



Vehicle Modification Process

Description and Purpose of this Document

This document is to outline the assessment process for vehicle modification requests with the Assistive Technology Partnership (ATP). This document defines the best practices followed by the Technology Specialist. It also identifies differences in process as determined by the partner funding programs.

Vehicle Modification Solutions

Vehicle modifications are assistive technology designed to help a consumer move through and interact with his/her home and environment. This includes some types of vehicle modifications and lifts.

Vehicle Modification Solutions that are Covered and Not Covered

Examples of possible solutions that are covered include: wheelchair carriers for top of car, wheelchair lifts, wheelchair ramps, driver’s hand controls and high tech control systems, full vehicle conversions.

Examples of solutions that are not covered include: devices or modifications already purchased or completed, vehicles such as the car or van (also known as the chassis), modifications/repairs that are not related to vehicle accessibility, general maintenance of the vehicle, general maintenance of the accessibility equipment.

Used accessibility equipment/modification in used or new vehicles can be covered after the Technology Specialist has verified the equipment/modification is appropriate. The amount of financial assistance is based on present average costs and depreciation of 20% for each year of use. The amount of financial assistance provided cannot exceed the estimated current value of the modifications. The age of the modifications is based on the date modifications went into use.

Age of Modification	New	1	2	3	4	5
Value	100%	80%	60%	40%	20%	0

Financial assistance may be provided for the cost of accessibility equipment/modification in a new vehicle after the Technology Specialist has verified the equipment/modification is appropriate. It is recommended that any mobility rebates provided to the consumer be applied to the cost of the adaptive equipment.



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Once an appropriate modification is identified, the Technology Specialist shall send the consumer/vehicle owner information about the modification. The proposal shall include a permission to proceed form. The consumer/vehicle owner shall sign and return the permission form prior to obtaining bids for the project. (Attachment A)

Vehicle Ownership

The consumer must own the vehicle if they are going to be the driver of the vehicle that is to be modified. Ownership can be determined by the Technology Specialist reviewing and documenting the current registration from the county (pink slip). Ownership can also be determined by review of the title. A leased vehicle cannot be modified. Current insurance should also be documented. Pictures of the current title and/or registration along with current insurance should be casenoted and uploaded into the Attachments section in Attie.

In the case of the consumer not being the driver of the vehicle, the various funding programs have different criteria:

The Development Disabilities Waiver (DD) program will allow for the guardian of the consumer to be the sole owner. Guardianship can be determined by the Technology Specialist reviewing and documenting the review of the guardianship paperwork or confirming guardianship with the consumer's Service Coordinator. The DD program does not allow for the purchase of an already modified vehicle. The consumer/guardian must present ownership of the vehicle before the Technology Specialist can proceed with project. DD administrative staff has agreed that a signed purchase agreement meets the ownership requirement in order to allow families to move forward while still including excess modification costs into their financing of the vehicle.

The Aged & Disabled Waiver (AD) program requires that an adult consumer (19 years of age or older), even if not driving, be the/or one of the owners of the modified vehicle. Ownership can be determined by the Technology Specialist reviewing the title of the vehicle/registration or ensuring that the consumer is on the application for certificate of title for the vehicle (if purchasing a newly modified vehicle).

The State of Nebraska allows for up to 4 owners on a title.

If the consumer's name is not on the title/registration, the consumer/owner(s) will need to go to their county treasurer's office to request that the consumer's name be added. There is a fee associated with this process which the consumer will need to be responsible for. If the vehicle is financed, it is recommended that the person who financed the vehicle contact the financing company to work through the steps necessary to add the consumer onto the title of the



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vehicle. Until this is done, ATP cannot assist as ownership of the vehicle cannot be determined. If it at all possible, it is recommended that the consumer be included in financing the vehicle.

The Enrichment Foundation Grant (EFG) program requires that the adult consumer be the/or one of the owners of the vehicle being modified.

Nebraska Voc Rehab (VR) does allow parents/guardians and even a spouse of a consumer be the owner of the vehicle. VR has the owner sign additional paperwork, however.

Regardless of funding source, ownership needs to be documented in a casenote in Attie along with a copy/picture of the title or current registration uploaded into the Attachments section.

For programs that allow the purchase of an already modified vehicle (AD Waiver, EFG, and VR), ownership is determined at the end of the project. The vendor is required to submit a copy of the application for certificate of title with their billing. (Attachment B)

At times, the family may be working with a vendor that has an unmodified vehicle scheduled for modification at the manufacturing plant. If the family is interested in pursuing this type of vehicle, ownership/purchase cannot be determined until after the vehicle returns modified and the purchase completed – see application for certificate of title above. The vendor and consumer should arrange the purchase so that purchase is completed when the vehicle is returned and deemed to work with the consumer/family. The Technology Specialist can work with the vendor to secure a bid and funding for the modification prior to the vehicle being modified so that the work is prior authorized. The Technology Specialist should make sure that the VIN on the vehicle is included on the bid. However, the final purchase should not take place until after the vehicle has returned to the local vendor.

Determining Vehicle Eligibility

If the Technology Specialist is in doubt of a vehicle's viability for modifications, the Technology Specialist should contact the local vendor. If requested, the consumer may have to bring his/her vehicle to the vendor so that it can be inspected. This may be necessary, for example, if there is rust present and a secure installation of a Curbsider is questioned. If the consumer is not able to bring their vehicle to a vendor for a visual inspection, the Technology Specialist may refer the consumer to work with their local mechanic and an approved vendor to coordinate the inspection.

If the vehicle has a salvaged or previously salvaged title, the Technology Specialist should contact the local mobility equipment vendor to determine if the vehicle is eligible for modification. The local vendor may be able to pull up a report identifying why the vehicle was



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salvaged. The local vendor can make the determination whether or not the vehicle can be modified.

Requests for accessibility modifications/repairs to a vehicle (such as the installation of a lift or lowering a van floor) that is 5 years old or whose mileage exceeds 50,000 miles, will require the consumer to obtain an inspection from a qualified mechanic noting that the vehicle is in good operating condition. A mechanic is defined as someone who is currently working as a mechanic in a business setting. The Vehicle Certification form will be provided by the Technology Specialist. This is the form that the mechanic uses to inspect the various parts of the vehicle. The consumer or their family is responsible for the costs of having the vehicle inspected and for any needed repairs to the vehicle. (Attachment C)

If items are noted needing repair on the Vehicle Certification form, the Technology Specialist should contact the inspecting mechanic to determine if such items are mechanical or safety issues and if they pose a safety hazard if not repaired in a timely manner. If the mechanic makes that determination, the project will need to be closed until the vehicle can be repaired. If an item does not constitute a safety hazard, the project may be able to proceed. The Technology Specialist should casenote the conversation with the mechanic and attach the mechanic's statement into the Attachments section in Attie. The Technology Specialist should ensure that if a repair is necessary and completed, that the mechanic notes that information on the Vehicle Certification form. If the repairs are not completed within a 30-day timeframe, it is recommended that the referral be closed until the repairs are completed. The Technology Specialist should disclose any concerns with the condition of the vehicle with the bidding vendor as part of the bid process. Reviewing supervisor may also determine which repairs are necessary prior to authorization of the project.

Wheelchair/Consumer Evaluation Information

The Technology Specialist is to assess the consumer and/or any mobility equipment as a part of the evaluation process. See measurements, securement system, and consumer functional information that is requested on the ATP vehicle eval form. This information should be provided to the vendors along with the bid request when the Technology Specialist is requesting bids for particular projects. It is recommended, as well, that the consumer visit with the vendors to ensure that the modifications are appropriate. (Attachment D)

Driver's Evaluations and Training

Driver's evaluations and training are necessary for consumers that do not already have a driver's license authorized/noted to drive with certain adaptive equipment. The driver's license will indicate the person is able to drive with "manual driving aids" or "adapted driving equipment" under the restrictions portion of his/her driver's license.



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If a consumer is a new driver with adapted driving aids, a driver's evaluation is warranted. If a consumer with a history of driving with adaptive aids has had a change in medical/functional condition, a new driver's evaluation may also be warranted. The vehicle vendor should be able to assist with determining the need for a driver's evaluation. The consumer will need to obtain a prescription from his/her doctor to participate in a driver's evaluation and training. NMEDA guidelines state that driver's evaluation reports are good for 1 year unless otherwise noted on the report by the evaluator. The consumer will also need to have a current permit/license prior to participating in the driver's evaluation and training.

Funding for driver's evaluations and training is limited to alternative funding resources as Medicaid, HHS AD Waiver, or HHS DD Waiver will not pay for the evaluations and training. In certain cases, coverage of the evaluation and training may be funded under insurance or funds with the EFG program. VR, in certain cases, will also fund driver's evaluations. When a VR consumer is in need of a driver's evaluation, oftentimes the VR counselor will authorize funds directly to the evaluator prior to submitting a referral to ATP. Once the driver's evaluation report is received, the VR counselor will include it with the referral.

If funding for a driver's evaluation and training has been identified through EFG, or if the VR consumer has not had one prior to the referral being submitted, the Technology Specialist will contact a driver's evaluation program for a quote. This quote shall include the costs of the evaluation itself along with an estimated time for training. Remember, that the consumer needs to complete training successfully before an evaluator will provide a report. If the evaluator feels that the consumer is safe, s/he will include in the report what aids the consumer will need to operate a vehicle safely. The Technology Specialist will contact qualified vendors and shall include a copy of the driver's evaluation report with the bid request. There can be no modifications to the equipment recommended on the report without the prior approval of the evaluator.

Sales Tax Exemptions

Revenue Form 13ME – Nebraska Certificate of Exemption for Mobility Enhancing Equipment: This form is used by the vendors selling the modified vehicle or the modifications in a vehicle already owned by the consumer/family to show to the state of Nebraska why they did not charge sales tax on the modification portion. This form requires that the family provide the vendor with a prescription from the doctor. The vendor will retain this form in their files. (Attachment E)

Revenue Form 6 – Nebraska Sales/Use Tax and Tire Fee Statement: Exemption number 7 on the form states that "if the amount contributed by Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is the maximum amount allowed by law, the



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entire purchase price of the motor vehicle is exempt from sales tax.” An award letter can be requested from the AD Waiver program to provide a family that has purchased a vehicle for the sole purpose of using it for a person who experiences a disability. This award letter can be used by the family when licensing the vehicle with their local county office. It is recommended that the family take this award letter along with the service authorization and Notice of Action when they go to their local treasurer’s office to plate their vehicle. The DD program, as of the date of this document, does not provide an award letter. ATP has requested this of DD but a final decision is still pending with DD administrative staff. (Attachment F) There is a document called Instructions for County Treasurers from November 2021 that highlights the process the county treasurers offices should follow regarding exemption number 7. (Attachment I)