

Vehicle modifications

About vehicle modifications

When you've had a severe injury, you may have difficulties with driving or being transported in a vehicle.

Vehicle modifications are one of the many ways we can help you get back to full participation in your life and community after a severe injury.

Eligibility for vehicle modifications

To be eligible for vehicle modifications, you need to:

- Have a physical, sensory and/or cognitive disability because of your motor accident injury, or serious injury or illness at work that prevents you from safely driving, accessing or travelling as a passenger in an unmodified vehicle
- Have achieved maximum recovery from your injury
- Own or have access to a motor vehicle on a regular basis
- Have been assessed by a driver trained occupational therapist certified by the State's Driver Licensing Authority, the Roads and Maritime Services NSW (RMS).

For driver modifications, you also need to:

- Have a medical certificate which gives you medical clearance to return to driving
- Have a current and valid driver's licence and be legally able to drive.

What vehicle modifications can icare pay for?

Vehicle modifications we can pay for include:

- Adapted controls to assist with steering assistance, acceleration and braking
- Hoists and ramps to enable wheelchair access
- Automatic transmission to change gears
- Changes to parking brakes, rear vision mirrors, seat belts or indicators.

If we have funded vehicle modifications, we can also pay for the cost of getting a blue slip, and any additional insurance costs directly related to your needs as a result of your motor accident injury, or serious injury or illness at work.

We'll also pay for ongoing costs of maintenance, including repairs and replacements for the modifications. If you buy a new car, we can pay for your modifications to be transferred over.

We fund modifications once every eight years, unless your needs change to the extent that you can't use your modified vehicle anymore. If your needs have changed within this time you can talk with your icare contact or case manager about suitable options.

How do I request vehicle modifications?

If you need vehicle modifications, talk to your icare contact or case manager. You'll need to have an assessment with a specialist driver trained occupational therapist.

If you don't have a car already, the occupational therapist can advise you on suitable vehicles types and models, and may be able to help you work out what's best for your circumstances.

If you do have a car, we can only pay for modifications if the car is considered reliable and roadworthy.

In the occupational therapist's assessment, they'll discuss modification options with you and arrange trials of these to work out the simplest and cost-effective option to meet your needs.

Once the most appropriate modifications are determined, they'll write a report with the recommendations and request these modifications on your behalf.

They'll also recommend whether driving lessons would be appropriate. The cost of your driving lessons can also be covered by us.

How is a decision made about vehicle modifications?

We'll review the information provided by the occupational therapist and make a decision about whether the requested modifications meet our criteria for funding. The modifications requested must be required because of the needs related to your motor accident injury, or serious injury or illness at work and be considered reasonable and necessary.

Once our approval is provided, the vehicle modifications can then be carried out.

What can't icare pay for?

You're responsible for all the normal running costs of the vehicle, including registration, insurance and fuel.

You're also responsible for making sure the vehicle complies with safety and roadworthiness standards.

We also can't pay for:

- Modifications that don't comply with the Australian Standards, Australian design rules or current "Assessing Fitness to Drive" national medical standards
- Modifications to a motor vehicle for a need/condition that you had prior to your motor accident injury
- Modifications that have no clear or sustained benefit to you, for example, if you don't plan to use the vehicle regularly, and there are other means of transport readily available
- Costs to convert the vehicle back to its standard configuration once major modifications have been paid by us
- Modifications completed outside of Australia
- Repairs subject to supplier's warranty, including vehicle modifier warranty or vehicle's insurance policy
- Cancellation fees for non-attendance at driving lessons as part of the driving program.

For driver modifications, we also can't pay for:

- Vehicle modifications if you are not medically cleared to drive and licensed to drive with an endorsed licence
- Vehicle modifications if you have been assessed as unsafe to drive.

How long will vehicle modifications take?

Vehicle modifications may take several months depending on the complexity of the modifications. It also depends on where you live, as most accessible vehicle modifiers are in major cities and your vehicle may need to be transported to the modifier.

If you're having driver modifications, you'll also need lessons to learn how to drive with the modifications. It may take some time to build your ability and confidence with driving.

For more information

If you'd like further information about vehicle modifications, contact us through one of the options below, or discuss with your icare contact or case manager.

icare

GPO Box 4052,
Sydney, NSW 2000

Phone: 1300 738 586

Fax: 1300 738 583

Email: care-requests@icare.nsw.gov.au

Web: icare.nsw.gov.au