



Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Access-A-Home Program Policy

Approved by: Vicki Elliott-Lopez, Senior Executive Director, Housing

Effective date: December 30, 2022

I. POLICY OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

This policy provides an overview of eligibility and funding for the Access-A-Home Program (Program) of the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Department).

This Program is to provide grants of up to \$7,000 to help renovate homes to make them wheelchair accessible. Often the grant pays for a wheelchair ramp, but it can also be used to pay for widening doorways and hallways or making bathrooms wheelchair accessible. The annual income limit for eligibility is \$60,000.

II. DEFINITIONS

Applicant	A person who applies to the Program, including the individual's spouse or common-law partner
Architectural Barrier	A physical restriction limiting the access to, and use of a wheelchair at an individual's Principal Residence
Housing Unit	Residential premises occupied as the Principal Residence of the Applicant or their Immediate Relative who is a wheelchair user by reason of a long-term disability
Household	A person or group of persons who occupy or have need of a unit in Nova Scotia and who do not have a Principal Residence elsewhere in Canada
Immediate Relative	A person related to the Applicant by blood, marriage, common-law partnership, or adoption
Principal Residence	Primary place of habitation

Total Gross Income Total household income before taxes. *Note:* Some forms of income may be excluded from this calculation.

III. APPLICATION

Individuals or their Immediate Relatives who are wheelchair users or expected to become wheelchair users by reason of a long-term disability, with a Total Gross Income of less than or equal to \$60,000.

IV. POLICY DIRECTIVES

Program Eligibility

1. The Applicant or their Immediate Relative must be a wheelchair user or expected to become a wheelchair user within six months of the date of application by reason of a long-term disability. Medical documentation is required in the case where individual is expected to become a wheelchair user.
2. Total Gross Income of the Applicant is less than or equal to \$60,000.

Eligible Properties

1. Any existing residential Housing Unit is eligible provided that:
 - a. It is occupied as the Principal Residence of the Applicant, and
 - b. There are Architectural Barriers that restrict the use of a wheelchair.
2. If the Applicant is not the owner of the residence, written approval from the owner is required.

Eligible Alterations

Eligible alterations must be:

1. Related to a housing,
2. Permanently installed, and
3. Improve access and/or safety for the wheelchair user in the Housing Unit.

Ineligible Alterations

1. Any repairs carried out prior to the Department providing approval in writing for the assistance are not eligible.
2. Any repairs, alterations or adaptations that are not related to use of a wheelchair are not eligible.
3. Supportive care related items, special equipment for therapeutic purposes, portable appliances and aids are not eligible for funding under this Program.

Eligible Costs

1. Costs eligible for assistance are limited to:
 - a. Materials and necessary equipment rental;
 - b. Contractor labour and related costs;
 - c. Harmonized sales tax.
2. The cost of labour performed by any member of the Household is not an eligible cost.
3. Immediate Relatives of the Applicant may include a charge for their own labour only where they are normally employed in the renovation or construction industry and are not a member of the Household. Such costs must not exceed trade prices for the area, as determined by the Department.

Grants not to exceed amount

1. Assistance will be in the form of a grant up to a maximum of \$7,000, subject to fund availability.
2. The contribution can only be used for eligible repairs as deemed by the Department.

Application and Approval

1. Applicants will submit an application to the Department. Approvals are subject to eligibility requirements and Program funding availability.
2. Work will not commence until the Applicant has received approval in writing from the Department.

Inspections

The Department reserves the right to conduct site inspections to determine that eligible work has been completed for the purpose of issuing payment.

V. ACCOUNTABILITY AND MONITORING

The Director of Housing Services will monitor the policy’s implementation, performance and effectiveness. The policy will be reviewed for revisions as needed.

VI. VERSION CONTROL

Version	Revision Date	Description of Revision
1.0	December 30, 2022	New Policy