



# WHAT DOES MEDICAID SAY ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS

## Environmental Modifications

### Service Definition

Environmental modifications are minor physical adaptations to the home, as required by the individual's service plan, that are necessary to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the individual, enabling the individual to function with greater independence in the home, and without which the individual would require institutionalization.

### Home Ownership

Environmental modifications must be approved for the individual's own home or family-owned home. Rented homes or apartments are allowed to be modified only when a signed agreement from the landlord is obtained. The signed agreement must be submitted with all other required waiver documentation.

### Choice of Provider

The individual chooses which approved/certified providers will submit bids or estimates for this service. The provider with the lowest bid will be chosen, unless there is a strong written justification from the case manager detailing why a provider with a higher bid should be selected.

### Requirements

All environmental modifications must be approved by the waiver program prior to services are rendered.

- Environmental modification requests must be provided in accordance with applicable State or local building codes and should be guided by Americans with Disability Act (ADA) or ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) requirements, when in the best interest of the individual and his or her specific situation.
- Environmental modifications must be authorized only when it is determined to be medically necessary and must have direct medical or remedial benefit for the waiver individual. This determination includes the following considerations:
  - The modification is the most cost-effective or conservative means to meet the individual's needs for accessibility within the home.
  - The environmental modification is individualized, specific, and consistent with, but not in excess of, the individual's needs.
- Requests for modifications at two or more locations may be approved only at the discretion of the DA director or designee.
- Requests for modifications may be denied if the State division director or State agency designee determines that the documentation does not support residential stability or the service requested.

## **Allowable Activities**

Justification and documentation is required to demonstrate that the modification is necessary to meet the individual's identified needs.

- Adaptive door openers and locks – Limited to one per individual primary residence for an individual living alone or who is alone without a caregiver for substantial periods of time but needs to open, close, or lock the doors and cannot do so without special adaptation.
- Bathroom modification – Limited to one existing bathroom per individual primary residence when no other accessible bathroom is available. The bathroom modification may include:
  - Removal of existing bathtub, toilet, or sink
  - Installation of roll-in shower, grab bars, toilet meeting ADA requirements, and wall-mounted sink
  - Installation of replacement flooring, if necessary due to bath modification
- Environmental control units – Adaptive switches and buttons to operate medical equipment, communication devices, heat and air conditioning, and lights for an individual living alone or who is alone without a caregiver for a substantial portion of the day.
- Environmental safety devices limited to:
  - Door alarms
  - Antiscald devices
  - Hand-held shower head
  - Grab bars for the bathroom
- Fence - Limited to 200 linear feet (individual must have a documented history of elopement)
- Ramp - Limited to one per individual primary residence and only when no other accessible ramp exists:
  - In accordance with the ADA or ADAAG, unless doing so is not in the best interest of the client
  - Portable - Considered for rental property only
  - Permanent
  - Vertical lift - May be considered in lieu of a ramp if photographic and written documentation shows it is not possible for a ramp to be used
- Stair lift - If required for access to areas of the home necessary to meet the direct medical or remedial benefit of the individual per service plan.
- Single-room air conditioners/single-room air purifiers - If required for access to areas of the home necessary to meet the direct medical or remedial benefit of the individual per service plan:
  - There is a documented medical reason for the individual's need to maintain a constant external temperature. The documentation necessary for this equipment includes a prescription from the primary care physician.
  - The room air conditioner size is consistent with the room size (square feet) to be cooled.
- Widen doorway – To allow safe egress:
  - Exterior – Modification limited to one per individual primary residence when no other accessible door exists.
  - Interior – Modification of bedroom, bathroom, or kitchen door or doorway as needed to allow for access. (A pocket door may be appropriate when there is insufficient room to allow for the door swing.)
- Windows – Replacement of glass with Plexiglas or other shatterproof material when there is a documented medical/behavioral reason.
- Upon the completion of the modification, painting, wall coverings, doors, trim, flooring, and so forth, will be matched (to the degree possible) to the previous color/style/design.
- Maintenance – Limited to \$500 annually for the repair and service of environmental modifications that have been provided through an HCBS waiver:

- Requests for service must detail parts cost and labor cost.
- If the need for maintenance exceeds \$500, the case manager will work with other available funding streams and community agencies to fulfill the need. If service costs exceed the annual limit, parts and labor costs funded through the waiver must be itemized clearly to differentiate which parts and labor costs are funded by the waiver service and which parts and labor are funded through a nonwaiver funding source.
- Items requested that are not previously listed must be reviewed and decision rendered by the State division director or State agency designee.

### ***Service Standards***

- Environmental modification must be of direct medical or remedial benefit to the individual.
- Environmental modifications must meet applicable standards of manufacture, design, and installation, and should be guided by ADA or ADAAG requirements when in the best interest of the individual and his or her specific situation.
- Environmental modifications must be compliant with applicable building codes.

### ***Documentation Standards***

- The identified direct benefit or need must be documented within a:
  - Service plan
  - Physician prescription and/or clinical evaluation, as deemed appropriate
- Documentation/explanation of the service in the Request for Approval to Authorize Services (RFA), including the following:
  - Property owner of the residence where the requested modification is proposed
  - Property owner's relationship to the individual
  - What, if any, relationship the property owner has to the waiver program
  - Length of time the individual has lived at this residence
  - If a rental property, length of lease
  - Written agreement of landlord for modification
  - Verification of individual's intent to remain in the setting
  - Land survey may be required when exterior modifications approach property line
- Signed and approved RFA
- Signed and approved service plan
- Provider of services required to maintain receipts for all incurred expenses related to the modification
- Must be in compliance with FSSA- and DA-specific guidelines and policies

### ***Limitations***

A lifetime cap of \$15,000 is available for environmental modifications. The cap represents a cost for basic modification of an individual's home for accessibility and safety, and accommodates the individual's needs for housing modifications. The cost of an environmental modification includes all materials, equipment, labor, and permits to complete the project. No parts of an environmental modification may be billed separately as part of any other service category (for example, specialized medical equipment). In addition to the \$15,000 lifetime cap, \$500 is allowable annually for repair, replacement, or adjustment to an existing environmental modification that was funded by an HCBS waiver.

## Activities Not Allowed

Examples and descriptions of activities not allowed include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Adaptations or improvements that are not of direct medical or remedial benefit to the individual:
  - Central heating and air conditioning
  - Routine home maintenance
  - Installation of standard (non-ADA, non-ADAAG) home fixtures (such as sinks, commodes, tub, wall, window and door coverings, and so forth) that replace existing standard (non-ADA, non-ADAAG) home fixtures
  - Roof repair
  - Structural repair
  - Garage doors
  - Elevators
  - Ceiling track lift systems
  - Driveways, decks, patios, sidewalks, or household furnishings
  - Replacement of carpeting and other floor coverings
  - Storage (such as cabinets, shelving, or closets), sheds
  - Swimming pools, spas, or hot tubs
  - Video monitoring system
  - Adaptive switches or buttons to control devices intended for entertainment, employment, or education
  - Home-security systems
- Modifications that create living space or facilities where they did not previously exist (such as installation of a bathroom in a garage or basement, and so forth)
- Modifications that duplicate existing accessibility (such as a second accessible bathroom, a second means of egress from home, and so forth)
- Modifications that will add square footage to the home
- Individuals living in foster homes, group homes, assisted living facilities, or homes for special services (any licensed residential facility) are not eligible to receive this service.

*Note: The responsibility for environmental modifications rests with the facility owner or operator.*

- Individuals living in a provider-owned residence are not eligible to receive this service

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- Completion of, or modifications to, new construction, or significant remodeling or reconstruction are excluded, unless there is documented evidence of a significant change in the individual's medical or remedial needs that now requires the requested modification.
- Services to participants receiving adult family care
- Services to participants receiving assisted living
- Environmental modification services will not be reimbursed when provided as an individual provider by a parent of a minor child participant, the spouse of a participant, the POA of a participant, the HCR of a participant, or the legal guardian of a participant.

## Provider Qualifications

Table 9 – Provider Qualifications Table for Environmental Modifications

Waiver	Provider	Licensure/ Certification	Other Standard
A&D, TBI	FSSA/DA- approved Environmental Modification Individual	Any applicable licensure must be in place	DA approved  455 IAC 2 Becoming an approved provider; maintaining approval 455 IAC 2 Provider qualifications: General requirements 455 IAC 2 Maintenance of records of services provided 455 IAC 2 Liability insurance 455 IAC 2 Professional qualifications and requirements; documentation of qualifications 455 IAC 2 Warranty required  Compliance with applicable building codes and permits.
A&D, TBI	FSSA/DA- approved Environmental Modification Agency/ Contractor	Any applicable licensure <i>IC 25-20.2</i> Home inspector <i>IC 25-28.5</i> Plumber  Evaluator <i>IC 25-23.5</i>  Certification <i>IC 25-4</i> Architect	DA approved  455 IAC 2 Becoming an approved provider; maintaining approval 455 IAC 2 Provider qualifications: General requirements 455 IAC 2 Maintenance of records of services provided 455 IAC 2 Liability insurance 455 IAC 2 Professional qualifications and requirements; documentation of qualifications 455 IAC 2 Warranty required  Compliance with applicable building codes and permits
A&D, TBI	Plumber	<i>IC 25-28.5</i>	DA approved  455 IAC 2 Becoming an approved provider; maintaining approval 455 IAC 2 Provider qualifications: General requirements 455 IAC 2 Financial information 455 IAC 2 Liability insurance 455 IAC 2 Professional qualifications and requirements; documentation of qualifications 455 IAC 2 Warranty required  Compliance with applicable building codes and permits
A&D, TBI	Architect	<i>IC 25-4</i>	DA approved  455 IAC 2 Becoming an approved provider; maintaining approval 455 IAC 2 Provider qualifications: General requirements 455 IAC 2 Financial information 455 IAC 2 Liability insurance 455 IAC 2 Professional qualifications and requirements; documentation of qualifications 455 IAC 2 Warranty required  Compliance with applicable building codes and permits

# Environmental Modification Assessment

## Service Definition

Environmental Modification Assessment Services will be used to objectively determine the specifications for an environmental modification that is safe, appropriate, and feasible in order to ensure accurate bids and workmanship.

The Environmental Modification Assessment will assess the home for minor physical adaptations to the home, which, as indicated by individual's service plan, are necessary to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the individual and enable the individual to function with greater independence in the home, and without which the individual would require institutionalization.

The assessor will be responsible for writing the specifications, review of feasibility, and the post-project inspection. Upon completion of the specifications and review of feasibility, the assessor will prepare and submit the project specifications to the case manager and individual for the bidding process and be paid a first installment of \$300 for completion of home specifications. Once the project is complete, the assessor, consumer, and case manager will then inspect the work and sign off, indicating that it was completed per the agreed-upon bid and be paid the final installment of \$200. This payment is not included in the actual environmental modification cost category and shall not be subtracted from the participant's lifetime cap of \$15,000. The case management provider entity will be responsible for maintaining related records that can be accessed by the state.

## Allowable Activities

- Evaluation of the current environment, including the identification of barriers which may prevent the completion of desired modifications
- Reimbursement for nonfeasible assessments
- Review of participant's plan of care
- Drafting of specifications: electrical, plumbing, and interior framing
- Preparation/submission of specifications
- Post-project inspection/approval

## Service Standards

- Need for environmental modification must be indicated in the participant's plan of care
- Modification must address the participant's level of service needs
- Proposed specifications for modification must conform to the requirements and limitations of the current approved service definition for Environmental Modification Services.
- Assessment should be conducted by an approved, qualified individual who is independent of the entity providing the environmental modifications.

*Note: An annual cap of \$500 is available for Environmental Modification Assessment services.*

## Activities Not Allowed

- Environmental Modification Assessment services will not be reimbursed when provided as an individual provider by a parent of a minor child participant, the spouse of a participant, the POA of a participant, the HCR of a participant, or the legal guardian of a participant.
- Payment will not be made for Environmental Modifications under this service.
- Payment will not be made for an Environmental Modification Assessment for the maintenance, repair, or service of an existing environmental modification that was funded by an HCBS waiver.

## Provider Qualifications

Table 10 - Provider Qualifications Table for Environmental Modification Assessor

Waiver	Provider	Licensure/ Certification	Other Standard
A&D	FSSA/DA-approved Environmental Modification Assessment Individual	License: IC 25-20.2 Home Inspector OR: Certified Aging-In-Place Specialist (CAPS Certification – National Association of Home Builders) OR: Executive Certificate in Home Modifications (University of Southern California) AND: Verification required every three years	DA Approved  455 IAC 2 Becoming an approved provider; maintaining approval 455 IAC 2 Provider qualifications: General requirements 455 IAC 2 Financial information 455 IAC 2 Liability insurance 455 IAC 2 Professional qualifications and requirements; documentation of qualifications 455 IAC 2 Warranty required  Compliance with applicable building codes and permits

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