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News and

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Seniors can fly with paid companions

Flying alone can be a problem if you have a disability or have trouble navigating unfamiliar airports or cities. While some airlines provide assistance, such as wheelchair service to the gate, the options may be limited if you are negotiating security and traveling after leaving the airport.

Atlanta-based company Flying Companions LLC offers another alternative.

"You can still travel, you can still be independent and see family and friends and the world," says the company's founder, Doug Iannelli.

Flying Companions and other such companies provide a number of services that seniors and others might find useful — home pickup, help with coordinating bag check-in and help with making connecting flights and travel changes. Companions also provide assistance when the people they're traveling with need help of any sort in the city they are visiting.

Fees for such services vary widely, but travelers are generally required to pay for their companion's flights, plus any other major costs, such as lodging or food.

Iannelli noted that it's often a challenge to negotiate travel these days, especially if a flight gets delayed or canceled.

"As the population continues to age, we believe there is a great demand for seniors to remain independent and continue to travel," he says. "Our service takes the stress out of flying for the senior."

For information: www.flyingcompanions.com or 1-888-350-8886.

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