

How Can I Find Financial Assistance?

The following agencies do offer some programs that can help homeowners pay for modifications. In addition, some banks and credit unions can offer special loan rates for accessibility modifications. Other possibilities include private insurance, civic and fraternal organizations.

Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development

Home Repair for the Elderly Program
703-246-5154, TTY 711

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha/seniorhousing/hrep.htm

Provides funding for minor repairs and modifications for older adults and, in some cases, persons with disabilities.



Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development

804-225-3129, TTY 711

www.dhcd.virginia.gov/LHTC

The Livable Home Tax Credit provides up to a \$5,000 income tax credit for the purchase of a new accessible residence and up to 50 percent of the cost of retrofitting activities, not to exceed \$5,000.



Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority

1-866-835-5876, TTY 711

www.atlfa.org

The fund offers low-interest loans to buy assistive technology or make home improvements to residents who have a disability or who have a family member with a disability.

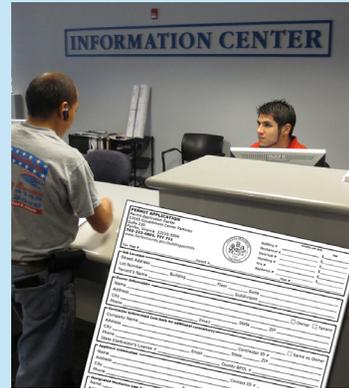
How Do I Find a Contractor?

Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS) professionals have been taught the techniques for designing and building aesthetically pleasing, barrier-free living environments. For more information about CAPS and to identify contracting candidates, go to www.nahb.org/caps.

The Fairfax County Office of Consumer Affairs also offers tips and advice on hiring a contractor for home modifications. Call 703-222-8435, TTY 711, or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/consumer/education/contractors.htm for more information.

Do I Need A Permit?

Many Universal Design elements can be incorporated into your home without permits; however, permits and inspections are required for structural changes such as altering or removing a wall. Additionally, plumbing, electrical and mechanical work



that involves gas appliances or work beyond the replacement of fixtures required permits. Contact the Customer Technical and Support Center at 703-222-0801, TTY 711, for specific permit information about your project.

For More Information...



WORKING FOR YOU!

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes

Fairfax County Department of Public Works & Environmental Services

Universal Design Ombudsman

12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 224

Fairfax, Virginia 22035

Phone: 703-324-1555, TTY 711

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/universaldesign



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To obtain this information in an alternative format, please call the Department of Public Works & Environmental Services at 703-324-1555, TTY 711.



UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Designing homes that enable everyone to prosper..



Creating a welcoming environment where everyone can flourish.



Adapting your home to changes in lifestyle.



Enhancing simplicity of household chores.



Reducing common causes of household injuries.

The Benefits of Universal Design

Have you ever asked yourself how you can make changes in your home to make it possible to:

- Enjoy your home as you grow older?
- Return home if you have an injury or accident?
- Live comfortably if you have a disability?
- Invite your parents to live with you?
- Welcome all your friends over - including people who use wheelchairs, walkers or canes?

Universal Design features are virtually unnoticeable. They simply allow your home to be adapted for a lifetime of changing needs. Benefits of Universal Design include:

- **Marketability**
Your home will be more desirable to a larger group of potential home buyers in the future.
- **Flexibility**
Makes your home a welcoming environment for you, your neighbors, family members and friends regardless of age, individual preferences and abilities.
- **Aesthetics**
Adds to the beauty of your home while making it more useful to more people.
- **Functionality**
Your home will have a feeling of freedom where you are in control of your environment, rather than having your environment confine you.
- **Longevity**
Enables you to thrive as your living situation changes so you can stay in your own home as long as you want.
- **A Home for a Lifetime**
All of our living situations change as we progress through life, yet most designs don't allow for it. Only a Universally Designed home is truly a home for a lifetime!

How to Incorporate Universal Design Features into Your Home

EXTERIOR MODIFICATIONS

- No-step pathway from sidewalk or driveway (*no steeper than 1 inch high to 12 inches slope*)
- No-step entry
- Railings on steps and porches
- Illuminated doorbell
- Additional lighting
- Bench/shelf by door for packages
- Roof overhangs
- Landscaping for low maintenance and easy access

KITCHEN MODIFICATIONS

- Varying counter heights
- Lower wall cabinets
- Adjustable and pull-out shelving
- Front controls on appliances
- Single-lever faucets with anti-scald feature

BATHROOM MODIFICATIONS

- Non-slip flooring
- Sinks that accommodate persons in a seated position
- Hand-held shower fixture
- Shower seat
- Grab bars
- No-threshold shower
- Single-lever faucets with anti-scald feature

GENERAL MODIFICATIONS

- Lever door handles
- Swing-away hinges to widen doorways
- Flat paint to reduce glare
- Slip-resistant flooring
- Increased lighting
- Front-loading washer and dryer
- 32-Inch wide clearance through doorways (*minimum*)
- Wall switches and controls 44 inches above floor
- Electrical outlets 15 inches above floor
- Loop handles on cabinets and drawers
- Handrails on both sides of stairways

FUTURE MODIFICATIONS

If you are in the planning or building phase of your project, consider adding these Universal Design features to the above suggestions:

- First-floor bathroom with no-threshold shower
- First-floor bedroom, kitchen and entertainment area
- 48-inch wide stairways and hallways (minimum)
- Closet over closet for elevator at later date
- Bathroom walls reinforced for grab bar installation
- 60-inch diameter turning areas for wheelchairs in kitchen and bathroom
- 84-inch vertical garage door clearance