

Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL)
Shared Living Program

Agency Portal User Manual
Variance Process for Accessibility Assessment
October 2024

Accessibility Assessments for individuals living in a shared living home are conducted on-site, as needed, by the DAIL Accessibility Contractor. The assessment is person-centered and promotes the individual's independence, and ensures the safety of the individual and any support staff.

Since the Accessibility Assessment is a person-centered assessment, and the Provider Agency may discuss alternative solutions with the Accessibility Contractor, a Variance should rarely be necessary.

In the rare occurrence that a home modification cannot be completed, or an alternative solution implemented, the Provider Agency may submit a request for a Variance through the DAIL Housing Portal. DAIL Quality Management staff will review each variance request and enter a decision into the DAIL Housing Portal. Each variance request must have the necessary documentation including a detailed rationale, and a signed letter of consent supporting the variance from the participant and guardian where applicable.

If additional time is required to make a home modification, a Variance for Additional Time **must** be requested through the DAIL Housing Portal within 45 days of the date the Accessibility Assessment information is entered into the DAIL Housing Portal by the contractor.

All Variances must be requested, and a decision made by DAIL, before a Follow-up Assessment is created and before the DAIL Contractor is contacted to schedule the Follow-up Assessment.

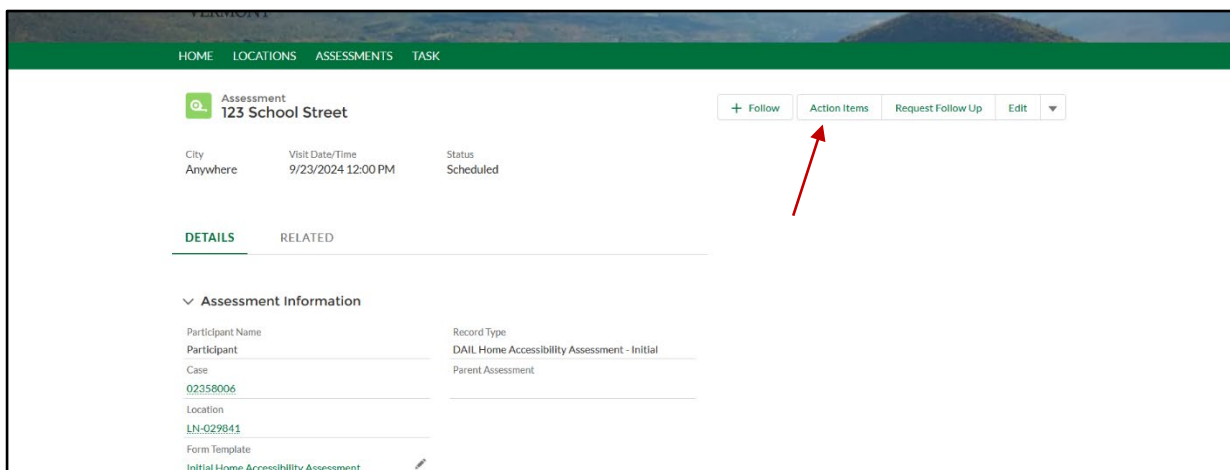
Request A Variance

The agency **must** first contact the Contractor to discuss alternative home modifications to meet the identified need. A Variance for an Accessibility Assessment can only be submitted if an alternative resolution cannot be agreed between the agency and the DAIL Accessibility Contractor.

View the Assessment Findings:

To view the items in which the DAIL Contractor has found a home modification is Required or Recommended

- Open the Accessibility Assessment;
- Click **Action Items** in the upper right;
- Click **All Required and Recommended Items** on the list on the left; All items requiring or recommending a home modification will be listed.
 - Click **All Recommended Items** for just the Recommended Items.
 - Click **All Required Items** for just the Required Items.
- **Close** to go back to the Assessment.
- Click the **Related** tab of the **Assessment** and click on the DAIL Contractor's report to view the details of the Assessment findings and information about the home modifications.



	Assessment Item Information	Result	Action Category	Result Resolution	Variance Notes	Observation Notes	Corrective Action Notes	Corrective Action Due Date	Feedback
All Required Items	AI-583394 2.2 Ramp has been installed at the home	Action Required	N/A	N/A					
All Recommended and Required Items	AI-583395 2.3 Ramp is installed in a location that is deemed appropriate by ensuring optimal accessibility within the home.	Action Required	N/A	N/A					
All No Action Taken Items	AI-583397 2.7 Handrails or guardrails are provided alongside the ramps to ensure additional	Action Required	N/A	N/A					

Request a Variance

A Variance can only be requested on an item that has a result of **Action Required**, and only after the agency has contacted the DAIL Accessibility Contractor and an alternative resolution cannot be found.

Note: Items with a result of **Action Recommended** are recommendations; therefore, a Variance would never be warranted for these items.

To Request a Variance:

- Open the Assessment, upload the required supporting documents in the **Related** tab of the **Initial** Assessment.
 - A document from the Participant and Guardian acknowledging they are aware and support the Variance request is being submitted, and they feel the Variance is in the best interest of the Participant and will not cause a safety risk.
 - A document that has a short explanation about the discussion with the DAIL Accessibility contractor and why a resolution could not be found. This document **must** be included before DAIL will review a Variance.
 - A Variance request for Additional Time **must** include a documented safety plan about how the Participant will remain safe in the home while the modification is being implemented.

- Click back on the **Action items** (see above).
 - A **Variance Note** must be added for each Assessment Item in which a Variance is being requested. This information will assist DAIL when reviewing the request.
 - There is a limit of 255 characters for the **Variance Notes**. If a separate document was uploaded for the Variance Note, write “See attached Note” in the **Variance Notes** field.
 - (All documentation **MUST** be uploaded, and the Variance Notes **MUST** be entered before this step is taken.) Change the **Result Resolution** to **Request Variance** for each item in which a Variance is being requested.
 - Click **Save**. A system generated message will be sent to DAIL notifying them of the Variance request.

A Variance request locks the Assessment until a decision has been made; All Variance requests must have a decision by DAIL before the Provider Agency can take any further action on the Assessment in the Portal.

	Assessment Item Information	Result	Action Category	Result Resolution	Variance Notes	Observation Notes	Corrective Action Notes	Corrective Action Due Date	Feedback
Section 2 - Ramps									
Section 8 - Bathroom									
All Required Items	AI-583394 2.2 Ramp has been installed at the home	Action Required	N/A	N/A					
All Recommended Items	AI-583395 2.3 Ramp is installed in a location that is deemed appropriate for ensuring optimal accessibility within the home	Action Required	N/A	N/A					
All Recommended and Required Items									
All No Action Taken Items									
All Variance Items	AI-583397 2.7 Handrails or guardrails are provided alongside the ramps to ensure additional safety and support	Action Required	N/A	N/A					
All Home Modification Items	AI-583447 8.11 Safety features or equipment in the shower are in place to ensure safety and minimize the risk of falls or injuries, such as a transfer bench or grab bars	Action Required	N/A	Request Variance	(Variance notes added here by agency)				

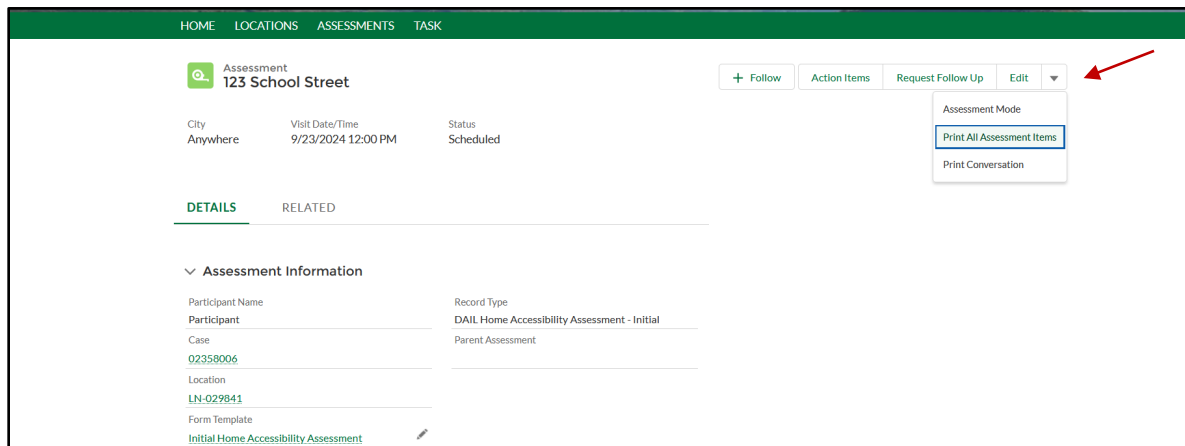
Review Variance Decision

When the Variance is Saved by the agency, DAIL will receive a system generated e-mail notification about the Variance request, and the DAIL Quality Management reviewer will review all the Variance information. DAIL will enter a decision on the Variance in the Portal, and the agency will receive a system generated e-mail of the Variance decision.

To Review the Variance Decision

Click the Link to the Assessment that is included in the e-mail notification about the Variance decision, or do the following:

- If the Variance was **Rejected** (Denied):
 - Open the Assessment,
 - Click on **Action Items** (as explained above),
 - Click **All Required Items** on the list on the left to view the decision(s) by the DAIL Quality Management reviewer, and take the necessary action to bring the item into compliance.
- If the Variance is **Approved**, the item will no longer show in the Action Items. To view the Variance information:
 - Click the chevron (or carrot) on the upper right corner
 - **Print All Assessment Items.**
- If the DAIL reviewer is requesting additional information, they will request **Variance Feedback**:
 - Follow the same steps as a Variance Denial to view the Variance Feedback from DAIL Quality Management Team, or go to Print All Assessment Items.



Variance Decision

Variances must be Approved or the home modification completed *before* a Follow-up Assessment is created in the DAIL Housing Portal and *before* contacting the DAIL Contractor to schedule the Follow-up Assessment.

There may be a combination of Variance decisions:

- Rejection (Denial),
- Approval, or
- Feedback Provided (*It is important to read the Variance Notes that are entered by the DAIL Quality Management reviewer.*)

Variance Approval

- If all of the Variance requests are approved, but there are other **Action Required** items or home modifications being made on Recommended Items, the Provider Agency will need to work with the Shared Living Provider to ensure all other home modifications have been completed then follow the steps to request a Follow-up Assessment.
- If all of the Variance requests are approved and there are **no other** home modifications required or home modifications made on Recommended Items, a Follow-up Assessment does **not** need to be created. The DAIL Quality Management Team will approve the Assessment. The agency will receive a system generated notification that the Assessment has been Approved.
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Variance Denial

If a Variance is Denied, the item will continue to show as an **Action Required** Item. The Required home modifications, and any recommended items in which home modifications are being made, will need to be completed within the required timeframe. Then follow the steps to request a Follow-up inspection.

Feedback Provided

- If DAIL needs additional information for a Variance request, they will enter a note into the Variance request and indicate **Feedback Provided**.
 - The Provider Agency will need to upload the requested documentation into the Housing Portal, in the **Related** Tab of the *Initial* Assessment.
 - Reopen the Assessment and (re)request the Variance using the same steps as **Request a Variance**, being sure to address the reviewer's questions in **Feedback**.

Variance for Additional Time

A Variance for Additional Time **must** be requested through the DAIL Housing Portal within 45 days of the date the Accessibility Assessment information is entered into the DAIL Housing Portal by the contractor.

- A Variance Feedback note will be added in DAIL's response to the Variance for Additional time, which will include if the Additional Time is approved or denied.
- If the Additional Time is *approved*, DAIL will indicate the request is approved as well as the completion date in which the modification is to be completed. The Provider Agency must work with the Shared Living Provider to correct this item within the required timeframe. The agency must contact DAIL to discuss the Follow-up Process.

All Variance requests must have a decision by DAIL before a Follow-up Assessment can be created in the Portal and a Follow-up inspection is scheduled with the DAIL Contractor.