

Guide to home modifications under the environmental accessibility adaptations (EAA) service

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This resource applies to people who use the following programs:

- Alternative Care (AC) program
- Brain Injury (BI) Waiver
- Community Access for Disability Inclusion (CADI) Waiver
- Community Alternative Care (CAC) Waiver
- Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver
- Elderly Waiver (EW).

Overview

Home modification assessment and installation are covered services under the environmental accessibility adaptations (EAA) waiver service. For more information, see [CBSM – EAA](#).

Lead agencies can use the following guide during the home modification assessment, authorization and installation process. Lead agencies also can take the [TrainLink – EAA Home Modification Training](#). The training provides information and tools for lead agencies through the home modification, assessment and installation process to help people they support who have accessibility needs in their primary residence. This guide is not suitable for all home modification projects, including small projects (e.g., grab bars) or projects that include [additional square footage](#).

How to discuss the process with the person and others

At the beginning of and throughout the home modification process, the lead agency should discuss the assessment, authorization and installation process with the person, provider and others, as appropriate (e.g., family, landlord, home owner). This discussion should include:

- The person's eligibility and need for a modification
- The lead agency's responsibility to review and authorize all home modification projects before any work can be performed (i.e., prior authorization)
- The requirements and role of an assessment
- How to select a provider (e.g., do research, get more than one bid)
- Roles of the person, home owner, lead agency and contractor
- How to document the landlord's agreement to complete the project, if applicable
- How long it may take to complete the project
- The impact on the person during construction
- What to do if the person has concerns about the quality of work during the project.

The lead agency can reference [EAA Home Modification Training – What to expect checklist \(PDF\)](#) during the discussion with the person.

When to authorize an EAA home modification assessment

If the lead agency determines the project is complex, an EAA assessment professional (e.g., occupational therapist, aging-in-place specialist, accessibility specialist, physical therapist) can help:

- Determine the modification to make the person's home safe and accessible
- Determine if the modification will meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements (see [United States Access Board – ADA Accessibility Guidelines](#))
- Recommend the most cost-effective option to meet the person's accessibility needs
- Review project bids [and assess if they will meet the person's accessibility needs and project requirements](#).

The lead agency should consider using the EAA home modification assessment service when they need support in the above areas to determine a person's home modification needs. For more information about the service, see [CBSM – EAA](#).

To learn more about the EAA assessment process, see [TrainLink – EAA Home Modification Training](#) and [EAA Home Modification Training – Pre-assessment inventory \(PDF\)](#).

How to coordinate, review and accept bid(s)

The assessment professional, person, family or case manager can solicit comparable, itemized bid(s). The lead agency must review the bid(s) to ensure:

- The modification makes the person's home safe and accessible
- The bids show the cost of materials
- The bids do not include items that do not meet criteria for approval, are upgrades (see [upgrades section](#)) or are paid/covered by other sources
- The bids do not include items that are homeowner responsibilities (e.g., maintenance, repairs, building code compliance)
- The modification is the most cost-effective option to meet the person's accessibility needs (see [accepting a bid section](#))
- The providers are qualified to complete the home modification project (e.g., licensed contractors, plumbers, electricians).

The following resources can help during this process:

- [EAA Home Modification Training – Bid checklist \(PDF\)](#)
- [EAA Home Modification Training – Pre-construction checklist \(PDF\)](#)
- [Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry \(DOLI\) – A consumer's guide to hiring a residential building contractor \(PDF\)](#)
- [Minnesota Attorney General – Home building and remodeling \(PDF\)](#).

Upgrades

The waiver or program can pay for the most cost-effective option to meet the person's accessibility needs. A person may choose to upgrade materials as long as the item continues to meet the person's accessibility needs (e.g., upgrade from linoleum to marble tiles), but the person must pay the difference and any additional labor costs associated with the upgraded materials out of pocket.

Costs for materials and installation related to upgrades must be in a separate, private pay agreement between the person and the provider.

Accepting a bid

The lead agency should accept the bid from a qualified provider that offers the most cost-effective option to meet the person's accessibility needs. The most cost-effective bid is not necessarily the lowest bid. For example, the provider with the lowest bid may have a history of low-quality work or be unable to begin or complete the project promptly.

The lead agency works with the provider to finalize the bid and keeps a copy in the person's record.

Verifying a provider's qualifications

The lead agency may hire a vendor who is not enrolled in Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP) to complete the home modification project. For more information, see [CBSM – Lead agency oversight of waiver/AC approval-option service vendors](#).

The lead agency must verify the provider has the credentials and licensing necessary to complete the home modification project. For information about EAA provider standards and qualifications, see [CBSM – EAA](#).

To ensure the provider is qualified and reputable, the lead agency should consider doing at least one of the following:

- Request and verify the provider's references
- Check the [Better Business Bureau](#)
- Check the [MHCP excluded provider lists](#)
- Check the [DOLI – License and registration lookup](#).

How to authorize in MMIS

The lead agency must determine the payment schedule with the provider. The lead agency has the option to authorize the home modification project on multiple line items in MMIS. Doing so may help the lead agency oversee the project's integrity. For example:

- Line 1: Materials and permits
- Line 2: Payment to start work or down payment
- Line 3: Completion and inspection or final payment.

Initially, the lead agency approves line 1 for materials and permits. The lead agency keeps line 2 in "pending status" until the work begins and line 3 in "pending status" until the provider's work is completed and verified by a city inspection, assessment professional or the person.

Note: The time span for multiple MMIS line items cannot overlap.

How to ensure provider integrity

The lead agency can use the following resources if they have concerns about a provider's integrity:

- To make a complaint against a contractor's license, contact [Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry](#), or contact the building official designated by the municipality (e.g., city, county, tribal nation)
- To make a complaint about a provider's qualifications, contact the [MHCP Provider Call Center](#)
- To report potential fraud, follow the instructions on [DHS – How to report fraud](#)
- To make a claim against the contractor's bond or seek help with restoration costs, consult with the county attorney
- To file a complaint with the Better Business Bureau, visit [Better Business Bureau – File a complaint](#)
- For project integrity guidelines, review [Minnesota Attorney General – Home building and remodeling \(PDF\)](#)
- For guidance during inspection of the completed project, see [EAA Home Modification Training – Final walkthrough checklist \(PDF\)](#).

Questions

If you have a general home modification policy question:

1. Take the [TrainLink – EAA: Home Modification training](#), which includes the following resource documents:
 - [Workflow chart \(PDF\)](#)
 - [What to expect checklist \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Pre-assessment inventory \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Bid checklist \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Pre-construction checklist \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Final walkthrough checklist \(PDF\)](#)
2. Review [CBSM – EAA](#)
3. Search [PolicyQuest](#) to see if DHS has answered a similar question
4. Submit a question to [PolicyQuest](#) if you cannot find an answer to your general home modification question.

If you have a specific question, contact the [DSD Response Center](#) (for people who receive BI, CAC, CADI or DD waiver services) or submit a question to [PolicyQuest](#) (for people who receive AC or EW services).