Blanche Fischer Foundation
Accessible Vehicle Funding Resources
For Oregonians with Permanent Physical Disabilities

An accessible vehicle can expand independence, mobility, employment, community participation, and everyday life. Funding may come together from several different sources, including grants, financing, vehicle conversion programs, adaptive equipment assistance, manufacturer rebates, and disability-specific resources.

The Blanche Fischer Foundation does not fund the purchase of motor vehicles. We created this guide to help Oregonians with permanent physical disabilities explore other resources that may support the purchase of an accessible vehicle, vehicle modifications, lifts, hand controls, adaptive driving equipment, or other accessibility needs.

Because funding often comes from more than one source, it can be helpful to explore several options and identify which programs may work together.

Important: Contact potential funding sources before purchasing a vehicle or completing modifications. Many programs require prior approval and will not reimburse expenses that have already been incurred.

Northwest Access Fund

Accessible vehicle financing Northwest Access Fund provides financing to people with disabilities in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. Contact Northwest Access Fund if financing for the vehicle or conversion is needed.

Adaptive vehicle loans may be used for:

- a vehicle that is already adapted;
- a vehicle chassis that will be modified for accessibility;
- wheelchair ramps and lifts;
- hand controls; and
- other adaptive vehicle equipment.

Loans are available up to $60,000, with terms of up to 10 years. A 10% down payment is required for adapted vehicle loans.

Northwest Access Fund — Adapted Vehicle Loans

Apply for a Northwest Access Fund Loan

Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation

Potential vehicle purchase or modification assistance related to employment

Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) serves eligible Oregonians whose disability creates a barrier to employment. In some circumstances, VR may authorize the purchase or modification of a vehicle when it is necessary to overcome a disability-related barrier to employment and supports the individual's approved employment goal. A lack of transportation by itself is not sufficient justification for VR to purchase a vehicle.

Important: Oregon VR currently has a waitlist for eligible applicants. People already receiving VR services continue to receive those services.

Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation — Client Services & How to Apply

Oregon Special Needs Trust — Accessibility Grant

Grant assistance for vehicle modifications

The Oregon Special Needs Trust offers Accessibility Grants to eligible Oregon residents with disabilities who demonstrate financial need.

The Accessibility Grant may pay for:

- vehicle modifications;
- adaptive equipment or technology;
- communication devices;
- home accessibility; and
- durable medical equipment.

The maximum Accessibility Grant is $5,000. Grant awards are paid directly to the vendor or service provider.

Oregon Special Needs Trust — Accessibility Grant Information

Apply for an Oregon Special Needs Trust Grant

Accessible Vehicle Purchase & Gap Funding

Bridge to Mobility

Last-dollar funding toward a wheelchair-accessible vehicle

Bridge to Mobility provides last-dollar grant funding to help close the remaining financial gap when purchasing a wheelchair-accessible vehicle. Grants are available up to $5,000. The applicant begins by working with a NMEDA dealer. The dealer completes a needs and financial assessment and submits the grant application directly to Bridge to Mobility when a funding gap remains.

Best fit: Someone who has identified an appropriate wheelchair-accessible vehicle and has financing or other resources in place but still has a remaining funding gap.

Bridge to Mobility — How to Apply for Funding

MagicMobility Vans / Special Kids Fund

Donated wheelchair-accessible vehicle assistance. MagicMobility Vans operates a nationwide wheelchair-van assistance program for children and adults with disabilities. Applicants submit a request for an adapted van and must demonstrate both the physical need for accessible transportation and an inability to afford an adapted van. If an appropriate donated vehicle becomes available in the applicant's area, the program may contact them. Applicants are responsible for insurance, registration, and picking up the vehicle from the donor.

Important: This is not a guaranteed cash grant or a program that purchases a specific vehicle selected by the applicant. Vehicle availability, timing, and location cannot be guaranteed.

MagicMobility Vans — Request a Wheelchair Van

Vehicle Conversion & Adaptive Equipment Grants

National Organization for Vehicle Accessibility — NOVA

Grant assistance for automotive mobility equipment NOVA's Ralph Braun Grant Program assists people with disabilities who have secured most of the money needed for automotive mobility equipment but still have a funding gap.

Eligible equipment may include:

- wheelchair-accessible vehicle conversions;
- wheelchair or scooter lifts;
- transfer seats;
- wheelchair securement systems;
- driving aids; and
- other qualifying automotive mobility equipment.

Grants may cover up to 25% of the mobility-equipment cost, with a maximum award of $5,000. Grants are available to residents of the continental United States and Canada.

Important: Applications are accepted during designated funding cycles.

NOVA — Ralph Braun Grant Program

Wheelchairs 4 Kids

Vehicle modifications for children and young adults with physical disabilities

Wheelchairs 4 Kids' Let's Roll program provides wheelchairs, home and vehicle modifications, and other necessary medical equipment at no charge to qualifying children with physical disabilities.

Best fit: Children and young adults with physical disabilities whose families need assistance with vehicle modification or other mobility-related equipment.

Important: This is a vehicle-modification resource rather than a general vehicle-purchase program.

Wheelchairs 4 Kids — Let's Roll Program

Diagnosis-Specific Resources

Cerebral Palsy — Alyssa V. Phillips Foundation

The Alyssa V. Phillips Foundation provides financial assistance to U.S. citizens diagnosed with cerebral palsy.

Vehicle modifications are eligible. For vehicle-modification requests, the vehicle must generally be no more than seven years old and have fewer than 100,000 miles. Applicants must pursue other funding options first, and cost-sharing requirements apply to larger requests. Current assistance is limited to $5,000 per beneficiary per year and $10,000 lifetime.

Alyssa V. Phillips Foundation — Application Guidelines

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy — Team Joseph

Team Joseph's Duchenne Family Assistance Program serves individuals and families affected by Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

Its program specifically offers assistance with:

- purchasing an accessible vehicle;
- modifying a van;
- disability-related equipment;
- home modifications; and
- other needs associated with Duchenne.

Eligibility: Limited to individuals and families affected by Duchenne muscular dystrophy.

Team Joseph — Duchenne Family Assistance Program

Spinal Cord Injury / Spinal Cord-Related — Bryon Riesch Paralysis Foundation

The Bryon Riesch Paralysis Foundation provides charitable grants to U.S. residents with a spinal cord injury or spinal cord-related disorder who demonstrate financial need.

Applicants must request a specific modification or piece of equipment. Wisconsin residents receive priority, but grants are not limited to Wisconsin residents. Partial funding toward larger items is considered only when the rest of the funding is already secured.

Vehicle-related requests can include adaptive modifications and equipment.

Bryon Riesch Paralysis Foundation — Charitable Grant Application

Spinal Cord Injury — Ian Burkhart Foundation

The Ian Burkhart Foundation provides grants to U.S. residents living with spinal cord injury who demonstrate financial need.

Eligible items expressly include:

- vehicle modifications;
- wheelchairs;
- home modifications;
- adaptive equipment; and
- assistive technology.

Average grants are approximately $3,500, with a current maximum award of $20,000. Partial payments toward larger items are considered only when all remaining funding is already in place.

Ian Burkhart Foundation — Fund Request

Paralysis Due to Spinal Cord Injury — Thomas E. Smith Foundation

The Thomas E. Smith Foundation's Stronger Together Grant Program provides financial assistance to people living with paralysis due to spinal cord injury. Funding can support essential equipment, therapy, and home or vehicle modifications that improve independence and quality of life. Applicants must demonstrate financial need. Current grant requests may be made for up to $25,000, and awards are paid directly to vendors, equipment suppliers, or service providers.

Thomas E. Smith Foundation — Stronger Together Grant Application

Neurological Disorders, Movement Disorders, Spinal Cord Injury & Amputation — The Perseverance Project

The Perseverance Project provides grants to U.S. residents diagnosed with a:

- neurological disorder;
- movement disorder;
- spinal cord injury; or
- amputation.

Its grant program specifically includes vehicle modifications and adapted-driving programs, as well as home modifications, physical activity programs, and specialized equipment.

Application periods are offered during designated times of year.

The Perseverance Project — Grant Program

Rare Medical Conditions, Veterans, Military Families & First Responders — Chive Charities

Chive Charities provides grants to qualifying:

- individuals with rare medical diagnoses;
- veterans;
- military families; and
- first responders.

Eligible mobility-related items can include:

- vehicle hand-control installation;
- adaptive car seats;
- wheelchair adaptations;
- mobility scooters;
- scooter lifts;
- wheelchairs; and
- other adaptive mobility equipment.

Important: This is not a general physical-disability grant. Applicants must qualify under one of Chive Charities' designated categories.

Chive Charities — Grant Eligibility & Application

Veterans

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs — Auto Allowance & Adaptive Equipment

Certain veterans and service members with qualifying service-connected disabilities may receive assistance to:

- purchase a specially equipped vehicle; and/or
- obtain approved adaptive vehicle equipment.

Qualifying disabilities can include permanent loss or loss of use of one or both feet or hands and certain permanent vision impairments, among other qualifying conditions.

Important: VA approval is required before purchasing the vehicle or adaptive equipment.

VA — Automobile Allowance & Adaptive Equipment

Apply Online for VA Automobile Allowance

Employment-Related Financial Planning

Social Security — Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)

PASS is a Social Security work-incentive program that allows certain people with disabilities to set aside income or resources to pay expenses necessary to achieve a specific employment goal.

An approved PASS can potentially include:

- purchase, lease, or rental of a vehicle;
- disability-related vehicle modifications;
- insurance;
- registration;
- fuel;
- maintenance; and
- other transportation expenses necessary to reach the approved work goal.

Important: PASS is not a grant. The individual sets aside their own eligible income or resources under a Social Security-approved employment plan.

Social Security — Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)

Social Security — PASS Application Form SSA-545

Fundraising Assistance

Help Hope Live

Nonprofit medical and disability fundraising

Help Hope Live helps individuals and families establish nonprofit fundraising campaigns for qualifying medical and disability-related expenses.

Its injury campaigns specifically identify accessible vans among expenses that can be supported through fundraising, and the organization has facilitated campaigns for wheelchair-accessible vehicle purchases.

Important: Help Hope Live is a fundraising program, not a direct vehicle grant.

Help Hope Live — Start a Fundraising Campaign

Help Hope Live — Request Help

Vehicle Manufacturer Mobility Programs

Many vehicle manufacturers offer reimbursement programs for customers who purchase or lease an eligible vehicle and install qualifying adaptive equipment.

Programs currently listed by the National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association include manufacturers such as:

- Stellantis / Chrysler / Dodge / Ram;
- General Motors;
- Toyota;
- Audi;
- BMW;
- Ford / Lincoln;
- Honda;
- Hyundai;
- Lexus;
- Mazda;
- MINI;
- Nissan;
- Subaru; and
- Volkswagen.

Individual programs typically reimburse part of the cost of qualifying adaptive equipment or vehicle modifications rather than the purchase price of the vehicle itself. Reimbursement limits and requirements vary by manufacturer.

NMEDA — Current Manufacturer Mobility Rebate Programs

National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association— NMEDA

Resource and dealer network — not a direct funding program

NMEDA does not generally provide grants directly. A NMEDA-accredited mobility dealer can help:

- identify an appropriate wheelchair-accessible vehicle or conversion;
- identify needed adaptive equipment;
- prepare estimates;
- identify manufacturer mobility rebates;
- explore financing and grant resources; and
- coordinate certain vehicle-funding applications.

Bridge to Mobility, for example, requires applicants to begin the process through a NMEDA dealer.

NMEDA — Find a Mobility Dealer

NMEDA — Mobility Rebate Programs

Where to Start

Accessible vehicle funding often requires combining several resources.

1. Determine what is needed. Identify whether assistance is needed for the vehicle itself, the accessibility conversion, adaptive driving equipment, or all three.
2. Obtain an assessment and written estimate from a qualified mobility dealer.
3. Contact Northwest Access Fund if financing for the vehicle or conversion.
4. Explore Oregon and federal programs that may apply, including Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation and VA benefits.
5. Check diagnosis-specific organizations for additional grant opportunities.
6. Ask about manufacturer mobility rebates before purchasing the vehicle or adaptive equipment.
7. Apply for grants and gap funding before making the purchase.
8. Consider structured fundraising when grants, financing, and other resources do not cover the full cost.

Families may be able to combine grants, public benefits, manufacturer rebates, financing, personal funds, and fundraising.

Important Information

Programs, eligibility requirements, funding amounts, application periods, and availability can change.

Inclusion in this guide does not constitute endorsement by the Blanche Fischer Foundation.

The Blanche Fischer Foundation does not administer these programs, determine eligibility, or guarantee funding.

Contact each organization directly to confirm current eligibility, available funding, and application requirements before making a purchase or financial commitment.