

Summary

Objective





The purpose of housing modifications is to enable our clients to live as independently and safely as possible. The Housing Modification service works with Housing Assessors, clients, their family/whānau and ACC staff to identify the most practicable and cost effective housing/workplace modification solutions to meet our clients' injury-related needs. Modifications should be done efficiently, be appropriate and be cost effective.

Owner [Name withheld]



Expert

Procedure

1.0 Who is this service for?

- a** The Housing Modification Service is for clients who have sustained serious physical injuries which will require a long term recovery (at least 6 months recovery timeframe) and who have:
 - an assessed need for modifications to their home, ie: an entitlement to receive social rehabilitation; and
 - we've considered other options to meet the client's injury related needs and have approved housing modificationsIn some situations, relocation or residential rehabilitation or support may be more cost effective alternative options than housing modifications.
 -  [Housing Modification Service - contract](#)
- b** For clients who require temporary solutions such as equipment, see the Managed Rehabilitation Equipment Services (MRES) service page. If the equipment requires fixing or attaching to the property, a referral for a housing assessment should be made, even if the need is temporary. This includes temporary bathrooms eg Highlander or Iowa Towa.
 -  [About the Managed Rehabilitation Equipment Services Service Page](#)
- c** If your client will need ongoing and extensive support please consider if suitable for Serious Injury Profiling. See Refer for an Injury Profile process.
 -  [Refer for an Injury Profile](#)
- d** Further information about Housing Modification service provision can be found in the Operational Guidelines
 -  [Operational Guidelines for Housing Modification and Housing Assessment Services](#)

2.0 We're unable to provide funding to modify:

- a** • hospitals
 - hostels
 - hotels or motels
 - rest homes
 - other institutions, eg schools.
- b** ACC is not required to:
 - repair or replace any modifications if the home or modifications are not insured and are damaged
 - replace any modifications that no longer perform their original function, eg that are worn out
 - provide or contribute to modifications to another home to which the client moves.
- c** For further information see Decision Making Principles for Extended Discretion
 -  [Decision Making Principles for Extended Discretion Policy](#)
- d** See the Housing Modification Operational Guidelines for repair, maintenance and removal of equipment
 -  [Housing Modification Operational Guidelines](#)

3.0 If Housing Modifications are requested

- a** ACC funds the full cost of modifications needed as a result of injury. All housing modifications are funded as a grant and become the property (and responsibility) of the property owner after completion.

The cost of modifications includes:

- preparation of any drawings or plans
- specialist reports from engineers, hydrologists, or geologists
- obtaining any permits or consents
- obtaining quotes from builders and sub-contractors
- project management of the builders and sub-contractors.

ACC will also cover the cost of alternative accessible accommodation for the entire household if it is unsafe to occupy the dwelling while modifications are being completed.

Referring for a Housing Modification Assessment

- 📄 arrange housing assessment

4.0 Referring for a Housing Modification Assessment

- a** We use assessments to identify a client's injury-related needs and to identify if housing modification is the most suitable form of social rehabilitation to meet those needs. Assessments are paid for by ACC and carried out by independent occupational therapists. Depending on the client's assessed injury-related need, the occupational therapist will complete one of these reports:

- ACC257 Housing modification assessment report - standard and complex modifications
- ACC263 Housing modification assessment report - minor modifications

Go to Arranging a Housing Modification Assessment for more information.

- 📄 ACC257 Housing modification assessment report - standard and complex modifications
- 📄 ACC263 Housing modification assessment report - minor modifications

- b** Before any modifications take place

- You must have reasonable evidence to support the request. The injury-related needs identified in the housing assessment should support any requirement for specific housing modifications. See Assessments and reports.
- The client and the property owner(s) (if not the client) must give written consent for the modifications to go ahead, which can be provided using the ACC1563 Housing modification consent form. See AC Act 2001, Schedule 1, Part 1, Clause 19(2a)

5.0 Suppliers

- a** We contract with Accessable (regions: Auckland and Northland) and Enable New Zealand (regions: South of Auckland-rest of NZ) to provide Housing Modification services for our clients.
- b** Clients can choose to employ their own builders and sub-contractors and to manage the build themselves, once there is agreement with ACC about the type of modifications needed. See Guidelines for managing the housing modification process when clients want to use their own architect or builder.

- 📄 Arrange Own Architect or Builder

NOTE What if clients want to engage their own builder or own architect?

- 📄 **PROCESS** Arrange Own Architect or Builder

6.0 Out of area supplier travel

- a** The exceptional circumstances when this out of area travel may be approved include:
- Where there is pressure on lead in times for contractors, especially in smaller regions where providers are unavailable due to the amount of work they have already taken on.
 - Only in instances where it is clearly cost effective
 - Where a long wait time presents a high risk to the client (eg client is using suboptimal equipment while waiting for installation and there is risk to client safety). If low risk to client and low cost – then the out of region travel should be declined; and,
 - There is no other contractor in the local TLA
 - Consider cost savings (eg where a more expensive installation is in place while waiting for the planned housing modification, and costs could be considerably reduced by having a contractor travel outside the TLA).

- b** The Supplier should make the request via email. Consideration will be given to the total cost of the project so the request from the Supplier needs to include:
- the tender costs from the different contractors; and
 - the separate travel related costs for the out of area contractor they are recommending; and
 - any other factors the Supplier thinks relevant in meeting the criteria above.
- The RTM may approve the request if the above criteria is met. Otherwise seek advice from Technical Services.
- c** Travel codes:
- Travel Mileage HMTD4 - for travel in excess of the 100km round trip - prior approval is required. Travel time for Specialists HMTT7 - hourly rate as per Appendix 4 of contract.
 - All other travel - HMT6 as per contract.
 - Accommodation costs would be met where staying near the building location is a more cost effective option rather than providers travel to and from site each day. Use HM35, HM45, HM55 codes for accommodation.
 - Prior approval is required for all use of these travel codes.

7.0 Types of modifications

- a** Clients may request initial modifications, additional modifications or modifications to an additional or subsequent home.

There are four types of Housing Modifications:

• **Grab Rails:**

Pre-made grab rails can be installed without a housing needs assessment. To request grab rails, complete the ACC7404 - Request for housing modification - grab rail form and indicate if the grab rails are to be installed within 5 working days (standard) or 48 hours for urgent installations. If custom-made handrails are required, see Arranging a Housing Modification Assessment process.

Minor Modifications

- minor ramps less than 1m in height
- decks/landings less than 1m in height
- low rise lifts
- stair lifts (chair)
- custom-made or one-off internal and external handrails that require fabrication
- door widening
- easy steps less than 1m in height
- fencing/gates
- hand-held showers.

See Arranging a Minor Housing Modification process for more details.

Standard Modifications Standard modifications require a building consent. Examples of standard modifications may include:





- ramps exceeding 1m in height and/or requiring multiple changes in direction
- decks/landings in excess of 1m in height
- bathroom modifications including wet area showers
- stair lifts (platform)
- covered transfer areas
- fencing/gates (building consent required)
- kitchen/laundry modifications.

See Arranging standard/complex housing modifications process for more details.

• **Complex Modifications** Complex modifications require building consent AND an extension to the footprint of the existing home and/or a through floor lift solution. Examples are extensions to existing rooms or building new rooms outside of the existing footprint. Covered transfer areas and decks are not considered to be part of the footprint of a home, as they are external to it.

Note: A housing modification may have a number of different elements involved, and may require a range of tradespeople who work together. This does not make a minor or standard project a "complex" housing modification. If you are unsure if the request meets the criteria for a standard or a complex housing project - seek internal advice.

See Arranging standard/complex housing modifications process for more details.

-  ACC7404 - request for housing modification - grab rail
-  Arranging the Installation of Pre-made Standard Length Grab Rails
-  Arranging Minor Housing Modifications
-  Arranging Standard/Complex Housing Modifications

8.0 Responsibilities

- a** Housing modifications can only be done with the explicit consent of the property owner. Once modifications are completed the property owner is responsible for their maintenance, repair, and insurance. For all types of housing modifications, the ACC case owner is the main point of contact for the client, their family as well as the property owner.

9.0 Financial contributions

- a We can only pay for modifications that meet our client's injury-related needs. ACC funds the full cost of modifications needed as a result of injury, including the costs of assessments and quotes from builders or other sub-contractors. All housing modifications are funded as a grant and become the property (and responsibility) of the property owner after completion.

10.0 Purchase Orders - Actual and Reasonable costs for Minor Modifications

- a Due to price pressures, costs in the construction industry continue to escalate. This has meant that our fixed prices in the contract have not been able to keep up with the actual costs of building modifications. As a result, ACC is no longer using a fixed Schedule of Rates for minor housing modifications. Instead, our Suppliers will invoice ACC the Actual and Reasonable costs.
- b This means that Purchase Orders for minor modifications are not required.
- c Prior approval is required, however, where there are more than two minor modifications requests per claim. Or, if unforeseen problems or events come up during the course of a housing modification project, such as the need for a specialist report from a soil geologist, then the Supplier should seek approval from ACC.
Another example where the Supplier should seek approval from ACC but a purchase order is not required is if more administration time is required for a minor modification - HM31 - up to 3 hours may be invoiced without seeking approval from ACC. If more than 3 hours is required, the Supplier must send an email to ACC seeking approval. A Purchase Order is not required.
- d ACC will monitor the costs via an independent auditor. The external auditor has been commissioned to undertake audits across a range of modifications to check that ACC is paying reasonable benchmarked prices.

11.0 Additional activities

- a We sometimes require our Housing Modification Services suppliers to undertake additional activities which are not included in the cost of minor, standard or complex housing modifications. See the Housing Modification pricing list for service item codes and request guidelines.

Our Housing Modification Services suppliers can provide specialist advice to help clients who want to purchase a property to identify properties that either:

- have the necessary features to meet their injury related requirements, or
- that have the potential to be more easily modified.

12.0 Electricity Power Costs

- a ACC does not generally fund basic services such as water, gas and electricity. However, on a case by case basis, ACC may consider making a financial contribution towards a client's power costs to power equipment which is necessary for the client's injury related needs.

 Injury-Related Increased Electricity Charges Policy

13.0 What to do if an extension of time is required

- a If the provider cannot deliver on the expected timeframe, as per contracted timeframes above, the provider needs to provide an extension of timeframe request to ACC via email. The request should set out:
 - Reason for the extension request
 - New revised timeframe - with rationale of why this amount of time is required

 Housing Modifications Timeframes

- b Discuss any concerns or queries you have with the Supplier in the first instance. In most cases a discussion with the Supplier will be able to resolve any concerns/queries. If you still have concerns about the request, the RTM may seek advice from Tech Services.

If there is a significant issue with timeliness please follow the usual escalation process:

- Level one – Recovery Team Member attempts to resolve with Supplier.
- Level two (when Supplier's response isn't adequate or timely) – Team Leader attempts to resolve with Supplier's Housing Manager.
- Level three (when Supplier's response remains inadequate or timely) – the Engagement and Performance Manager can be involved.

If ACC cannot deliver to the expected timeframe, as per the contracted timeframes above, the Recovery Team Member should advise the Supplier of this, and set a revised timeframe with them.

14.0 Temporary Accommodation During Housing Modifications


- a Temporary accommodation is sometimes required while housing modifications are completed. See the policies for Post-discharge temporary accommodation below for more information on how to manage claims where temporary accommodation is required.

 Temporary Accommodation During a Housing Modification

15.0 Subsequent or Further Housing Modifications

a A client may request:


- additional housing modifications, ie further modifications to their existing home
- modifications to a secondary home, ie the client is a child whose parents have separated and the child is living at both parent's properties
- modifications to their primary subsequent home, ie the client moves to another home.

 [Subsequent or further housing modifications Policy](#)






16.0 Certificate of Satisfactory Completion

a On Completion of the Housing Modifications, the Housing Modification Supplier is responsible for obtaining the agreement of the Client, the Housing Assessor and the Project Manager that they are satisfied that the agreed modifications have been completed to a satisfactory standard.

b The Client or their representative, the Housing Assessor and the Project Manager sign the ACC1565 form.

 [ACC1565 Housing modification certificate of satisfactory completion](#)

17.0 Service details

-  [Housing Assessments and Reports Service Page](#)
 -  [Arranging a Housing Modification Assessment - Engaging with the Client Service Page](#)
 -  [Useful external resources relevant to home modification projects](#)
 -  [Operational Guidelines for Housing Modification and Housing Assessment Services](#)
 -  [Non-MRES Equipment Service Page](#)
-