

Accessible Vehicle Funding Policy Manual

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Department of Social Supports and Well-Being

Available in alternate formats:

Accessible Vehicle Funding
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Objective

To remove financial barriers to accessible transportation by providing financial assistance to eligible individuals and families in Newfoundland and Labrador toward the cost of modifying personal vehicles for accessibility.

Rationale

Access to accessible transportation can be a significant barrier for persons with disabilities. It is particularly difficult in many rural areas of the province where accessible transportation options are limited or do not exist. This can affect opportunities for community engagement, employment and inclusion.

Accessible Vehicle Funding supports the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's commitment to enhance accessibility and inclusion in the province.

Scope

Accessible Vehicle Funding provides financial assistance to individuals and families toward the cost of modifying personal vehicles for accessibility. Scope for funding includes:

- funding is only available to residents of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- individuals can apply for funding once every five (5) years (exceptions are assessed on an individual basis).
- one (1) personal vehicle per household may be adapted.
- the applicant must not be eligible or have received funding for the same purpose under another government grant or program; and,
- vehicles funded under this program may be purchased or retrofitted inside or outside the province.

Eligible Funding and Costs

Accessible Vehicle Funding provides maximum funding of \$50,000. Grants are awarded based on either the **cost of a new retrofit** or the **current value of an existing retrofit**, up to a maximum of \$50,000.

Applicants are encouraged to meet with an Occupational Therapist if they are not familiar with vehicle conversion options or driving adaptation requirements.

New Retrofits

Grants may be used toward the purchase and/or installation of eligible vehicle accessibility equipment or conversions, such as:

- customized seating

- hand controls
- left-foot gas pedals
- lifts and ramps
- roof, floor and door alterations (accessible retrofit)
- steering devices
- wheelchair securing systems
- shipping and installation costs
- maintenance of equipment no longer under warranty

Grants for new vehicle retrofits are awarded based on the cost of purchasing and/or installing accessibility modifications, up to a maximum of \$50,000.

Note: For new retrofits, applicants **must** submit a quote (valid within 6 months of the application date) from a certified supplier. This quote must include details of the accessibility features being purchased and/or installed, as well as the cost.

Example:

Heidi has a disability and uses a power wheelchair. She needs the following accessibility modifications for her vehicle:

- a powered ramp;
- hand controls; and
- a securing system for her wheelchair.

Heidi is purchasing a new van and has a quote from a vendor who will install the new equipment in her vehicle. The cost of the van is \$48,000.00, and the cost of the accessibility modifications is \$42,000.00 for a combined cost of \$90,000.00. If approved for funding, Heidi can receive a grant of up to \$42,000.00, which is the cost of her vehicle modifications.

Existing Retrofits

Grants may be used toward the purchase of a second-hand vehicle that already has accessibility modifications. These grants are awarded based **only on the current value of the existing accessibility modifications**, not the overall cost of the vehicle or the original cost of the modifications. Retrofit values are calculated at a percentage of the original retrofit.

Note: For existing retrofits, applicants **must** submit a quote or valuation (valid within 6 months of the application date) from a certified supplier. This quote or valuation must include details of the accessibility features of the vehicle, as well as their **current** value.

Example:

Ben is the parent of a child with a disability. He needs the following accessibility modifications for his vehicle:

- swivel transfer seat

Ben finds a second-hand vehicle for sale that has the exact swivel transfer seat his son needs. The vehicle is 4 years old and the seller is asking for \$35,000.00. The original cost of the seat was \$16,500.00. Ben consults a vendor, who provides a quote stating that after 4 years, the seat's **current value** is approximately \$10,500. If approved for funding, Ben can receive a grant of up to \$10,500.00, which is the current value of his vehicle modifications.

For any cost incurred prior to the date of the application, approval is only considered if:

- funding is available; and,
- costs were incurred within twelve months of the date of the application.

Application Procedure

1. Applications:
 - can be downloaded online (<https://www.gov.nl.ca/sswb/disabilities/accessible-vehicle-funding/>)
 - can be requested by email, fax or mail
 - are submitted to Accessible Vehicle Funding, Department of Social Supports and Well-Being (See Appendix A – Contact Information)
2. Upon receipt:
 - the application is documented with the date and time it is received;
 - the application is reviewed to ensure all necessary information/documentation and signatures are included; and,
 - an acknowledgement email is sent to the applicant.

Review and Recommendation

Criteria

Applications are reviewed and processed in the order in which they are received.

Approvals are based on the following criteria:

- meets funding objective;
- meets stated eligibility requirements; and,
- availability of funding.

Notification

Applicants who are **approved**:

- are informed in writing of their approval and the amount of funding for which they qualify; and,
- are provided a funding letter and/or contract for signature.

Once the letter and/or contracts are signed and returned, any changes to your approved application will require you to submit a request in writing for consideration. Please note that these requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis, and you may be required to submit a new application.

Applicants who are **not approved**:

- are informed in writing; and,
- are able to request feedback on the application (See Appendix A – Contact Information).

Applicants with **incomplete applications**:

- are informed in writing; and,
- applicants will be contacted for any missing information, and if no response is received within 5 business days the application will be deemed not eligible.

Note: All required documents (quotes, proof of ownership, proof of financing, and vehicle details etc.) must be submitted with the application.

Exceptional Circumstances

A request for an exception to eligibility criteria:

- can be submitted in writing to Accessible Vehicle Funding, Department of Social Supports and Well-Being, outlining the nature of the request and specifying the unique or exceptional circumstances for which the exception is being sought; and,
- is evaluated on its own merit.

Applicants will receive written notice of the decision.

Payment Process

The options for payment include:

- **Payment to Vendor**
 - For **new retrofits**, payment is issued directly to the vendor providing the equipment and/or completing the installation.
 - 80% of the payment is issued when the contract is signed; and the remaining 20% payment is released when invoice(s) for the completed retrofit work is received and verified to be satisfactory. Invoices must match details of approved funding and applicant must sign off the work as satisfactory.

- **Payment to Applicant**

- If the applicant has already paid for the retrofit in advance , or purchased a vehicle with an existing retrofit, payment is issued directly to the applicant based on invoice(s) submitted for the completed retrofit work or proof of purchase of the retrofitted vehicle.
- Invoices must match details of approved funding, and the applicant must sign off the work as satisfactory.

All costs that exceed the **approved** amount of funding are the responsibility of the applicant.

Evaluation and Monitoring

Information may be collected for purposes of evaluation. This information helps ensure the funding is meeting its objective and helps assess whether changes may be required.

Appendix A: Contact Information

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