

Navigating a Move With a Disability

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Moving with a disability isn't impossible. But like any successful move, it takes a combination of planning, assistance, and care. Instead of letting your move overwhelm you, break it down into an organized list of steps and small tasks.

Moving can be strenuous for anyone and hiring help is never a bad idea. [Professional movers](#) can work with you to make sure you aren't in harms' way throughout the entirety of the process and can be there to help as much or as little as you'd like.

Furthermore, specific resources are available for people with disabilities when it comes to financial assistance for a move and ensuring the new living space is fully accessible. [MYMOVE](#) is here with a simple guide to help you discover those resources and learn what you can do to ensure a smooth move.

Make Sure Your New Home Is Accessible

First things first — before you begin packing up and moving from one home to another, you need to make sure your new living space is accessible and meets your needs.

Start with a home accessibility checklist

When it comes to accessibility, your home should make it easy for you to move around, use the bathroom, and go about your daily life. Assessing your home may feel overwhelming, but you can start with this dedicated [home accessibility checklist](#) to analyze your living space. It covers everything from ramps and slopes, parking, entryways and halls, bathrooms, bedrooms, and more. Depending on your disability, you may not need to make every single update on this checklist. But know that it's a good way to keep track of everything you should be thinking about for your new space.

Hire specialized professionals to make accessibility updates

If you need to make modifications in your new home, hire professionals who can complete the work successfully. Organizations or companies like the [UDS Foundation](#) can provide individual assessments, home evaluations, and help with construction and installation. You can also find independent contractors through services like [Home Advisor](#). Though these contractors may not work solely in accessibility improvements, you can provide your list of needs to see what they've had experience working on before.

Know your renters' rights

If you're moving into a rental, it's important to understand your rights surrounding the relationship with your landlord and what you're permitted to modify or update in your living space. According to the [Fair Housing Act](#), your landlord may not discriminate based on your disability or ask discriminatory questions surrounding it. If you feel like this could be a problem where you're moving, consider consulting with an attorney about your options.

Disabled tenants also have the right to request accommodations that are directly associated with their disability. This can include accommodations like living with a service animal or having a dedicated parking spot close by.

It's generally legal for tenants with disabilities to make modifications and updates to the rental unit to accommodate their needs. Common modifications include adding a wheelchair ramp or installing special handles on doors.

These modifications, however, must be approved by your landlord. If your landlord thinks the modifications will create an ["inappropriate living condition"](#) for the next tenant, you may be asked to remove the modifications when you move out. In order to get your proposed modifications approved, you may need to provide proof of your disability and a description of the changes.

Double-Check Your Insurance, State Services, and Other Forms of Disability Assistance

If you're moving to a different state, you may want to check with your insurance providers and other organizations to make sure you can retain the same disability services once you relocate.

Social Security

If you use Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income, there's no need to worry about what happens when you move. As long as you're moving within the United States, federal funding stays with you from state to state. You won't need to re-apply for social security, though you'll need to [notify the Social Security Administration](#) about your address change and new living arrangements.

Private insurance or state services

With private insurance, you'll need to call your insurance provider and let them know about your move and any changes to your living arrangements. You'll likely need to update your policy, though rates could vary depending on if you're working and where you'll be moving.

If you use state services for your disability, you'll need to reapply for them in your new state. This process should be similar to what you've gone through before, but you should double-check with your new state government to make sure you have all the proper paperwork you need to apply.

Financial Assistance for Moving With a Disability

If you're in need of financial assistance for your move, there are a variety of resources and grants you can apply for.

Here are some links to helpful financial resources:

- [Grants.gov](#) is a great place to start when searching for government grants. On the site, you can custom search for grants related to your disability. Keep in mind that the site adds new grants periodically. Make sure to check back even if you haven't found anything right away.
- [Elderly or Disabled Living](#) is a 501c3 registered charity that provides financial assistance for low-income seniors or people with disabilities. The application process is free and starts with a simple registration online.
- The [Administration for Children & Families](#) is another resource you can check for government financial assistance. The agency offers grants for families, children, individuals, and communities. Many of these grants can also be found on the [grants.gov](#) site, but the agency website has more information about specific government loans and resources.

7 Moving Tips to Help You Get Organized Before and After Moving Day

The more you plan and organize, the smoother your move will be. Creating a to-do list can help ease the stress of an otherwise busy time period. Try using our seven moving steps to make moving with a disability an easier process:

1. Create a moving checklist

Creating a moving checklist can help you track your tasks and ensure that you aren't missing anything. You can create a [personalized online checklist](#) when you sign up with MYMOVE!

2. Get rid of unnecessary clutter

Leading up to your move, [focus on decluttering](#) and getting rid of everything you don't need. Your move will go by even faster as long as you focus on the necessities. Getting rid of the excess will make your new home feel organized and refreshed.

3. Make a home inventory

Moving can be hectic no matter how much you prepare — and this is also magnified if there are movers coming in and out of your home. [Preparing a home inventory](#) helps you keep track of everything you own so you know exactly what's coming with you to your new place. It's especially important to create the inventory after you've decluttered so you can remember what you've gotten rid of and what should be in your new home.

4. Pack light

As you begin packing things into boxes, pay attention to the weight as you go. Even if you won't be the one picking up the boxes, it's usually easier for everyone to move faster with lighter boxes. If it's too light, the movers can always stack two boxes on top of each other. When it's too heavy, though, it will take longer to move and your box could break.

5. Prepare an essentials box

Once you get everything into your new home, settling and can feel even more hectic than the move. To minimize stress, pack an [essentials box](#) for your first week or so in the new home when everything still needs to be unpacked and organized. This should include basics like clothes, toiletries, books, and linens, but it also needs to include anything that will make you feel more comfortable.

Don't forget any medicines you may need, and make sure you have easy access to wheelchair accessories and anything else you're used to having on a daily basis.

6. Plan for a final walk-through with your movers

If you've hired movers or have people helping you, make sure you do a final walk-through before they head out. Make sure you can handle everything left after Moving Day. If the furniture isn't in the right places, you'll need the movers to help you put everything in the right spot. If you're unable to unpack, [movers can do that for you](#). Before they leave, just be sure everything has been unpacked properly and nothing's been forgotten.

7. Organize as you unpack

After the big move, unpack little by little so you don't get overwhelmed. Start with your essentials box, then keep going in order of importance. If you love to cook,

unpack your kitchen first. On the other hand, if you want to make your living room feel at home, start with your TV and entertainment center so you can relax.

Hire the Right Moving Company

Hiring a moving company is helpful for everyone, but can be a necessity if you're navigating a move with a disability. If you have loved ones helping you out, that's great. But professional movers are still the way to go in order to make the move as quick, safe, and efficient as possible.

But it's important to [find the right moving company](#) — one that has experience helping people with disabilities move. You should find a company that can move special equipment, such as wheelchairs, CPAP machines, lift chairs, and more. They'll provide extra care and can even help you put some equipment back together if it requires disassembly to move.

When you're looking to hire a moving company, do some research. Make sure they've worked with people with disabilities in the past. Ask them if they specialize in moving certain equipment. It could make the difference between a good and a great moving experience.

Questions for the moving company:

Before hiring a moving company, be sure to ask them:

- Have you helped a person with a disability move before?
- What types of equipment have you handled in a move?
- What are your cleanup procedures once the move is over?
- Will you bring extra ramps and protective gear for special equipment?
- Are the movers able to help unpack if needed? If so, is there an additional fee?
- Can the movers put together medical equipment?

You may not feel the need to ask all of these questions, but they can help give you an idea of the moving company's expertise in helping people with disabilities move.

The Bottom Line

Moving with a disability requires the same amount of planning and preparation as any other move. However, you do need to take a little extra care to make sure you're comfortable before, during, and after the move. To do so, make sure you get the help you need and have all your ducks in a row well ahead of your moving day.

Following MYMOVE's moving steps and [creating a custom checklist](#) is well worth it in the long run when you can finally relax in your new home.