

Flight Filing Requirements - Ground Lesson

Attention

I know I need to file to fly to Chattanooga today. I know with the ILS the clouds can be just over 200 feet, do I need to list an alternate airport? Which airport?

Objective

To know how to legally fill out an IFR flight plan correctly.

Schedule

Ground instruction – 10 minutes

Reference Material

Title 14 Part 91 General Operating and Flight Rules

<https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=3efaad1b0a259d4e48f1150a34d1aa77&rqn=div5&view=text&node=14:2.0.1.3.1.0&idno=14>

Material

§91.167 Fuel requirements for flight in IFR conditions.

(a) No person may operate a civil aircraft in IFR conditions unless it carries enough fuel (considering weather reports and forecasts and weather conditions) to—

- (1) Complete the flight to the first airport of intended landing;
- (2) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, fly from that airport to the alternate airport; and
- (3) Fly after that for 45 minutes at normal cruising speed or, for helicopters, fly after that for 30 minutes at normal cruising speed.

(b) Paragraph (a)(2) of this section does not apply if:

(1) Part 97 of this chapter prescribes a standard instrument approach procedure to, or a special instrument approach procedure has been issued by the Administrator to the operator for, the first airport of intended landing; and

(2) Appropriate weather reports or weather forecasts, or a combination of them, indicate the following:

(i) For aircraft other than helicopters. For at least 1 hour before and for 1 hour after the estimated time of arrival, the ceiling will be at least 2,000 feet above the airport elevation and the visibility will be at least 3 statute miles.

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§91.169 IFR flight plan: Information required.

(a) Information required. Unless otherwise authorized by ATC, each person filing an IFR flight plan must include in it the following information:

(1) Information required under §91.153 (a) of this part;

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, an alternate airport.

(b) Paragraph (a)(2) of this section does not apply if :

(1) Part 97 of this chapter prescribes a standard instrument approach procedure to, or a special instrument approach procedure has been issued by the Administrator to the operator for, the first airport of intended landing; and

(2) Appropriate weather reports or weather forecasts, or a combination of them, indicate the following:

(i) For aircraft other than helicopters. For at least 1 hour before and for 1 hour after the estimated time of arrival, the ceiling will be at least 2,000 feet above the airport elevation and the visibility will be at least 3 statute miles.

(ii) For helicopters. At the estimated time of arrival and for 1 hour after the estimated time of arrival, the ceiling will be at least 1,000 feet above the airport elevation, or at least 400 feet above the lowest applicable approach minima, whichever is higher, and the visibility will be at least 2 statute miles.

(c) IFR alternate airport weather minima. Unless otherwise authorized by the Administrator, no person may include an alternate airport in an IFR flight plan unless appropriate weather reports or weather forecasts, or a combination of them, indicate that, at the estimated time of arrival at the alternate airport, the ceiling and visibility at that airport will be at or above the following weather minima:

(1) If an instrument approach procedure has been published in part 97 of this chapter, or a special instrument approach procedure has been issued by the Administrator to the operator, for that airport, the following minima:

(i) For aircraft other than helicopters: The alternate airport minima specified in that procedure, or if none are specified the following standard approach minima:

(A) For a precision approach procedure. Ceiling 600 feet and visibility 2 statute miles.

(B) For a nonprecision approach procedure. Ceiling 800 feet and visibility 2 statute miles.

(ii) For helicopters: Ceiling 200 feet above the minimum for the approach to be flown, and visibility at least 1 statute mile but never less than the minimum visibility for the approach to be flown, and

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(2) If no instrument approach procedure has been published in part 97 of this chapter and no special instrument approach procedure has been issued by the Administrator to the operator, for the alternate airport, the ceiling and visibility minima are those allowing descent from the MEA, approach, and landing under basic VFR.

(d) Cancellation. When a flight plan has been activated, the pilot in command, upon canceling or completing the flight under the flight plan, shall notify an FAA Flight Service Station or ATC facility.

Translation

If for 1 hour before and 1 hour after estimated arrival you have a forecast of 2000+ ft AGL, 3+ SM visibility at the destination then an alternate airport is not needed. (The 1-2-3 rule)

If your destination has no approach, an alternate is always required. (Elijay)

The alternate airport must have a forecast of 600+ ft AGL/2+ SM if you are using a precision approach. It must have a forecast of 800+ ft AGL/2+ SM if you are using a precision approach.

These are defaults. Many airports have non-standard minimums for alternate purposes. These are indicated by an on charts directing you to look in the "Alternate Mins" section.

You must have enough fuel to get to your destination + get to the alternate + 45 minutes at cruise speed.

Altitudes

VFR east – 5500, 7500, 9500

VFR west – 4500, 6500, 8500

IFR east – 5000, 7000, 9000

IFR west – 4000, 6000, 8000