

§91.173

§91.173 ATC clearance and flight plan required.

No person may operate an aircraft in controlled airspace under IFR unless that person has—

- (a) Filed an IFR flight plan; and
- (b) Received an appropriate ATC clearance.

§91.175 Takeoff and landing under IFR.

(a) *Instrument approaches to civil airports.* Unless otherwise authorized by the Administrator, when an instrument letdown to a civil airport is necessary, each person operating an aircraft, except a military aircraft of the United States, shall use a standard instrument approach procedure prescribed for the airport in part 97 of this chapter.

(b) *Authorized DH or MDA.* For the purpose of this section, when the approach procedure being used provides for and requires the use of a DH or MDA, the authorized DH or MDA is the highest of the following:

- (1) The DH or MDA prescribed by the approach procedure.
- (2) The DH or MDA prescribed for the pilot in command.
- (3) The DH or MDA for which the aircraft is equipped.

(c) *Operation below DH or MDA.* Except as provided in paragraph (l) of this section, where a DH or MDA is applicable, no pilot may operate an aircraft, except a military aircraft of the United States, at any airport below the authorized MDA or continue an approach below the authorized DH unless—

(1) The aircraft is continuously in a position from which a descent to a landing on the intended runway can be made at a normal rate of descent using normal maneuvers, and for operations conducted under part 121 or part 135 unless that descent rate will allow touchdown to occur within the touchdown zone of the runway of intended landing;

(2) The flight visibility is not less than the visibility prescribed in the standard instrument approach being used; and

(3) Except for a Category II or Category III approach where any necessary visual reference requirements are specified by the Administrator, at least one of the following visual references for

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the intended runway is distinctly visible and identifiable to the pilot:

(i) The approach light system, except that the pilot may not descend below 100 feet above the touchdown zone elevation using the approach lights as a reference unless the red terminating bars or the red side row bars are also distinctly visible and identifiable.

(ii) The threshold.
(iii) The threshold markings.
(iv) The threshold lights.
(v) The runway end identifier lights.
(vi) The visual approach slope indicator.

(vii) The touchdown zone or touchdown zone markings.

(viii) The touchdown zone lights.
(ix) The runway or runway markings.
(x) The runway lights.

(d) *Landing.* No pilot operating an aircraft, except a military aircraft of the United States, may land that aircraft when—

(1) For operations conducted under paragraph (l) of this section, the requirements of (l)(4) of this section are not met; or

(2) For all other part 91 operations and parts 121, 125, 129, and 135 operations, the flight visibility is less than the visibility prescribed in the standard instrument approach procedure being used.

(e) *Missed approach procedures.* Each pilot operating an aircraft, except a military aircraft of the United States, shall immediately execute an appropriate missed approach procedure when either of the following conditions exist:

(1) Whenever operating an aircraft pursuant to paragraph (c) or (l) of this section and the requirements of that paragraph are not met at either of the following times:

(i) When the aircraft is being operated below MDA; or

(ii) Upon arrival at the missed approach point, including a DH where a DH is specified and its use is required, and at any time after that until touchdown.

(2) Whenever an identifiable part of the airport is not distinctly visible to the pilot during a circling maneuver at or above MDA, unless the inability to see an identifiable part of the airport results only from a normal bank of the aircraft during the circling approach.