

# Information for Children/Youth and Families Regarding Vehicle Modifications

## What is a Vehicle Modification (VMod)?

VMods are changes made to a vehicle that help your child ride or drive safely in their community. VMods allow your child and family to go to medical and therapy appointments. VMods also help your child get around your hometown and attend local events.

**Examples of VMods** include, but are not limited to: Power wheelchair lifts, wheelchair tie downs, modified hand or foot controls, seatbelt extenders, ramps, floor cut-outs, and repositioning of seats.

## Who is Eligible for a VMod?

- ✓ Children and youth up to the age of 21 years old,
- ✓ Must be enrolled in Medicaid,
- ✓ Must be eligible for Home and Community Based Services (HCBS),
- ✓ Must be enrolled in the Children's Waiver, **and**
- ✓ Must have a medical need for an VMod

### *What is the fiscal responsibility of the parent/guardian?*

The parent/guardian is **not** fiscally responsible for any approved VMod project costs.

## What is the Request Process?

Identify Need for the VMod



Gather Needed Documentation



VMod Service Request Review and Approval



VMod Service Delivery

- Your Care Manager will assist your child and family with the request process.

### **WHAT IS NEEDED:**

- Determine the need for a specific Vehicle Modification (VMod)
  - Update your child's Plan of Care to reflect their need for the medically necessary VMod service.
  - Obtain a Physician's Order explaining the medical need for the VMod from your child's doctor.
  - In some cases, a Clinical Justification is required (i.e., a written letter from your child's therapist explaining how the requested VMod will assist your child in obtaining their goals).
  - A pre-project evaluation is often required for VMods. This process may involve a pre-project evaluator taking measurements and discussing options for the proposed VMod. The pre-project evaluation makes sure proposed VMods are safe for your child and vehicle.
  - If any documentation is missing when the request is submitted, project approval could be delayed.
- The Care Manager will work with your family to obtain necessary medical documentation along with any required evaluations.
  - The Care Manager will submit all required documents for review.
    - Once reviewed, you will receive a Notice of Decision (NOD) that informs you whether your request has been approved or denied.
    - If denied, the NOD will include information on your right to seek a Fair Rights Hearing.

### *What do I do if my family determines that we're unable to go through with the requested VMod?*

Contact your Care Manager immediately and notify them of your decision to withdraw your request.

If you decide to re-open your application at a later date, updated information/assessments may be required.

*Costs associated with any pre-project evaluations will be covered under the Children's Waiver regardless of project completion.*

## Role of the Parent/Guardian

Your primary role as a parent/guardian is to advocate for the needs of your child. You have the best knowledge of the day-to-day needs of your child, and you have a better understanding of what types of changes will work best for their transportation needs. Please collaborate with your Care Manager on the VMod request process.

### ***Can I use Children's Waiver funds to purchase an unmodified vehicle for modification?***

The Children's Waiver will **not** purchase a vehicle for a family.

When selecting a VMod, consider the long-term needs of your child. As your child grows, their needs may change, and they may require different equipment and/or supplies.

VMods are available only for your child's primary source of transportation and may be owned by the child, family, or another party. Permission from the vehicle owner to install a VMod is required.

*The vehicle must be less than five years old and have less than 50,000 miles to be eligible for modification.*

### ***Can I use Children's Waiver funds to purchase a vehicle that has already been modified?***

If a family is looking to purchase an already modified vehicle, the vehicle must meet all VMod standards and must not require any further modifications to meet the child's needs. The Children's Waiver **may** reimburse the family for the cost of the existing modification minus any depreciation that has occurred. NYSDOH is not permitted to issue reimbursement funds directly to families. Reimbursements must be issued through a third-party dealership.

Consumer to consumer sales are **not** permitted under the Children's Waiver.

Once a project scope is approved, any changes to the approved project must receive **prior approval** from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) or risk nonpayment. It is parent's/guardian's responsibility to contact your Care Manager if any changes to the VMod are needed or requested.

**Parents/Guardians do not have authority to authorize changes to previously approved projects, otherwise the parent/guardian will be responsible for the cost.**

The cost of maintenance and repairs due to normal wear and tear on a VMod are your responsibility. Service contracts are not provided under the Children's Waiver. Prior authorization of repairs or replacement of nonfunctioning VMods is decided on a case by case basis by NYSDOH.

### ***Will the Children's Waiver pay for a rental vehicle while my vehicle is being modified?***

The Children's Waiver **cannot** pay for the costs of renting a vehicle while your vehicle is being modified.

Check with your Care Manager about options for Medical Transportation and/or Non-Medical Transportation to meet the needs of your child while your vehicle is being modified.

### **Who do I contact if I have questions?**

You can reach out to your Care Manager

**OR**

You can speak to someone at NYSDOH by email:

EModVModAT@health.ny.gov

Or by phone: 518-473-5569