

## Section 4(f) – Home Modifications

### Guidance

Architectural modifications to a consumer's home or workplace may be provided under the following conditions:

- Modifications to the home will assist the individual to more independently gain egress and ingress to their home, or perform self-care and grooming activities needed in order for the individual to gain or maintain employment.
- In the case of the workplace, the modifications will allow the individual to perform or significantly increase independence in the job functions. BRS may be involved only in those cases where the employer is not required to provide the modifications under the Americans with Disabilities Act:
- The modifications are part of the individual's Employment Plan.

Counselors should contact the BRS consultant assigned to architectural modifications as soon as it becomes evident that a home or workplace modification is under consideration. The consultant can provide advice and technical assistance through assessment, planning, and procurement of architectural modification services (see also Appendix B-6 for guidance).

### Legal Requirements

- A. Architectural alteration services may be provided to enable a consumer to accomplish safe egress from and ingress to the home or the workplace, or to enable a consumer to function vocationally within the home or workplace.
- B. BRS's participation in alterations shall be limited to those determined by the Bureau to meet the functional needs of the consumer at the least cost. Ramps, grab bars, lifts, or bathroom modifications are examples of such services.
- C. Alterations to work sites or business properties can only be considered when they are not covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

- D. Except as outlined in paragraph (E) below, BRS will not be responsible for financial participation in extensive or elaborate reconstruction, structural modifications, the addition of a room or rooms, or any other alteration that adds appreciable value to the property.
- E. The BRS director or his/her designee may approve Bureau participation in a structural addition or reconstruction where BRS determines that, with respect to removing the architectural barriers which need to be eliminated in order for the individual to achieve an employment outcome:
1. there is no other alternative; or
  2. such addition or reconstruction is the least costly alternative for the Bureau.
- In any case where the Bureau makes one of the above exceptions, BRS's participation will be limited to the minimum cost necessary to eliminate the architectural barriers.
- F. Architectural alterations will only be provided to the extent necessary for the successful completion of the consumer's Employment Plan. The case record will contain the following:
1. The limitation of activities and functioning that are due to the consumer's disability must be explained specifically and in detail. These should be supported by reports from appropriate sources;
  2. The consumer's vocational impediment or barrier to employment that will be eliminated or reduced by the provision of the architectural modification service must be thoroughly explained and supported; and
  3. The architectural barriers of the present site must be clearly and carefully delineated in the case record, together with an explanation as to how they impede the successful attainment of the *employment outcome*\* for the consumer. How these barriers will be eliminated or reduced through the planned alteration services must also be explained.
- G. BRS is not required to participate in alterations that are anticipated to meet the consumer's needs for a period of less than two years after the completion of the alterations, due to factors either related to the living situation or the consumer's disability. Alterations to a site may be made only after the consumer has provided written agreement that the consumer's planned occupancy is a minimum of two years beyond completion of alteration services.

This section applies primarily to situations where the consumer is expected to move within two years or where the disability is rapidly progressing, making certain modifications inappropriate as a longer-term solution. For example, a stair glide may currently be appropriate for a particular individual. However, due to the rapid progression of his/her disability, s/he is expected to need a different modification to move between floors (e.g., a minivator) within two years.

- H. The consumer must provide a signed agreement by the owner of the site to be modified, giving consent and authorization for the Bureau to provide or participate in the provision of the necessary modifications to the property occupied by the consumer. Without this written consent, BRS cannot provide or participate in the provision of such services.

- I. If the consumer or his/her family is building a home where the consumer is to reside, necessary alterations will be the responsibility of the consumer or his/her family. BRS will not participate in the financing of such construction.
- J. If the consumer or his/her family have entered negotiations with a vendor for alteration work to be done or for equipment or materials to be supplied, any resulting agreements will not be binding on BRS.
- K. BRS will not assume and is not responsible for the full restoration of structures or grounds that are disturbed in the process of alterations. Such areas will be functionally restored to the minimum level allowable by applicable codes. BRS will not be responsible for the matching of finishes, trims, and accessories when special sizing, tooling, and construction methods and materials would be required to do so.
- L. BRS's financial participation in alterations for a consumer will be limited to a one-time basis, with the exception of cases where there are changes in the consumer's disability, employment or other circumstances beyond the control of the consumer which warrant additional modifications.
- M. Once the alterations are completed, the consumer is thereafter responsible for upkeep, maintenance, insurance and repairs. BRS will not pay for these expenses or be responsible for the cost of removing ramps and restoration of property back to its original state after the accessibility-related construction is no longer needed.
- N. When BRS anticipates that alteration services may be part of a consumer's Employment Plan and BRS financial participation may be necessary, BRS will consult with a licensed architect or other qualified approved technical consultant approved by the Bureau.
- O. A local building permit must be issued for each project, which must be provided to BRS upon demand. Any zoning variance or other requirements necessary to secure this permit are the sole responsibility of the property owner.
- P. If BRS discovers a structural defect or building code violation on the property that has direct bearing on the proposed modifications, BRS will not proceed until corrective action or repair has occurred. Any cost of repair will be the sole responsibility of the property owner. Documentation of sufficient corrective action must be submitted to BRS before proposed modifications can resume.
- Q. BRS may deny assistance with any architectural modifications that it determines to be unsafe, unstable, in violation of applicable building codes or where, due to the nature of the site to be modified, the costs will be unreasonable.
- R. When an individual consumer's needs may not be met by strictly adhering to these policies, the Bureau Director or his/her designee may determine where exceptions will be made.



# Authorization for Release/Disclosure of Personal Information

**Instructions to BRS staff:** Original copy to information holder. Copy to recipient of information.

I authorize: (name & address of person/organization that will release the information)

Date:

BRS

to release the information indicated below to: (name & address of person/organization to which information is to be released)

Bidding BRS Approved home modification  
 Vendors, Architects and/or Rehabilitation Technologists

Purpose(s) of this release (check one):

- This information is being sent or requested by BRS for purposes associated with my eligibility for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services.
- Other purpose: to share background information for bidding process

Type of Information	Date of Authorization	Consumer's Initials	Type of Information	Date of Authorization	Consumer's Initials
medical			financial		
hospital records			school and/or transcript		
psychosocial			employment history		
psychiatric	(explain extent of authorization)				
psychological	(explain extent of authorization)				
alcohol and/or drugs*	(explain extent of authorization)				
HIV/AIDS**	(explain extent of authorization)				
Other	(specify) (see above)			X	X

Additional instructions to information holder: \_\_\_\_\_

Consumer name	Date of Birth	SS# (Last 4 digits only)
Signed (consumer) X	If minor, signature of parent or guardian; conservator, if applicable X	Relationship to consumer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If release is not related to my obtaining BRS services, my refusal to sign will not affect my ability to receive services from BRS.</li> <li>▪ I understand that the information I authorize a person or entity to receive may be redisclosed and no longer protected by privacy regulations.</li> <li>▪ This authorization may be revoked by me at any time by notifying BRS in writing, except to the extent that action has been taken in reliance on it. Unless expressly revoked earlier, this authorization expires as noted here (box to the right):</li> </ul>		SPECIFY DATE, EVENT OR CONDITION:

**Note to Recipient of Information:** The confidentiality of this record is required under chapter 899 of the Connecticut general statutes. This material shall not be transmitted to anyone without written consent or other authorization as provided in the aforementioned statutes.

\* **Alcohol and/or drug treatment records:** This information has been disclosed to you from records protected by Federal confidentiality rules (42 CFR Part 2). The Federal rules prohibit you from making any further disclosure of this information unless further disclosure is expressly permitted by the written consent of the person to whom it pertains or as otherwise permitted by 42 CFR Part 2. A general authorization for the release of medical or other information is NOT sufficient for this purpose. The Federal rules restrict any use of the information to criminally investigate or prosecute any alcohol or drug abuse patient.

\*\* **HIV Related Information:** This information has been disclosed to you from records whose confidentiality is protected by state law. State law prohibits you from making any further disclosure of it without the specific written consent of the person to whom it pertains, or as otherwise permitted by state law. A general authorization for the release of medical or other information is NOT sufficient for this purpose.