

2026 Operating Rules – What Members Need to Know

Condor Aero Club, Inc.

Why the Operating Rules are being updated

The current Operating Rules date from the older combined “Charter and Operating Rules” format and mix day-to-day operating procedures with governance concepts. The proposed 2026 Operating Rules are reorganized to work with the updated Charter and Bylaws, so the Club has a clearer structure: the Charter and Bylaws govern how the Club is organized and governed, while the Operating Rules explain how members conduct day-to-day Club operations.

The goal is not to change the spirit of Condor. The goal is to make the rules easier to find, easier to understand, easier for the Board to maintain, and better aligned with today’s operational, safety, insurance, financial, security, and nonprofit requirements.

Key changes and why they matter

1. Clearer document structure

What changed:

The proposed Operating Rules are reorganized into 21 sections covering purpose and authority, membership administration, financial procedures, scheduling, aircraft use, pilot qualifications, instructor standards, safety, facilities, security, maintenance, contracts, conduct, dispute review, accidents/incidents, records, and amendments.

Why:

The old Operating Rules were organized more like a running list of rules, which made some topics harder to find and caused some overlap. The new structure groups related topics together so members can more easily find the rules they need.

2. Better alignment with the Charter and Bylaws

What changed:

The proposed rules now state the governing document hierarchy: Articles of Incorporation, Charter, Bylaws, Operating Rules, and Board-adopted policies. The proposed rules also state that if the Operating Rules conflict with a higher-ranking document, the higher-ranking document controls.

Why:

This prevents confusion about which document controls if there is ever an inconsistency. It also supports the broader governance update by keeping day-to-day operating rules separate from member-ratified governance documents.

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3. Updated nonprofit and member-benefit language

What changed:

The proposed rules add a section explaining that Club aircraft, facilities, services, programs, and resources are intended primarily for members and that operations should be consistent with the Club's nonprofit and tax-exempt status under IRC Section 501(c)(7).

Why:

The Club is a nonprofit, tax-exempt flying club. The updated language helps protect that status by making clear that Club resources are primarily for member benefit and that nonmember use must be limited, Board-approved, and consistent with legal, insurance, FAA, and tax-exempt requirements.

4. Updated membership class and fee presentation

What changed:

The proposed rules include a membership class and fee table for Full Members, Social Members, and Honorary Members. The proposed rules also clarify that instructor approval is an operational designation, not a separate membership class unless the Board expressly creates one.

Why:

The old rules contained membership-related material but were intertwined with the older Charter framework. The new format makes membership categories, voting status, flying status, and current fees easier to understand in one place.

5. Clarified Social Member flying limitation

What changed:

The proposed rules clarify that Social Members do not have flying privileges and may not act as pilot-in-command but may participate in one limited orientation or evaluation flight with a Club-approved instructor to consider upgrading to Full Member status.

Why:

This clarifies that a Social Member orientation flight is not general flying privilege. It preserves flexibility for a Social Member considering a return to flying while protecting the Club, its insurance position, and the distinction between Social and Full Membership.

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6. More complete financial and account procedures

What changed:

The proposed rules organize billing, payment, dues, fees, delinquent accounts, returned payments, prepayments, restricted funds, scholarship funds, and revenue tracking into one financial section. The proposed rules include a clearer delinquency timeline, including notices, late charges, automatic flying suspension at 45 days past due, Board review at 60 days, and termination eligibility at 90 days.

Why:

The old rules addressed charge privileges and prepayment incentives, but the new structure gives members a clearer picture of how accounts are handled and how financial issues affect flying privileges.

7. Reservations moved into a dedicated scheduling section

What changed:

Reservation procedures are now grouped under “Aircraft Scheduling and Access,” including reservation information, responsibility of the reserving member, cancellations, fair access, scheduling administrator limits, reservation limits, reassignment, minimum charges, recording flight time, and delayed returns.

Why:

The old rules included these topics, but they were easier to miss because they appeared in a less structured format. The new version keeps the core reservation concepts while making them easier to find and administer.

8. Cleaner aircraft use and preflight rules

What changed:

The proposed rules consolidate aircraft use, preflight responsibilities, damage or discrepancy reporting, aircraft grounding, hangaring, off-field/overnight procedures, KPJC traffic pattern guidance, landing limitations, refueling, carelessness, damage responsibility, and the Insurance Deductible Fund.

Why:

The old rules covered these topics, but some of the language was repetitive or spread across multiple sections. The new version keeps the substance but improves organization and reduces ambiguity.

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9. Clearer aircraft grounding and return-to-scheduling process

What changed:

The proposed rules clarify that aircraft with potential airworthiness issues must not be flown and must be reported to the Director of Maintenance. The Director of Maintenance is the only Club operational representative authorized to release an aircraft back to Club scheduling after maintenance or grounding, subject to any required FAA maintenance approval by appropriately certificated personnel.

Why:

The old rules allowed return to service by the Maintenance Officer or a Board member, while also stating that FAA rules must be followed. The revised language better separates Club scheduling authority from FAA maintenance approval authority.

10. FAA investigation or certificate action notice added

What changed:

The proposed rules require a member to immediately notify the Board or Director of Flight Training and Standards after learning of an FAA investigation, enforcement action, certificate suspension, revocation, medical qualification issue, or similar regulatory matter that may affect safe or lawful operation of Club aircraft.

Why:

The old rules treated active FAA investigations more automatically. The new approach requires notice and Board review, while allowing temporary restrictions when necessary for safety, insurance, compliance, or asset protection.

11. Pilot qualifications, checkouts, and currency updated and reorganized

What changed:

The proposed rules reorganize flight condition privileges, aircraft-specific checkout requirements, and recurrent proficiency requirements. The revised version retains detailed aircraft-specific expectations for the Basic Cessna 172s, Cessna 172S, Piper Archer, Piper Dakota, and Piper Arrow.

Why:

The old rules contained extensive aircraft checkout and currency language, including weather limits, aircraft categories, student restrictions, and aircraft-specific requirements. The proposed version keeps those operational details but presents them in a cleaner structure.

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12. New “Appointed Operational Positions” section

What changed:

The proposed rules add a dedicated section for appointed operational roles, including the Safety Officer, Director of Maintenance, and Director of Flight Training and Standards. It explains that appointed operational positions do not automatically create officer status, employment status, compensation rights, contract authority, or authority to waive Club rules.

Why:

The old rules included appointed positions such as Safety Officer and Chief Flight Instructor. The new rules modernize these roles, define their responsibilities more clearly, and align the titles with the updated governance documents.

13. Chief Flight Instructor terminology updated

What changed:

The proposed rules replace “Chief Flight Instructor” with “Director of Flight Training and Standards.” This role coordinates training standards, instructor approval recommendations, checkout standards, flight condition authorizations, pilot qualification procedures, student pilot standards, recurrent training, and related records.

Why:

The new title better reflects the role’s broader responsibility for training, standards, instructor coordination, and pilot qualification oversight.

14. Club-approved instructor section strengthened

What changed:

The proposed rules clarify the definition, eligibility, requirements, documentation, approval, renewal, removal, recordkeeping, and participation expectations for Club-approved instructors. The rules also state that instructor approval is an operational designation and does not create a separate membership class, employment relationship, officer position, compensation right, or independent authority to bind the Club.

Why:

The old rules addressed Club instructors, but the updated language better protects the Club by defining instructor status more clearly and tying instructor oversight to the Director of Flight Training and Standards.

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15. Student pilot training provisions retained and modernized

What changed:

The proposed rules retain the supervised solo progression, student pilot limitations, weather briefing expectations, written test expectations, and checkride prerequisite language, while making the language clearer and replacing old references to the Chief Flight Instructor.

Why:

These rules are important for training consistency and aircraft protection. The update keeps the instructional framework but makes the wording more consistent with the new role titles and governance structure.

16. Safety and Education Program added

What changed:

The proposed rules add a Safety and Education Program section covering safety culture, safety reporting, winter operations and seasonal training, education programming, FAA WINGS participation, proficiency clinics, maintenance briefings, emergency procedures, and mentorship activities.

Why:

The old rules included winter seminars and safety officer duties, but the new version creates a broader, more positive framework for ongoing safety and education.

17. Facility access, security, and video surveillance added

What changed:

The proposed rules add a new section covering facility access, door codes, keys, visitor access, tenant access, access logs, video surveillance, audio recording restrictions, camera placement, privacy, access to surveillance footage, security-sensitive records, and security violations.

Why:

The old rules did not address modern facility security and surveillance issues. The new rules recognize current security systems and set expectations for access credentials, surveillance footage, privacy, and security-sensitive information.

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18. Hangar operations and shared facility care added

What changed:

The proposed rules add expectations for hangar operations, facility care, cleanliness, shared spaces, trash, recycling, consumables, snacks, drinks, coffee, damage, facility issues, and supplies.

Why:

The old rules covered hangaring aircraft but did not comprehensively address shared facility courtesy and day-to-day member conduct in the pilot lounge, hangars, restrooms, meeting areas, and workspaces. The new rules make shared-space expectations clearer.

19. Maintenance Program and Standards added by reference

What changed:

The proposed rules add a Maintenance Program and Standards section that defines the Director of Maintenance's coordination role and incorporates the separate Standard Maintenance Operations document by reference.

Why:

This keeps high-level maintenance expectations in the Operating Rules while allowing detailed maintenance protocols to live in a separate operational maintenance document that can be updated as practices, aircraft, and technical requirements change.

20. Fleet Strategy and Governance added

What changed:

The proposed rules add a Fleet Strategy and Governance section stating that the Club will maintain a separate Fleet Strategy and Governance document to guide aircraft availability, member value, financial sustainability, safety, standardization, and long-term planning.

Why:

The old rules were mostly focused on current aircraft operations. The new section gives the Board and Fleet Committee a framework for long-term fleet planning while making clear that the Board makes final decisions on aircraft acquisition, disposition, leases, financing, or material fleet commitments.

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21. Contract approval and signature authority added

What changed:

The proposed rules add a section requiring Board approval for material contracts, including hangar leases, aircraft leases, aircraft leasebacks, financing agreements, aircraft acquisition or disposition documents, and other agreements that create recurring obligations, operational restrictions, insurance obligations, indemnity obligations, security concerns, facility access rights, or material risk to the Club.

Why:

The old rules did not clearly explain who may sign material agreements on behalf of the Club. The new section helps protect the Club from unauthorized commitments and aligns contract authority with Board oversight.

22. Social media policy modernized

What changed:

The old rules included a general social media “dos and don’ts” section. The proposed rules replace that with a more complete policy covering public communications, who may speak for the Club, media inquiries, unsafe or misleading posts, confidential information, security-sensitive information, accident/incident discussion, privacy, and Board requests to remove or correct problematic content.

Why:

Social media can be useful for promoting aviation and Club activities, but it can also affect safety, privacy, insurance, investigations, security, and the Club’s reputation. The new policy encourages positive aviation-related posts while protecting the Club and its members.

23. Discipline language made more flexible and fairer

What changed:

The old rules described a more rigid three-step discipline process and included some provisions suggesting automatic outcomes. The proposed rules allow the Board to use corrective or disciplinary actions ranging from verbal warnings to termination or expulsion, while recognizing that progressive discipline is not required where immediate action is necessary.

Why:

This gives the Board flexibility to respond appropriately to different situations. Minor issues can be handled differently than serious safety, regulatory, insurance, security, or asset-protection issues.

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24. Accident and incident checklist improved

What changed:

The proposed rules create a dedicated accident and incident checklist covering immediate priorities, required Club notification, documentation, preservation, FAA/NTSB/insurance/media issues, aircraft movement and security, temporary flight restrictions, and member cooperation.

Why:

The old rules included accident and incident instructions, but the new checklist is clearer, easier to follow in a stressful situation, and avoids treating every restriction as automatic discipline.

25. Administrative records, templates, and version control added

What changed:

The proposed rules add sections for official repositories, document templates, branding files, forms, records, version control, annual review, publication, and emergency/temporary rules.

Why:

This helps the Club maintain current documents, preserve records, publish updates, and keep operational rules current without needing to rebuild the document from scratch each time.

What is mostly staying the same?

Members should also know that many core operating concepts remain familiar:

- Club aircraft remain for qualified Club members and may not be used for charter or unauthorized nonmember use.
- Members must still meet FAA, insurance, checkout, currency, medical or BasicMed, and Club requirements before flying.
- Reservations still use the Club-approved scheduling system and generally require destination or flight-intent information.
- Reservation limits, late arrival/reassignment rules, minimum charges, and delayed-return expectations are largely preserved but reorganized.
- Winter flying still requires winter training or seminar completion.
- Aircraft-specific checkout and currency rules remain in place, with updated wording and formatting.

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- Student pilot training standards, supervised solo progression, written test expectations, and checkride prerequisites remain in substance but are updated for clarity and role titles.