

Guidelines:
Preparing for UAS/Drone Flights
at Texas A&M University

Both Texas A&M University and the Texas A&M System have established requirements to ensure our compliance with federal FAA regulations for safely operating *Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)* and *Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV)*, also known as “drones,” on university property and/or off-campus on university business. Due to our proximity to Easterwood Airport, campus properties are in stringently regulated/controlled airspace, which impacts our UAS operations, and limits flight ceiling height.

UAS flight request applications must be submitted to the Texas A&M *Supervising Authority (SA) Committee* for compliance review, a minimum of 15 days prior to planned flight operations. Approvals are granted by the designated university SA. The SA committee meets monthly to consider application requests. Any unapproved UAS/UAV flights are disruptive to university operations and will be referred for appropriate disciplinary action.

Steps to Initiate a UAS Flight Request:

1. Texas A&M has established online resources for UAS requirements. Please familiarize yourself with the referenced requirements and materials at the following sites:

The TAMU System Regulation for UAS Operations

<http://policies.tamus.edu/24-01-07.pdf>

The TAMU Rule for UAS Operations

24.01.07.M0.01, *Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)*

<https://rules-saps.tamu.edu/rules-saps-library/>

The TAMU Program for UAS Operations

<https://ehs.tamu.edu/programs/unmanned-aerial-systems/>

2. Go to the **UAS Site** at <https://ehs.tamu.edu/programs/unmanned-aerial-systems/>, to register and then follow the steps to complete the online UAS flight request application form, attach/upload your supporting documents, and “submit.” Note that the system will not allow you to submit incomplete applications.

Step 1 – Request access to Registration Site

Step 2 – Add your UAS Pilot Record

Step 3 – Add Your Flight Location

Step 4 – Add a UAS/Drone Aircraft Record

Step 5 – Enter your UAS Flight Request

3. Most UAS flights are for one flight event. If your project involves multiple flight events over a broader period, you may request the SA Committee approve a “blanket” flight permit for up to one year from date of approval.
4. The UAS Supervising Authority (SA) Committee will evaluate your application request and supporting documents, and contact you with a list of any remaining documents that will be required. Complete applications will be reviewed by UAS staff, and placed on the SA Committee agenda for review and recommendation.
5. If your project is such that your flight request application cannot be submitted prior to the 15- day deadline, please contact UAS staff at the Environmental Health and Safety Department (EHS) to discuss alternative options.
6. If you will be flying under an FAA Part 107 *Certificate of Authorization (CoA)* waiver, please submit your request directly to the FAA at: [http://www.faa.gov/uas/\[2\]](http://www.faa.gov/uas/[2]), and provide a copy.
7. *Supporting documentation* includes the following if/as applicable:
 - a. **FAA CoA** (*Certificate of Authorization or Waiver*); CoA types include:
 - i. CoA for General Flight Operations
 - ii. CoA for Emergency Operations
 - iii. CoA for National Disaster Response
 - iv. CoA for Part 107 Waiver(s)
 - b. **Copy of FAA UAS registration number certificate**
 - c. **FAA Remote Pilot Certificate**
 - i. Submit a copy of the current, valid FAA *Remote Pilot Certificate* for the Pilot-In-Command (PIC), and other pilot participants
 - a. NOTE 1: If the Certificate is more than 2 years old, you must submit the PIC’s *Certificate of Recurrent Training*
 - b. NOTE 2: Submit documentation of the PIC’s *Biannual Flight Review*, if the PIC is also a certificated pilot under 14 CFR 61 or higher
 - d. Project-Specific and Site-Specific **Safety Plan** as a *Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)*, including:
 - Mission Brief and Safety Risk Matrix
 - Provisions for not flying over people & vehicles
 - Mishap Response Plan
 - Incident Logs
 - Maintenance Plan & Repair Logs
 - Contingency Management Plan
 - Site Security Plan
 - e. **Reportable Accident Report**, for the past year and including current flight incidents
 - f. **Certificate of Aviation Insurance**
 - g. **Liability Waiver(s)**

- h. For **external vendors**, a current TAMU or TAMUS **contract or agreement** applicable to the proposed flight activity
 - i. UAS on University or System **Inventory**?
 - TAMU *Inventory Asset Number* for UAS(s)
 - j. **Flight Category:**
 - i. Part 107 Waiver CoA, or
 - ii. Section 336, Hobbyist or Recreational Flight, including Educational Purpose
 - Note 3: Texas A&M does not approve or accept requests for hobby/recreational UAS flights on university property, due to proximity of Easterwood Airport and stringent FAA airspace restrictions.
 - k. **Flight Requestor Affiliation:**
 - Texas A&M University
 - Texas A&M System
 - Third Party Vendor or Contractor
 - Other: _____
 - l. **Purpose** of the proposed UAS flight(s)
 - m. UAS **Flight Location** — *by description, address, and geographic coordinates*
 - TAMU Campus Proper:
 - RELLIS Annex Campus:
 - Other TAMUS campus:
 - TAMUS Agency:
 - Non-TAMU property:
 - n. **Photograph(s)** of each UAS (drone) documenting exterior installation of the FAA Tail Number and TAMU inventory asset number
 - o. When using the new **Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability (LAANC) System**, capture and provide a screen shot of your LAANC Approval prior to initiating flight(s)
 - p. Letter of permission/authorization to fly over non-university property, signed by the property owner or an authorized individual
8. **FAA Part 107 Operating Rules;** Summary from <https://www.faa.gov/uas/>:
- a) Unmanned aircraft must weigh less than 55 pounds, including payload, at takeoff
 - b) Fly in Class G airspace* or provide an FAA CoA Waiver for restricted airspace areas
 - Note 4: The primary Texas A&M campus and adjacent properties are with five (5) miles of Easterwood Airport and are thus in heavily restricted airspace.
 - c) Keep the unmanned aircraft within visual line-of-sight
 - d) Fly at or below 400 feet* (Fly below 300 feet on College Station campus properties due to proximity of Easterwood Airport))
 - e) Fly during daylight or civil twilight*
 - Night flights with FAA Night Flight training and certificate only.
 - f) Fly at or under 100 mph*
 - g) Yield right of way to manned aircraft*
 - h) Do not fly directly over people or vehicles*
 - i) Do not fly from a moving vehicle*

- j) For more detailed operating rules, please see:
- Summary of the FAA Part 107 Rule (PDF)
 - FAA Advisory Circular 107-2 (PDF)
 - 14 CFR Part 107 [4] Revision V.6

These rules are subject to FAA CoA Waiver. For more information about applying for FAA waivers, visit **Request a Waiver at https://www.faa.gov/uas/request_waiver/*

9. UAS Evaluation and Approval Process:

- Texas A&M UAS *Flight Request Application* completed, with support documents, and submitted to Supervising Authority (SA), for evaluation and review.
- *Supervising Authority (SA) Approval*, via confirming email from the Texas A&M UAS Supervising Authority (SA) or designated official in accord with SA recommendation.

Flying UAS at the RELLIS Campus

The RELLIS Campus has formed a dedicated program to manage safe UAS/Drone operations at/over RELLIS property. RELLIS provides prime space for the utilization of drones by multiple agencies and industry partners as part of their ongoing research. With the popularity of UAS, the FAA has issued guidelines for safe operation, and The Texas A&M University System, TAMU, and the RELLIS Campus have established programs to ensure compliance with the applicable rules and regulations. Most flights on The RELLIS campus will fall under Part 107 of the FAA rules.

RELLIS UAS/Drone Information & Guidance

<https://rellis.tamus.edu/campus-management/drone-and-uas-submissions/>

Request to Fly UAS at RELLIS

<https://www.tamus.edu/risk/risk-management/part-107-civil-coa-public-coa-flight-application/>