

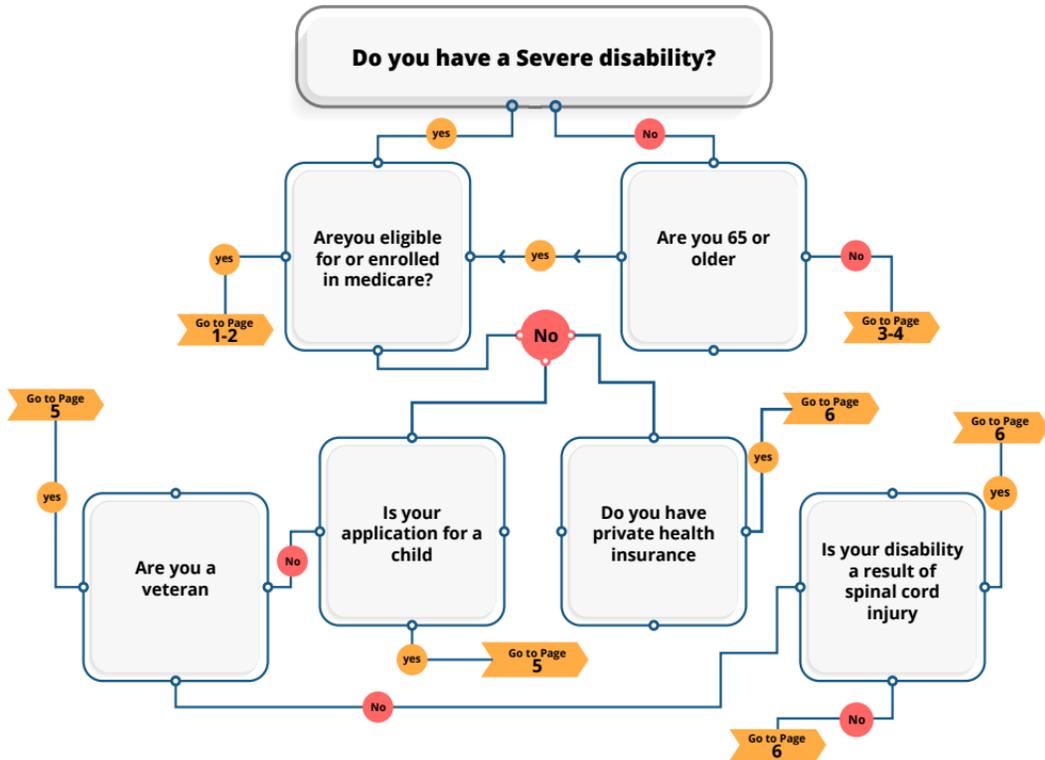


# Showerbuddy

## How to get funding in California

Guide to Medicare, Medi-Cal and other funding  
For residents of California

# Funding: A Quick Guide for Residents of California



# OVER 65'S AND PEOPLE WITH A SEVERE DISABILITY

Medicare provides assistance with Assistive Technology equipment like Showerbuddy to individuals 65 and older or those with a severe disability.

Medi-Cal and Medicare both provide health coverage for American citizens, but they do so in different ways for different demographics.

Medi-Cal (California's state-run and funded Medicaid program) provides assistance with Assistive Technology equipment like Showerbuddy to those people whose disability is not severe, with very low income, as well as pregnant women and the blind, among others.

**Coverage is not mutually exclusive:** individuals who are eligible for both programs may receive dual coverage.

If you are covered by Medicare, Showerbuddy chairs will require pre-approval. To get pre-approval your OT, PT or primary care physician will need to work with your local approved mobility equipment (DME) vendor to submit a Treatment Authorization Request (TAR) to your Medicare filed office or Managed Care Plan (if applicable).

**This TAR application is a critical step in the process of getting your equipment.**

**Your story** and description of **your problems** and how a Showerbuddy chair will **solve your problems** will help to get the funding approved.

# OVER 65'S AND PEOPLE WITH A SEVERE DISABILITY

The following steps will help you in this

## PROCESS:



*With the help of your OT or PT, write out your story*



## List out and detail your problems,

- *What stops you from achieving a better standard of living*
- *How would the equipment help you*
- *What would the chair allow you to do, would it provide you more independence etc.*

The better the TAR is presented the higher your chance of success. The completed TAR document must justify the "need" for the equipment to both Medicare and the DME vendor.

It is your responsibility to urge your OT or physician to be as specific as possible. For example, rather than the physician simply writing "shower chair," include necessary details such as "shower chair that transfers over the tub with reclining motion is medically necessary.

Be specific, set out the problems and how a Showerbuddy chair would make your life easier and safer by giving access to the bathroom again, allowing toileting and showering with less manual handling.

The physician will describe your medical needs and the DME Supplier will describe how a Showerbuddy will meet those needs but you should take responsibility for ensuring the forms are completed fully and to a high standard.

Once Medicare approves the request, the DME supplier bills Medicare. If Medicare agrees that the Showerbuddy equipment is necessary, they will cover what it considers to be a reasonable rate for the item.

If you do not have a preferred equipment supplier or your usual DME store is not an approved DME dealer then contact a Showerbuddy customer support representative, phone Toll-free: **(800)337-6660** or email [info@myshowerbuddy.com](mailto:info@myshowerbuddy.com) for advice on who to contact in your area.

If you have any issues getting approval, you can contact Disability Rights California. More information about the process is available here: <https://abilitytools.org/resources/what-is-tar.php>



# UNDER 65'S AND PEOPLE WITH A MILD DISABILITY

Medi-Cal (California's state-run and funded Medicaid program) provides assistance with Assistive Technology equipment like Showerbuddy to those people whose disability is not severe, those under 65 years, those with very low income, as well as pregnant women and the blind, among others.

Medi-Cal and Medicare both provide health coverage for American citizens, but they do so in different ways for different demographics.

**Coverage is not mutually exclusive:** individuals who are eligible for both programs may receive dual coverage.

If you are eligible for both Medi-Cal and Medicare, the process will be very similar. Here, the physician and approved DME supplier liaise to submit a Treatment Authorization Request (TAR). Once Medi-Cal approves the request, the DME supplier bills Medicare. If Medicare agrees that the Showerbuddy equipment is necessary, they will cover 80% of what it considers to be a reasonable rate for the item. Medi-Cal will then cover the difference between actual cost and what Medicare has covered. If Medicare rejects the bill, Medi-Cal will cover the entire cost of the Showerbuddy equipment.

To get pre-approval your OT, PT or primary care physician will need to work with your local approved mobility equipment (DME) vendor to submit a Treatment Authorization Request (TAR) to your Medi-Cal filed office or Managed Care Plan (if applicable).

**This TAR application is a critical step in the process of getting your equipment.**

*Your story* and description of *your problems* and how a Showerbuddy chair will *solve your problems* will help to get the funding approved.

# UNDER 65'S AND PEOPLE WITH A MILD DISABILITY

The following steps will help you in this

## PROCESS:



With the help of your OT or PT, write out your story



List out and detail your problems,

- What stops you from achieving a better standard of living
- How would the equipment help you
- What would the chair allow you to do, would it provide you more independence etc.

The better the TAR is presented the higher your chance of success. The completed TAR document must justify the "need" for the equipment to both Medi-Cal and the DME vendor.

It is your responsibility to urge your OT or physician to be as specific as possible. For example, rather than the physician simply writing "shower chair," include necessary details such as "shower chair that transfers over the tub with reclining motion is medically necessary.

Be specific, set out the problems and how a Showerbuddy chair would make your life easier and safer by giving access to the bathroom again, allowing toileting and showering with less manual handling.

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If you do not have a preferred equipment supplier or your usual DME store is not an approved DME dealer then contact a Showerbuddy customer support representative, phone Toll-free: (800)337-6660 or email [info@myshowerbuddy.com](mailto:info@myshowerbuddy.com) for advice on who to contact in your area.

Medi-Cal have **30 days** to either approve, decline or defer the request. The deferral would be caused by a lack of information, so when completing the original **Treatment Authorization Request** try to be as detailed as possible. If the **request is deferred**, Medi-Cal have a further 30 days to decide. Once the request has been approved, the **order can** be placed.

If you have any issues getting approval, you can contact Disability Rights California. More information about the process through Medi-Cal is available here: <https://abilitytools.org/resources/what-is-tar.php>

# CHILDREN

## *For children or primary caregivers applying on behalf of their children, there is additional help available*

- ✓ **California Children's Services** can provide funding for assistive tech for children under the age of 21. The eligibility for this funding is based on family income, and the funding cannot be accessed by those who are covered by Medi-Cal. In order to apply, you will need to complete a CCS application that can be found here <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/ccs/Pages/apply.aspx>
- ✓ **GrantWatch** also lists one-off grants for people living with disability. You can search grants which are aimed at your specific circumstances, including grants for caregivers or for children living with disability.
  - **GrantWatch ID#:** 157388. This grant provides funding for USA disabled children youth for mobility equipment, adaptations, and devices.
  - **GrantWatch ID#:** 188973. This grant is aimed at California families in eligible locations to benefit children with a chronic illness. Funding is intended to improve the quality of life for the child. Eligible expenses include, but are not limited to equipment, transportation, family counselling, etc.



## VETERANS

For veterans, funding for assistive technology is available through the California Department of Veterans Affairs. The California Department of Veterans Affairs can direct you to your local Assistive Technology Program, who will be able to coordinate access to equipment if it meets your needs. However, typically for this funding to be available, the injury which created the need for assistive technology must have occurred during the veteran's service or been aggravated by it.

**GrantWatch ID#** 165702 provides funding to USA military veterans and active-duty personnel who have been disabled during the course of their service for home alterations and adaptations.

# SPINAL CORD INJURY

If you have recently become disabled through spinal cord injury, the **Triumph Foundation** provides a “**Keep Moving Forward**” grant.

## TRYING OTHER GENERAL RESOURCES

If you are unable to have your Showerbuddy covered by insurance or if you are not insured, there are other funding sources available to you

- ✓ **The Department of Rehabilitation** can provide you with low interest loans for assistive tech – like a Showerbuddy. This is coordinated through the Freedom Tech program, and the loans range from \$500 to \$1500 and from 6 months to 15 years.
- ✓ **The Department of Developmental Services** is a funder of last resort for people who are unable to find any other funding for assistive tech. There are 21 regional centers in California and funding is available for all ages. To apply, you will need to write a letter to your regional center. In the letter you will need to explain why you need a Showerbuddy and why you haven't been able to get funding elsewhere.

## PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE

If you have private insurance contact your primary healthcare physician – whether this is your OT, PT, doctor or pediatrician – and discuss a prescription with them. Showerbuddy chairs are classified as Assistive Technology, and help people maintain good hygiene, independence, and support good mental health.

Your healthcare physician in conjunction with your local approved DME store will be able to assist with your insurance claim application and the best Showerbuddy model to suit your particular needs.

Consideration should also be given to what accessories you might need to prescribe in order to adapt and customize your chair to your requirements.

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*If you have any issues getting coverage for an assistive technology through your private insurance, you can contact Disability Rights California.*