

Guide to Reasonable and Necessary (R & N) decisions

Modified vehicle repairs and maintenance

Case example

Anthony had an accident in his vehicle which was modified for his disability support needs. Only the rear bumper bar of his car was damaged in the accident. He asks us to fund the costs of the vehicle repairs following the accident.

Would we fund this?

No, we would not fund the vehicle repairs as they're not an NDIS support. However, we may fund repair costs to the vehicle modifications installed for Anthony's disability support needs if these were damaged during the accident.

Why wouldn't we fund it?

The laws for the NDIS determine what we can and can't fund. Things we can fund are called NDIS supports. You can use the funding in your plan to buy NDIS supports for your disability support needs which are in line with your plan.

Many Australians use a motor vehicle for transport. The purchase, general running costs, standard registration and insurance of vehicles are considered day-to-day living costs not related to your disability support needs. We don't fund these everyday expenses.

We do fund the maintenance and repair of vehicle modifications that have been installed for your disability support needs. For example, the maintenance of vehicle modifications needed so that you can:

- get in and out of the vehicle with or without a wheelchair
- carry your wheelchair in or on the vehicle without lifting
- be transported safely whilst seated in your wheelchair
- drive with specialised controls or other adaptations.

We can also fund the part of your insurance premium related to the vehicle modifications required for your disability support needs.

We usually include funding for the maintenance and insurance of vehicle modifications when we approve funding for modifications in your plan. If you have a car accident, we would expect your insurance policy to cover most of the costs for the repair of your vehicle modifications.

In most cases, you can use the maintenance funding in your plan to cover the extra costs of any repair of your vehicle modifications. If the repairs cost more than the funding you already have, or you need to replace the equipment, contact us or your planner for advice. If it will cost

more than \$1,500 to repair or replace your vehicle modifications, you'll also need to give us a quote and make sure we accept it before you go ahead with the repairs.

What other related supports might we fund?

Usually, we won't fund the general maintenance and repair of your vehicle. We can typically fund maintenance and repair costs of modifications made to the vehicle that are directly related to your disability support needs. This includes:

- servicing the suspension or undercarriage if the floor has been lowered or 4-point suspension or height-adjustable kneeling has been fitted
- damage to the vehicle interior, such as floor relining due to wheelchair access
- seat belt stalks and replacing customised seat belt systems
- servicing the power system if there are power modifications to support power ramps or other vehicle-powered assistive technology.

For more information on vehicle modifications, refer to [Our Guideline – Vehicle modifications and driving supports](#).

Case example 2

Raja is paraplegic. He uses a wheelchair and drives a vehicle modified for his disability support needs. We funded these vehicle modifications. Recently, while visiting his doctor, an unknown driver crashed into the side of Raja's car and drove off.

The accident caused damage to the:

- front and side panels
- front wheel
- modifications that allow Raja to drive without pedals.

Raja contacts his vehicle insurance provider and finds out that, as the driver of the other vehicle is unknown, the excess on his policy will be \$1,000. As Raja needs his vehicle to get to work, he contacts the NDIS to fund the:

- \$1,000 excess
- transport for his regular essential transport needs
- costs to travel to and from his workplace for the 6 weeks it will take to repair his vehicle.

Raja gives us a quote from the insurance provider's approved panel beater. The price includes the itemised costing from a vehicle modifications dealer to replace the driving modifications and repair the vehicle. It also specifies how long the vehicle will be off the road.

To work out whether Raja's request is an NDIS support for him, the planner looks at the information provided against the NDIS funding criteria, and whether:

- the \$1,000 excess covers the total cost of all the damage to the vehicle, or only the cost to repair the damage to the vehicle modifications
- Raja's plan includes funding for the maintenance and repair of vehicle modifications
- Raja's NDIS supports, mainstream and community supports, and regular essential transport needs are documented. This is so the planner can work out transport costs while Raja's vehicle is being repaired. The planner also looks at whether Raja's insurance policy covers alternate transport while his vehicle is being repaired.

In Raja's case, the planner decides:

- the excess covers the total amount of all the repairs needed to be made to the vehicle, including the vehicle modifications
- they need more information about whether Raja's insurance covers alternative transport such as a loan vehicle
- Raja is not able to use public transport due to his disability. Therefore, his request for transport funding to cover his regular essential transport needs and the transport costs to his workplace would be an NDIS support for Raja.

After they get more information, the planner decides:

- the funding of the excess is an NDIS support for Raja. This is because it's more cost effective to fund the excess than it is to pay for the repairs themselves.
- to approve the NDIS support of funding for six weeks of transport costs so Raja can travel while his vehicle is being repaired. This is because Raja's insurance policy doesn't cover alternative transport while his vehicle is being repaired, and he is not able to use public transport due to his disability.

For more information, refer to:

- [Our Guideline – Reasonable and necessary supports](#)
- [Our Guideline - Vehicle modifications and specialised driver training](#)