

VERMONT

**Housing
Safety and Accessibility
Inspection Process**

Accessibility Assessment Addendum

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Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living
Developmental Disabilities Services Division
Adult Services Division
280 State Drive
Waterbury, VT 05671-2030
www.dail.vermont.gov

Housing
Safety and Accessibility Inspection Process
Accessibility Assessment Addendum

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Overview

This addendum will supersede the current process outlined in the [DAIL Housing Safety and Accessibility Inspection Process Protocol](#) regarding Accessibility Inspections and serve as the guiding procedure for Provider Agencies and the Housing Accessibility Contractor until further notice.

The Department of Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL) Shared Living Workgroup in collaboration with the Designated Agency, Specialized Service Agency, Brain Injury Provider Agency, or Adult Family Care Authorized Agency (Provider Agency) and the new DAIL Housing Accessibility Contractor will be implementing changes to the Home Accessibility Inspection process beginning in November 2022.

The new process will focus on assessing the home environment through the lens of the individual receiving supports and services, and implementing home modifications that will:

- Address any immediate health or safety risks and
- Include improvements that will have a considerable impact on the individual's independence and will increase safety for the individual and the shared living provider.

When an individual who uses a wheelchair, a walker, or has other mobility or accessibility needs (such as low vision or hearing loss that affect the individual's ability to freely navigate the home environment) receives home supports funded by DAIL, an Accessibility Assessment of the residence and Participant's needs is required. The Accessibility Assessment is intended to maximize an individual's independence and level of safety and is designed to provide workable and safe environments for caregivers. The Accessibility Assessment is a person-centered Assessment; each Participant identified as having a mobility or accessibility needs within the home must have an Accessibility Assessment completed by the Accessibility Contractor.

The Provider Agency arranges for Accessibility Assessments as per the guidance set forth in this document. The Provider Agency is responsible to ensure that Accessibility Assessments are completed within the timelines established by DAIL.

Accessibility standards are designed to maximize a participant's independence and level of safety. Reimbursed funding from DAIL that is used for accessibility renovations to DAIL-funded homes are required to meet the ADA standards unless otherwise approved by the DAIL Housing Accessibility Contractor.

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It is the responsibility of the Provider Agency to perform a preliminary inspection of the home environment, upload the pre-inspection into the DAIL Housing Portal, enter an Accessibility Assessment into the DAIL Housing Portal and notify the Housing Accessibility Contractor that an Accessibility Assessment must be completed. The Provider Agency shall also notify the participant receiving DAIL- funded services and the Shared Living Provider (SLP) of the date and time of the Housing Accessibility Contractors visit and be present at the home for the assessment.

Completed Accessibility Assessments for participants with mobility needs will be reevaluated and a new Accessibility Assessment completed every 5 years by the DAIL Housing Accessibility Contractor. The Provider Agency is responsible to track the reassessment process and will have 90 days to complete the Accessibility Assessment. If the mobility needs of a participant decline and change before the 5-year reevaluation date, the Provider Agency must reach out to DAIL for approval before moving forward with coordinating the Assessment with the Housing Accessibility Contractor.

Accessibility Inspection Process

When a need for an Accessibility Assessment is identified, the Provider Agency staff member will create an Initial Accessibility Assessment in the DAIL Housing Portal. A Provider Agency staff member, with knowledge of accessibility issues, will perform a preliminary inspection of the home, using the [DAIL Housing Pre-Inspection for Accessibility Assessment form](#). The form is intended to provide the Housing Accessibility Contractor with information about the home environment and the individual's current mobility needs.

The Accessibility Contractor will monitor the DAIL Housing Portal Reports for initial Accessibility Assessments that need to be scheduled. Within 5 working days of receiving a request for an Accessibility Assessment, the Accessibility Contractor will coordinate with the Provider Agency to schedule a date to go to the home and complete the initial assessment and will confirm the name of the Service Coordinator attending the assessment visit. The Accessibility Contractor will enter the date of the home visit into the DAIL Housing Portal.

During the assessment, all common areas and any areas in the home in which the individual will be accessing, are evaluated for accessibility. The Initial Accessibility Assessment will be completed by the Accessibility Contractor within 10 days of receiving the Provider Agency's request.

Within 5 business days of the completion of the assessment, the Accessibility Contractor

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will prepare and provide a written report detailing all requirements and recommendations for modifications to the home that will maximize the individual's independence with a level of safety and ensure a safe workable environment for all Shared Living Providers. The Accessibility Contractor will upload the report and the results into the DAIL Housing Portal. The results of the assessment will include observations, and requirements and recommendations for modifications to be completed by the Shared Living Provider.

The Provider Agency will provide a copy of the report with the Shared Living Provider, and work with them to complete the home modifications. The Provider Agency is responsible for overseeing the implementation of [Agency Accessibility Modification Plan](#) to initiate the home modifications within 10 days and uploading the plan into the DAIL Housing Portal and ensuring the completion of the modifications within 45 days. The Provider Agency is responsible for monitoring the Shared Living Provider's progress, confirming that the modifications are corrected within the timelines established by DAIL, and once all required modifications are made and verified, will create a follow-up Accessibility Assessment in the DAIL Housing Portal.

The Accessibility Contractor will monitor the DAIL Housing Portal Reports for follow-up Accessibility Assessments that need to be scheduled. Within 5 working days of receiving the request from the agency, the Accessibility Contractor will coordinate with Provider Agency to schedule a date for the Contractor to go to the home to complete the follow-up assessment and will obtain the name of the Service Coordinator who will be attending the visit. The Accessibility Contractor will enter the date of the follow-up home visit into the DAIL Housing Portal.

The Accessibility Contractor will complete the follow-up assessment to ensure that the recommended home modifications are completed to the required standards and enter the results of the follow-up assessment into the DAIL Hosing Portal. If all required modifications are completed the Contractor will **Approve** the Accessibility Assessment in the system.

*If any modifications have not been completed to the Accessibility Contractors required standard, the Provider Agency will work with DAIL to obtain approval before another follow-up assessment can be scheduled. If approved by DAIL, the Provider Agency will work with the Shared Living Provider to correct any deficiencies identified, confirm that the modification has been completed to standard and schedule a second follow-up in the DAIL Housing Portal. These occurrences should be extremely rare, and it should be noted that prior approval from DAIL **MUST** be obtained.*

The Provider Agency will print a copy of the Approved Assessment from the DAIL Housing Portal, send a copy of the report to the Shared Living Provider, and will confirm that the Shared Living Provider has received it. The Provider Agency will also put a copy of the

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Approved Assessment in the individual's file at the agency, which is required as part of the DAIL quality management review.

Home Modifications

The Accessibility Contractor's assessment report will detail any items that need immediate action. The Shared Living Provider and Provider Agency must take immediate action to make these corrections or put a plan in place to ensure safety until the correction is made. The Accessibility Contractors report will list all other required items that the SLP and Provider Agency must address through home modifications. Agencies will ensure these required modifications are made within the 45-day timeline requirement. Additionally, the Contractor's report will list recommendations that the SLP and Provider Agency may choose to correct through other home modifications. The Contractor will be available to the Agency and SLP to discuss possible resolutions to bring items into compliance with the applicable standards. The table below details the levels for all items identified in the Contractor's report.

Code	Description	Agency and SLP Responsibility
Red = Immediate Action	Any immediate health or safety risks with potential legal implications.	Agencies must ensure that immediate action is taken to make these corrections or a plan in place to ensure safety until the correction is made. Agencies must incorporate a safety plan within the plan of action.
Yellow = Required	All improvements that will have a considerable impact increasing safety and promoting independence.	Agencies will ensure these required corrections are completed within the 45-day timeline allotted to complete the Assessment.
Green = Encouraged	Medium level solutions requiring extensive modifications to the home.	Agencies and SLP's may choose to make these recommendations or not.
Blue = Innovative	Innovative (blue sky thinking) approaches that may be of benefit.	Agencies and SLP's may choose to make these recommendations or not.

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Home Modification Reimbursement Requests

Provider Agencies may be reimbursed up to \$1,000.00 per Participant for costs incurred for implementing home modifications within the 45-day timeline requirement. The modification(s) must be listed on the Accessibility Contractors report, and reimbursement requests may ONLY be submitted for **approved Accessibility Assessments performed by the Housing Accessibility Contractor after November 2022.**

Provider Agencies must complete the required DAIL [Agency Accessibility Modification Plan and Request for Modification Reimbursement](#) form to include any receipts and invoices obtained. All invoices submitted will be required to be on business letter head from the business or contractor that performed the work. Labor cannot be paid to individuals who live in the home and all work is required to be completed at a reasonable cost.

The completed form and all other supporting documentation will be uploaded to the related tab of the initial Accessibility Assessment in the DAIL Housing Portal with the appropriate naming conventions [insert naming conventions]. When the documentation has been uploaded, Provider Agency will send a notification to DAIL for review and processing by clicking the notification link on the [DAIL Housing Accessibility Assessment Forms](#) webpage. Approved funding will be dispersed to Agencies by the DAIL Business Office on a quarterly basis.

Note: If multiple Participants in a home need an Accessibility Inspection and the home modification(s) are necessary for both Participants, reimbursement for the modification(s) will only be re-imbursed once. *(Example: Two Participants in the home need grab bars added in the shower; request for reimbursement of the grab bars can only be submitted once.)*

If the mobility needs of a participant decline and change before the 5-year reevaluation date, or the Participant moves into a new home, the Provider Agency must reach out to DAIL to discuss any possible reimbursement.

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Accessibility Inspection Process – Steps

Provider Agency

- a. Create Initial Accessibility Assessment in the DAIL Housing Portal
 - i. Assessment status will be “Assessment Requested”
- b. Complete Accessibility pre-inspection form
- c. Upload pre-assessment form under related tab of Assessment in DAIL Housing Portal using the required naming convention
 - i. PAA_(Participant Last Name)_(Date)
- d. Change Assessment Status from Assessment Requested to “To Be Scheduled”
- e. Coordinate with Accessibility Contractor and SLP to set a Visit Date
- f. Attend Initial Assessment with the Accessibility Contractor and Shared Living Provider
- g. Review Accessibility Report with Shared Living Provider
- h. Complete Agency Accessibility Modification Plan and Request for Modification Reimbursement and upload to DAIL Housing Portal using the required naming convention
 - i. AMPR_(Participant Last Name)_(Date)
- i. Change Result Resolutions for Non-Complaint Assessment Items in DAIL Housing Portal
 - i. Result Resolution status will be “Initiate Home Modification”
- j. Work with SLP to complete home modifications
- k. Verify that all immediate action and required action items have been corrected
- l. Create a Follow-up Accessibility Assessment in DAIL Housing Portal
 - i. Assessment status will be “To Be Scheduled”
- m. Coordinate with Accessibility Contractor to set the follow-up Visit Date
- n. Attend Follow-up Assessment with Accessibility Contractor and SLP
- o. Provide Shared Living Provider with a copy of the approved Accessibility Assessment from the Housing Portal
- p. If the Agency is going to request modification reimbursement, then:
 - i. Complete the reimbursement section of the Agency Accessibility Modification Plan and Request for Modification Reimbursement
- q. Upload completed form, receipts, and other supporting documentation to the related tab of the Accessibility Assessment using the required naming conventions.

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- i. AMPR_(Participant Last Name)_(Date)
 - ii. Receipts_(AID #)_(Participant Last Name)_(Date)
- r. Notify DAIL that the completed form and supporting documentation has been uploaded to the DAIL Housing Portal

Housing Accessibility Contractor

Initial Assessments

- a. Monitor Assessment Contractor Reports for Initial Accessibility Assessments
 - i. DAIL Housing Portal Report Name: "All Assessments (Status = 'To Be Scheduled')
- b. Coordinate with Agency and SLP to set Visit Dates for all initial Assessments
- c. Enter Visit Date and confirm Service Coordinator name into Assessment in DAIL Housing Portal
- d. Complete Accessibility Assessments
- e. Complete Accessibility Reports to include findings and recommendations
- f. Enter data into the Assessment in the DAIL Housing Portal and Upload Accessibility Assessment Report

Follow-up Assessments

- a. Monitor Accessibility Contractor Reports for Follow-up Accessibility Assessments
- b. Coordinate with Agency and SLP to set Visit Dates for all Follow-up Assessments
- c. Enter Visit Date and confirm Service Coordinator name for the Follow-up Assessment in the DAIL Housing Portal
- d. Complete Follow-up Assessments
- e. Enter data into the Assessment in the DAIL Housing Portal
- f. If everything is in order, Approve Assessment in DAIL Housing Portal

Glossary

Contractor: The entity in which the State contracts to perform the housing inspections.

DAIL: The Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL). DAIL includes the Developmental Disabilities Services Division (DDSD) and the Adult Services Division (ASD), and its federally funded programs that include shared living providers.

DAIL Housing Portal or Portal: DAIL implemented a new safety and accessibility inspection portal in February 2019 which houses information on all of the Shared Living Providers, Participants, and inspections for DAIL's federally funded programs.

Housing Accessibility Contractor or Accessibility Contractor: The entity in which the State contracts to perform Accessibility Assessments for Participants living in shared living homes.

Inspection or Assessment: The term Assessment and Inspection are used interchangeably. The DAIL contracted Housing Safety and Accessibility Contractor completes an inspection of the home to ensure it meets all the safety requirements or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. The inspections are called 'Assessments' in the DAIL Housing Portal.

Non-Compliant: An item on the inspection that does not meet the acceptable standards for the inspection. Also known as a Deficiency.

Participant: A participant who is receiving DAIL federally funded services.

Provider Agency: The agency who provides/oversees the services for a participant receiving services through one of the DAIL federally funded programs that include shared living providers. These agencies are also known as Designated Agency, Specialized Services Agency, Brain Injury (TBI) Provider Agency, or Adult Family Care (AFC) Authorized Agent.

Shared Living Provider: A person who has an agreement with a Provider Agency to share their home with a participant receiving DAIL federally funded services. A Shared Living provider is also known as the Home Provider.

State: The Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL). DAIL includes the Developmental Disabilities Services Division (DDSD) and the Adult Services Division (ASD), and its federally funded programs that include shared living providers.