure that provision of these services is affordable within defined budgets, service allocation can be evaluated against the following principles:

- i. they make an effective contribution towards helping people with disabilities to live, as far as possible, as others do in their own homes and communities;
- ii. they represent value for money both now and in the future;
- iii. they are allocated fairly through a consistent, principled and equitable approach; and
- iv. they reflect a lifetime perspective through recognising that the services that are most appropriate for a person may change over time.

The Ministry of Health contracts two agencies to administer and provide Equipment and Modification Services. These organisations are:

Accessible

The region administered by Accessable extends from the Bombay Hills including Meremere and Cape Reinga

Enable New Zealand

The region administered by Enable New Zealand extends from South of the Bombay Hills and Meremere to Stewart Island



Equipment and Modification Services provide:

- **Vehicle purchase and/or modifications**
- **Equipment**
- **Housing modifications**



vehicle hoists, hand controls and swivel seats.



items that are portable, free-standing or immediately removable such as bathing or toilet aids, wheelchairs, hoists, walking frames, hearing aids and equipment to help with communication and vision.



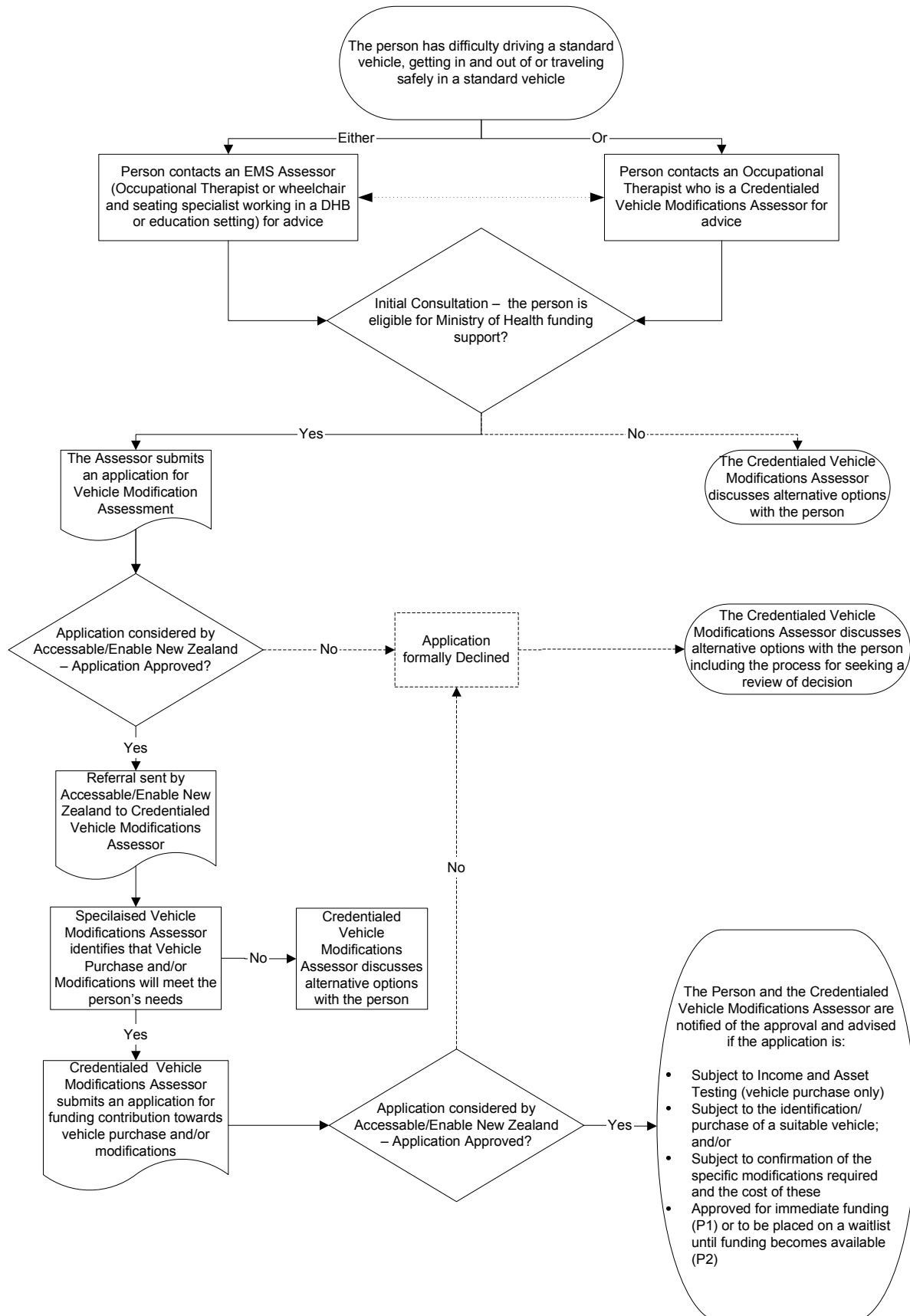
door widening, handrails, ramp access and level access showers.

This manual contains guidelines for the funding of Vehicle Purchase and/or Modifications only. Guidelines for the funding of Equipment and Housing Modifications can be found at the following web addresses:



www.enable.co.nz
www.accessable.co.nz
www.disabilityfunding.co.nz

ASSESSMENT AND CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR VEHICLE PURCHASE AND/OR VEHICLE MODIFICATION



2. FUNDING GUIDELINES FOR VEHICLE PURCHASE AND MODIFICATION

2.1 INITIAL CONSULTATION

In order for a funding application to be made, the person must first undergo consultation with an EMS Assessor to establish whether or not they would be eligible for Ministry of Health funding. This consultation can be undertaken over the phone with an EMS Assessor or at a meeting with the EMS Assessor.

In some cases, the initial consultation may be with an Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist working in the health (District Health Board) or education (schools) sector. This may happen when the person with a disability already has contact with these services or if they have a range of daily living needs which they also wish to have addressed. Whilst there may be a waiting list for new referrals to the public services, this initial consultation will be free of charge.

Alternatively, the consultation may be undertaken with a Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor. In many cases, these Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessors work in private practice. When the person is eligible for Ministry of Health funding, the cost of this initial consultation will be covered within the assessment fee charged to the Ministry of Health via Accessable or Enable New Zealand. If the person is not eligible for Ministry of Health funding, they may be charged a fee for this initial consultation.

When it is agreed that the person meets criteria as outlined in this manual, and alternatives (such as change in technique, vehicle and use of equipment) have been ruled out, the EMS Assessor or Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor may make an application for funding of the Vehicle Modifications Assessment.

If the person is not able to get Ministry of Health funding towards vehicle purchase and/or modifications, or if these are not considered as being essential or the most suitable solution for the person, the EMS Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor should discuss other support or funding options with the person.



EMS Assessors hold certain areas of accreditation which relate to their qualifications and experience within that specialty. The areas of accreditation refer to the types of equipment and modifications that the EMS Assessor is able to recommend.



Cost effective refers to the most economic and suitable solution to meet the person's needs related to their disability. This may not necessarily mean the cheapest option but does include the consideration of equipment and alternative transport options before funding towards vehicle purchase and/or modifications may be approved.



All applications for funding are given a priority rating based on the level of safety risk to the person or their support people if the equipment and/or modifications are not provided. Some people may have to wait for their assessment, equipment and/or modification until funding becomes available, where there is no immediate risk to their safety.



A complete Vehicle Modifications Assessment should not take place until approval for funding has been received in writing from Accessable or Enable New Zealand

2.1.1 Vehicle Modifications Assessment for Vehicle Purchase and/or Modification

Assessments for vehicle purchase and/or modification may only be approved for people who meet the agreed eligibility criteria as outlined in this manual.

All costs related to the assessment for consideration of vehicle purchase and/or modifications must be approved by Accessable or Enable New Zealand before the assessment can commence.

The assessment for vehicle purchase and/or modifications is undertaken by a suitably qualified Occupational Therapist who has specialist skills in Driving and Vehicle Modifications Assessment /modifications (known as a Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor). Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessors will hold the relevant area of accreditation for vehicle purchase and modification.

If it is agreed that the use of a modified vehicle would meet the person's essential needs related to their disability, and the person is eligible for Ministry of Health funded support, the Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor completes an application requesting the relevant services.



Essential means that there is no other viable or cost-effective alternative available to meet the person's needs related to their disability. The provision of equipment would reduce the risk of the person and/or their support people being harmed. Where the person has other long-term support options available, the request for funding cannot be considered as being 'essential'.

2.2 ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for consideration of funding towards vehicle purchase and or vehicle modification the person:

- will have a disability that lasts for more than six months
- will have difficulties managing to get in/out of, travel in and/or drive a vehicle safely and requires ongoing support to do so
- is not eligible for cover or entitlement through ACC
- lives in New Zealand
- is a New Zealand resident or is eligible under a shared (reciprocal) funding agreement with another country.



*More information about eligibility is available at:
www.moh.govt.nz/eligibility*

2.3 CRITERIA

Funding related to purchase of vehicles and modification to and/or vehicle equipment is allocated according to different criteria. These are described as follows:

- Vehicle Modifications** (See section 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3 of this document).
- Purchase of a Vehicle** (See section 4.1 of this document)
- Vehicle Equipment** (Refer to the Equipment and Modification Services Equipment Manual)

3. FUNDING FOR VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS

Where the use of alternative or unmodified transport is not a viable option, a person may be able to get assistance with funding for:

- i. Modifications to their own or a family vehicle, or
- ii. Modifications to a vehicle to be purchased

Such modifications must be considered as a long-term solution that is essential to enable the person to be able to drive independently or travel safely, including transferring in/out of the vehicle and transporting mobility equipment.

The level of funding available for vehicle modifications is up to a maximum of \$11,900 (inc. GST). This funding is not subject to Income and Asset testing. Additional requests for funding will generally only be considered after a period of six years in cases where the person's disability related needs have changed.

The following costs will be included in the maximum funding contribution:

- essential modifications to the vehicle
- certification of the modifications (if required).

The funding for modifications is considered separately from funding for purchase of a vehicle (refer to Section 4). Where the total cost of vehicle modifications on an application is less than the maximum available \$11,900 the remainder of the funding cannot be put towards vehicle purchase.

3.1 CRITERIA FOR VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS

3.1.1 Disabled Drivers

Funding for vehicle modifications will be considered where it has been identified as being essential for the person to do one of the following:

- i. Get to/from or undertake their full time employment.
- ii. Get to/from tertiary education or vocational training.
- iii. Undertake their role as the main carer of a dependent child or children.

The person must be the intended driver of the vehicle, and have a minimum of a learner's licence to drive a vehicle and either:

- i. be the vehicle owner (or intending to purchase a vehicle), or
- ii. be an employee of an organisation which has provided a vehicle for their use.



Alternative transport means:

- *Public transport*
- *Mobility taxi*
- *Being a passenger in a private vehicle*



Not a viable option includes:

- *No access to regular and reliable transport (e.g. person doing shift work, person lives with others who cannot assist with transport)*
- *No physically accessible or safe transport available*



Modifications to enable safe and independent driving include:

- *Hand controls*
- *Extended foot controls*
- *Joy stick controls*
- *Remote switches*
- *Vehicle mounted hoists*
- *Automatic swing out seat*

3.1.2 Disabled Passengers (Adults)

The person must require modifications to the vehicle in order for them to undertake work or study requirements (see Section 3.1).

The person must be unable to drive because of their disability but need to travel in the vehicle as a passenger and they must have someone who is always available to drive the vehicle for them.

3.1.3 Disabled Passengers (Children)

Funding for vehicle modifications will be considered for children with a disability aged 15 years and under where it has been identified that the modifications are essential to enable the child to:

- i. get in and out of a vehicle safely, and/or;
- ii. travel in a vehicle safely.

The applicant must be either:

- i. A family or whānau member applying for vehicle modifications on behalf of a child 15 years of age or under who is living with them full-time and being cared for by the applicant in a family setting that is anticipated to be long-term (i.e. minimum of 2-3 years).
- ii. A foster family member applying for a vehicle modifications or vehicle equipment on behalf of a child 15 years of age or under who is living with them full-time.



Modifications to support a child in safe travel and/or transferring include:

- Platform hoists
- Wheelchair restraints



Where a child is living regularly in a shared care arrangement, modifications to one vehicle only will be considered.

3.2 GENERAL INFORMATION

- The funding contribution for vehicle modifications is up to a maximum of \$11,900 incl. GST.
- Applications for vehicle modifications are not subject to Income and Asset Testing.
- If the person's needs change and further modifications are required to the vehicle, applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis, generally after a minimum of six years.
- Modifications to vehicles will only be considered for funding when it is confirmed that it is economically viable to modify the vehicle. Confirmation of this is required from the EMS Assessor or the Vehicle Modifier.

Where a person is not eligible for Ministry of Health Funding, the Lottery Grants Board may be able to assist with funding in some circumstances.

Where applications are being made for funding contributions from both Ministry of Health and Lottery Grants Board, this should be noted on the application submitted by the EMS Assessor.

Where possible, the same Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor should be used to manage both the Lottery Grants funded vehicle purchase and Ministry of Health funded assessment/application for vehicle modifications processes to ensure the continuity of assessment and service provision.



[Further information about Lottery Grants funding](#)

Phone: 0800 824 824

Email: grantsonline@dia.govt.nz

3.3 REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Instructions on the use and maintenance of the vehicle modifications and equipment should be given to the vehicle owner by the EMS Assessor and/or the Vehicle Modifier.

All repairs and maintenance of vehicle modifications are the responsibility of the vehicle owner.

3.4 INSURANCE

Once vehicle modifications are installed, they become part of the vehicle and as such are the responsibility of the vehicle owner to insure.

3.5 VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS NOT COVERED BY THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH:

- The purchase of a vehicle (unless the person is eligible for funding under the Vehicle Purchase criteria – refer to section 4).
- Insurance costs of any modifications to the vehicle.
- The cost of replacing vehicle modifications as a result of vehicle theft, damage or loss.
- Reimbursements to cover the cost of vehicle modifications that have been purchased before written funding approval from Accessable or Enable New Zealand.
- Modifications to vehicles where it is not considered economically viable to proceed with modifications.
- The purchase of vehicles to be owned by organisations or disability service providers.



Organisations or Disability Service providers may include:

- *Aged Residential Care Providers*
- *Disability Support Services residential care providers*
- *Supported Independent Living providers*
- *Day/Vocational service providers*

4. FUNDING FOR PURCHASE OF A VEHICLE

When access to alternative transport is not a viable option, the person with a disability may be able to receive a once-only funding contribution up to a maximum of \$11,900 (incl. GST) towards the purchase of a vehicle. This vehicle will be required to enable the person to get to and from their work or tertiary study or fulfil their role as main carer of a dependent child who lives with them.

The cost of modifications that may be required for the vehicle are considered separately (refer to section 3).

Funding may be provided where the vehicle to be purchased has already been modified for a previous owner.

4.1 CRITERIA

The person must either:

- be the intended driver of the vehicle, and have a minimum of a learner's licence to drive a vehicle; or
- be unable to drive because of their disability but require a modified vehicle to travel safely in order to meet their work or study requirements. In such cases the person must have someone who is always available to drive the vehicle for them.

Funding towards the purchase of a vehicle to be modified will be considered where it has been identified as being essential for the disabled person to do one of the following:

- i. Get to and from and/or undertake their full time employment (See Glossary).
- ii. Get to and from tertiary education or vocational training (See Glossary).
- iii. Undertake the role of main carer of a dependent child who lives with them (See Glossary).

4.2 GENERAL INFORMATION

- Where an application has been approved for funding towards purchase of a vehicle, the person is required to have an Income and Asset Test administered by Work and Income to determine the amount of funding the person will be eligible to receive.
- The maximum funding contribution for purchase of a vehicle is \$11,900 (incl. GST).
- Funding for modifications to the purchased vehicle is not subject to Income and Asset Testing (refer to section 3).

4.3 REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

All ongoing repairs and maintenance to the vehicle are the responsibility of the vehicle owner, including Warrant of Fitness and registration.

4.4 INSURANCE

All insurance costs are the responsibility of the vehicle owner.



Alternative transport means:

- Public transport
- Mobility taxi
- Being a passenger in a private vehicle.



Not a viable option includes:

- No access to regular and reliable transport (e.g. person doing shift work, person lives with others who cannot assist with transport)
- No physically accessible transport available.



Once-only funding means that a person is eligible to receive a funding contribution from the Ministry of Health towards the purchase of one vehicle only.

In situations where a person has previously received funding (between 1995 and May 2008) for a vehicle from the Ministry of Health or Vote: Health Funding, subsequent funding will only be considered if the person meets the current access and eligibility criteria, and it is clearly demonstrated that no other suitable options are available to them. Any such applications will require approval from the Ministry of Health Equipment and Modification Services Review Panel.



A Learners Licence is the minimum requirement as the person may require the use of a modified vehicle to drive safely and pass the practical test.

4.5 COSTS NOT COVERED BY THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH:

- The purchase of standard vehicles that do not require any alteration or adaptations to enable the person to drive independently and safely.
- The purchase of a vehicle to be owned by a person's employer. It is the responsibility of an employer to provide a suitable work environment, facilities and tools. (Note: funding approval will be considered for the provision of modifications to a business owned-vehicle to enable a person to undertake their work activities – refer to Section 3).
- The purchase of vehicles to be owned by organisations or disability service providers.
- The purchase of a vehicle where the person does not agree to an Income and Asset Test being undertaken by Work and Income New Zealand.
- Costs towards pre-purchase checks of the vehicle.
- Costs (including lessons) relating to the obtaining of a New Zealand Drivers Licence.
- Reimbursements to cover the cost of vehicles that have been purchased before written funding approval from Accessable or Enable New Zealand.
- The purchase of vehicles where it is not considered economically viable to proceed with modifications.
- A funding contribution towards the purchase of a second or subsequent vehicle, except in circumstances as described in Section 4.



Standard features such as power steering, automatic transmission, and wide doorways do not meet the Ministry of Health's definition of vehicle modifications.



Organisations and Disability providers include:

- *Aged Residential Care Providers*
- *Disability Support Services residential care providers*
- *Supported Independent Living providers*
- *Day/Vocational service providers*
- *Shared care/foster care providers or families*



Refer to the [Work and Income New Zealand website](#) for information on Income and Asset Testing.

5. PRIORITY GUIDELINES

Priority Guidelines ensure that people at most risk are given access to available funding.

All applications are subject to prioritisation based on the level of safety risk to the person or their support people if the vehicle purchase and/or modification is not provided. Some people may have to wait for their vehicle purchase and/or modification until funding is available where there is no immediate risk to their safety.

The priority timeframes relate to the processing of the application for provision of the service. Once the application is approved, the time for the provision of the service may extend because the vehicle purchase and/or modification process is subject to timeframes of external agencies such as the credentialed assessment services, Work and Income New Zealand (Income & Asset testing) and the suppliers and fitters of vehicle/modifications.

When evaluating the priority rating of an application, the EMS Assessor must evaluate the risk factors and record these on the Consideration of Risk form (see Section 10, Appendix) Applications must be given either a Priority 1 or Priority 2 rating.

5.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Priority Guidelines are not intended:

- To be used as a tool to guide clinical assessment and/or
- To assist in the management of waiting lists for assessment by an EMS Assessor

The Priority Guidelines are for use with all applications requesting equipment, housing modification, or vehicle purchase, modification and/ or vehicle equipment.

Accessible or Enable New Zealand may reprioritise an application from P1 to P2 where the rationale provided does not support the Priority 1 status. The EMS Assessor will be informed of the reprioritisation if this occurs.

Priority for funding may be upgraded if the person's need or access to other options change and the service is required more urgently. The EMS Assessor must provide updated information in order for P1 funding approval to be considered.



Priority 1 (P1) – Approval for applications for vehicle purchase, vehicle modification and/or vehicle equipment is required within 4 weeks

Priority 2 (P2) – Applications for Equipment, Housing Modifications or Vehicle Purchase and or Modification may be waitlisted, however where possible funding approval is given to proceed within 16 weeks. If demand on the budget exceeds the available funding, the waitlist time may be extended.



The Ministry of Health may make changes to these Priority time frames depending on budget availability



Applications for vehicle purchase or modification to enable a person to undertake employment or tertiary level education are generally Priority 2. In some circumstances these applications can be considered as Priority 1 where information confirms that the person is at risk of being unable to commence or continue their study or employment roles safely and or independently and there is no viable short term alternative.

6. PRIVACY ACT

The information provided within the Accessable and Enable New Zealand application forms may be used:

- for the purposes of assessing the need for funding of equipment and modifications by the Ministry of Health
- for the purposes of arranging trials of specific equipment items as part of the assessment process
- for the collection of statistical information such as gender, ethnicity, and disability type to assist the Ministry of Health to develop a clearer picture of the requirements of people with disabilities and to ensure that future access to Disability Support Services is fair and equitable for all
- to check national consistency of decision-making and processes with Accessable or Enable New Zealand and the Ministry of Health
- for such other functions as permitted under law.

Accessable or Enable New Zealand may provide the Ministry of Health with information about the equipment and/or modification services the person may receive.

The provision of information in the application form is voluntary but consideration of funding approval may depend upon all the information being provided.

The person has the right to access the information held about them and to have corrections made to this information.

The Health Information Privacy Code applies to the information collected within the application form.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The consideration and provision of vehicle purchase and/or modifications for the person involves a number of different people and agencies. Their responsibilities are outlined below.

7.1 THE PERSON, AND/OR THEIR SUPPORT PEOPLE, AND/OR FAMILY OR WHĀNAU

- Participate in an assessment by an EMS Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor.
- Assist the Assessor to obtain complete and accurate information for the purpose of making applications.
- If there are no viable alternatives (including equipment), consider a range of options recommended by the EMS Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor to find out what vehicle modifications are the most appropriate solution.
- Read / listen to all information provided in the course of the assessment and provision process and discuss with the EMS Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor where information provided is not fully understood.
- Complete, sign and return any documentation required in order for the application to progress.
- Contact the EMS Assessor or their manager if unsatisfied with any part of the assessment process.
- Contact the EMS Assessor, Accessable or Enable New Zealand if dissatisfied with the decision regarding funding for Vehicle Modifications Assessment, Vehicle Purchase or Vehicle Modification.
- If the intended driver, the person must hold a current/valid New Zealand Drivers Licence (Minimum of Learner's).
- If approved funding towards vehicle purchase, the intended vehicle owner must advise the Motor Vehicle Dealer of the amount approved by Accessable or Enable New Zealand and make arrangements with the Motor Vehicle Dealer regarding their portion of the payment should the total cost exceed the approved funding amount.

7.2 THE VEHICLE OWNER

- Insure the vehicle (including modifications).
- Maintain warrant of fitness and registration of the vehicle.
- Maintain regular vehicle servicing.
- Maintain modifications in accordance with instructions provided at the time of installation/purchase.
- Undertake repairs to the vehicle and modifications as required in order to maintain them in safe working order.

7.3 THE DRIVER

- Use the modifications in accordance with the instructions provided at the time of installation/purchase.
- Ensure that all people and disability equipment in the vehicle are restrained in accordance with the New Zealand Road Code.

7.4 THE EMS ASSESSOR OR CREDENTIALLED VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS ASSESSOR

- Responsible for maintaining their registration with the EMS Assessor national database (held by Enable New Zealand).

7.4.1 Accreditation as an EMS Assessor:

- To become an Approved Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor, suitably qualified people must complete and submit a registration form to Enable New Zealand.
- Accreditation may be removed from an Approved Assessor or Vehicle Modifications Assessor if:
 - an audit shows a consistent pattern of inappropriate recommendations made or applications do not align with Ministry of Health funding guidelines, or
 - they show a consistent pattern of not complying with the correct application process, or
 - they have not maintained the appropriate qualifications and competencies to enable them to practice. To maintain an appropriate skill level an Approved Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor should be able to provide evidence to demonstrate that ongoing relevant knowledge and experience has been maintained.
- The Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor must advise Enable Information of any change in their:
 - accreditation area
 - employer
 - registration or practising status
 - contact details.

7.4.2 During the assessment

The EMS Assessor/ Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor will:

- Assess the functional abilities and limitations, needs and anticipated outcomes for the person and/or their carers and/or dependent children in relation to driving and safe transportation in a vehicle.
- Consider the long term viability of solutions noting potential for change in the person's function or mobility equipment needs.
- Inform the person of all possible support options that could meet their essential needs related to their disability (this could include options other than Ministry of Health funded equipment or modifications).
- Explain to the person (and other relevant people):
 - the current Ministry of Health eligibility criteria
 - the roles/responsibilities of relevant people according to the Ministry of Health criteria and processes
 - the requirement to provide the most cost effective solution to meet the person's essential needs related to their disability
 - the application process, priority guidelines, and likely timeframes.



*The registration forms and accreditation standards are available from Enable Information
Phone: 0800 17 1981 or:
Assessor Registration
Enable Information
PO Box 4547
Palmerston North*

7.4.3 During the application process

The EMS Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor will complete the application forms according to the processes as outlined by Accessable and/or Enable New Zealand in Part 2 of this manual. Applications will only be accepted from an EMS Assessor who holds the relevant area of accreditation.

7.4.4 For Vehicle Purchase

The Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor will:

- Provide the person with detailed information about the disability related vehicle specifications that are being recommended.
- Provide the person with information about criteria and process - specific to vehicle selection and purchase.
- Support the person throughout the vehicle selection process.
- Provide all relevant information and documentation regarding vehicle selection to Accessable or Enable New Zealand as outlined in Part 2 of this manual.

7.4.5 For Vehicle Modification

The Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor will:

- Identify suitably qualified vehicle modifiers to undertake the work required.
- Liaise with the vehicle modifiers to provide appropriate quotes:
 - that clearly separate the essential modifications from modifications that are desirable (and therefore the person/family/whānau or vehicle owner's responsibility to fund should they wish to have these).
 - that note and include the cost of LVVTA certification where required.
- Discuss additional funding arrangements with the person/family/whānau or vehicle owner when the cost of modification exceeds the funding available.
- Provide all relevant information and documentation regarding the recommended vehicle modifications to Accessable or Enable New Zealand as outlined in Part 2 of this manual.

7.4.6 After Vehicle Purchase and Modification

The Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor will:

- Check that the completed vehicle modifications meet the person's identified needs and provide relevant information and documentation regarding this to Accessable or Enable New Zealand as outlined in Part 2 of this manual.
- Ensure that information has been provided to the person, their support people and/or vehicle owner with regards to the ongoing care and maintenance of the modifications.
- Ensure that the person (their support people), vehicle owner and driver have been trained in the safe use of the modifications.



When the EMS Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor is unable to support an application that has been requested by the person, their family or whānau, they must document this on the application and inform the person, family or whānau, of their reasons. (Refer to Sect 8.1)

7.5 EMPLOYERS AND SUPERVISORS

Employers and/or supervisors of EMS Assessors / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessors will:

- Verify that the Assessor has the qualifications and experience to enable them to competently perform the role of an EMS Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor.
- Follow up on concerns raised by Accessable or Enable New Zealand about aspects of specific applications from an Assessor.
- Complete audits of applications submitted by an EMS Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor where concerns have been raised about the quality of a specific or of successive applications.

7.6 ACCESSABLE AND ENABLE NEW ZEALAND

Accessable and Enable New Zealand will:

- Administer Ministry of Health funding within a defined budget and in a way that ensures that people who have the most urgent need have their needs met first.
- Communicate Ministry of Health policy and procedural changes and updates to EMS Assessors.

7.6.1 During the application process

Accessable and Enable New Zealand will:

- Receive and review applications from EMS Assessors / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessors in line with current Ministry of Health funding guidelines and Accessable and Enable New Zealand processes.
- Advise the EMS Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor of the outcome of the application, or request additional information from the Assessor, within 4 weeks of the application being received at Accessable or Enable New Zealand.
- Process replies to queries or any new communications about existing applications within 4 weeks of being received at Accessable or Enable New Zealand.
- Refer all relevant applications to the Ministry of Health's Equipment and Modification Services Review Panel for a decision.
- Forward details to Work and Income to arrange an Income and Asset Test where funding is approved towards vehicle purchase.
- Approve or decline applications in writing to the person and EMS Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor, giving reason/s if the application has been declined.
- Undertake a review of the decision to decline an application if requested by either the person or the EMS Assessor.
- Respond to complaints by following the Accessable or Enable New Zealand Review and Complaints process.
- Advise the person and EMS Assessor / Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor in writing of any anticipated delays in funding.



An application may be queried by Accessable or Enable New Zealand if it does not contain sufficient information to demonstrate:

- *That the person is eligible for a funding contribution towards vehicle purchase and/or modification*
- *How the person's essential needs related to their disability will be met by provision of the recommended solution/s (equipment and/or modifications)*
- *That the solution is cost effective including what other solutions and support options have been considered.*
- *That the need for the solution is immediate and that the person and/or their caregiver are unable to wait for its provision*

- Advise the Ministry of Health of any ongoing application where a decision has not been reached within 6 months.
- Audit applications as per the Ministry of Health Review and Complaints Procedure.
- Where a dispute has arisen from Ministry of Health funded vehicle modifications, facilitate the resolution of such disputes.
- Manage payment processes for the purchase of vehicles, vehicle modifications and vehicle equipment in accordance with Ministry of Health guidelines and criteria and Accessable and Enable New Zealand Processes.
- Maintain accurate records of individual contributions towards vehicle purchase, vehicle modifications and equipment.

7.7 MINISTRY OF HEALTH

- Develop and implement access and eligibility criteria for the provision of Equipment and Modification Services.
- Manage and monitor the contracts with Accessable and Enable New Zealand to ensure that quality services are provided in a timely, fair and efficient manner and administered within budget.
- Review relevant applications through the Equipment and Modification Services Review Panel and communicate the decision within 10 working days of the receipt of the application.
- Follow up with Accessable and Enable New Zealand where a decision regarding an application has not been reached within 6 months.

7.8 WORK AND INCOME

Work and Income will:

- Conduct an Income and Asset Test where the request for funding towards vehicle purchase has been approved by Accessable or Enable New Zealand.
- Notify Accessable or Enable New Zealand in writing of the funding amount the person is eligible to receive once the Income and Asset Test has been completed.
- Follow up with a person regarding any disagreement relating to the Income and Asset Test.
- Undertake a review of decision when requested by the person, according to Work and Income process.

7.9 MOTOR VEHICLE DEALERSHIP / SALESPERSON

- Provide product information to the person and/or the Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor.
- Provide a copy of the Consumer Information Notice regarding the selected vehicle to the person and/or the Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor.
- Negotiate with the person to arrange payment for purchase which is additional to the amount approved for contribution by Accessable or Enable New Zealand.
- Provide written confirmation to the Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor that arrangements for payment have been made as above.
- Liaise with Accessable/Enable New Zealand regarding the relevant payment requirements and processes of the funding providers.
- Comply with all relevant legislation regarding vehicle sales.

7.10 VEHICLE MODIFIER

- Liaise with the Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor and provide appropriate quotes that:
 - clearly separate the essential modifications from modifications that are desirable (and therefore the person/family/whānau or vehicle owner's responsibility to fund should they wish to have these).
 - note and include the cost of LVVTA certification where required.
- Contact the person within 10 working days of receipt of formal notification to proceed to arrange commencement of the modifications.
- Notify the Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor if unable to contact the person for any reason or if unable to undertake the modifications as requested for any reason.
- Notify and liaise with the Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor immediately if any issues arise during the course of modification that may result in the need to alter the specifications or cost of modifications.
- Once modifications are completed, notify the Assessor and provide an invoice and a copy of the LVVTA certification (where applicable) to Accessable / Enable New Zealand.
- Liaise with Accessable/Enable New Zealand regarding the relevant payment requirements and processes of the funding providers.
- Comply with all relevant legislation regarding vehicle modification.

8. REVIEWS OF DECISION

8.1 APPLICATIONS NOT SUPPORTED BY THE CREDENTIALLED/VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS ASSESSOR

Even where the EMS Assessor/Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor does not support a person's application for equipment, the person may still request the Assessor to submit the application to Accessable or Enable New Zealand.

- The Assessor should not sign the application and must record their reasons for not supporting the application and advise the person of their decision.
- Applications will be declined if they are not supported by the Assessor.
- Where the person is not satisfied with the decision made by Accessable or Enable New Zealand they may request a Review of Decision.

8.2 REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT BY A CREDENTIALLED VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS ASSESSOR

The person may wish to seek a second opinion/assessment from another Credentialed Assessor if they are not happy with any aspect of the service they have received. This would need to be arranged by the person, and/or their family or whānau. They could do this by:

- contacting the Assessor's Service Manager or Supervisor to request a second opinion/assessment.
- ringing Enable Information (Phone 0800 17 1981) for a list of alternative Credentialed Vehical Modification Assessor who could carry out the assessment.

All costs associated with getting a second opinion/assessment will be the responsibility of the person unless funding for second Vehicle Modifications Assessment is pre-approved by Accessable or Enable New Zealand.

8.3 REVIEW OF DECISION BY ACCESSABLE OR ENABLE NEW ZEALAND

If the person, or the Assessor, is not satisfied with any decision that has been made about their application, they may request a review of this decision. Additional information in writing, supporting their request, should be provided.

- The person and their Assessor will be advised of the outcome or progress of the review within 10 working days of receipt of the request for a review.
- If the person is still dissatisfied with the outcome of the Review of Decision, they may request a second review which will be undertaken by the Ministry of Health Equipment and Modification Services Review Panel.



A Review of decision will be carried out by the management teams at either Accessable or Enable New Zealand

8.4 REVIEW OF DECISION BY THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, EQUIPMENT AND MODIFICATION SERVICES REVIEW PANEL

The Ministry of Health has an Equipment and Modification Services Review Panel which considers applications that:

- Require clarification of the Ministry of Health's Equipment and Modification Services operational policy, or
- Require a review of the decision made by Accessable or Enable New Zealand, as requested by the person, their family or whānau or the Assessor.

The objectives of the panel are to ensure that all decisions regarding applications are:

- considered in a nationally consistent way
- transparent and fair, and
- based on the Ministry's agreed funding criteria.

This means that some applications submitted to the Equipment and Modification Services Review Panel may also be sent to either Accessable or Enable New Zealand as part of this review process.

The panel will inform either Accessable or Enable New Zealand of its decision within 10 working days of receipt of the application. Accessable or Enable New Zealand will then advise the person and EMS Assessor of the Ministry of Health's Equipment and Modification Services Review panel's decision. Only applications forwarded by Accessable or Enable New Zealand will be considered by the Panel.

Membership of the Panel includes Ministry of Health representatives who have portfolio responsibility and experience in the following areas:

- Equipment and Modification Services
- Child and youth services
- Services for older people.



Accessable or Enable New Zealand may share relevant information from specific applications that are submitted to the Equipment and Modification Services Review Panel. This is to make sure that applications are considered in a nationally consistent and fair way.

9. GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

9.1 FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT

At least thirty hours per week or achieving a degree of financial independence that is at least the same as they could earn on the sickness benefit. Where the person is in full time employment, written confirmation of their employment status (or earnings) must be provided with the application.

If a person is unable to work thirty hours per week due to the limitations of their disability, funding approval may be considered if the person is working at their maximum capacity. This will require supporting documentation from either a Medical Practitioner or an Allied Health Professional.

9.2 FULL TIME TERTIARY EDUCATION/ VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The course/courses must be full time. If a person is unable to undertake a full time course due to the limitations of their disability, funding approval may be considered if the person is studying at their maximum capacity. This will require supporting documentation from one of the following: a Medical Practitioner, Allied Health Professional or Disability Advisor/Coordinator who is based in a tertiary education institution. The course length must be at least a calendar or academic year and the content of the course must support the person working toward full time employment (or employment to the level of their maximum capacity). Where the person is undertaking Tertiary Education/Vocational training, written confirmation of their full time student status must be provided with the application.

9.3 MAIN CARER

With respect to vehicle purchase and/or modification is an unpaid carer who has a disability and lives with a dependent child/children aged 15 years and under. The carer will need to be able to drive a vehicle independently and safely in order to be able to transport their dependent child/children as part of their responsibilities as a parent or guardian. Supporting documentation is required in the form of copies of the children's birth certificates, or where the applicant is not the biological parent, copies of guardianship or adoption papers are appropriate.

9.4 EMS ASSESSOR

EMS Assessors hold certain areas of accreditation which relate to their qualifications and experience within that specialty. The areas of accreditation refer to the types of equipment that the EMS Assessor is able to recommend (refer to the Equipment and Modification Service Equipment Manual: Part 1, Section 10 for EMS Assessor Accreditation areas).

9.5 CREDENTIALLED VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS ASSESSOR

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Is a suitably qualified Occupational Therapist with specialist skills in driver/passenger assessment and vehicle modification who has completed the Ministry of Health's Vehicle Modification Assessor Competency programme. Will be registered as holding DVA accreditation with Enable New Zealand.

9.6 VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS ASSESSMENT

An assessment by a Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor for selection of an appropriate vehicle and/or modifications to the vehicle that will enable a person to achieve either:

- independence and safety as a driver, and/or
- safe access to and/or transportation as a passenger in a vehicle.

9.7 VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS

Any permanently attached alteration and/or adaptation of a vehicle completed to meet a person's needs related to their disability. These modifications may or may not require certification.

9.8 VEHICLE MODIFIER

The person or company that is contracted to complete the modification works as prescribed by the Credentialed Vehicle Modifications Assessor.

9.9 LVVTA CERTIFICATION

A legal requirement as overseen by the New Zealand Transport Agency to ensure that vehicle modifications comply with specific standards as set out by the Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association (LVVTA).

9.10 VEHICLE EQUIPMENT

All equipment used in and around a vehicle to transport a person safely or to transfer someone into/out of the vehicle. Equipment items used to assist safe travel will not be permanently fixed to the vehicle or require certification. Refer to EMS Equipment Manual for criteria and process.

9.11 ESSENTIAL

Means that there is no other viable or cost-effective alternative available to meet the person's needs related to their disability. The provision of equipment would reduce the risk of the person and/or their support people being harmed. Where the person has other long-term support options available, the request for funding cannot be considered as being 'essential'.

9.12 COST EFFECTIVE

Is the most economic and suitable solution to meet the person's needs related to their disability. This may not necessarily mean the cheapest option but does include the consideration of equipment and alternative transport options before funding towards vehicle purchase and/or modifications may be approved.