NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.789

National Policy

Effective Date:
10/18/26

Cancellation Date:
10/18/27

SUBJ: Revised A449 Authorizations for 14 CFR Parts 121, 121/135, and 135

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice announces a nonmandatory revision to Operations Specification (OpSpec) A449, Drug and Alcohol Testing Program, and the corresponding updates to inspector guidance in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System. The updates announced in this notice affect operators under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) parts 121, 121/135, and 135, and provide guidance to the aviation safety inspectors (ASI) with oversight responsibilities.

2. Audience. The primary audience for this notice is the Flight Standards (FS) Safety Assurance offices' ASIs and the Office of Aerospace Medicine's (AAM) Drug Abatement Division (AAM-800). The secondary audience includes all other FS personnel and offices. This notice is available to the public for information purposes only. Its content is not legally binding on the public in its own right and will not be relied upon by the Department as a separate basis for affirmative enforcement action or other administrative penalty. Public conformity with the guidance document is voluntary only; nonconformity will not affect rights and obligations under existing statutes and regulations.

3. Where to Find This Notice. You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee website at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices and the Dynamic Regulatory System (DRS) at https://drs.faa.gov. Operators and the public can find this notice on the FAA's website at https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices and DRS.

4. Background. Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 18, Section 3, Part A Operations Specifications—General, is updated to clarify the requirements to issue OpSpec A449. The previous guidance discussed the certificate holder (CH) demonstrating compliance prior to issuance of A449. The guidance is updated to clarify that only submission of the information required by 14 CFR §§ 120.117(d) and 120.225(d) is necessary for issuance of OpSpec A449. In addition, the title for 14 CFR parts 121, 121/135, and 135 OpSpec A449 is revised to align with the title for 14 CFR part 145 OpSpec A449, Drug and Alcohol Testing Program.

5. Revised Authorizations. Appendices to this notice show the revised templates. This notice contains the following:

Appendix	Authorizing Document	Paragraph	Applicable to 14 CFR Part
A	OpSpec	A449	121
B	OpSpec	A449	121/135
C	OpSpec	A449	135

6. Action. This is a nonmandatory revision to A449. ASIs should review updated guidance and complete reissuance of the revised A449 within 12 months of the effective date of this notice.

7. Disposition. The information in this notice has been incorporated into Order 8900.1, Volume 3, Chapter 18, Section 3. Direct questions or comments concerning the information in this notice to the Air Transportation Division's Operations Group (AFS-220) at 9-AFS-200-Correspondence@faa.gov or 202-267-8166, or AAM-800 at DrugAbatement@faa.gov or 202-267-8442.



Timothy R. Adams for
Hugh J. Thomas
Executive Director, Flight Standards Service

Appendix A. Sample OpSpec A449, Drug and Alcohol Testing Program: 14 CFR Part 121

a. The certificate holder that conducts operations under 14 CFR Part 121 certifies that it will comply with the requirements of 14 CFR Part 120 and 49 CFR Part 40 for its Drug and Alcohol Testing Program.

b. Drug and Alcohol Testing Program records are maintained and available for inspection by the FAA's Drug Abatement Compliance and Enforcement Inspectors at the location listed in Table 1 below:

Table 1 – Location of Drug and Alcohol Testing Program Records

Address:	
Address:	
City:	
State:	
Zip Code:	
Telephone Number:	

c. Limitations and Provisions.

(1) Drug and Alcohol Testing Program inspections and enforcement activity will be conducted exclusively by the Drug Abatement Division. All questions regarding this program should be directed to the Drug Abatement Division.

(2) The certificate holder must implement its Drug and Alcohol Testing Program fully in accordance with 14 CFR Part 120 and 49 CFR Part 40 no later than the date it starts operations.

(3) The certificate holder is responsible for ensuring that its contractors who perform safety-sensitive work for the certificate holder are subject to a Drug and Alcohol Testing Program.

(4) The certificate holder is responsible for ensuring that the information in Table 1 of this operations specification is kept current by informing the responsible Flight Standards office when any changes occur in the location or phone number where the Drug and Alcohol Testing Program records are kept.

Appendix B. Sample OpSpec A449, Drug and Alcohol Testing Program: 14 CFR Part 121/135

a. The certificate holder that conducts operations under 14 CFR Part 121/135 certifies that it will comply with the requirements of 14 CFR Part 120 and 49 CFR Part 40 for its Drug and Alcohol Testing Program.

b. Drug and Alcohol Testing Program records are maintained and available for inspection by the FAA's Drug Abatement Compliance and Enforcement Inspectors at the location listed in Table 1 below:

Table 1 – Location of Drug and Alcohol Testing Program Records

Address:	
Address:	
City:	
State:	
Zip Code:	
Telephone Number:	

c. Limitations and Provisions.

(1) Drug and Alcohol Testing Program inspections and enforcement activity will be conducted exclusively by the Drug Abatement Division. All questions regarding this program should be directed to the Drug Abatement Division.

(2) The certificate holder must implement its Drug and Alcohol Testing Program fully in accordance with 14 CFR Part 120 and 49 CFR Part 40 no later than the date it starts operations.

(3) The certificate holder is responsible for ensuring that its contractors who perform safety-sensitive work for the certificate holder are subject to a Drug and Alcohol Testing Program.

(4) The certificate holder is responsible for ensuring that the information in Table 1 of this operations specification is kept current by informing the responsible Flight Standards office when any changes occur in the location or phone number where the Drug and Alcohol Testing Program records are kept.

Appendix C. Sample OpSpec A449, Drug and Alcohol Testing Program: 14 CFR Part 135

a. The certificate holder that conducts operations under 14 CFR Part 135 certifies that it will comply with the requirements of 14 CFR Part 120 and 49 CFR Part 40 for its Drug and Alcohol Testing Program.

b. Drug and Alcohol Testing Program records are maintained and available for inspection by the FAA's Drug Abatement Compliance and Enforcement Inspectors at the location listed in Table 1 below:

Table 1 – Location of Drug and Alcohol Testing Program Records

Address:	
Address:	
City:	
State:	
Zip Code:	
Telephone Number:	

c. Limitations and Provisions.

(1) Drug and Alcohol Testing Program inspections and enforcement activity will be conducted exclusively by the Drug Abatement Division. All questions regarding this program should be directed to the Drug Abatement Division.

(2) The certificate holder must implement its Drug and Alcohol Testing Program fully in accordance with 14 CFR Part 120 and 49 CFR Part 40 no later than the date it starts operations.

(3) The certificate holder is responsible for ensuring that its contractors who perform safety-sensitive work for the certificate holder are subject to a Drug and Alcohol Testing Program.

(4) The certificate holder is responsible for ensuring that the information contained in this operations specification is kept current by informing the responsible Flight Standards office when any changes occur in the location or phone number where the Drug and Alcohol Testing Program records are kept, as listed in Table 1 above.

[Select the appropriate statement for the number of safety-sensitive employees, OR, if a government-owned aircraft certificate holder under Department of Transportation (DOT) Order 3910.1, as amended, Drug and Alcohol-Free Departmental Workplace Program, select option 3 OR 4.]

o (5) When the certificate holder has 50 or more employees performing a safety-sensitive function on January 1 of any calendar year, it must submit an annual report to the Drug Abatement Division in accordance with 14 CFR Part 120. The certificate holder is responsible

for informing the responsible Flight Standards office when the number of safety-sensitive employees falls to 49 or fewer.

o (5) When the certificate holder has 49 or fewer employees performing a safety-sensitive function on January 1 of any calendar year, it must submit an annual report upon request of the Administrator to the Drug Abatement Division in accordance with 14 CFR Part 120. The certificate holder is responsible for informing the responsible Flight Standards office when the number of safety-sensitive employees grows to 50 or more.

o (5) Notwithstanding the requirements of this operations specification, the certificate holder with 50 or more employees performing a safety-sensitive function on January 1 of any calendar year operating government-owned aircraft is authorized to use the substance abuse and drug testing program mandated by Department of Transportation (DOT) Order 3910.1, as amended, Drug and Alcohol-Free Departmental Workplace Program, for its management, pilot, and maintenance personnel, in lieu of certain drug and alcohol program requirements contained in 14 CFR Part 120. The certificate holder must submit an annual report to the Drug Abatement Division in accordance with 14 CFR Part 120.

o (5) Notwithstanding the requirements of this operations specification, the certificate holder with 49 or fewer employees performing a safety-sensitive function on January 1 of any calendar year operating government-owned aircraft is authorized to use the substance abuse and drug testing program mandated by Department of Transportation (DOT) Order 3910.1, as amended, Drug and Alcohol-Free Departmental Workplace Program, for its management, pilot, and maintenance personnel, in lieu of certain drug and alcohol program requirements contained in 14 CFR Part 120. The certificate holder must submit an annual report upon request of the Administrator to the Drug Abatement Division in accordance with 14 CFR Part 120.