



# **Team Canada Family and Friends (F&F) Program**

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

Families are essential partners in the recovery journey of an ill or injured serving member or Veteran. Through their ongoing encouragement, understanding and support, they help create the stability and strength that make healing and recovery possible.

The Invictus Games recognize and honour this vital role by giving competitors and their families an extraordinary experience to share—one that celebrates their progress together, strengthens their connections and welcomes them into the broader Invictus community.

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## About the F&F Program

### 1. What is the Team Canada Family and Friends (F&F) Program?

The F&F Program gives loved ones the chance to be part of the Invictus Games experience alongside Team Canada competitors. The program provides information, guidance and support before, throughout and after the Games to help F&F prepare and make the most of their experience.

### 2. What support is available through the F&F Program?

The F&F Program is here to support F&F throughout their Invictus Games journey. Before, throughout and after the Games, the program provides practical and well-being support to help make the experience as smooth, positive and meaningful as possible.

#### Practical support includes:

- Registering family members and friends for the Games.
- Helping with travel arrangements, accessibility needs and special requirements.
- Providing information about events, schedules and travel.
- Sharing an Information Guide and hosting Q&A sessions.
- Offering orientation, updates and support throughout the Games.

#### Well-being support includes:

- Regular check-ins.
- Emotional support and counselling.
- Connecting families with resources, services and programs.
- Providing support during any challenging moments that may arise.

The F&F Program Manager and two counsellors from the Military Family Services Family Information Line (FIL) will be available to provide guidance, answer questions and support F&F every step of the way.

## Preparing for the Games

### 3. What can F&F expect from the Invictus Games experience?

The Invictus Games can be a meaningful and memorable experience for family members and friends. F&F can look forward to:

- Meeting families, friends and volunteers from more than 25 countries who understand the challenges and triumphs of the recovery journey.
- Taking part in social events, family activities, children's programming and live entertainment.
- Celebrating their competitor's hard work, achievements and progress in recovery.



- Building lasting connections and feeling part of the Team Canada and Invictus community.
- Experiencing the excitement, energy and inspiration of a major international sporting event.

For many families and friends, the Games are not only an opportunity to cheer on their competitor, but also a chance to connect with others, create lasting memories and celebrate how far they have come together.

#### **4. What should F&F know about the Invictus Games experience?**

The Invictus Games are an exciting international event that brings together competitors, families, friends and supporters from around the world. Days can be busy, venues can be lively, and travel can sometimes be unpredictable. Knowing what to expect can help F&F prepare and make the most of their experience.

##### **Getting around**

Games days may include a fair amount of walking, periods of standing or sitting, and travel between venues using public transportation. Airports and venues can also involve longer walking distances. F&F with accessibility needs are encouraged to identify them during registration so the F&F staff can provide support where possible.

##### **Travel**

International travel can include long travel days, connecting flights and occasional delays. F&F may travel separately from competitors, so anyone travelling with children should be comfortable managing the journey independently.

##### **Crowds and atmosphere**

Sporting events and ceremonies are often energetic and loud, with large crowds, cheering and music. F&F who prefer quieter environments may wish to plan for breaks when needed.

##### **Accommodations**

The two sponsored F&F will share one hotel room. Bed configurations, additional cots and extra room capacity cannot always be guaranteed. Rooms may not be available immediately upon arrival.

##### **Travelling with children**

Children are welcome at the Invictus Games. Because competitors have full schedules that include training, competition, recovery and Team Canada activities, the accompanying parent or caregiver should be prepared to take primary responsibility for the children throughout the Games. F&F and competitors stay in separate accommodations and may use different transportation, so families should consider how travel, busy schedules and changes in routine may affect younger children.



## Other things to expect

As an international sporting event, the Games may include media coverage, security screening, restricted-access areas, a variety of cultures and languages, and changing indoor and outdoor temperatures.

The F&F Program Manager will share additional information before and during the Games to help families prepare, feel confident and enjoy the experience.

## 5. What should a competitor consider when selecting F&F?

When selecting F&F, competitors should consider the people who are most important to them and who they would value having by their side throughout their Invictus journey.

They may wish to consider individuals in their support network who:

- Have played an important role in their recovery.
- Have supported them through difficult times.
- Help them feel encouraged, comfortable, and supported.
- Can provide emotional and/or practical support during the Games.
- Feel comfortable with travel, crowds, and changes to schedules.
- Are adaptable, independent, and able to manage their own activities, travel, or childcare arrangements.

There is no right or wrong choice. The most important consideration is selecting the individuals whose presence will help the competitor feel supported and make their Invictus Games experience more meaningful.

## Sponsored F&F

### 6. What is a sponsored F&F and what is included?

The Invictus Games F&F Program sponsors up to **two** F&F per competitor.

Sponsored F&F receive:

- Round-trip flights to and from the Games.
- Hotel accommodations (**one** room per competitor for their **two** sponsored F&F).
- Meals during the Games.
- Invictus Games accreditation—an official pass providing access to sporting events, reserved seating, special activities, select local attractions and other services.
- Access to Nations Home, Welcome Event and the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.
- Team Canada F&F apparel.
- Transportation between Games venues, accommodations, and the airport.

The following costs are not covered:

- Medical or travel insurance.



- Passport fees or electronic travel authorization fees.
- Meals on travel days.
- Transportation to and from the local airport.
- Airport parking.
- Invictus Games merchandise.
- Personal sightseeing or activities not included in the program.

### **Important notes**

- Hotel room layouts and occupancy limits vary. Two separate beds and extra cots may not be available.
- Transportation between the airport and hotel is provided only on designated arrival and departure days.

### **7. What is the Nations Home and what is available there?**

Nations Home is the heart of the Invictus Games experience. It is a gathering place where competitors and F&F can connect, relax, spend time together and celebrate throughout the Games.

Nations Home offers:

- Lunch and supper buffets. Breakfast is typically provided at the F&F hotel.
- Snacks and refreshments throughout the day.
- Live broadcasts of sporting events and ceremonies.
- Activities and play areas for children.
- Quiet spaces to relax and recharge.
- Support services such as chaplaincy, peer support and limited health services.

For many competitors and F&F, Nations Home becomes a home away from home during the Games. It is a place to connect with other families, share experiences, celebrate achievements and feel part of the wider Invictus community.

### **8. Will F&F stay at the same hotel as their competitor?**

As part of the Invictus Games experience, competitors and F&F stay in separate accommodations. While they will not stay at the same hotel, there will be many opportunities to spend time together throughout the Games. F&F can cheer on their competitor at sporting events, connect with them at Nations Home and enjoy other special events together.

### **9. Will F&F have reserved seating at Invictus Games events?**

Yes. Accredited F&F will have access to reserved seating at sporting events. To use these seating areas, F&F must show their Invictus Games credentials. Reserved F&F seating is not open to the general public.



## Buy-in Packages and Additional Attendees

### 10. Can a competitor have more than their two sponsored F&F at the Games?

Yes. We recognize that a competitor's support network may extend beyond two people. In addition to the two sponsored F&F spaces, there may be opportunities for additional family members or friends to attend through a limited number of Buy-in Packages or by making their own travel and accommodation arrangements. Any costs for additional F&F are the responsibility of the competitor or additional F&F participant.

### 11. What is a Buy-in Package and what does it include?

A Buy-in Package allows an additional family member or friend to receive the same Games accreditation and access as sponsored F&F. Two Buy-in Package options may be available for purchase: an In-room Buy-in Package, where the participant shares a hotel room with the sponsored F&F, or an Extra-room Buy-in Package, which provides separate accommodations. Buy-in participants are responsible for the cost of their airfare in addition to the package fee.

A Buy-in Package includes:

- Hotel accommodations, either in-room or extra-room.
- Meals during the Games.
- Invictus Games accreditation—an official pass providing access to sporting events, reserved seating, special activities, select local attractions and other services.
- Access to Nations Home, Welcome Event and the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.
- Team Canada F&F apparel.
- Transportation between Games venues, accommodations, and the airport.

The following costs are not covered:

- Round-trip flights to and from the Games.
- Medical or travel insurance.
- Passport fees or electronic travel authorization fees.
- Meals on travel days.
- Transportation to and from the local airport.
- Airport parking.
- Invictus Games merchandise.
- Personal sightseeing or activities not included in the program.

### Important notes

- Hotel room layouts and occupancy limits vary. Two separate beds and extra cots may not be available.
- Transportation between the airport and hotel is provided only on designated arrival and departure days.



The number of Buy-in Packages available is determined by the Invictus Games Organizing Committee and is tied to Team Canada's overall allocation and team size. As a result, availability can be limited and packages are not guaranteed.

## **12. Can other family members or friends attend without a Buy-in Package?**

Yes. Other family members and friends are welcome to attend without a Buy-in Package. They will need to arrange and pay for their own travel, hotel, meals, local transportation and event tickets. They can buy tickets to sporting events and the Opening and Closing Ceremonies through the official Invictus Games website. Tickets are sold on a first-come, first-served basis, so it is best to buy them early.

Without a Buy-in Package, they attend as members of the public. They will not receive Games accreditation or have access to reserved F&F seating, Nations Home, the Welcome Event, or other activities and services for F&F only.

## **Family Travel**

### **13. My spouse and one child are sponsored F&F, but my second child is not. Can we all travel on the same flights?**

Yes. Soldier On can book the sponsored F&F and an unsponsored minor child on the same flights so the family can travel together. The minor child will need a Buy-in Package, and the competitor will need to reimburse Soldier On for the cost of the child's flight. Flights are usually booked using FLEX fares.

### **14. At what age do children count toward the two sponsored or Buy-in F&F spaces?**

Children under the age of two generally do not count toward the sponsored or Buy-in F&F spaces and do not require tickets for sporting events or the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. However, they must still be accredited. Depending on the event or flight, children under two may be required to sit on a parent or caregiver's lap.

A child's age is determined based on the first day of the Games.

## **Travel Changes and Substitutions**

### **15. What if my F&F cannot attend for the full Games or would like to travel on different dates?**

We understand that work, family and other commitments may make it difficult for some F&F to attend for the full Games period. F&F can attend for only part of the Games; however,



sponsored and Buy-in Packages are designed for the full Games experience and cannot be prorated or shared between individuals.

F&F may also request to arrive earlier or depart later than the scheduled travel dates. Any additional costs associated with alternative travel dates are the responsibility of the F&F. Airport-to-hotel transportation is provided only on the designated arrival and departure days. F&F travelling outside those dates must arrange and pay for their own transportation.

Information on how to request alternate travel dates, along with any applicable deadlines, will be provided.

#### **16. Can F&F change their travel dates after flights are booked?**

Yes. F&F may request changes to their travel dates up to the applicable deadline. To process a request, the F&F Program Manager must receive the complete request in writing.

Once flights have been booked, any airline change fees or fare differences are the responsibility of the F&F. Before any changes are made, the F&F Program Manager will provide a written cost estimate, which must be approved in writing within three business days.

Information about travel change deadlines and the request process will be available on the F&F Program webpage.

#### **17. How can a competitor request an F&F substitution?**

If a competitor needs to replace an F&F, they must submit a written substitution request to the F&F Program Manager by the applicable deadline and provide all required registration and travel information for the replacement F&F.

Once flights have been booked, any airline change fees or fare differences are the responsibility of the competitor or the F&F. Before any changes are made, the F&F Program Manager will provide a written cost estimate, which must be approved in writing within three business days.

Requests received after the deadline will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and where operationally possible. Information about substitution deadlines and requirements will be available on the F&F Program webpage.

#### **18. How does the waiting list work for Buy-in Packages?**

As Buy-in Package availability is limited, Team Canada maintains a waiting list to help allocate available spaces as fairly as possible. Priority may take into account factors such as the needs of minor children, room occupancy requirements and availability, and Team Canada's overall Buy-in allocation. Requests within the same priority level are considered in the order they are received.



If a package becomes available, the next eligible person on the waiting list will be contacted and given three business days to accept the package and provide the required information.

While being on the waiting list does not guarantee a Buy-in Package, room, or flight, the F&F Program Manager will make every effort to allocate available spaces fairly and support as many families as possible.