

Reasons for Decision:

Order # 1516-391

The appellants filed an appeal on behalf of their <reference removed>, as their request for funds for van modifications to enable <reference removed> to access the van in a wheelchair were denied.

A Medical Equipment Request and Justification form was submitted to the Disability Health Supports Unit requesting funds for the modification required for a rear entry ramp and lift system for a new family van. The family had been using a <reference removed> van which had a side lift system. This lift system was obtained when <reference removed> was a child and was funded through Children's Disability Services. Due to the age of the van and <reference removed> increase in stature, the family needed to buy a new vehicle. The family showed the Board pictures of <reference removed> in the previous vehicle where the appellant had to sit with head tilted forward whenever the appellant was in the family vehicle.

The DHSU provided a decision letter on <date removed> which stated that the Employment and Income Assistance Program did not fund van modifications. The EIA policy regarding persons in wheelchairs that required transportation was to provide funds for medical transportation and social activities in accordance with their policy. The program stated that if the family was unable to provide transportation for <reference removed>, then they would have to book a Handi-transit van from a neighboring community which would cost about \$200 - \$300 per trip. The program stated that they also explored funding under the Community Living with a disAbility Program, but funds were not available under that program either.

The <reference removed> family stated at the hearing that <reference removed> lives at home and is dependent on them for all personal needs. <Reference removed> attends day programming, which transports the appellant to and from the program, but otherwise the family provides all transportation for <reference removed>. The family stated, and provided pictures to demonstrate that in their previous vehicle <reference removed> could not be safely transported as <reference removed> needed to bend forward to fit within the van. In addition, due to the age and condition of the van it was no longer a safe and suitable vehicle to meet <reference removed> transportation needs.

After carefully considering the written and verbal information the Board has determined that there are no provisions in the Manitoba Assistance Act or Regulation to provide funds to retrofit a vehicle to accommodate a person with a disability. The Board acknowledged the need as legitimate; however the program does not provide funding for this need. The Board does not have the jurisdiction to order funds to be provided under the Community Living with a disAbility program.