

Vehicle Modifications

September 2013

Is it difficult for you to get around or get in and out of a vehicle or travel safely because of your disability?

Who can get vehicle modifications?

If you are a New Zealand resident ordinarily living in New Zealand and you have a long-term disability that isn't covered by ACC, you may be able to get some funding assistance from the Ministry of Health. You must be in New Zealand at the time of receiving the services.

There is limited funding available for vehicle modifications for eligible people and, in a small number of cases, for purchase of a vehicle that will then be modified. The availability of funding assistance to buy a vehicle will depend on your financial situation and your circumstances for needing such a vehicle.

The maximum level of funding is \$12,165 (including GST) that can be paid towards the purchase of a vehicle. You will need to have an income and cash asset test administered by Work and Income before any funding can be considered.

How can I get vehicle modifications?

An occupational therapist who is experienced in this area works with you to complete an assessment of your needs and identifies whether modifications to a vehicle are necessary to support you to work or study, or to look after someone who depends on you. To find out how to arrange an assessment with an occupational therapist in your area, call Enable Information on freephone: 0800 17 1981.

The occupational therapist will let you know whether you can get funding assistance from the Ministry of Health for modifications to your vehicle or to help you purchase a vehicle.

If you are eligible, they can make an application for you to Accessable (if you live in Auckland or Northland) or Enable New Zealand (rest of New Zealand). They

can also let you know about other sources of funding or what options you may be able to buy or arrange yourself.

Please note: Other options, such as public transport, mobility taxis and applying for grants from other organisations (ie, New Zealand Lottery Grants Board) should also be looked at. An occupational therapist can help you work through these options.

Types of vehicle modifications

An occupational therapist can help you to find the best way to get around the community, including driving a modified vehicle, being a passenger in a modified vehicle or other options.

If you will be the driver of the vehicle, your disability needs, the impact of your disability on your life, your driving ability or potential to learn to drive and the reason you need to use a modified vehicle will be considered. Types of modifications may include hand controls, seating, ramps or hoists and safe ways of transporting your wheelchair.

If you are caring for a disabled child (aged 15 years or younger) who lives with you, their safety needs as a passenger will be assessed. Types of modifications may include seating, safety restraints, ramps or hoists and safe ways of transporting wheelchairs.

Funding of \$12,165 (including GST) is the most funding that is available for vehicle modifications. An income and cash asset test is not required if vehicle modifications are requested.

What do Accessable and Enable New Zealand do?

The occupational therapist sends the application to Accessable or Enable New Zealand. They check applications to make sure the assessor has considered the different support, transport and equipment options available. This is so any vehicle or vehicle modifications you receive funding for are suitable and useful for you.

If your application is approved, modifying your vehicle or purchasing a suitable vehicle can begin when the funding becomes available. This may be soon after

funding approval or longer if your need is not as urgent as others. The occupational therapist will let you know about this process.

For more information, contact:

Accessible (Auckland/Northland)

Call free: 0508 001 002

Fax: (09) 620 1702

www.accessable.co.nz

Enable New Zealand (rest of New Zealand)

Call free: 0800 17 1981

Fax: (06) 353 5876

www.disabilityfunding.co.nz

Vehicle Association of New Zealand (VANZ)

www.vanz.co.nz/accessors vanz@vanz.co.nz

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