



# What is a Guardian?

A guardian serves as a trained, traveling companion to our Honor Flight participants. Many guardians are friends, children, or grandchildren of the veterans, but others are citizens who give of their time, spirit, and funds to spend a day in living history. Guardians are responsible for providing safety, comfort and friendship for veterans who range in age from their late '60s to occasionally even older than 100.

Guardians are essential to the success of every Honor Flight. Without these patriotic Americans, we would not be able to carry out the dreams of so many veterans, enabling them to see the memorials built in their honor. Through a nearly 18-hour day, guardians will be asked to treat these heroes as if they are family and ensure that every veteran has a safe, memorable, and rewarding experience.

All guardians **MUST** attend a guardian training session prior to flight day. During this training, we will cover safety and health concerns and just as importantly, how to ensure that each veteran has the best possible experience. Every aspect, potential scenarios and details of flight day will be discussed.

Priority is given to family members and friends of veterans to be part of our guardian team, as long as they meet the stated requirements. Spouses, significant others, fiancées, or partners are **NOT** allowed to travel as guardians (on the same flight as the veteran). When filling out a guardian application, it is important that you indicate the veteran you wish to accompany. After family members, priority is given to active-duty personnel and guardians who have previously flown.

In order to ensure the safety of all on the flight, Guardians are selected based on a number of factors, and must be able to meet the single seating requirements of the airline. Available spots are filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Each veteran is only allowed one guardian.

## **Some guardian requirements:**

- Must be at least 18 years old and no older than 72.
- Must be able to push the veteran in a wheelchair (we call them an Honor Chair) who may oftentimes weigh more than yourself, throughout the day.
- A guardian must be in general good health themselves, able to walk long distances without any issues. Also, assisting, **NOT LIFTING**, veterans in or out of the Honor Chairs, or up and down a few stairs.
- Pay a guardian fee of \$400 (for round-trip airfare, luxury buses, meals, police escort, and an experience you will long remember).
- Attend a three-hour mandatory guardian training session. At guardian training, you will receive the name of your veteran, and yours and your veteran's flight gear. Conference call training sessions are offered only for guardians who live out of state or three hours or more from the training site.

APPLY HERE: <https://www.honorflightsouthflorida.org/guardians/>