



Environmental Modifications



A. INTRODUCTION

Those physical modifications/adaptations to a beneficiary's primary residence identified in his/her funding request which are necessary to ensure the health, welfare and safety of the beneficiary and/or to enable the beneficiary to function with greater independence.

Please Note: *This is not a renovation or remodel, it is to meet the functional needs specifically related to the TBI.*

B. GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Requests for an Environmental Modification:

- a. Such adaptations may include the installation of ramps and grab bars, widening of doorways, modifications of bathrooms, or installation of specialized electrical or plumbing systems that are necessary to accommodate the medical needs related to the health, safety and welfare of the individual.
- b. An environmental modification evaluation performed by a Rehabilitation Engineering Technologist (RET) certified by RESNA, the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America, must be completed for all environmental modification requests.
- c. A copy of the environmental modification evaluation must be included with the funding request and a copy will be sent to the beneficiary and all potential contractors, bidding on the job, by the beneficiary. If the property is rented or leased, the beneficiary must secure written approval from the owner.
- d. All environmental modifications are limited to the beneficiary's assessed need. The bid will represent the most cost effective means to meet the needs of the beneficiary.
 - Beneficiaries may purchase upgraded materials at their own expense, reflected clearly on the estimate provided by the bidder.

2. Exclusions

- a. Excluded modifications may be those items that are of general utility or repair rather than of direct medical or remedial benefit to the beneficiary and/or
- b. Requests that add to the total square footage of the home must be necessary to ensure the health, welfare and safety of the beneficiary and/or to enable the beneficiary to function with greater independence (e.g., in order to improve entrance/egress to a residence or to reconfigure a space to accommodate a wheelchair).

3. Requirements

- a. Requests to modify rental properties must be submitted with the written approval of the landlord/owner of the property which includes an agreement to the modification to the property as presented in the bids and an acknowledgment that the State/TBI Fund is not responsible for the removal of the modification from the property.
- b. All services shall be provided in accordance with applicable State/local building codes.
- c. The Contractor must be licensed in NJ per the NJ Division of Consumer Affairs, NJSA 56:8-136 et seq. as a home repair contractor and exist in the NJ Division of Consumer Affairs database located at:
<http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/LVinfo.htm> Each bid must provide the license number.
- d. Prior to commencing work, the Contractor must be on-boarded as an authorized vendor through the TBI Fund.
- e. Each Contractor/sub-contractor must meet applicable requirements for licensure, certification, applicable State and local building and safety codes. (N.J.A.C. 5:23-2) or other qualifications necessary to conduct the scope of business.
- f. Evidence of permits and approvals must be available as required and upon request.
- g. Requests that exceed the \$15,000 annual cap in whole or in conjunction with other requested services must include a written request for a waiver from the beneficiary demonstrating extraordinary hardship. Hardship circumstances to be considered may include, but are not limited to, loss of income, extreme medical need, and potential functional decline of the applicant.

4. Contracting Request Specifications:

- a. Requests for funding should only include those requested items listed in the environmental modification evaluation.
- b. Requests for funding should only include a clearly defined line-item estimate that identifies each item and its associated cost.
- c. Materials requested should only be the basic standard builder grade materials.
- d. Beneficiaries may purchase upgraded materials at their own expense and clearly indicate upgrades on the line-item estimate.
- e. Any estimate that includes items not listed in the environmental modification evaluation will be returned to the beneficiary.
- f. The TBI Fund will make an initial payment of 2/3 of the cost at the start of the modification and the final 1/3 upon completion of the modification.