



Guardian Roles & Responsibilities:

The Guardian Roles and Responsibilities are listed below. This list is not all encompassing; you may be asked to assist the Vet or flight staff in some other way not listed. Villages Honor Flight strives to provide a safe, enjoyable experience for all of the Vets. The work done by the Guardians is key to this success. There is one mandatory Pre-Flight meeting for Veterans and Guardians where the Vet/Guardian team will be introduced and training for flight day will occur. Guardians will also be required to attend a Guardian-specific meeting with their Squad Leader prior to the mandatory Preflight session.

- I understand my first responsibility as a Guardian is to my Vet. I will ensure that my Vet is never out of sight except when specific arrangements have been made with another Guardian or staff member. I will treat my Vet with respect and maintain his/her dignity at all times.
- I understand that I am not a sightseer and will never act as if I am. I will do everything reasonable to ensure that my Vet has a safe and enjoyable experience. This trip is all about the Vet and not about me.
- I understand that the logistics of a Mission require that VHF has rules and a chain of command and I agree to follow both. The rules and chain of command are described during training sessions at preflight meetings. I understand that Guardians who do not follow the rules and are considered to be disruptive will be warned and possibly dismissed and not allowed to continue as a member of the Mission.
- I understand that the Mission will not be successful and the Vets will not have the best possible experience unless everyone pulls together, shows appropriate respect and actively works to make the Mission a success. Basic courtesy and respect must be shown at all times to everyone. If a staff member asks for your help then you must make every effort to comply without compromising the safety of your Vet.
- I understand that I must participate in early assessment of Vet's cognizant, and memory abilities during pre-flight meetings, phone calls, and socials. I will ask the Vet's significant other, and/ or family members to get more information about confusion, and increased agitation, especially in the evenings. I will report all findings to my Squad Leader who will pass them along to Medical.
- I understand that most communication with me will initially be done by email. I agree to check email daily and respond as requested from the time I am assigned to a Mission until after the flight.
- I understand that I will be asked to help with transportation for my Vet for preflight meetings, squad luncheons and flight day. This may involve personally transporting the Vet, or making arrangements for that to happen.
- I understand that I will take pictures for my Veteran and provide him/her an appropriate collection of photos in a timely fashion after the flight.
- I understand that during the flight, cell phones and tablets are only to be used for communicating with the Vet when hearing problems prevent oral communications, having the Vet communicate with his family, taking pictures for the Vet or emergency calls and are

not to be used to peruse personal interests of the Guardian, e.g., checking the internet, check email, phone calls etc.

- I understand that wheelchair safety and operation are my responsibility and I will offer my Vet a wheelchair every time we get off the bus.
- I understand that my Vet may have mobility issues or other health needs and that it is my responsibility to attend to his/her needs as best as I can and to report any unresolved problems to the Medical staff ASAP. I understand that as the day goes on, Vets may become forgetful, or extremely tired. Memory or mental status issues must be addressed to Medical immediately.
- I understand dehydration can be a serious issue for a Vet and many will avoid drinking liquids out of concern about being able to find a restroom in a timely manner. It is critical that I monitor the liquid intake of my Vet and any indication of dehydration be passed on to the Medical staff.
- I understand I must have a grip on my Vet's arm, or will **always** be near enough to steady a stumble, if necessary. I understand my Vet's safety is my most important task for the day. Although some Vets are very mobile, they are all increasingly tired as the day goes by, and most are unsteady, to some degree. Even if they insist, "I am Fine", I will tell them, with a smile, "**this is my job**". I understand I am responsible for my Vet and will be very attentive every minute we are moving.
- I understand I will always carry **ALL** belongings for my Vet **at all times**. I understand that trying to hold onto water bottles, jackets, lunches, etc. while maneuvering steps, or curbs and sidewalks, is very dangerous for someone who is a bit off balance, or tired. I understand a backpack is necessary to keep my hands free to assist my Vet.
- I understand I will know what medications my Vet takes and will be responsible for alerting the Vet to take them during flight day at the appropriate time.
- I understand that if there is an accident or an emergency, I will call 911 first and then I will contact Medical.
- I understand that my performance as a Guardian will be assessed after the flight and if unsatisfactory I will not be considered for future Missions.

I understand that successful management of restroom breaks are key to a pleasant day for the Vet and agree to follow the Restroom Responsibilities listed below.

RESTROOM RESPONSIBILITIES

- Guardians must make every effort to determine if the Vet has issues that require help in the restroom. This is a difficult conversation, but necessary for the dignity of the Vet and enjoyment of his/her flight day. Acknowledge the difficulty, but forge ahead. "Dignity" and "comfort" are good talking points in the conversation. A conversation with the family, or significant other can help. Sometimes the Vet is open about this subject, however, don't count on it. All findings must be reported to Staff/ Medical. An adequate supply of Depends or pads from the Vets home will be carried by the Guardian for the day, along with another pair of pants, and socks, and wipes in case of an accident. Keep the Depends or pads and wipes in a separate smaller bag/pack inside your back pack to allow discretion for Vet.
- Guardians must be willing to go into the restroom with the Vet to assist as necessary. Family Restrooms offer privacy for helping your Vet. Opposite sex Guardians must arrange for their Vet to be escorted to the restroom by another Guardian or Staff member.
- Restroom issues such as incontinence of urine or feces must be addressed by Medical immediately.
- Insist on frequent restroom stops with your Vet.. say "let's go"...and head into the restroom. They will rarely question the authority in your voice. Attempt to take your Vet to the restroom.

at every stop. Be suspicious of a developing problem if your Vet skips all restroom stops. Some Vets think they'll wear the same Depends all day. Don't allow this...You are responsible, so take charge.

GUARDIAN PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

The physical requirements for the Guardians are listed below. You must be able to meet these requirements. Any Guardian over the age of 71 will be asked to obtain a Fit to Fly declaration from your doctor. The Fit to Fly form will be provided to any Guardian applicant over the age of 71.

- Be awake and moving for close to 24 hours.
- Be walking close to 5 miles throughout the course of the day.
- Be assisting your Veteran in all of the day's activities and may be required to assist him/her in the restroom.
- Be climbing up and down bus stairs many times during the day and assisting your Vet doing the same.
- Might be asked to help load and unload wheelchairs from the luggage area on the bus.
- Be pushing a wheel chair with an estimated 175 lb. (or more) Veteran in it for portions of the day on both flat and inclined surfaces; the walking trip around the National Mall is approximately 2 miles and you might be pushing a wheel chair the entire time.
- Be traveling by plane and bus for extended times in close quarters.

I have read all three pages of the Guardian Roles and Responsibilities, understand what is expected of me, and agree to abide by them.

(Please use the link below to submit your digital signature in acceptance of the terms.)

<https://form.jotform.com/VHFforms/GuardAcceptRR>

[Please note: some browser security settings inhibit this link from working properly. If the link does not work for you, please copy and paste the link text into your browser address bar and hit Enter.]