

Vehicle Modifications

Getting back into life after a motor vehicle accident can include returning to driving. Depending on your needs, you may benefit from changes to your vehicle to enable you to access and operate it.

Modifications can be provided to support you to return to driving or to travel as a passenger in the car. Types of vehicle modifications that the Lifetime Support Authority (LSA) may provide include;

- Adapted controls to steering wheel and foot pedals
- Hoists to enable wheelchair access
- Adaptations to park brake, rear vision mirrors, seat belts or indicators

What will the LSA fund?

As per the Lifetime Support Scheme (LSS) Rules (part 11), the LSA will fund necessary and reasonable costs of modification to a motor vehicle. This includes modifications to your own vehicle, to a vehicle that you share with a spouse or family member or, in certain circumstances, a guardian's or a work vehicle. Modifications must be assessed and recommended by a suitably qualified Occupational Therapist and specified and installed by a supplier in line with relevant standards and regulations.

The LSA will only fund modifications that have been approved as necessary and reasonable, that are commercially available and meet the current South Australian legislation.

Suitable alternatives need to have been considered to support driving and travelling in a vehicle. Vehicles that are modified are owned by the vehicle owner and not by the LSA. The owner is still responsible for paying for the ordinary running costs of the car, such as servicing, insurance and fuel.

What is the process for vehicle modifications to support you to return to driving?

If you feel you would benefit from modifications to your vehicle, the first step is to ensure you are medically fit to return to driving after your motor vehicle injury.

The LSA will then refer you to a Driver Trained Occupational Therapist who will decide if modifications are suitable for you. The Occupational Therapist will;

- Complete an assessment and work with you to determine your needs
- Advise the LSA of their recommendations

As part of the Occupational Therapist's assessment, they may recommend trialing different modifications, and driving lessons once modifications are installed.

The LSA will require confirmation in writing from your doctor or Occupational Therapist of your suitability to return to driving prior to completing any vehicle modifications.

What the LSA will fund:

- The assessment by a Driver Trained Occupational Therapist to assess for vehicle modifications
- Training in the safe and correct use of the modifications
- Maintaining, repairing, transferring and replacing modifications
- Additional insurance costs related to the modifications

What the LSA will not fund:

- Purchase of a car
- Car registration or insurance
- Commercially available features for a vehicle (eg power steering)
- Running costs including servicing costs.
- Loss of value to your car as a result of the modifications
- Modifications any more frequently than once every eight years unless there is a change in medical condition related to the motor vehicle injury which prevents the use of the previously modified vehicle

For more information about vehicle modifications refer to part 11 of the LSS rules on the website.