

The requirements of the [Exception for Limited Recreational Operation of Unmanned Aircraft](#) (“The Exception”) can be found in 49 U.S.C. §44809. Those requirements are:

- Fly for recreational purposes only
- Follow the safety guidelines of a Community Based Organization (CBO)
- Keep your drone in your visual line of sight (VLOS)
- Always give way and never interfere with manned aircraft
- Get an airspace authorization before flying in controlled airspace
- Do not fly higher than 400ft above the ground in uncontrolled airspace
- Pass an aeronautical knowledge and safety test
- Register and mark your drone

You will learn more about these requirements throughout this course.

RECREATIONAL FLYING

Flying for recreational purposes means flying only for fun. You may not fly for work, payment, or as part of any business. For example, under the Exception for Recreational Flyers, real estate agents may not take photos of properties that will be used to help sell them.

Remember, flying for *any* reason other than for fun, is not allowed under the Exception for Recreational Flyers.



If you do not meet all the requirements to fly under the [Exception for Recreational Flyers](#), you must fly under 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) [Part 107](#), also known as the civil small UAS rule.

AIRSPACE AND RESTRICTIONS

Before flying a drone, it is important to understand that you are sharing the airspace with a variety of other aircraft. Airspace in the United States is designed to ensure a safe operating environment for everyone. Being able to identify airspace and any restrictions is important for everyone's safety.



Regulated airspace begins at ground level. Even if you are a long way from a large airport, you may be closer than you realize to seaplane bases, smaller airports, heliports, or agricultural aircraft operations.

Airspace is divided into two main categories: controlled and uncontrolled. Controlled airspace includes areas around most airports. It is designed to protect aircraft arriving at or departing from an airport. The size and shape of the controlled airspace varies depending on airport needs.

Uncontrolled airspace covers most of the airspace closest to ground level and away from airports. Uncontrolled does not mean unregulated. Flying in uncontrolled airspace still requires that you comply with all the rules under the Exception for Recreational Flyers.

Unless specifically authorized by the FAA, recreational drone flying is limited to no more than 400ft above ground level in uncontrolled airspace and is limited to [UAS Facility Map](#) (UASFM) altitudes in controlled airspace.

Airspace may also be restricted at certain times, prohibiting any drone flying. These restrictions can happen in both controlled and uncontrolled airspace. [Airspace restrictions](#) can be temporary or permanent, dependent on security or safety needs.

WHERE CAN YOU FLY?

Prior to flying your drone, you must know what airspace you will be in and if there are any restrictions or prohibitions. The FAA, working with industry, has developed applications that show the type of airspace you are in, if the airspace is restricted or prohibited, and if you will need an airspace authorization prior to flying.



These applications are:

FAA-approved UAS Service Supplier (USS) of the Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability (LAANC; pronounced “lance”)

- Provide airspace information and authorizations
- [Listing of FAA-approved USS](#)

FAA B4UFLY App

- Provides airspace information only

The applications are available on most mobile devices.

Regardless of which app you use, before every flight:

- Identify if you are in controlled or uncontrolled airspace

- If you are in controlled airspace you will most likely need to get an airspace authorization from the FAA before you fly
- If you are in uncontrolled airspace, you do not need an airspace authorization to fly at or below 400ft above ground level (AGL)

Also, check for airspace restrictions in your area

- Certain airspace is permanently restricted or prohibited for recreational drone flyers
 - Airspace surrounding certain military facilities and national security locations, such as the White House, are off limits for drone flying
- At times, it may be necessary for the FAA to temporarily restrict airspace
 - These restrictions are called Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) and do not allow any drone flying
 - TFRs may be established days in advance, or with little notice
- You might find a TFR in your area during a Presidential visit, during major sporting events, or in times of severe weather/natural disasters
- Unauthorized flying in restricted airspace is a federal crime
 - Violators can face fines from the FAA and additional prosecution from law enforcement

BEST PRACTICES: REVIEW AIRSPACE REQUIREMENTS IN FAA UAS APPS BEFORE YOU FLY!

The FAA, working with industry, has developed applications that provide increased situational awareness to recreational flyers.

These are:

- [FAA-approved UAS Service Suppliers of the Low Altitude Authorization and Notification Capability \(LAANC\)](#)
- [FAA B4UFLY app](#)



These apps provide:

- A clear "status" indicator that lets you know where you can fly
- Informative, interactive maps with filtering options
- Information about controlled airspace, special use airspace, critical infrastructure, airports, national parks, military training routes and TFRs
- Ability to check whether it is safe to fly in different locations by searching for a location or moving the location pin
- Links to other FAA drone resources and regulatory information
- FAA UAS Service Suppliers of LAANC also provide near real-time airspace authorizations
- A full list of companies that provide authorizations to recreational flyers is available on the [FAA website](#)

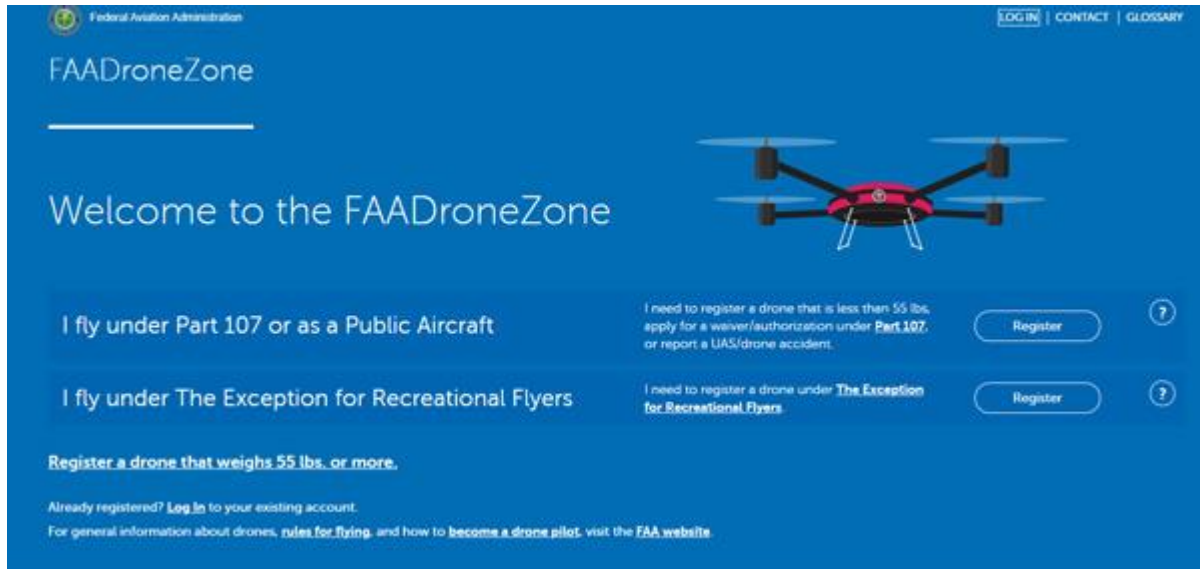
REQUESTING AUTHORIZATION FOR CONTROLLED AIRSPACE

Controlled airspace is located in areas where there are generally more aircraft flying and are often found near airports, cities, and metropolitan areas. If you will be flying in controlled airspace, you must get an FAA airspace authorization.

Recreational flyers should not directly contact ATC facilities to request approvals.

You can request an airspace authorization in two ways:

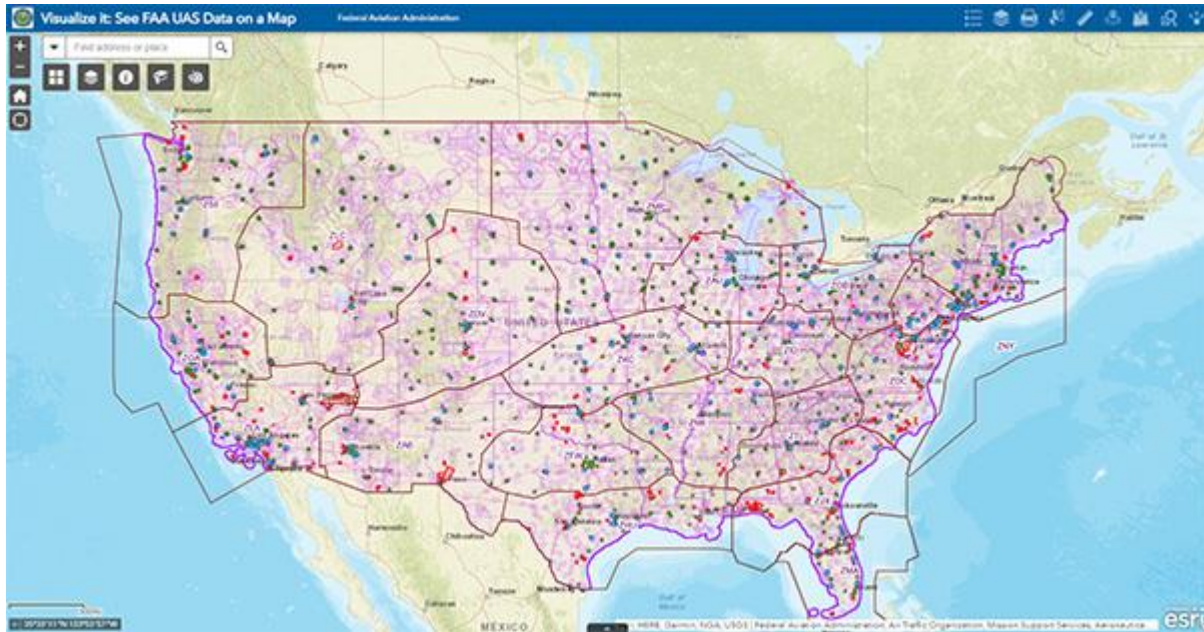
- Using an FAA approved LAANC UAS Service Supplier (USS). A listing of USSs are available on the FAA's website: [UAS Data Exchange \(LAANC\) \(faa.gov\)](#)
- [The FAA's DroneZone website](#)



The airspace authorization alerts FAA Air Traffic Control (ATC) that there are drones in the area.

UAS FACILITY MAPS (UASFMS)

[UAS Facility Maps](#) show the maximum altitudes in controlled airspace where the FAA may authorize drone flights. UASFMs *do not* “pre-authorize” drone flights in these areas, they are for informational or planning purposes only.



Recreational flyers who need to request an airspace authorization are encouraged to look at the UASFM prior to submitting their request to ensure their request will be below the UASFM maximum altitude limit.

USING LAANC

LAANC is an automated application and approval process for airspace authorizations in controlled airspace at or below 400ft.

You can access LAANC through an FAA-approved UAS Service Supplier (USS). The USSs make it easy to request an airspace authorization in near real-time using your computer or smart phone. Requests are checked against UAS Facility Maps, restricted airspace, airports and airspace classes, as well as TFRs.

The LAANC USSs display the maximum requested altitudes and show areas where no airspace authorizations will be given.

More information about LAANC, as well as a listing of current UAS Service Suppliers, can be found on the FAA website: [UAS Data Exchange \(LAANC\) \(faa.gov\)](https://www.faa.gov/uas/laanc)

USING DRONEZONE

LAANC does not cover all controlled airspace. If you need to request an airspace authorization in an area not serviced by LAANC, you can use the FAA's [DroneZone](#).

To use DroneZone, create a recreational flyer account and follow the steps on screen to submit your airspace authorization request.