



**SB 395**  
**March 8, 2016**

## **Senate Finance Committee Hearing**

### **United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan supports SB 395.**

Founded in 1949 by parents of children with disabilities, United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan (UCP MI) connects people with disabilities to the opportunities and resources needed to live productive and independent lives.

Since 2006, UCP MI has offered the Michigan Assistive Technology Loan Fund program. This program assists people with financial loans to purchase assistive technology (AT) devices and adaptations including home adaptations. AT helps people gain greater access to the world at large, increases independence and mobility, and enhances communication and job opportunities. Examples of items purchased through the AT loan fund include accessible home modifications, hearing aids, voice simulation systems, telecommunications equipment, environmental control units, computers, adapted recreational equipment, and modified vehicles.

Home modifications include exterior ramps to get in and out of the house; door way expansion to accommodate a wheelchair; counter height lowering for wheelchair users, bathroom fixture alterations to allow for getting into and out of the tub and many other personal changes to help people with disabilities. According to Homeadvisor.com the average homeowner spends between \$2,719 - \$11,086 for a remodel for disability accommodations. For some people affordable home modifications is the key to living in one's own home instead of a nursing home.

UCP MI has assisted hundreds of disabled individual through the AT loan program but people need additional financial help for disability home modifications. The proposed HB 395 tax credit would significantly assist people throughout MI to live successfully in their homes.

3496 Lake Lansing Rd., Ste 170  
East Lansing, MI 48823  
TEL 517.203.1200  
TEL 800.828.2714  
FAX 517.203.1203

[ucp@ucpmichigan.org](mailto:ucp@ucpmichigan.org)  
[www.ucpmichigan.org](http://www.ucpmichigan.org)

**KATHLEEN BROCKEL**  
*Executive Director*

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## Michigan Assistive Technology Loan Fund

The Michigan Assistive Technology Loan Fund helps people with disabilities, and their families, purchase assistive technology devices or services.

Assistive technology is an item, piece of equipment, or device that enables an individual with a disability to improve individual independence and quality of life.

Allowable equipment includes, but is not limited to:

- Voice simulation systems
- Braille equipment
- Telecommunications equipment
- Augmentative communications equipment
- Environmental control units
- Computers
- Adapted recreational equipment
- Accessible building modifications
- Modified vehicles



## Michigan Employment Loan Fund

The Michigan Employment Loan Fund provides loans for equipment and services to improve employment for people with disabilities.

Applicants are those interested in self-employment, those needing assistive devices to maintain, increase, or enhance employment, and those who require equipment to engage in telecommuting employment arrangements.

Employment Loan Funds Criteria:

- The applicant has a disability that is a barrier to employment
- Proposed work overcomes that barrier
- Work can be performed at proposed location
- Work location appropriate for proposed work
- Equipment purchased is necessary to make work possible at proposed location
- Loan increases employment opportunities



## How to Apply

People with disabilities qualify to apply for the Loan Funds programs. A disability is an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities including: seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, performing manual tasks, learning, caring for oneself, and working.

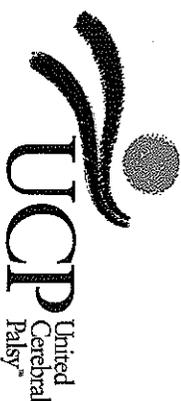
The Loan Fund program is a loan, not a grant, which means you will have to repay your loan in a timely fashion.

The actual monthly loan payment will depend on the total amount borrowed and the length of the loan.

To apply visit our website: [ucpmichigan.org](http://ucpmichigan.org), Assistive Technology tab.

Contact the Loan Fund Coordinator, Brenda Henige at:

Email: [henige@ucpmichigan.org](mailto:henige@ucpmichigan.org)  
Phone: 517-203-1200 Ext. 303  
Toll-free Phone: 800-828-2714 Ext. 303



of Michigan  
*Life without limits for people with disabilities\**

The Michigan Loan Funds is a program of UCP Michigan in partnership with Michigan Disability Rights Coalition and Option 1 Credit Union.

The MDRC AT Exchange is another option to obtain assistive technology devices.

The ATXchange is a place where people with disabilities, family members, friends and others can sell or donate used assistive technology devices. You can also list items you need.

<https://atxchange.org/welcome.aspx>



United Cerebral Palsy of Michigan  
3496 Lake Lansing Rd., Suite 170  
East Lansing, MI 48823

[www.ucpmichigan.org](http://www.ucpmichigan.org)

Email: [henige@ucpmichigan.org](mailto:henige@ucpmichigan.org)

Phone: 517-203-1200 Ext. 303

Toll-free Phone: 800-828-2714 Ext. 303

Fax: 517-203-1203

**SUPPORT UCP  
DONATE TODAY**



United Cerebral Palsy

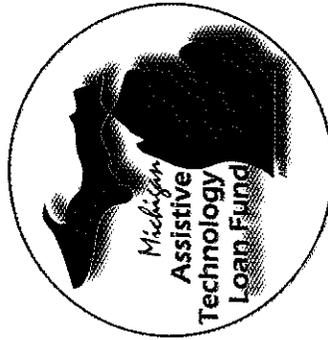
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Donation in honor of:
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**Assistive Technology  
Loan Programs**



**ucpmichigan.org**

## Disability Accommodation Cost Guides



Changing, remodeling or making additions to your home to accommodate people with disabilities can be done in a variety of different ways. If you are building a new home, you can ensure that it be single-level without door jambs to impede a wheelchair. If you are remodeling aspects of an existing home, you may need to do reconstruction or creative planning to make the changes. Disability accommodations can range in cost depending on the complexity of the changes. If you need to accommodate a wheelchair then you may choose to add ramps, stair lifts or an elevator. There are many ways to change your home or business to accommodate for disabilities including turning written signs into Braille or adding alerts to things like clocks and computers.

### Ramps

Adding ramps to provide wheelchair access can be as simple as securing a piece of plywood over steps to pouring a cement ramp. Before you attempt the simpler and cheaper version, find out what city codes, if any, apply to disability ramps outside your home or building. If your front steps are steep, you may need to build a ramp that switches back and forth from right to left to make the slope more gradual. [Continue Reading](#)

### Build a Disability Ramp Costs

MOST HOMEOWNERS SPENT BETWEEN:

**\$828 - \$2,261**

AVERAGE COST:

\$1,542

LOW COST:

\$400

HIGH COST:

\$3,820

## Select your Disability Accommodation project



### Build a Disability Ramp

(321 projects)

AVERAGE NATIONAL COST: \$1,542

[VIEW COSTS IN YOUR AREA >](#)



### Need help financing your project?

Get started now with low, fixed monthly payments.

[LEARN MORE >](#)



### Remodel for Disability Accommodation

(153 projects)

AVERAGE NATIONAL COST: \$5,055

[VIEW COSTS IN YOUR AREA >](#)



### Install an Elevator or Chairlift

(42 projects)

AVERAGE NATIONAL COST: \$5,679

[VIEW COSTS IN YOUR AREA >](#)



### Repair an Elevator or Stair Lift

(26 projects)

AVERAGE NATIONAL COST: \$245

[VIEW COSTS IN YOUR AREA >](#)



### Repair a Wheelchair Ramp

(12 projects)

AVERAGE NATIONAL COST: \$662

[VIEW COSTS IN YOUR AREA >](#)

# 2016 Disability Accommodation Costs | Price For Disability Accommodation Services

## Doorways

In older homes, doorways are not wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair, or the door jamb makes it impossible for a wheelchair to enter without outside assistance. In an existing home, you may need to widen doorways. Reconstruction of the doorway and hanging a door that is no longer going to fit a standard sized doorway will be expensive. If you're building a home from scratch, you can design the door to fit wheelchairs.

## Stairs and Elevators

In multi-level homes, stairs will always be an issue for wheelchairs, but they can be fitted with stair lifts. These lifts take a chair up a flight of stairs by using an electronic track. In most cases the lift is fitted with a chair so there would need to be one waiting at the top and bottom of the stairs for the person to use. A stair lift is reasonably economic, as most staircases can be fitted with these types of stair lifts. For a larger price and more major remodeling, some homes can have elevators installed. An elevator will require a major remodel of the layout of your home.

## Kitchen

For disabled people to reach things in base cabinets without problem, it's recommended there be spaces of 40 inches in between each, except in U-shaped kitchens, which should have 60 inches in between each. It's better if the cabinet faces can be removed. To adapt shelf cabinets, you can take a 30-inch section put on brackets so they can be adjusted to reach people of different heights. The same can be done with a counter. The bottom shelf of the pantry should be lowered to 48 inches above the floor.

You can also install U-shaped handles, lazy-susans, pull-out trays for storage, holders, two feet of heat-resistant countertop, and buy small electrical appliances.

## Bathroom

These usually have too narrow doors and no grab bars. Think about installing grab bars next to the toilet and in the bathtub so someone can up and down more easily. If the sink stands alone, install an L-bracket so it doesn't fall when leaned on for support. Put down a bath mat to avoid slipping and think about installing a hand-held shower head. You may also need to buy an elevated toilet seat, since usual toilet seats are too low to the ground to sit on.