

## **1240-I - HOME MODIFICATIONS**

EFFECTIVE DATES: 02/14/96, 10/01/17, 03/02/20

APPROVAL DATES: 10/01/01, 04/01/04, 01/01/05, 03/01/06, 03/01/07, 10/01/07, 07/01/12,  
07/20/17, 12/05/19

### **I. PURPOSE**

This Policy applies to ALTCS/E/PD, DES/DDD (DDD) Contractors, and Fee-For-Service Tribal ALTCS; excluding Federal Emergency Services (FES). (For FES, refer to AMPM Chapter 1100). This Policy establishes requirements for home modifications for ALTCS members.

### **II. DEFINITIONS**

**ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING** Activities a member shall perform daily for the member’s regular day-to-day necessities, including but not limited to mobility, transferring, bathing, dressing, grooming, eating, and toileting.

**HOME** A residential dwelling that is owned, rented, leased, or occupied by a member, at no cost to the member, including a house, a mobile home, an apartment, or other similar shelter. A home is not a facility, a setting or an institution, or a portion on any of these that is licensed or certified by a regulatory agency of the state as a:

1. Health care institution under A.R.S. §36-401,
2. Residential care institution under A.R.S. §36-401,
3. Community residential setting under A.R.S. §36-551, or
4. Behavioral health facility under 9 A.A.C. 20, Articles 1, 4, 5 and 6.

**RESIDENTIAL  
CONTRACTOR**

Any person, firm, partnership, corporation, association or other organization, or a combination of any of them, that for compensation undertakes to or offers to undertake to, purports to have the capacity to undertake to, submits a bid or responds to a request for qualification or a request for proposals for construction services to, or does himself or herself or by or through others, within residential property lines:

1. Construct, alter, repair, add to, subtract from, improve, move, wreck, or demolish any residential structure, such as houses, townhouses, condominiums or cooperative units and any appurtenances on or within residential property lines.
2. Connect such a residential structure to utility service lines, metering devices or sewer lines.
3. Provide mechanical or structural service for any such residential structure.

Residential Contractor does not include an owner making improvements to the owner's property.

**III. POLICY**

AHCCCS covers physical modifications to the Home as determined through an assessment of the member's needs and as identified in the member's service plan. Home modifications shall have a specific adaptive purpose aimed at increasing the member's ability to function with greater independence in his or her own Home thus reducing the risk of institutionalization.

**A. GENERAL HOME MODIFICATION STANDARDS**

1. Home modifications may be provided to members residing in his or her Home:
  - a. If the member does not own the Home, the owner of the Home shall approve the modifications, and
  - b. No Title XIX funds may be used to return a Home to its pre-modification state.
2. Alternatives should be considered prior to the authorization of a Home modification. Alternatives considered shall be those that would assist in maximizing independence. For instance, giving the member bed baths in lieu of making the bathroom accessible, is not an acceptable alternative to Home modification. Examples of acceptable alternatives include:
  - a. Use of another accessible bedroom, bathroom or entry if the current arrangement is inaccessible for the member,
  - b. Use of medical equipment (e.g. transfer bench), and
  - c. Use of community resources.

The member's needs shall be met in a timely manner consistent with AHCCCS standards, even when an alternative option is utilized and/or when there are other payers for the provision of this service.

**B. ASSESSMENT OF NEED FOR HOME MODIFICATIONS**

1. Assessment and documentation of the member's needs for Home modifications shall include the following, as appropriate:
  - a. PCP or attending physician order,
  - b. Documentation to support medical necessity, including an assessment of the Home modification's impact on the member's ability to independently perform Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). Documentation should also be included noting if the Home modification will also assist a caregiver in meeting the ADL needs of the member,
  - c. Documentation to support cost-effectiveness, including the permanency of the member's residence, longevity of previous residential history and the prior provision of Home modifications (if applicable),
  - d. An assessment by a qualified professional, usually an occupational or physical therapist. An assessment by a Certified Environmental Access Consultant (CEAC) can be used in lieu of an assessment from an occupational or physical therapist,
  - e. At least two competitive bids (cost estimates) from qualified residential contractors for each Home modification project for comparison of costs and project options are recommended,
  - f. Tribal ALTCS case managers shall submit the completed Home Modification Request/Justification Form to AHCCCS Administration/Division of Fee for Service Management, Tribal ALTCS Unit. DFSM Refer to Attachment A for a copy of the required form, and
  - g. Home modifications have limited benefits and are not intended to alleviate all risk of injury or make every ADL task easier or more convenient.
2. Under 42 CFR 438.210, the Contractor shall approve or deny requests for Home modifications within 14 calendar days of the request.
  - a. The Contractor may extend an additional 14 calendar days when there is justification that additional information is necessary for the determination of the request and the extension is in the member's best interest. The Contractor shall notify the member of the intent to extend the timeframe, or
  - b. Denial of a Home modification shall be signed by the Contractor Medical Director or physician designee.
3. Requests for approval of Home modifications for Tribal ALTCS members shall be submitted to the AHCCCS Administration/Division of Fee for Service Management, Tribal ALTCS Unit and prior authorized by the Manager of the CMSU Unit or designee. A written decision regarding approval or denial of the service shall be provided within 30 days from receipt of a properly completed request.

**C. APPROVED HOME MODIFICATIONS**

1. Home modifications shall be performed by a Residential Contractor and in accordance with applicable State or local building codes. Attachment A addresses Home modification request/justification for Tribal ALTCS members. Tribal ALTCS may use a residential or commercial contractor who has been certified by the Tribal Authority

for Home modifications on the reservation. All residential or commercial contractors shall be registered AHCCCS providers.

2. Examples of modifications that may be covered include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Installation of one ramp, including handrails, and necessary threshold modification, to facilitate barrier-free member access to his or her Home,
  - b. Widening of doorways to allow a member in a wheelchair access to essential areas of their Home,
  - c. Modification of one bathroom to allow member access and/or increased independence in bathing and toileting functions. For example, roll-in showers, wall-hung or other wheelchair accessible sinks, re-positioning of existing fixtures for adequate movement within the bathroom, and specialized toilets to allow for easier transfers, and
  - d. Removal of flooring cover for ease of access and replacement with suitable flooring. This does not include removal of carpet for hygiene purposes.
3. The cost of Home modifications may include refinishing the area, such as drywall finishing and painting, and general cleanup of construction debris from the site after completion of the project. This does not include items for aesthetic purposes. If the Residential Contractor shall travel a distance of more than 60 miles one way to the member's Home in order to complete the project, mileage expenses may also be included in the cost of the service. Associated costs such as those noted in this paragraph shall be within reasonable limits.
4. The Contractor or AHCCCS/DFSM CMSU may not exceed 90 days from the date of the approval of the final specifications to the completion of the project.

#### **D. EXCLUSIONS**

Examples of specific exclusions for the provision of Home modifications include, but are not limited to:

1. Modifications of the Home that are of general utility to the household, or that are not of direct medical benefit to the member.
2. General maintenance, Home improvements, or Home repair. These are considered to be the responsibility of the homeowner and are not covered by AHCCCS.