

# Injury-related housing needs

If you have a significant disability following an accident, you may be able to get your house modified. This information sheet tells you about how we can help with housing modifications.

---

## ACC can help with your housing needs

Depending on what you need, we can help by:

- adding ramps or low-rise lifts
- adding handrails
- widening doorways
- changing bathrooms so you can use the toilet and shower
- changing the kitchen so you can reach cupboards, sinks and stove
- adding storage for any injury-related equipment you need.

Talk to your ACC Service or Support Coordinator about your housing needs as early as you can, as it can take some time to solve your housing issues.

We'll usually start with a specialist housing assessment to find out what you usually do around home and what barriers may need to be overcome. We have a contract with a housing services provider who arranges the work to be done.

It may not be safe for you to live in your home while major changes are being done. We'll arrange and pay for alternative accommodation for you and other residents while the work is being done.

## Can I use my own architect or builder?

No. Due to the specialised nature of the work, we use a housing services provider who understands the requirements of our legislation. Our housing services provider only employs architects and builders who have the expertise and track record to complete the changes to your house to a high standard and on time.

## Minor changes

If only minor changes are needed, then we'll contact our housing services provider to get quotes and arrange for the work to be done. Minor changes are things like:

- ramps under one metre high (these don't require a building consent)
- handrails (internal or external)
- door widening
- modifications to steps to make them lower and easier for you to use
- gates/fencing
- handheld showers.

Our housing services provider handles all payments to the builder, any other subcontractors, and suppliers.

### Major changes

Major changes usually involve structural work and require some form of certification or building consent. Some examples of major changes are:

- installing a wet area shower in the bathroom
- installing lifts
- extensions to, or additional, bedrooms, bathrooms or living areas
- changes to the kitchen and/or laundry.

Work of this sort goes ahead in stages:

1. our housing services provider identifies what's needed, prepares preliminary drawings and gets the property owner's agreement to proceed
2. we get final drawings and quotes so we can approve the costs and get any building consents
3. our housing services provider oversees the work to make sure it is done to a high standard and finished on time
4. we get the property owner to sign a document formally accepting the work – which means taking responsibility for all future maintenance and repairs to the modifications

### What does ACC pay for?

We can only pay for changes that help to solve barriers to access and independence that are a direct result of your injury.

We can't pay for extra rooms or features that aren't needed for your injury.

### What happens if I need to move house?

Your accommodation may be unsuitable for you after your accident, and relocation may be the most effective solution. If you need to move to a different house, ACC can provide access to expert advice to help you identify houses that are capable of meeting your needs – either with or without modifications. However, you are responsible for buying or renting the new accommodation.

If you are considering moving house, please talk to ACC before you buy, build or rent another house.

#### We're happy to answer your questions

If you have any language or cultural needs, let us know so we can help.

If you'd like to know more about our services, please call your Support or Service Coordinator. You can reach them on their extension, or phone **0800 101 996** and ask for them by name. You may also find the following information helpful.

For information about...	See the guide ...
how we collect and use your information	Collection and disclosure of information (INPIS01 - information sheet)
your rights to receive a high standard of service, and how we resolve any concerns you may have	Working together to resolve issues (ACC2393 booklet)

Copies are available at any ACC Branch, on our website [acc.co.nz](http://acc.co.nz) or by calling **0800 101 996**.