

Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Rehabilitation Services
Home Modifications Fact Sheet

The Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) can provide a **limited** range of home modification services to job seekers to achieve the goal included on their approved Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). DORS Rehabilitation Technology Services (RTS) staff will be your contacts for all information related to home modifications.

DORS-funded modifications can only include:

1. The least expensive means of safely addressing the individual's disability needs.
2. Standard construction grade materials.

Upgrades will not be considered, provided or paid for by DORS.

Maryland State procurement regulations apply to all home modification contractors, and they must be DORS-approved providers with proof of their current Maryland Home Improvement Certificate and certificate of insurance.

All DORS home modification services are provided based on:

1. Your need for modifications based on your disability.
2. The home modification's relationship to your employment goal on your IPE.
3. Prior written approval from DORS.
4. Availability of DORS funds.

Modifications to property that is not owned by the DORS participant or that person's family may be considered only in exceptional circumstances.

What kind of home modification services may be available?

DORS support for modifications to an eligible individual's residence may only be considered when such modifications are feasible without fundamentally altering the physical structure of the home, and when necessary to enable:

- **Entry and exit** – What is needed to get into and out of the house — one entry/exit per residence.

This may include widening an exterior door and providing a ramp or lift, including modification of approach, door handle and lock, ramp and porch railings and other related features.

- **Access to bathroom facility and/or kitchen** – What is needed to get into and use a bathroom or kitchen, when it is possible to do so without fundamentally altering the physical structure, layout, or both, of the bathroom or kitchen.

This may include widening of the door, installation of grab bars, installation of ADA compliant sinks, toilets, and assistive devices designed to facilitate use of the shower or bathtub. A roll-in shower enclosure may be considered only if it does not involve fundamental alterations to the physical structure, and it is not located in a unit within a multi-unit or multi-dwelling building.

- **Access within the residence** – Modifications for non-bathroom and kitchen areas may be authorized only to the extent necessary for an individual to move freely and independently within the residence to assist the individual in performing the essential activities of daily living to achieve an employment goal. (Note: Reconfiguration of house space may be recommended instead of modifications if those modifications would pose a safety concern or would require structural changes.)

Modification examples include interior door widening, installation of a stair lift or similar equipment, and installation of other adaptive equipment that is required for access to essential areas of the home but do not require structural changes to the home.

DORS cannot provide:

- Services which directly or indirectly involve the purchase of land, construction of a permanent building, or construction of an addition to a permanent building.
- Fundamental alterations to the structure or infrastructure of a residence, such as removal of walls, creation of new rooms, and/or replacing or substantially modifying existing plumbing, electrical or other structural systems.
- Repair or replacement of previous home modifications included and covered in an existing warranty or insurance policy.
- Funding for home modifications that do not fully comply with the current ADA Accessibility Guidelines
- Funding for new home modifications in the individual's residence within 10 years after previous home modifications have been completed, as certified by the DORS Agency Architect, unless warranted by a new RTS accessibility assessment and DORS determines that exceptional circumstances exist.
- Modifications to a second bathroom or kitchen when there is an existing accessible bathroom or kitchen in the residence that meets the accessibility needs of the consumer, as determined by a DORS Occupational Therapist and the Agency Architect.
- A roll-in shower enclosure when the bathroom is located within a residence in a multi-unit or multi-dwelling building (i.e., condominium or apartment building).

If you are interested in home modifications:

- Discuss your request with your DORS counselor.
- Your counselor will explain the DORS policies and procedures related to home modifications.

- As appropriate, an RTS assessment may be completed to explore all aspects of possible modifications to your home. Information will be gathered about the house, your functional limitations which require accommodations/modifications, applicable codes, covenants and restrictions, and other housing resources.

Your Responsibilities:

1. Work cooperatively with your DORS counselor and other DORS staff during the initial exploration of the requested modifications, providing accurate information about the dwelling and other factors.
2. Participate financially toward modifications approved and funded by DORS according to the DORS Financial Need Policy, if applicable. Discuss specific arrangements for payment of any required participation with the DORS Program Income Office prior to project initiation.
3. Contact your DORS counselor if any changes are requested from the modifications documented in the signed *Home Modification Services Agreement*. Any change requires prior written approval from DORS.
4. Maintain and repair any modifications provided as required by any relevant product warranties.
5. Obtain and pay for maintenance, service and repairs for any modifications provided once they are no longer covered under warranty.
6. Review the homeowner's insurance coverage related to any equipment provided and make adjustments to the coverage as needed.