




Title:	<b>Vehicle Modification Procedure</b>
Procedure #:	<b>80-VR-25-01</b>
Policy Reference:	80-VR-25 Rehabilitation Technology
Legal Reference:	34 CFR 361.5 (45), (55), (56); 34 CFR 361.48; OAC 3304-2-59, 3304-2-52, 3304-2-56, 3304-6-01 through 3304-6-15.
Effective Date:	April 30, 2018
Approved:	Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director 
Origin:	Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation and Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired
Supersedes:	N/A
History:	N/A
Review/ Implementation	Begin Review – 10/30/19 Implement Revisions By – 04/30/20

## I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide direction for vehicle modification in accordance with appropriate federal (e.g. Code of Federal Regulations [CFR]) and state law (i.e. Ohio Revised Code [ORC], Ohio Administrative Code [OAC]), Governor directives and executive orders, other governing agency (e.g. DAS, OBM) policy or guidance, and/or Executive Director expectations.

Refer to the AWARE Manual for more detailed instructions regarding the management of cases in AWARE.

## II. APPLICABILITY

This procedure applies to VR Staff and VR Contractors.

## III. DEFINITIONS

Refer to “Vocational Rehabilitation Definitions” (80-VR-99.A).

## IV. PROCEDURES

### A. General

1. OOD shall provide information to individuals and if applicable, their parent or legal guardian throughout the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) process as required by law (e.g. rights and duties). This information shall be provided, in writing, and when appropriate, in the individual’s native language or through an appropriate mode of communication.

2. AWARE shall be updated with pertinent conversations, recommendations, justifications, approvals and/or other actions taken in relation to this procedure.
  - a. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall obtain supervisory approval, if required via use of an "Activity Due" in AWARE.
    - i. If supervisory or management approval is required during the VR process, the supervisor or manager shall document their approval in AWARE. .
3. If any OOD Staff are a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC-certified) and will be directly involved with an individual's case, he/she shall complete the "Professional Disclosure Statement" (80-VR-01.E).
  - a. VR Staff or VR Contractors who are not a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) are exempt from this requirement.
  - b. Once completed, the "Professional Disclosure Statement" shall be reviewed and signed by the individual and, if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian, and the CRC-certified VR Staff or VR Contractor.
    - i. Once signed, the statement shall be scanned into the AWARE Participant Module, as a Case Note, with the category "Professional Disclosure Statement" and summary title "Signed."
4. "Transition Services" (80-VR-11-12) shall be followed for additional guidance and direction regarding vehicle modification for students with a disability enrolled in a secondary educational institution.
5. For the purposes of this procedure, vehicle modification applies to passenger vehicles only (e.g. car, van).
6. Vehicle modifications may only be provided to an individual actively involved in VR services (i.e. either participating in services, ready for employment, or currently employed) and shall only be considered when it is more cost effective and/or more efficient than the purchase of public or any other mode of transportation per "Transportation" (80-VR-11-11).
7. VR Staff or VR Contractors and the individual and if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian shall discuss the vehicle modification process highlighting the typical timeframe for completion.
8. VR Staff or VR Contractors shall not purchase new or used vehicles for individuals.

#### B. Adaptive Driver's Evaluation and License

1. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall review all proposed vehicle modifications with an OOD VR Supervisor prior to authorizing for a driver's evaluation.
2. If the VR Supervisor agrees to move forward with exploring the feasibility of a vehicle modification, a driver's evaluation is required to document the individual's needs and ability to operate a motor vehicle.

- a. The driver's evaluation may be conducted as part of the Comprehensive Assessment (CA) process as outlined in "Comprehensive Assessment" (80-VR-04-01) or later in the VR process (i.e. as the individual is approaching readiness for the modification).
- b. The evaluation shall be completed by a Certified Driver's Rehabilitation Specialist (CDRS). A listing may be found on the Association of Driving Rehabilitation Specialist website (<http://aded.site-ym.com/>) under the Directory & Services Section.
  - i. Prior to the evaluation, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall contact the CDRS to determine if a prescription is needed from the individual's treating physician for participation in the driver's evaluation.
    - a) A prescription, if required, should include the relevant diagnosis and any other requirements deemed necessary by the CDRS.
    - b) If necessary, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall work with the individual and if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian and/or the treating physician to obtain the prescription.
- c. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall ask the CDRS if the individual requires a driver's permit in order to complete the evaluation if he/she does not currently possess a valid driver's license.
  - i. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall follow "Transportation" (80-VR-11-11) if the individual needs to obtain a driver's permit to participate in a driver's evaluation.
- d. If the individual does not possess a valid driver's license with the proper endorsements, the CDRS may recommend Driver Rehabilitation Training for the individual to obtain or update his/her driver's license, the VR Staff or VR Contractor shall follow the steps in Section C.
- e. If the individual possesses a valid driver's license with proper endorsements, the CDRS shall issue a written certification of driver competency and a listing of any adaptive equipment recommendations.
  - i. The CDRS' certificate of driver competency is valid for 12 months.
- f. If the CDRS does not recommend Driver's Rehabilitation Training or driving overall, VR Staff or VR Contractor and the individual and if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian shall explore other transportation options.

### C. Driver's Rehabilitation Training

- 1. If determined necessary by the CDRS, VR Staff or VR Contractor will add Driver's Rehabilitation Training (DRT) to the IPE.
  - a. The DRT on the IPE shall include an estimate of time, based upon the recommendations from the CDRS.

#### D. Previous Vehicle Modifications

1. If OOD has provided the individual with previous vehicle modification assistance within the past seven (7) years, or the originally modified vehicle has accumulated at least 70,000 miles since the final inspection of the last vehicle modification, another vehicle modification shall not be authorized.
  - a. Exceptions may occur on a case by case basis when requested by an OOD VR Supervisor and approved by the Area Manager.
  - b. When considering an exemption, the Area Manager shall consult with the OOD vehicle modification subject matter expert (herein referred to as the OOD Designee) to finalize any exception decisions.
    - i. Once a decision regarding the exemption has been made, the Area Manager shall notify the VR Supervisor.
      - a) The VR Supervisor shall document the decision in an AWARE Case Note.
  - c. Possible exemptions may include, but are not limited to the following:
    - i. an individual with a progressive disability (e.g., multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, spinal muscular atrophy) experiences a deterioration of function such that he/she is no longer able to safely drive or be transported with the provided level of adaptive driving technology;
    - ii. an individual experiences an additional disability, such that he/she is no longer able to safely drive or be transported using the provided modification;
    - iii. the manufacturer of the high technology integrated driving system (i.e. joystick steering, joystick gas/breaks and voice commands for auxiliary controls) recommends a safety upgrade to the driving system or the high technology integrated driving system is out of warranty (as long as the vehicle has been maintained through appropriate maintenance);
    - iv. a previously modified high technology integrated driving system provided to the individual by OOD, that requires a replacement modification may be authorized after (5) five years or 50,000 miles since the final inspection of the last vehicle modification; or
    - v. an individual requires vehicle modifications due to an unforeseen need not addressed above and not covered in the "Vehicle Modification Agreement" (80-VR-25-1.A) form.

#### E. Minor Vehicle Modifications

1. Minor modifications shall be listed on the IPE prior to authorizing the services as stated in Section F.2.
2. "Vocational Rehabilitation Purchases" (40-FIN-01-06) shall be followed for determining whether verbal or written quotes or bids are required.

3. Minor modifications include:
  - a. manual hand/foot controls;
  - b. left foot accelerator;
  - c. unoccupied wheelchair hoist and carriers;
  - d. spinner knobs;
  - e. simple extension modifications of secondary controls described in OAC 3304-6-06 (e.g. shift lever, park break, turn signals, hazard lights, washer/wiper, ignition, lights, dimmer, seat adjustments, HVAC controls, door locks, pedal extensions, mirrors, remote switches, and unoccupied wheelchair//scooter handling devices); and
  - f. similar items which may be considered by the OOD Designee on a case by case basis.
4. OOD is not required to consider the age of the vehicle or mileage limits when an initial request is made for minor modifications to a vehicle.
5. The length of time between OOD authorizing for minor modifications follows the seven (7) years/70,000 mile requirement, if previously modified.

#### F. Process for All Vehicle Modifications

1. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall inform individuals and if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian that a vehicle should NOT be purchased with the expectation that OOD will approve a modification prior to OOD completing requirements set forth in this procedure (e.g. review by the OOD designee, obtaining and approving a bid for modifications).
2. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall request a review of all proposed vehicle modifications (including minor modifications) by sending an e-mail to [ood.rehabtech@ood.ohio.gov](mailto:ood.rehabtech@ood.ohio.gov) where it will be reviewed by the OOD Designee.
  - a. Information sent to the OOD Designee shall be documented in AWARE and must include the make and model of the vehicle being considered for modification.
    - i. Listed below are the only pre-approved vehicle types which can be modified with a lowered floor.
      - a) Honda Odyssey;
      - b) Toyota Sienna;
      - c) Dodge Caravan;
      - d) Chrysler Pacifica; and
      - e) Chrysler Town and Country.

- ii. Specialty vehicles (i.e. vehicles other than a full-size van or minivan) available to the public that require structural or other modifications may be considered for approval but must be based on vocational need as related to the IPE employment goal.
    - a) VR Staff or VR Contractor should consult with the OOD Designee before discussing a modification to a specialty vehicle with the individual.
- 3. Prior to obtaining bids or quotes, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall NOT add vehicle modifications to an IPE.
- 4. When an individual requests a modification to a used vehicle, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall require that it be inspected by an ASE certified mechanic, prior to modifications.
  - a. If purchasing a used vehicle, the inspection shall be completed by an ASE certified mechanic who is independent of the seller.
  - b. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall only authorize for modifications on used vehicles documented to be "in sound condition" on the "Vehicle Inspection Form" (80-VR-25-1.B) completed by the mechanic.
  - c. New vehicles (i.e. not previously owned) purchased for modifications do not require inspection by a mechanic.
- 5. Once the OOD Designee reviews the AWARE case record and determines all required information is documented and that all requirements are met, the Designee shall:
  - a. issue bids to three (3) qualified vehicle modifiers selected by the individual and if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian;
    - i. If bids are not required for a minor modification, per direction in "Vocational Rehabilitation Purchases" (40-FIN-01-06), the OOD Designee shall inform VR Staff or VR Contractor which vehicle modifiers shall be used.
  - b. enter the quote for minor modifications or the bid summaries for non-minor modifications into AWARE;
  - c. review bids and award the project to the lowest, most responsive bidder; and
  - d. notify VR Staff or VR Contractor after bids/quotes are returned.
- 6. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall complete the OOD "Vehicle Modification Agreement" (80-VR-25-01.A) and obtain the individual's signature and date and if applicable, the signature and date of his/her parent or legal guardian.
- 7. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall obtain the following and scan into AWARE:
  - a. an individual's proof of insurance;
  - b. the vehicle title (or registration); and
  - c. a copy of the individual's driver's license.

8. VR Staff or VR Contractor shall add the vehicle modification service to the IPE and prepare an authorization once the following has been completed:
  - a. the bid for the modification has been awarded; and
  - b. the "Vehicle Modification Agreement" (80-VR-25-01.A) is signed by the individual and if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian;
    - a. all of the other required information has been obtained and documented in AWARE.
9. The individual and if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian may purchase a compliant vehicle after the modification bid has been awarded and the "Vehicle Modification Agreement" (80-VR-25-01.A) has been signed.
  - a. If the individual and if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian wishes to purchase a used vehicle, VR Staff or VR Contractor shall follow F.4 for guidance, prior to purchase to ensure that it may be modified.
    - i. OOD will not repair a used vehicle that has been purchased for the purpose of a vehicle modification.
  - b. If during the process, the individual and if applicable, his/her parent or legal guardian or any immediate family member wants to change the approved vehicle, the VR Staff or VR Contractor must consult with the OOD Designee by sending an e-mail to [ood.rehabtech@ood.ohio.gov](mailto:ood.rehabtech@ood.ohio.gov).

#### G. Final Inspection

1. Upon completion of the modifications, the vehicle shall be inspected by an OOD approved vehicle inspector.
  - a. The CDRS should attend the final inspection (i.e. fitting) of the vehicle when training for the individual has been recommended.
2. VR Staff or VR Contractor releases payment for vehicle modifications after the following occurs:
  - a. the inspection is completed;
  - b. the inspector's report has been submitted to OOD; and
  - c. the individual completes all required training, recommended by the CDRS, upon delivery of the modified vehicle.

#### H. Violation

An employee who violates this procedure may be subject to discipline up to and including removal.

## FORMS AND ATTACHMENTS

- 80-VR-25-01.A – Vehicle Modification Agreement *(formerly 80-VR-11-11.B)*
- 80-VR-25-01.B – Vehicle Inspection Form *(formerly 80-VR-11-11.C)*

## RESOURCES

- 80-VR-99.A Vocational Rehabilitation Definitions
- 80-VR-11-11 Transportation
- 80-VR-04-01 Comprehensive Assessment Procedure
- 80-VR-11-12 Transition Services
- 40-FIN-06-01 Vocational Rehabilitation Purchases

## REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the Deputy Director, or designee, to review this procedure, on or before, the date listed in the header and if applicable, make any necessary revisions. The Deputy Director, or designee, shall document the review as required in “Policy and Procedure Development, Review, Dissemination and Acknowledgement” (10-ADM-01).