

General Information

Freedom's Wings Canada is a charitable organization that provides inspirational glider flights to members of the disabled community at no cost to the participant or the visiting agency.

Freedom's Wings Canada is a strategic-alliance between local gliding/soaring clubs across Canada, their volunteer members and the registered charity Youth Flight Canada Education Fund that operates Freedom's Wings.

Flight Information

Flights for your disabled clients are free of charge. Staff and volunteers of your agency who accompany the participants may be offered flights at a reduced cost at most of the Freedom's Wings Chapters.

A flight lasts generally from 15-30 minutes and depends on the weather conditions. The gliders hold only two people, sitting one behind the other, with the pilot usually in the back seat to give a nicer view for the passenger. Most of our pilots are also instructors and may allow the passenger to handle the controls, if the passenger so wishes. The pilot can adjust the "thrill level" of the flight according to the wishes of the passenger, from very gentle to "extreme roller-coaster". We normally see very large smiles after the flights.

Freedom's Wings Chapters vary by location as to the number of participants they are able to fly in one day. Typically groups range in size from 6 to 12 flying visitors exclusive of caregivers and assistants. Frequently larger groups will be invited to book more than one day for flights. Most clubs are very busy with club member flights on weekends and welcome Freedom's Wings larger groups only during weekdays when club volunteers and aircraft are more readily available. To ensure sufficient number of pilots and ground-crew volunteers are available it is necessary to book your group in advance by contacting the club in your location. (Contact Us)

Gliding is very weather-dependent. We do not fly in high winds, rain or when storms are impending. You should contact the local Chapter two days in advance to check the weather forecast and then – if you have your own transportation -- confirm the weather the morning of your visit.

What to bring

To best enjoy the day please ensure that everyone wears a hat and sunscreen. Hydration is extremely important please ensure that ample refreshments/drinking water is available for participants and your staff. Please bring your own food; many of the Freedom's Wings Chapters have accessible facilities that they will allow you to use. Some of our Chapters have accessible kitchens and will allow you to use the club facilities to prepare, cook or serve the food. Feel free to bring games, reading material or other entertainment items for when your clients are not flying. Most Chapters have soaring-related videos and magazines available to visitors.

Transportation

If your organization does not have access to transportation we may be able to help. Thanks to a grant generously provided by The Hansen Foundation, we have a limited amount of funds available to provide charter busses equipped to carry wheel-chairs.

If your organisation needs transportation, please contact our Executive Director, (Contact US) for assistance. It will be necessary to make a weather decision two days in advance to either confirm or cancel the provided bus.

Moving around the airport

Our Chapter Locations have accessible washrooms with ramps and many have an accessible clubhouse where wheelchairs and powerchairs may move easily. (Those who do not are involved in fund raising activities to build suitable facilities for our visitors.)

Routes to the airfield may not be direct. Not all of the parking lots are paved many are dirt, gravel and grass. The bus usually drives to the side of the clubhouse or onto the airfield to discharge passengers before going to the parking lot.

Some of the Chapters have a specially-modified golf cart with a hoist and sling that we use for transferring passengers from chairs into the aircraft and back out again, as needed. Our personnel are trained in its' use, but we are always open to assistance in the proper handling of our passenger from those who know the person best.

Safety Information

Safety is of paramount importance to Freedom's Wings. All of our tow pilots, inspiration flight pilots, flight instructors and aircraft are fully licensed with Transport Canada. Pilots have completed all training necessary to perform their duties with the best training and highest level of care available.

There are various requirements that must be met before the flight to ensure the safety of our passengers and our personnel. Occupants are secured into the glider using safety belts (approx 2.5" width) across the hips and down the shoulders (connecting to the belt on the hips); this is snug to prevent the person from moving around the cockpit during flight (the pilot is similarly strapped in). We may insert additional padding to spread the force of the straps or support the passenger, but we must adequately secure all occupants. The belt anchor points are not moveable. Please be aware that it is not possible for the pilot to reach the passenger or offer any direct assistance during the flight. If the needs of the passenger are such that s/he cannot be unattended for the flight (15-30 minutes), then this person should not fly. In the event that the flight needs to be terminated early, it may take over 5 minutes for the aircraft to reach the ground safely and stop.

Passengers must have good impulse control. The aircraft are equipped with full controls for both seats; both control sets are connected and manually operated. It is potentially lethal for a passenger to take hold of the controls and prevent the pilot from properly flying the aircraft. Individuals with impulse control difficulties may be flown at the discretion of the pilot provided they are secured by a restrictive device or restraint garment.

Passengers should weigh less than 100kg (242 lbs). This is a design limit of most gliding aircraft and must not be exceeded.

All passengers (or their legal representative) must sign an acknowledgement of risk and release of liability form before the flight. While Freedom's Wings Canada has not had any injuries during our operations, flying is not without risk.

We will not allow a flight to launch if we deem the situation to be unsafe for anyone involved.

[Contact Us](#)