

MobiChair Beach Wheelchair – Safety Procedures

Overview

The **MobiChair** beach wheelchair is designed for use on the beach (on hard or soft sand), on grass or surfaced footpaths, in low water, and to float in shallow water levels.

The **MobiChair** beach wheelchair is to **ONLY** be used on the beach it was hired from (either Williamstown or Altona Beach).

The chair is designed to be able to access low levels of water, with support people, to aid floating. Water level should not exceed waist height of the support people. The wheelchair is not to be used in deep water and **ONLY** between the flags as patrolled by the Life Saving Club.

When entering the water to float, it is required that **TWO** support people are present.

The **MobiChair** is not intended for areas with currents or strong waves.

NOTE there is a hoist available for transfer at Altona Beach within the Weaver Reserve accessible changing facility. Please ensure you bring your own sling.

There is **NO** hoist available at Williamstown Beach.

The **MobiChair** is not an independent chair therefore please ensure you have the right level of support to transfer and push the beach wheelchair.

It is important to be prepared before you head out in the beach wheelchair. Please read this document in full including signing the safety procedures checklist (attached) prior to using the wheelchair.

If you have any questions about using the beach wheelchair please contact **Council's Metro Access and Inclusion Officer** Monday to Friday call 9932 1000 or email socialplanning@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au



Before use

- check the weather for incoming tides as well as the strength of the waves, wind strength, storms and heat prior to hiring the wheelchair. The staff at the **Life Saving Club** will be able to provide you with helpful information about weather conditions and suitability for the beach wheelchair
- ensure walkway / routes to be taken are clear of hazards
- visually inspect seating, tyres and moving parts for possible damage
- ensure the support person(s) stabilise the wheelchair so that it will not move when a person is being seated
- **NOTE** that there is currently no hoist available at Williamstown Beach
- if you are not experienced at lifting, it may be useful to approach a local rehabilitation center, hospital or physiotherapist regarding training for transferring and lifting

During use

- the wheelchair has been designed to be used on dry sand, wet sand, at the water's edge and to float in shallow water levels up to waist height of the support person, in still water conditions
- the **MobiChair** will begin to float as the water level reaches half way up the balloon tyres. At this point the user will notice a small tilt backwards as the chair transitions into the floating position
- When entering waist height waters to float, it is required that two assistants are present. It is important the tide and waves are monitored throughout the period of use
- the wheelchair is **NOT** to be used in deep water beyond waist height of the support persons
- do not exceed maximum recommended loading of 150kg
- it is recommended that the user securely fastens all harnesses to ensure safe and stable positioning. They can easily be adjusted in length to create a suitable fit
- the backrest angle can be adjusted into three positions by pulling the looped chain located at the back of the chair behind the backrest
- do not leave a person unattended when in the wheelchair

- when parking find a level surface to park on
- gradients steeper than a standard ramp rise are not recommended unless two people are assisting with pushing/pulling the chair. It is recommended one assistant pulls using the tow rope at the front, whilst the second assistant pushes from behind
- ensure heavy items are not placed on back of wheelchair
- always keep the passenger informed about what you are intending to do (turning, entering water, crossing road)
- the wheelchair is not designed for self-propelling (independent use) and must be supervised and pushed by a responsible assistant
- the wheelchair must not be propelled by towing behind a motor vehicle, kite or other means, other than being pushed/pulled by an assistant
- when in water, the use of the safety belt is recommended, depending on the passengers understanding of their capacity to move around freely. If a passenger experiences unsteadiness (such as with epilepsy) the seat belt should be used
- always use the safety belt when using the chair on dry land, including soft and hard sand. If a passenger experiences unsteadiness (such as epilepsy) the seat belt should be used at all times
- the wheelchair is not to be removed from the designated beach area

After use

- where possible the hirer should use a shower or hose to clean down the chair before returning to the **Life Saving Club**
- any safety, mechanical or accessibility concerns with the use of the beach wheelchair should be reported immediately to the **Life Saving Club**

We welcome your feedback on your experience and use. Please provide feedback directly to the staff at the **Life Saving Club** or contact Council's **Metro Access and Inclusion Officer** on 9932 1000 or email socialplanning@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au

For further details about accessible beaches visit www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au for information and resources available. For information about the **MobiChair** wheelchair visit: <http://pushmobility.com.au/shop/mobi-chair-floating-beach-wheelchair/>

Safety Procedure checklist for user to complete *prior to use* of the MobiChair wheelchair

Have you

- read and understood the wheelchair safety procedures
- been provided with a demonstration on how to use the wheelchair
- checked back rest adjustment, seat belt harness
- noted the low water instructions
- have **TWO** assistants if entering the water to float
- checked weather conditions such as wind strength, incoming tides, possible storms, heat
- checked the life saving flags are in operation
- provided an approximate time to return the beach wheelchair
- note **Life Saving Club** contact number in case of unexpected issues or emergency: **Williamstown 0478 416 004, Altona 9398 1270**

Name of hirer

SignatureDate / /

Name of **Life Saving Club** representative

SignatureDate / /