



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Space Launch and Reentry Licensing and Permitting User Fees

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Policy Statement.

SUMMARY: This document provides notice of the FAA imposing commercial space launch and reentry licensing and permitting user fees, as required under statute.

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The Commercial Space Launch Act of 1984, as amended and codified at 51 U.S.C. 50901 through 50924 (“Act”), authorizes the Secretary of Transportation, and the Administrator of the FAA through delegation,¹ to oversee, license, and regulate commercial launch and reentry activities, and the operation of launch and reentry sites as carried out by United States citizens or within the United States. The Act’s requirements are implemented in parts 400 through 460 of title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR).

On July 4, 2025, President Trump signed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (Pub. L. 119-21) establishing a fee beginning in 2026 for each launch or reentry carried out under a license or permit issued under section 50904 (51 U.S.C. 50924, as established by section 4004 of Pub. L. 119-21, title IV, § 40004(a), 139 Stat. 132 (July 4, 2025)).

Section 50924 further directs the Secretary of Transportation to collect and deposit the fees in a newly established “Office of Commercial Space Transportation Launch and Reentry Licensing and Permitting Fund” located in the Treasury of the United States. The user fee is to be assessed in an amount equal to the lesser of two amounts prescribed by two fee schedules. Both fee schedules set forth specific rates for each calendar year. One fee schedule establishes the rate that is to be assessed for each pound of the weight of the payload, while the other one provides a maximum user fee.

For the purpose of collecting the user fees required by 51 U.S.C. 50924, FAA will begin including terms and conditions that outline the fee assessment and collection procedures as set forth by 51 U.S.C. 50924 in experimental permits and vehicle operator licenses subject to those fees. Regardless of whether the permit or license contains those terms and conditions, operators are still liable for user fees under 51 U.S.C. 50924 for all launches and reentries conducted in 2026 under a license or and permit issued under section 50904.

II. Fee Assessment and Payment Process under 51 U.S.C. 50924

51 U.S.C. 50924 requires FAA to assess the user fees based on the weight of the payload on each launch or reentry carried out under a license or permit issued pursuant to 51 U.S.C. 50904 during 2026 or a subsequent year. For each launch or reentry, vehicle operators are currently required to provide FAA with the weight of the payload at least 60 days prior to each mission.² FAA will use the payload weight provided by vehicle operators as part of their pre-flight reporting submission to calculate the user fee owed for the launch or reentry and will issue a fee notification to the vehicle operator reflecting the amount due. As reflected in the terms and conditions that FAA will incorporate into all new licenses and permits, vehicle operators will then have thirty (30) days from the date of the issuance of the fee notification in order to submit payment for the user fee in accordance with the instructions provided in the fee notification. This includes

notifications for fees accrued since January 1, 2026, which FAA intends to issue later in 2026.

Issued in Washington, D.C.

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Office of Commercial Space Transportation.

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¹ See 49 CFR 1.83(b).

² See, e.g., 14 CFR 450.43(i) and .213(b)(1).