

What are vehicle modifications?

Vehicle modifications are any alterations to your vehicle to assist you to drive safely, including modifications to steering, brake and accelerator controls, modifications to assist you to transfer into the driver's seat, or even to drive from your wheelchair. If a modification changes the method which you drive your vehicle (e.g. using hand controls to operate brake and accelerator), you will need to have an occupational therapy driving assessment to prescribe these.

Who needs vehicle modifications?

Any person with a physical disability that impacts on their ability to safely drive a vehicle without modification. This includes if you are not able to steer with both hands, if you are not able to operate foot pedals for brake and accelerator, or you may even need modifications to your mirrors if you have difficulty with turning your head to complete adequate observations.

What happens in an assessment with vehicle modifications?

The driver trained occupational therapist will complete a clinical assessment to gather information of your physical and cognitive abilities. This will assist them to identify if modifications are required, and that you will be able to learn to drive with them too. You will then complete a driving trial with the modifications to ensure they are suitable.

Can anyone drive with vehicle modifications?

No – to drive with vehicle modifications that change the way you drive your vehicle; you must have an endorsed licence allowing you to do this. Our driver trained occupational therapists can assist you with the process in gaining this licence. It will involve a comprehensive occupational therapy driving assessment, some lessons with a driving instructor with suitable modifications, and completion of a Department of Transport practical driving assessment.

If you have your own vehicle modified, there are options to allow other able-bodied people who do not require the modifications to still drive the vehicle in most occasions.

Is there anything else required if you have vehicle modifications?

- **Passing the Practical Driving Assessment with the Department of Transport**

Once your vehicle modifications are complete you will be required to sit a Department of Transport practical driving assessment to be assessed for an 'endorsed licence.'

- **Driving with an endorsed licence**

Once you have successfully completed the Practical Driving Assessment by the Department of Transport, you will be issued with an 'endorsed' licence. This means you will be only able to drive a vehicle fitted with these endorsements.

- **Getting your vehicle passed over the 'pits'**

Once your vehicle is fitted with modifications, it will be required to be assessed by a WA licensing centre to ensure it meets the Australian Road Standards

Is there any funding for vehicle modifications?

There is different funding available dependent on your circumstances. The Disability Equipment Grant is managed through the INDIGO and you may be eligible for this based on income eligibility (see Independent Living Centre Disability Equipment Grant information package for financial details). Funding can assist with the cost of the assessment, the cost of lessons and cost of having the modification to your vehicle.

Funding continued...

If you are registered with the NDIS you will need funding available in your plan to cover the cost of the assessment. An outline of the standards for vehicle modifications and NDIS funding is listed below, NDIS may not fund vehicle modifications if it does not comply with their standards: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/Operational-Guideline/including-7>

How do I get the modifications installed?

The modifications will be installed by a fully qualified engineer with experience in these types of vehicle modifications. The occupational Therapist will connect you with the relevant engineer, we recommend Ben Ludlow, Freedom Motors, TL Engineering and Wesbar Vanquip.

What happens to the vehicle modifications if I need a new car?

Your existing modifications may be able to be transferred to your new vehicle, however you will need to check that they are compatible (a vehicle engineer can assist with this). If you are applying for funding to assist with this, you will need a driving assessment to ensure the modifications remain the most suitable for you. If your modifications are old, there may be newer models or different styles of modification that better suit your individual needs. In this case, we recommend having an assessment to determine the most current and suitable modifications.

What if there is a change in my medical condition/disability? Will my vehicle modifications change?

Your modifications may change if you have had a change in your condition and having difficulty with operating the controls. With any change in medical condition, it is recommended to have a review assessment to determine whether your current modifications remain the safest and most appropriate option, and if they are not we can determine whether there is a different modification that will better suit your needs. You may need to complete another Department of Transport practical driving assessment if there is significant change in the style of modification.

I've been driving for years without modifications, but I've just found out about mandatory reporting. Do I need to be assessed after all this time?

You will need to report to the Department of Transport to have a Medical Assessment Certificate completed by your Doctor. Your Doctor and the Department of Transport may request for you to complete an assessment to ensure you're driving remains safe.

Do I have to do anything when insuring my vehicle if it is modified?

Yes, you should advise the company at the time of organising insurance that you hold an endorsed licence and the specific vehicle modifications that are in your car.