

# NATIONAL MOBILITY EQUIPMENT DEALERS ASSOCIATION

## MANUFACTURER QAP RULES (MQAP)

QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM RULES



**QAP-104**  
**2023A EDITION**  
[Effective July 1, 2023]



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## **I. Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of the Manufacturer Quality Assurance Program (MQAP) is to ensure that products manufactured and distributed by NMEDA Manufacturer members in North America meet or exceed customer needs as well as applicable industry and government safety standards. It is based on the principle that in order to satisfy customers consistently, companies must have a systematic and documented approach to quality. The program was developed to elevate the level of manufacturer performance to reliably meet consumers' personal transportation needs in the safest manner possible. MQAP is an accreditation open to all mobility vehicle converters and automotive adaptive equipment (ie. component) manufacturers including NMEDA members and non-members.

### **MQAP Requirements Summary**

All NMEDA Manufacturers shall participate in the MQAP and are held to extremely high standards for consumer safety and product quality. They are required to:

- Submit applicable federal safety standard compliance data (F/CMVSS) to NMEDA's Compliance Review Program (CRP) as requested
- Maintain liability insurance to protect the consumer, installer, and manufacturer
- Provide 24-hour service for all products sold
- Provide detailed operating instructions
- Have a documented certification training program
- Provide minimum 1-year warranty on all products
- Have an established service/dealer network
- Assign a MQAP primary contact for all communications
- Undergo an annual audit from third-party firm to verify compliance to rules



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**II. Definitions and Acronyms**

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| AAE        | Automotive Adaptive Equipment (Components)  |
| ADA        | Americans with disabilities act   |
| CARB       | California Air Resources Board  |
| Component  | Any automotive adaptive equipment (AAE), mobility equipment, or mobility products that are routinely installed in vehicles to allow people with disabilities to enter, exit, and or operate a motor vehicle, and includes products such as lifts, driving controls, securement devices, seating, and more |
| CRP        | Compliance Review Program   |
| DSP        | Designated Seating Positions  |
| F/CMVSS    | Federal/Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Standards   |
| FSM        | Final Stage Manufacturer  |
| GAWR       | Gross Axle Weight Rating  |
| GVWR       | Gross Vehicle Weight Rating   |
| ISM        | Intermediate Stage Manufacturer   |
| MFG        | Manufacturer  |
| MY         | Model Year  |
| NHTSA      | National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  |
| OEM        | Original Equipment Manufacturer   |
| Product(s) | The output from the manufacturer's process, means both components and vehicle conversions   |
| QAP        | Quality Assurance Program   |
| TC         | Transport Canada  |



### III. Program Participation

The Manufacturer Quality Assurance Program (MQAP) accreditation is open to all manufacturers who perform vehicle conversions or manufacture mobility equipment (or components) regardless of if the manufacturer is or is not a NMEDA member.

**NMEDA Manufacturer Member:** Participation in the MQAP is required for all NMEDA manufacturer members.

**Non-Member:** Any mobility equipment manufacturer or vehicle converter may attain MQAP accreditation by contacting NMEDA and following the accreditation process.

### IV. Categories of MQAP Accreditation

The MQAP accreditation categories are established based on the type(s) of products that are produced. MQAP manufacturers can earn accreditation in any or all the following categories:

#### **Type 1 – Vehicle Manufacturer:**

A manufacturer who produces adaptive mobility vehicles, including:

- Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM)
- Intermediate Stage Manufacturers (ISM)
- Alterers
- Final Stage Manufacturers (FSM)

#### **Type 2 - Component Manufacturer:**

A manufacturer who produces adaptive mobility equipment, including, but not limited to:

- Seating systems
- Lifts and Ramps
- Hitches
- Securement systems
- Primary and Secondary controls
- Any other equipment installed in adaptive mobility vehicles



**V. NMEDA MQAP Manufacturer Accreditation Process**

- A.** Complete NMEDA Manufacturer member, or MQAP Non-Member Application.
- B.** Forward required documentation to NMEDA:

For documents, electronic versions are preferred (PDF).

1. Completed Application (original).
2. Insurance Certificate (copy).
3. Operation Instructions or Owner's Manual for all vehicles/products manufactured (copy or link to digital copy).
4. Manufacturer's certification training program (document or outline).
5. Sample copies showing all types of labels being applied \*\*applies to vehicle manufacturers only.
6. Service Network listing and terms and conditions.
7. First year's dues payment.
8. First year's audit fee.
9. Compliance package as required by CRP (contact NMEDA for what compliance requirements are applicable, if any)
10. Statement of certification (self-certification) to all applicable federal safety standards for all components where a CRP compliance package was not requested or submitted. This statement will reflect all applicable standards as promulgated by NMEDA at the time of submission.

**C. Acceptance:**

NMEDA will issue an accreditation certificate once all required elements are received and approved. If there are compliance items required by CRP, all CRP items must be satisfied. If there are any missing documents, the NMEDA membership coordinator will provide written notice within ten (10) calendar days to the applicant. The applicant will have thirty (30) calendar days to provide the missing elements or a plan on when the missing elements will be provided.

**D. Renewal:**

Accreditation is renewed annually on the member or non-member's anniversary.



Annual membership or non-member dues are required to be paid in accordance with the NMEDA Bylaws in order to maintain good standing status.

## **VI. Program Requirements**

### **A. Compliance Review Program (CRP)**

Participation in the NMEDA CRP is required for all manufacturers. The level of participation and the details of any data or compliance documents to be submitted will be determined by the CRP.

### **B. Compliance Data**

#### **B1. Vehicle Conversions**

A compliance data package compiled in accordance with the “MQAP Compliance Data for Vehicle Conversions” form (CRP-F02) shall be submitted to the CRP for all applicable vehicle conversions sold. All applicable conversions must be reviewed and accepted by CRP prior to the first sale date. When the OEM releases a new model year of a given platform, the conversion company must complete and submit the “Vehicle Model Year Update” form (CRP-F08) for all conversions they intend to continue to sell and state if there are any design changes that affect compliance and/or require additional testing.

#### **B2. Components**

Unless requested by the CRP, there is no compliance data requirement for components that are not federally regulated or that do not have any other standards that apply other than what is stated by the manufacturer. For all components that are federally regulated, and when a compliance data package is not requested by the CRP, the manufacturer shall provide a statement of self-certification. This certification statement shall list each component and all applicable standards that apply and be signed by an authorized agent of the company, preferably on company letterhead. All applicable regulations and standards promulgated by NMEDA CRP shall be listed in the statement.

### **C. Installation Instructions (Components)**

The component manufacturer, as required, shall provide installation instructions in sufficient detail showing how their product is installed. The instructions shall contain any safety warnings and/or important aspects of installation to the installer. When specific tools or measurement devices are required such as torque wrenches or multi-meters, the instruction shall include the quantitative measurement value including the



level of precision and tolerance as required for proper installation. The use of industry standard specifications or tolerance charts for fasteners and the like are acceptable if they are referenced in the instruction. If the installation is not universal to all make/model vehicles; the instructions shall be detailed sufficiently to be specific to the vehicle they are compatible to be installed into including, as relevant, make, model, and model years to which the instructions apply. The instructions shall include any critical to quality (CTQ) post-installation inspections or inspection steps recommended by the manufacturer to verify proper installation. These instructions can be in paper or digital format, including web-based.

#### **D. Operating Instructions**

The manufacturer shall provide operating instructions showing how the product is operated and detailing any warnings and/or important aspects of operation to the dealer or consumer. This can be part of owner's manual or stand alone.

#### **E. Insurance**

Manufacturers shall have, as a minimum, liability insurance to cover the manufacturer, installer, and the consumer. Verification of insurance coverage shall be provided upon request.

#### **F. Labeling**

Completed products shall be labeled for compliance to all applicable federal, state, and industry standards including Federal and Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (F/CMVSS), when applicable.

#### **G. Weight Compliance (Vehicles only)**

Completed vehicles shall not exceed OEM weight ratings including GVWR and GAWR (front and rear). The available load carrying capacity shall allow for a minimum of 150 lbs. (68 kg) per designated seating position (DSP).

#### **H. Certification Training**

The manufacturer shall have a documented training program that provides certification training to the installation/service technicians. The certification training shall be made available to and delivered to all dealers and/or service providers. There shall be pass/fail criteria established in the training program, and a 'certificate of completion' or letter of certification shall be provided to candidates who have successfully completed the training. The training certificate or certification letter shall include an expiration date





or state that there is no expiration date. The manufacturer shall maintain a list of the names of all current trainees.

## I. Service Network

To ensure the vehicle/component purchased is serviced and maintained as necessary by qualified technicians, the manufacturer shall have a service network capable of responding to the end user within a twenty-four (24) hour period. When working with NMEDA QAP dealers, the service will be performed or supervised by a certified technician. If a certified technician from a QAP dealer is not readily available, an independent, appropriately certified automotive technician in good standing [such as ASE] may be trained and the servicing instructions will be provided as directed by the product manufacturer. The dealer or service network shall be documented and include the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all qualified service providers, as well as the process steps necessary to provide support to the service provider. The terms and conditions of the service arrangement shall be described in the vehicle/component delivery documents.

**NOTE: NMEDA strongly recommends working only with QAP accredited dealers. QAP dealers are required to have ADA compliant facilities, have NMEDA certified technicians, use only calibrated tools and perform weight assessment to assure compliance with federal safety standards. QAP dealers also bring a wealth of industry knowledge and experience not always found with standard automotive repair shops. QAP dealers should always be your first choice when available.**

## J. Warranty

Manufacturer must provide minimum one (1) year warranty for all products sold.

## K. New vehicle conversions applied to used vehicles

For purposes of this section, the term “conversion” means a structural modification to a vehicle to make it accessible for people with disabilities. All NMEDA members or companies that have conversions posted on the NMEDA website and who apply new conversions to used vehicles shall have a documented screening process in place for used vehicles that is approved by NMEDA that meets the minimum requirements of this section. Used vehicles (titled to end user) eligible for conversion should be in a ‘like-new’ condition or in the same condition and configuration as were the test vehicles used for certification and they shall be screened for the minimum requirements criteria before a new conversion is applied. This requirement applies to all new vehicle conversions (including conversion kits) installed by vehicle modifiers on used vehicles. Note that if a conversion company or kit manufacturer has more stringent requirements



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or criteria for used vehicle screening than are stated in this section, the more stringent shall apply.

The minimum requirements for a used vehicle are:

- K1. No more than 70,000 miles
- K2. No greater than 5 years old
- K3. No after-market modifications that would impact FMVSS
- K4. All systems/equipment fully functional with no warning lights illuminated
- K5. No mechanical or equipment defects
- K6. No prior collision work to the frame or any structural damage reported
- K7. Good cosmetic condition (free of penetrated rust or corrosion)
- K8. No major accidents reported including any with airbag deployment
- K9. Clean title with no salvage, junk, flood, rebuilt, or scrap declarations
- K10. No open safety recalls that have not been performed

A documented used vehicle inspection report showing compliance to the listed items, the VIN number, and any other pertinent vehicle information shall be retained on file for at least seven (7) years with the conversion company and made available to NMEDA upon request.

All conversions applied to used vehicles are done as a vehicle modifier. That means that the person or company installing the conversion cannot knowingly make inoperative any applicable federal motor vehicle safety standard (FMVSS). Alterer (certification) labels shall not be applied to used vehicles.

#### **L. Replacement Parts Availability**

Manufacturers shall publish in their end user's documentation their corporate policy for replacement parts or functional performance equivalent parts availability. It shall clearly state the length of time these parts are expected to be available after the warranty period. Within commercial reason, manufacturers shall maintain sufficient stock or have the means to fulfill the replacement parts requests for a minimum of 10 years on modified vehicles and a minimum of 5 years for components or "non-structural adaptive equipment" after the item is put into use or documented end of life (EOL) timeframe. Any safety related component shall have a replacement availability that matches the Original Vehicle Manufacturer's equipment it replaces. [Examples include occupant restraints, door latches, steering systems, seating systems, lifts, etc.]



## **M. MQAP Contact**

A MQAP Contact shall be assigned for each accredited location. The MQAP Contact shall be the main point of contact within the organization that all MQAP relevant information flows through (from NMEDA, audit firm, etc.). The MQAP Contact's name, phone number, and email address shall be provided to NMEDA and listed in the accredited location's [NMEDA member portal](#). It is the accredited location's responsibility to assure the NMEDA member portal information is accurate and up to date.

The MQAP Contact has the responsibility to receive inbound information and disseminate the information, as appropriate, to the accredited location's internal workforce. The MQAP Contact will be the point of contact for audit scheduling, corrective actions, email notifications, and any other pertinent information. The MQAP Contact shall host or be available during all audits. NMEDA shall be notified immediately if there is any change to the MQAP Contact.

The accredited location may opt to assign a Secondary MQAP Contact in the NMEDA member portal. The Secondary is a backup to the Primary and is copied on, but not responsible for, all correspondence and actions. Assigning a Secondary is not a requirement.

## **N. Annual Third-Party Audit**

All MQAP accredited locations are audited annually by the audit firm. The audit process and method are determined in a manner that will sufficiently assess adherence to the MQAP program Rules and Guidelines.

At the completion of the audit, the audit results are sent to NMEDA headquarters for final review and disposition. A copy of the audit report is put into the accredited location's MQAP file. The location's MQAP Contact will be advised by NMEDA of any discrepancies or findings in their audit report and notified of any corrective actions that are required to be completed to maintain MQAP accreditation when necessary.

## **VII. Best Practices**

- Quality system – it is expected that the manufacturer is producing under a controlled environment with repeatable processes that result in conforming product focused on satisfying the needs of the customer.
- Safety Defect Recall – the manufacturer is expected to have a process in place to be able to recall manufactured and/or delivered vehicles or equipment.



## **VIII. Web Postings**

NMEDA maintains a location on its website for MQAP accredited members. The purpose of the listing is to provide a single-point location for consumers and providers to verify MQAP accreditation and product compliance. All vehicle conversions are posted as “accepted” or “under-review” under the “Safety Reviewed Vehicles” section of the website. All components are not posted. Only components (and their associated company) are posted under the “Safety Reviewed Components” section of the website when voluntarily submitted and approved by the CRP.

## **IX. Non-Compliance**

A manufacturer who has been found in non-compliance for any of the following reasons may have their accreditation status changed from “good standing” to “suspended”:

- Failure to meet any of the MQAP Program Requirements
- Failure to pay annual dues within sixty (60) days of due date

Manufacturers found in non-compliance (other than non-payment of annual dues which results in automatic suspension) will be notified by the QAP Coordinator and will have no more than thirty (30) days to provide objective evidence that the non-compliance has been resolved.

If after thirty (30) days the non-compliance remains unresolved the manufacturer’s status will be changed to “suspended” and the manufacturer will no longer be allowed to promote or display the QAP or MQAP logo on any vehicle/product or in any form of media, including but not limited to: literature, documents, websites, and/or social media.

Manufacturers may be reinstated to ‘good standing’ when they have satisfied all required corrective actions.