

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N JO 7110.803

Air Traffic Organization Policy

Effective Date:
October 28, 2026

Cancellation Date:
December 24, 2026

SUBJ: Separation

1. Purpose of this Notice. This notice amends FAA Order JO 7110.65, Air Traffic Control, Chapter 7 Section 6 and paragraphs 7-7-3, 7-8-3, and 7-9-4 Separation. The notice adds paragraph 7-6-2 and 7-6-3.

2. Audience. This notice applies to the following Air Traffic Organization (ATO) service units: Air Traffic Services, Mission Support Services, System Operations Services, Safety and Technical Training, and all associated air traffic facilities.

3. Where can I Find This Notice? This notice is available on the MyFAA employee website at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/ and on the Air Traffic Plans and Publications website at https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/.

4. Background. A near mid-air collision (NMAC) occurs when two aircraft come within less than 500 feet of each other, posing a potential collision risk. Since the primary purpose of the ATC system is to prevent collisions, controllers must maintain positive control when aircraft targets may converge. While specific separation standards exist for IFR traffic, there are no defined standards for VFR to IFR aircraft separation outside of Terminal Radar Service Area (TRSA), Class C, or Class B airspace. To address this, separation standards have been added to Section 6., Basic Radar Service to VFR Aircraft- Terminal. Section 6 title was amended to remove the annotation, Terminal, to include all facility types. Additionally, new language was added throughout Chapter 7. Visual, to ensure that one or both aircraft receive positive control instructions to achieve target resolution.

5. Action. Amend FAA Order JO 7110.65 by changing the following paragraph to read as follows:

Section 6. Basic Radar Service to VFR Aircraft

Paragraph 7-6-1, No Change

7-6-2. SEPARATION

Separate VFR aircraft from IFR aircraft by any one of the following:

a. Visual separation as specified in paragraph 7-2-1, Visual Separation, paragraph 7-4-2, Vectors for Visual Approach, and paragraph 7-6-7, Sequencing.

NOTE–

Issue wake turbulence cautionary advisories in accordance with paragraph 2–1–20, Wake Turbulence Cautionary Advisories.

b. 500 feet vertical separation.

c. Target resolution.

1. Except when ISR is being displayed.

2. Except when established in a local VFR airport traffic pattern, if the lateral distance between two identified targets will reduce below 1 ½ miles laterally, each aircraft involved must be on an assigned course or heading that ensures target resolution.

NOTE–

1. *Aircraft established in a local VFR airport traffic pattern are considered to be under positive control.*

2. *Apply the provisions of paragraph 5–5–4, Minima, subparagraphs g and h, when wake turbulence separation is required.*

REFERENCE–

*FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 7–2–1, Visual Separation.
P/CG Term – Positive Control.*

7–6–3. HELICOPTER/POWERED LIFT TRAFFIC

VFR helicopters and powered-lift aircraft need not be separated from VFR or IFR helicopters or powered-lift aircraft. Traffic advisories and safety alerts must be issued as appropriate.

Paragraph 7–6–2 through 7–6–12, Renumber as 7–6–4 through 7–6–14

No further change to paragraph

7–7–3. SEPARATION

Title through Subparagraph b, No Change

c. Target resolution.

1. Except when ISR is being displayed.

2. Except when established in a local VFR airport traffic pattern, if the lateral distance between two identified targets will reduce below 1 ½ miles laterally, each aircraft involved must be on an assigned course or heading that ensures target resolution.

NOTE–

1. *Aircraft established in a local VFR airport traffic pattern are considered to be under positive control.*

2. *Apply the provisions of paragraph 5–5–4, Minima, subparagraphs g and h, when wake turbulence separation is required.*

REFERENCE–

*FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 7–2–1, Visual Separation.
P/CG Term – Positive Control.*

No further change to paragraph

7–8–3. SEPARATION

Title through Subparagraph b, No Change

c. Target resolution.

1. Except when ISR is being displayed.

2. Except when established in a local VFR airport traffic pattern, if the lateral distance between two identified targets will reduce below 1 ½ miles laterally, each aircraft involved must be on an assigned course or heading that ensures target resolution.

NOTE–

1. *Aircraft established in a local VFR airport traffic pattern are considered to be under positive control*

2. *Apply the provisions of paragraph 5–5–4, Minima, subparagraphs g and h, when wake turbulence separation is required.*

REFERENCE–

*FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 7–2–1, Visual Separation.
P/CG Term – Positive Control.*

No further change to paragraph

7–9–4. SEPARATION

Title through Subparagraph b NOTE, No Change

c. VFR aircraft must be separated from all VFR/IFR aircraft which weigh 19,000 pounds or less by a minimum of:

1. Target resolution, or

(a) Except when ISR is being displayed.

(b) Except when established in a local VFR airport traffic pattern, if the lateral distance between two identified targets will reduce below 1 ½ miles laterally, each aircraft involved must be on an assigned course or heading that ensures target resolution.

2. 500 feet vertical separation, or

NOTE–

1. *Aircraft established in a local VFR airport traffic pattern are considered to be under positive control.*

2. Apply the provisions of paragraph 5-5-4, Minima, subparagraphs g and h, when wake turbulence separation is required.

3. Aircraft weighing 19,000 pounds or less are listed in FAA Order JO 7360.1, Aircraft Type Designators.

REFERENCE-

FAA Order JO 7360.1, Para 2-2, How Designators are Formulated.
P/CG Term - Positive Control.

No further changes to paragraph

6. Distribution. This notice is distributed to the following ATO service units: Air Traffic Services, Mission Support Services, and System Operations, and Safety and Technical Training; the Air Traffic Safety Oversight Service; the William J. Hughes Technical Center; and the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center.

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