As we return to in-person training, procedures and protocols have been developed to reduce the risk associated with the transfer of COVID-19. This FIF and FIF 2020-04, together, address the detailed procedures and protocol the College of Aviation has put in place to facilitate the return to flight training. FIF 2020-04 addresses a variety of protocol and includes collegiate level and airplane/FTD specific material. This FIF is specific to the flight operation only and includes modifications to the FOM as well as other operational changes. These are listed below by grouping but are expected to evolve over time as the situation remains very dynamic.

**WMU Flight Operations Guidelines**

*Note: These guidelines are meant to minimize the risk and spread of COVID-19 at WMU. Due to the nature of flight training and the inability to maintain social distancing there is still a risk of contracting COVID-19; everyone who chooses to participate in flight operations must comply with these procedures for them to have maximum effectiveness. Acknowledging this FIF and participating in flight or simulator training is construed as acceptance of the risk outlined above.*

*Students are not required to return to fly if they feel the risk of doing so is too great. In this case, they should communicate their intentions to their assigned CFI or, in the absence of an assigned CFI, a Chief Flight Instructor.*

**All Personnel:**

- All College of Aviation students, faculty, and staff are required to complete an eLearning course covering the COA COVID-19 Mitigation Plan (FIF 2020-04), their individual responsibilities and best practices prior to being granted access to the COA facilities.
**Students/CFIs general information:**

- Cancellations due to illness will not be counted as a “No Show” as long as the event is cancelled at least one hour in advance of the ETA scheduled slot time. In the event a student is turned away at a screening station due to a high temperature or a positive response to one of the questions, a no show will not be assessed.
- Maintain 6 feet distance from other crew members during pre and post flight briefs.
- Double check the IMSAFE checklist placing an emphasis on Stress, Fatigue, and Illness.
- Print off weight and balance, performance and other flight related forms from home (available at [https://wmich.edu/aviation/academics/afs](https://wmich.edu/aviation/academics/afs)) or take copies from Flight Planning. Do not conduct flight planning activities at the Flight Operations building. Plan events at home or in your vehicle. Note: Student cross-country planning and solo events still require SOF approval.
- All students, CFIs and DPEs must Utilize Personal Protective Equipment as outlined in FIF 2020-04; this includes the use of face masks in the cockpit unless it interferes with the safety of flight. Face masks are also required in the public spaces of all buildings.
- When feasible, ground lessons should be completed remotely utilizing programs such as Webex, Zoom, Facetime or Skype to minimize student/CFI contact. Stage and progress checks should be conducted in-person using social distancing standards.
- For make-up part 141 ground school lessons (i.e. AVS 1520, 2510, 3530 and 3550), it may be required to conduct these in person depending on the status of the temporary authorization from the FAA for distance learning. Before conducting a make-up ground school lesson for one of these ground schools, please see a Chief Instructor for clarification on the status of the distance learning approval from the FAA.
- It is understood that pre and post flight briefing must take place. Whenever possible, do so remotely or outside while maintaining social distancing. If that is not possible, a limited number of tables with chairs spaced 6’ apart are available within COA buildings. Briefing rooms may be used for very short duration events.
- When feasible, after signing student logbooks, CFI’s are encouraged to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer.

**Maintenance:**

- The Maintenance Hangar is closed to all non-maintenance personnel.
- Aircraft maintenance troubleshooting will be handled remotely by phone call or form of video media (e.g. WebEx, Facetime or Skype) if requested by Fleet Maintenance. If this is not feasible, then a discussion with maintenance personnel may take place outside the maintenance hangar while maintaining 6’ social distancing requirements.
- When bringing an aircraft to maintenance, park in front of hangar (or in an available space on the North ramp) and disinfect cockpit controls and door handles utilizing approved methods outlined in FIF 2020-04. Contact maintenance via phone [(269) 964-7318](tel:(269)964-7318) to let them know the aircraft is outside. Approach the maintenance facility from the ramp side and announce your arrival with the aircraft tin. Keep six-foot separation and wear a mask when dropping off the tin.
- When an aircraft is finished at maintenance, maintenance personnel will pull the aircraft out of the hangar and leave it in front of the hangar and notify flight ops that the aircraft is airworthy.
- Do not enter the maintenance hangar unless entrance is approved by maintenance personnel.
- If off base maintenance is performed by a maintenance facility other than WMU’s, the crew shall clean the cockpit as outlined in FIF 2020-04 before conducting flight operations. Note: in this case, regular WMU provided cleaning supplies may not be readily available and the crew may have to use the resources at hand to clean the airplane to the best of their ability.

**Flight Restrictions and FOM changes**
- Aircraft and simulator occupancy will be limited to minimum crew. Except for CRJ operations, occupancy will be limited to one person for solo activities and two people for dual and team ride/safety pilot activities. Exceptions must be approved by the Chief Instructor. Unless otherwise approved and required for operational reasons, no passengers will be allowed on flights (including personal use).
- CRJ operations will be limited to minimum crew as approved by the CRJ instructor.
- To help limit the potential for COVID-19 exposure, flight crews should not exit aircraft at outstation airports unless absolutely necessary.
  - Crews should plan to leave Battle Creek with sufficient fuel reserves to complete the entire flight. Note 1: Safety of flight and appropriate fuel reserves shall always be followed. Note 2: For long qualifying cross-country events, a fuel stop will likely be required; do not be tempted to cut reserve fuel short.
  - No use of crew cars
  - No lunch or dinner out! Please plan appropriately and pack a meal if necessary.
  - No business at out station airports, this includes meeting family members or for other social visits.
  - Outstation stops should be for physiological (i.e. bathroom) or operational (e.g. fuel, maintenance difficulty or weather diversion) needs only.
  - Approved airports for use may change (i.e. become limited) depending on the presence of COVID-19 hot spots. This will be communicated to crews as the need arises.
- When planning cross country flights, crews are encouraged to
  - Review executive orders from neighboring states to ensure aircraft activity is permissible.
  - Ensure that the FBO is open for business if an FBO stop is required.
  - Review any temporary restrictions posted in the flight planning area established to avoid high exposure (hot spot) areas.
- If it is necessary to exit the aircraft at an outstation airport, maintain six-foot separation whenever possible and when not possible, wear a mask.
- After-hours operations will be on a limited basis initially and remain subject to Chief or Assistant Chief approval.

**Dispatch:**
- Until further notice, students and CFIs will not be allowed in Dispatch except for essential functions.
- When you have arrived at the airport, if the screening station is not in use, contact Dispatch via phone at (269-964-4037) to announce your arrival. Wait until cleared by Dispatch to enter the building.
- Depending on building occupancy limitations, aircraft tins/keys may be delivered by the dispatcher to a crew outside (ramp side) the dispatch area.
- No loitering in dispatch whatsoever.
- The Dispatch service counter and the SOF service counter will each be limited to one person at a time.
- The CFI shall authorize activities for dual and D-PIC flights and the SOF shall authorize activities for solo and PIC flights.
- Aircraft will be assigned in ETA per normal procedures. If a specific N-number aircraft is required for weight/balance and performance calculations for a cross country or check flight, students are to call dispatch for coordination.
- At the completion of a flight or FTD lesson the CFI (or PIC) will return the keys to the dispatch counter or, on busy days, another designated drop off location for the Dispatcher to clean and issue to the next crew.
- Loaner headsets and Vibans will not be issued by Dispatch; iPad and Stratus units will still be available to CFI's, however.
- To better facilitate flow of traffic, pedestrian traffic to the ramp side will exit via the dispatch vestibule door. Returning pedestrian traffic will enter via the door by CFI office area.

Scheduling:
- For the near term, a maximum of seven flights will be scheduled at any given time to minimize personnel at airport and accommodate an aircraft cleaning schedule.

Flight Ops Building
- Access to the College of Aviation shall be limited to those involved with in-person training and essential business. Unless they are customers of Air Docs proceeding to the third floor, guests will not be permitted into buildings or airplanes until further notice.
- Individuals should limit time in buildings to minimize the potential for cross exposure.
- The Flight Planning Room is closed for pre-flight planning and general congregation until further notice.
- No congregating or studying in the Flight Operation building.

It is understood the above represents significant changes to how we do business. We ask for your patience as we navigate this challenge. Please remember that not every student or CFI may feel comfortable with these procedures and thus resuming flight operations will be a personal decision for each student and CFI and this decision may change as more information about COVID 19 becomes available. Please be considerate and understanding of those who choose not to fly during this time. Also, remember that the situation is evolving, and flight operations may shut down (or restrictions may change/ease) at any given time due to new information, WMU guidance, or governmental restrictions.