



# Home Modifications for Workers with Catastrophic Injuries

## What is a home modification?

A home modification is a permanent structural change made to a residence to meet an injured worker's needs for safety, mobility or activities of daily living.

## Who qualifies for a home modification?

Workers who have experienced a job-related catastrophic injury resulting in permanent physical impairment may be eligible for a home modification. Some examples of catastrophic injuries are severe brain injuries, paralysis, loss of arms or legs, or occupational diseases that substantially limit the worker's activities of daily living or that may be terminal.

To have your home modified, you must have an open workers' compensation claim or have been determined to be permanently and totally disabled (receiving a pension).

If your claim has been closed and the closure is final, you must file a written application to reopen the claim. Your claim cannot be reopened only for a home modification. To reopen a claim, objective medical evidence must show the condition caused by the industrial injury or occupational disease has worsened since the claim closed.

## What kind of home can be modified?

The home may be a house, duplex, apartment, condominium, manufactured or mobile home. If local government allows you to use a recreational park trailer or recreational vehicle as your permanent residence, then the trailer or vehicle can be modified.

You must consider the home to be your permanent residence. You are not required to own or rent the home.

The home must be structurally sound and meet state safety requirements. All modifications must meet local and state codes.

## What modifications can L&I pay for?

L&I can modify only one home to help maintain your basic needs for safety, mobility and daily living. Examples of modifications include widening doorways, modifying the primary bathroom, and installing ramps.

If your condition changes or a prior modification needs repair or replacement, then L&I may consider additional modification for the same home.

For new-home construction, L&I may pay the cost difference between the construction of the standard home (before modification) and the modified home.



## How much money is available to modify a home?

L&I can pay up to the state's average annual wage that is in effect on the date a request for modification is approved.

The state's average annual wage is determined by the Washington State Department of Employment Security.

## How do you request a home modification?

Contact your claim manager. This request can be made by you, your representative, or others on your behalf.

## How are the modifications identified?

L&I will send a consultant to meet with you and assess the home. The consultant will send L&I a report identifying all needed modifications and equipment.

## Other questions?

If you have questions about home modification, please contact your claim manager or L&I's Therapy Services Coordinator at 360-902-4480.

For self-insured claims, contact your employer or their claims management representative.

You can also learn more about home modification by referring to the following laws and rules:

- Residence modification assistance: *RCW 51.36.020, RCW 51.36.022* ([apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=51.36.022](https://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=51.36.022)).
- Annual average wage: *RCW 50.04.355* ([apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=50.04.355](https://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=50.04.355)).
- Washington Administrative Codes on residence modification: *WAC 296-14-6200* ([apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=296-14-6200](https://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=296-14-6200)) through *WAC 296-14-6238*, also *WAC 296-23-180* ([apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=296-23-180](https://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=296-23-180)).

### For more information

Learn more by visiting L&I's website:

 [www.Lni.wa.gov](http://www.Lni.wa.gov)

*Other formats for persons with disabilities are available on request. Call 1-800-547-8367. TDD users, call 360-902-5797. L&I is an equal opportunity employer.*