Command Pilot Manual

Revised February 2025

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Welcome

Congratulations on becoming a Command Pilot with Uphaven!

On behalf of our Board and team, we are excited to welcome you to our community of volunteer pilots – a role which we call a Command Pilot. Uphaven Operations, our mission coordination team, is here to make your first mission, and every mission thereafter, a rewarding experience.

This manual will give you a good start on learning about Uphaven and what being a Command Pilot with us is all about. Read it. Take it with you. Use it!

About Uphaven

Our mission.

At Uphaven, we help families stay connected to pediatric medical care and to each other throughout a child's healthcare journey.

Who we are.

Uphaven is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization offering free flights and ground transportation services for families traveling to and from healthcare facilities in the Milwaukee area – we're all about making sure nothing gets in the way of kids receiving the care they need, right by their family's side. No distance or financial hurdles can stop us!

What we do.

Uphaven is built on a foundation of love, integrity, and a deep understanding of what families need most – each other. We offer families a glimmer of strength, solace, and empowerment, especially at a time when all they may know how to feel is scared or helpless. Uphaven strives to keep care close and families closer, to literally lift them UP into a HAVEN of love, peace, and courage during their toughest times.

On Leni's wings we fly.

Our values.

Integrity – Doing what we say and keeping people first.

Authenticity – Staying true to our purpose, mission, and to ourselves.

Empathy – Always considering the unique journey of families and team members.

Safety – Safe place, safe travels.

Accessibility – Access to care, access to family, access to home.

Our values mean so much to us and we trust that they do to you, too. They should not only be used as guardrails for how we reach our families in need, but also with our partners, our communities, and most importantly, yourself. We want so badly for you to feel at home here, for you to feel comfortable, supported, to be fulfilled, and to thrive. We want our success to be measured by the combination of the impact we make for the lives of the families we are supporting, and by the happiness you feel in your heart. Your heart is what keeps so many others going all around you and it's what keeps Uphaven's mission strong.

Uphaven Websites

Available missions: Volunteer Portal.

Our mission coordination system, known as the Volunteer Portal, where pilots can see and volunteer for upcoming missions, view pending mission requests and upcoming assigned missions, and file mission reports.

Flyuphaven.org

Our main website contains general information about our organization. Some key features include:

- ➔ **Volunteer Resources** – download copies of important and useful documents, such as handbooks, forms, waivers, and best practices summaries.
- ➔ **Volunteer Portal** – log in via the Volunteer Portal link at the top of our website.
- ➔ **News & Stories** – view our newsletter with updates, stories, and articles published online.

Our Passengers

People we fly.

Uphaven provides flights for children and their families. The people we serve include:

- ➔ Children with medical appointments and/or follow-up care.
- ➔ Families that require long-term hospital stay support – this includes parents of a child, siblings, friends, religious support, etc.
- ➔ Urgent family supplement support whose child is transported to Children's Wisconsin for advanced care via helicopter and their transport team.

Partnerships with other organizations.

Uphaven works closely with the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Eastern Wisconsin and Children's Wisconsin. They have been with us since our beginning and have shown us how to lend a helping hand in ways families never even think to ask. Uphaven is here to extend that love and care to families, making sure it's delivered efficiently, reliably, safely, and sustainably. We are also working with partner airlines, aircraft charter and local Part 135 flight operators when needed and as resources are available. We will continue to expand our partnerships across the region to increase efficiencies and grow our impact.

Qualifying a passenger.

Our Operations team ensures that each family meets specific requirements before posting a mission. The following is an outline of qualifications:

- ➔ Children (18 years old or younger) and their families.
- ➔ Receiving care at Children's Wisconsin and/or lodging at Ronald McDonald House Charities of Eastern Wisconsin.
- ➔ Traveling two hours or more from the Milwaukee area (drive time).
- ➔ Medically stable and requiring no medical assistance during a flight.
- ➔ Able to walk, climb stairs, and get into an aircraft seat without help.
- ➔ Non-emergency situation: Uphaven does not provide Air Ambulance or emergency rescue services.
- ➔ Uphaven embraces all families, regardless of financial situations, as applicable. We do, however, ask that families be mindful, as each mission represents considerable cost and resources to you. We ask that families consider making a donation to Uphaven if financially able. There may be a financial eligibility requirement for longer flights supported by airlines and other charter partners, governed by their policies.

Volunteer Pilot Policies

Volunteer Pilot requirements.

To prioritize the safety of both our pilots and the families we serve, Uphaven requires all pilots to meet the following minimum qualifications:

- **Private or Commercial Pilot**:
  - Total PIC – 250hrs
  - X-Country PIC – 75hrs
- **Medical Certificate**: Must hold a current medical certificate per FAR 61.53 (including BasicMed)
- **Currency**: Must be current per all applicable FARs and meet at least one of the following criteria within each specified timeframe in the applicable aircraft make/model:

  Within the Last 12 Months
  - Flight Review per FAR 61.56, or
  - Insurance-approved recurrent training program at an approved facility, or
  - Part 121 or 135 line check, or
  - New FAA certificate or rating check ride, or
  - Instrument Proficiency Check (IPC) (per FAR 61.57(d)), or
  - One phase of the FAA Wings Pilot Proficiency Program.

  Within the Last 90 Days
  - Logged at least 12 hours as PIC in the applicable aircraft make/model; or
  - Completed 2 hours of dual flight training with a certified flight instructor in the applicable aircraft make/model.
- **Insurance**: Whether flying rented or owned aircraft, have in force liability insurance providing minimum coverage of $500,000 per occurrence and $100,000 per seat

Pilot applicants must confirm at orientation (and annually thereafter) their commitment to comply with all FARs and Uphaven minimum requirements, hold the required certificates and ratings, maintain aircraft currency, and ensure active insurance coverage.

Volunteer Pilot applicant checklist.

1. Complete the Volunteer Application.
2. Review this manual you're reading right now!
3. Complete the required (free) AOPA ASI Public Benefit Flying course. Make sure to save your certificate of completion – you'll need to upload it with your other documents, later.
4. Complete your self-paced, online Uphaven Volunteer Orientation. You'll receive an email with the link and password after completing your Application. Note that you can save your progress at any time by using the "Save" button at the bottom of each page.
5. Compile the required documents to upload at the end of your Orientation:
    - AOPA Safety Foundation Course Certificate
    - Proof of Aircraft Insurance
    - Profile picture
    - Pilot Certificate
    - Medical Certification
6. Complete your background screening with TrueHire. You will receive instructions via email after completing the orientation. Can't find the information? Email us at volunteer@flyuphaven.org.
7. Hooray! You're now an official Uphaven Command Pilot and ready to fly your first mission. You'll be emailed an invitation to set up your account for the Volunteer Portal.

For more information on flying to help others, please read this AOPA article on public benefit flying and why pilots must assume all expenses of the charity flight: https://www.aopa.org/news-and-media/all-news/2019/july/pilot/ownership-flying-to-help-others.

Support for Volunteer Pilots

Mission Coordination (Operations).

Our Mission Coordination (Operations) team acts as the primary point of contact among pilots, passengers, requesters, and health care providers. The team approves passenger requests and finds volunteer pilots to fly available missions.

Fixed-Based Operators (FBOs).

Discounts on Fuel and Fee Waivers

Many FBOs offer discounts on fuel and other fees for charitable flights. In some cases, we have this information and will provide it to you. If you don't know if an FBO will provide a discount, it's always a good idea to ask.

If an airport or an FBO requires documentation to provide a discount, the coordination team will generally provide this documentation proactively in advance of your flight.

Note: Uphaven is a relatively new organization and it will take some time for many of the FBOs to become familiar with us. With your help in spreading the word and your patience, we'll obtain more discounts as we work to streamline this process for everyone.

Safety Above All Else!

All missions flown are conducted safely and with the passenger's comfort in mind.

The Uphaven Volunteer Pilot is responsible for planning the flight, determining their ability to conduct the flight safely within the mission timeframe, conducting or canceling the flight, and doing their best to assure the comfort of their passengers.

This section provides Uphaven's guidance for achieving this mission objective.

Uphaven Volunteer Pilots provide a great service for their passengers. They volunteer to provide transportation because they want to help others. Along with the desire to help comes the responsibility to ensure a safe trip. Uphaven wants all Volunteer Pilots to keep safety at the forefront as they plan and execute their missions. With that goal, this section covers some of the key safety aspects to be considered when flying Uphaven missions. Safe missions start with a pilot's expectations and attitude. Uphaven's three rules of safety are::

1. No pilot is required to accept any mission.
2. No pilot is required to complete a mission if at all in doubt about completing it safely.
3. No pilot may compromise safety in any way to complete a mission.

Canceling a mission is considered a demonstration of good judgment and will never be criticized. If these three tenets are kept in mind, then a pilot can expect to have an enjoyable time participating in Uphaven missions.

Passenger safety and comfort.

Uphaven often carries first- or low-time general aviation passengers. These passengers may have concerns and fears and need some knowledge and personal management to ensure their comfort and safety. To ensure the passenger's safety and comfort, the pilot should:

- ➔ **Introduce general aviation to first time passengers**. The time spent providing a general explanation about flying to a passenger while doing an abbreviated walk around will often assuage a passenger's concerns and fears. One media induced misconception from both television and movies is that if the engine was to stop; an aircraft would immediately go into an almost uncontrollable dive. A short light-hearted explanation that an airplane operating without an engine is simply a short-winged glider can often abate that misconception and minimize any nervousness.

- ➔ **Manage your passengers on the ramp**. Passengers often don't know about the dangers that airplanes present (like invisible spinning props). Escort your passengers to and from your aircraft, making certain that everyone is under control. This is especially important with children. Make certain that your engines are shut down prior to enplaning/deplaning and manage your passengers so they remain clear of other aircraft, whether the engines are operating or not.

- ➔ **Complete a thorough passenger briefing**. FAR 91.519 requires that a pilot provide a thorough briefing for all passengers on every flight. A good briefing includes explaining seat belt and shoulder harness operation; operation of entry doors and emergency exits; location and use of survival equipment, life jackets, and life vests; the use of oxygen masks; as well as what the passenger should and shouldn't do during the flight. From an operational standpoint, the passengers should be briefed on how to use headsets (and where to place the microphone), the intercom (if equipped), the pilot's preferred hand signals, and so forth. Pilots should be prepared to communicate with passengers who are blind, deaf, or those who speak a language other than that which the pilot speaks. For deaf passengers, ensure a paper and pen are available.

- ➔ **Seat belts on all passengers**. Seat belts must always be worn. Young children and infants MUST be in appropriate FAA approved car seats and these seats MUST be attached to passenger seats and oriented correctly for the age of the child and type of seat. No child seat should ever be attached to a front seat.

- ➔ **Sterile cockpit as required**. Passengers should be told that from engine start through the climb to cruise altitude is considered a "sterile cockpit" time where the passengers should only speak to the pilot if there are personal problems or issues or to assist the pilot (e.g. pointing out other aircraft). The same "sterile cockpit" rule should apply from the pilot's specified point on the descent to the destination through engine shut down. The pilot should explain to the passenger(s) how they should get the pilot's attention if they do have a problem or issue and should notify the passenger when it is appropriate to speak freely.

- ➔ **Monitor weather conditions**. The pilot should continue to monitor weather conditions throughout the flight, especially if weather conditions warrant. The pilot should use FSS, and/or onboard satellite weather. If there are any questions regarding the weather, the pilot should create an alternate strategy, which may include returning to the departure airport, diverting to an alternate, or holding for the weather to clear. If the weather makes a successful completion of the flight questionable, the pilot should discuss the weather and the options with the passenger and, together, agree to an alternative strategy. Remember, however, that the Pilot in Volunteer has the final decision. A safe conclusion to any flight is the ultimate goal.

- ➔ **Monitor fuel usage & requirements**. During the flight, the pilot is expected to continually monitor fuel consumption and remaining fuel. This becomes even more important if there are weather or other issues that may require a diversion or holding.
- ➔ **Use ATC/aircraft resources**. Uphaven requires VFR and IFR filing, VFR Flight Following (as applicable and when available), and the use of all ATC resources anytime there is an issue of safety. The passenger(s) can also be used as a resource (for example, asking the passenger to watch for other airplanes is always a good use of the passenger).
- ➔ **Monitor your passenger's condition**. Being constantly aware of your passenger's condition can mean a great difference in the success of a flight. If your passenger is uncomfortable for whatever reason, it is the pilot's responsibility to initiate an action. Often that will mean nothing more than providing fresh air or changing to an altitude that is smoother. If the passenger is physically uncomfortable, however, it might mean diverting to another airport or returning to the departure airport. In extreme cases where the passenger's condition might be life threatening, it might require declaring an emergency and flying directly to an airport located near suitable medical facilities. If you encounter a questionable situation, declare an emergency and land as soon as practicable.
- ➔ **Flight Instruction**. Flight training while Uphaven passengers are on board the aircraft is prohibited. This can give the passenger the impression that the pilot is unaware of how to fly the aircraft. You may take a flight instructor along as a Mission Assistant, but he/she can only instruct on the dead-head leg. Additionally, please use care when communicating with another pilot in the right seat. Chatter about the "right" way to do something, casual comments about safety and other inappropriate comments can make a passenger uncomfortable or frightened.

The Eight Deadly Flying Sins.

Studies done by the AOPA's Air Safety Institute and other organizations have identified a finite set of causative factors that lead to most accidents with injuries and fatalities. The ASI's 2007 Nall Report statistics state that pilots were the cause of 73.8% of all GA accidents and 79.1% of all fatal accidents. If a conscientious pilot avoids the following traps, it minimizes the likelihood of an accident.

- ➔ **Fuel mismanagement**. Fuel mismanagement constituted nearly 9% of all GA accidents. This type of accident happens nearly twice a week and is almost always avoidable.
- ➔ **Overloaded and/or out of center of gravity**. General aviation aircraft are reasonably limited in terms of payload and CG. Each aircraft's documents contain the aircraft's official "weight and balance" table so the pilot can ensure the aircraft as loaded is safe to fly. An overloaded aircraft doesn't perform at POH performance values, the stall speed is higher than normal, and an aircraft that is out of CG can be uncontrollable.
- ➔ **High density altitude operations**. All pilots should always be aware of the performance robbing effect of density altitude. Density altitude is an insidious danger because it doesn't have to be particularly hot for it to have a major impact on an aircraft's takeoff and climb performance, especially at heavy weights.

- ➔ **Takeoff and landing accidents**. Although typically not deadly, landings and takeoffs are responsible for an inordinate number of accidents each year. According to the Nall Report, almost 57% of all accidents happen during takeoff or landing. Not surprisingly, a full 40% happened during landing. Wind and turbulence, un-extended landing gear, loss of control, and midair collisions on final, are some of the hazards of airport operations.
- ➔ **Maneuvering accidents**. Maneuvering flight has been the number one cause of fatalities in general aviation. During the last ten years, more than one-quarter of all fatal accidents happened during maneuvering flight. Low altitude maneuvering accidents are usually fatal and often, but not exclusively, the result of a pilot operating an aircraft in marginal weather conditions.
- ➔ **Continued VFR flight into IMC conditions**. Continued VFR flight into IMC conditions is usually 100% fatal to non-instrument rated pilots. IFR flights into severe weather conditions claim instrument rated pilots as well.
- ➔ **Controlled Flight into Terrain (CFIT)**. CFIT accidents are usually attributed to IFR operations, but CFIT accidents also happen during VFR operations, especially at night.
- ➔ **Must complete the flight mindset**. Also referred to as get-home-itis. Pilots of all ratings and hours have succumbed to the desire to complete the flight and ended their flights in a tragic way. Beware and do not fall into this trap.

Potential risky mindset.

Uphaven pilots are subject to all the Eight Deadly Sins listed above, but the one that may be most compelling to an Uphaven pilot is the last one, a pilot's desire to complete a flight in the face of risk. After all, an Uphaven mission isn't just a personal flight; it is a flight to help someone in need. The pressure to complete the flight might come from some of the following motives:

- ➔ Carrying an unknown person as passenger. It is sometimes more difficult to disappoint a stranger than someone you know.
- ➔ Awareness of passenger's personal needs. As a compassion flight pilot, we want to help our passengers. The more we know about the person and their needs the more we want to make sure we deliver them to their destination.
- ➔ Signed up for the mission. Pilots have a strong personal motivation to complete what they start. When a pilot signs up for a mission, it is their nature to complete the mission.
- ➔ Personal obligations afterward. If a pilot has personal obligations after a mission, there will be pressure to complete the mission.
- ➔ Proximity to the Destination. The closer the aircraft is to the destination, the greater the desire to complete the flight.

Priorities in an emergency.

Many accidents are the result of a series of incidents, mistakes, or bad decisions; otherwise known as a safety chain. Often, all it takes to stop an accident is for one of the links in the chain to be broken. The best way to do that is to always make good decisions. But if there is a problem or issue, there are some things that can be done to mitigate the risk.

- ➔ With any problem or issue, the pilot must fly the aircraft first.
- ➔ Know emergency procedures for the aircraft. Use emergency checklists when available.
- ➔ Use ATC as well as your passengers to identify a landing site, provide directions, read a check list, find a frequency, whatever is necessary.
- ➔ If the problem warrants, the pilot should DECLARE AN EMERGENCY. That ensures you can do what you need to do without endangering other aircraft, and you will have 100% of ATC's focus and assistance. Pilots are often reluctant to declare, but every pilot needs to understand that when the situation warrants, declaring an emergency shows sound decision making and good judgment.
- ➔ As difficult as it sounds, forcing yourself to remain calm and talking through the problem and solution can keep you from fixating.
- ➔ Finally, as the old saying goes, runway behind, fuel left on the ground and altitude above are all worthless, so keep those in mind as you plan and fly any flight. Additional altitude can, for example, make an acceptable off-airport landing location accessible and additional fuel can take the stress out of a hold vs. divert decision.

Think, act, and fly like a professional.

There are many reasons that the airlines and professional business pilots have better accident records than general aviation pilots. Some of their success has to do with the aircraft they fly and the ground support and resources that they have access to. Much of their success has to do with their professional attitudes and planning.

Professional pilots operate to more stringent rules than non-professional pilots. They often have regulatory minimums and other criteria that they set and follow as well. For example, they have mandated very specific official rules in terms of fuel, weather, pilot rest, and so forth. But they may personally set higher instrument approach minimums depending upon their flight and instrument currency. While you can't avail yourself of their company resources, you can follow their lead:

- ➔ **Set "Personal Minimums" for yourself**. A tired, ill, or distracted pilot is prone to make mistakes. Be honest about your health, whether you are rested, whether you have personal/family issues, and so forth. Don't fly if there is any question.
- ➔ **Set flight minimums**. Set enroute and airport weather minimums below which you won't fly. Verify your aircraft's take-off and landing performance is suitable for the airports you plan to operate out of at the desired mission weight and then add a safety factor. Set personal instrument weather minimums that are appropriate for your instrument currency and abide by them. Set personal criteria for every phase of flight.

- **Use checklists**. It is a given that professional pilots use checklists. Always use your checklists.
- **Communicate with the passenger**. Good communication with the passenger is important, especially if there are issues with the weather, completing the flight, and so forth. But it is also important to keep the passenger informed regarding the state of the flight and the current ETA. As the Pilot in Command, you make the final decision, but if your passenger understands and agrees with your decision, the passenger will be more comfortable, and you will be able to better focus on the remaining flight.
- **Monitor weather conditions**. Professional pilots recognize that weather will often be the primary factor in a successful flight. As a result, they monitor the weather to minimize any surprises and they make informed decisions earlier than pilots who aren't as aware.
- **Monitor fuel usage & requirements**. A pilot should always know how much fuel is remaining, how much is required to reach the destination, and how much to reach the alternate with a legal quantity of fuel remaining onboard. With that knowledge, the stress and cause of many general aviation accidents completely disappears.
- **Use ATC/aircraft resources**. Airline pilots usually have a copilot, often a flight engineer, and usually instant access to ground support resources through air to ground communications. As a general aviation pilot, we rarely have any of the above. But we often have an autopilot, a passenger, and we can always count on ATC as a resource. Use them all to make the flight more professional.

Flight and instrument currency.

By signing the Uphaven Volunteer Affirmation Form, each Volunteer Pilot agrees to remain proficient and abide by the FAA's minimum currency requirements for the appropriate category of aircraft being flown on any Uphaven mission:

- Day VFR - Three takeoffs and landings within 90 days.
- Night VFR - Three takeoffs and landings to a full stop within 90 days during the period beginning one hour after sunset and ending one hour before sunrise.
- Instrument Operations - Six instrument approaches, holding, and intercepting and tracking courses using navigation systems in actual IMC or simulated IMC conditions within six calendar months, or an IPC within the last 12 months.

Are you proficient? The question that must be asked and answered honestly is: Are those currency minimums enough? Single pilot night and instrument operations are some of the most demanding operations in general aviation. Low or deteriorating weather conditions increase the requirement that a pilot be on his game. Crosswinds can be a challenge even when a pilot is current. Remember, proficiency is a product of more than just recent flight time. Personal health, rest, family and work situations, and so on all can affect a pilot's concentration and focus.

Ask yourself whether your personal situation, currency, and proficiency not only meet the legal requirements, but the common-sense requirement for safe operations for the conditions you may encounter. If there is any doubt, then set higher minimums for each type of operation.

Ongoing study.

All pilots benefit from ongoing learning and training. Uphaven encourages all pilots to actively participate in the Wings Program and to avail themselves of the learning resources of the AOPA Safety Institute and the FAA. URLs for both are

- ➔ AOPA Safety Institute: https://www.aopa.org/training-and-safety/air-safety-institute
- ➔ FAA: https://www.faasafety.gov

Scenario Based Flight Review.

Uphaven pilots should consider comprehensive Scenario Based Flight Reviews and practices that consider some of the factors that are inherent in Uphaven Pilot missions, such as:

- ➔ Small and large airport operations,
- ➔ Flights into new or unusual environments (e.g. busy terminal areas, mountainous terrain, coastal airports, etc.),
- ➔ Risk assessment and decision making,
- ➔ Weather operations specific to all possible mission areas (e.g. desert density altitude operations, mountainous terrain, local weather patterns, marine layer, icing, etc.),
- ➔ Multi-leg flight planning and operations,
- ➔ Diverting or returning to the departure airport,
- ➔ IFR introduction and practice (for VFR Pilots), and
- ➔ Instrument Currency and Competency (for IFR Rated Pilots).

By studying and reviewing these during Flight Reviews, a pilot will be better prepared for Uphaven missions.

Safety Is Your Responsibility! - Three rules of safety.

As an Uphaven Pilot, you will have the opportunity to fly missions in a variety of weather conditions, into and out of a variety of airports, and with a variety of passengers. The responsibility for a safe flight is yours alone. At the same time, Uphaven missions provide an opportunity for you to increase your decision making and piloting skills while you are helping others. Once again, always remember our three basic safety principles:

1. No pilot is required to accept any mission.
2. No pilot is required to complete a mission if at all in doubt about completing it safely.
3. No pilot may compromise safety in any way to complete a mission.

Canceling a mission.

Canceling a mission due to safety is considered a demonstration of good judgment and will never be criticized.

Consequences of non-compliance.

Failure to carry out Uphaven's safety policies may result in your being suspended from Command Pilot status and/or denied future missions.

Mission Procedures

Uphaven has an online Volunteer Portal for communicating with our volunteer pilots and drivers and for facilitating mission coordination.

Members are typically notified of upcoming missions by email or by logging into the Volunteer Portal and checking the Available Missions page. The portal is accessible by members 24/7 and requires your username and password for access.

Here are a few of the things you can do using the Volunteer Portal:

- ➔ View a list of Available Missions that correspond to outstanding family requests for transportation.
- ➔ Request an Available Mission from the list, which communicates with Uphaven Operations that you are available and willing to fly that particular mission.
- ➔ View your Pending and Filled mission requests.
- ➔ Download a PDF of the complete Mission Itinerary once Uphaven Operations has reviewed your request and assigned you to the mission. This Mission Itinerary will also be emailed to you.
- ➔ File mission reports.
- ➔ Update your personal information in our database.
- ➔ View Uphaven announcements on the Volunteer Portal homepage.

Managing your account settings.

Once you've logged into the Volunteer Portal, you will see different links at the top of the page. Click on the icon with your initials, and then click "My Profile." There, you can update your email address and change your password.

Procedures for requesting a mission.

Before you request a mission

You must be approved as a qualified Volunteer Pilot in accordance with Uphaven procedures at the time of each flight.

You must meet the requirements as stipulated in the Uphaven Volunteer Affirmation Form. By signing this Affirmation form prior to flying an Uphaven mission, Volunteer Pilots agree to adhere to these requirements.

If you have any questions about these policies or procedures, please contact the Uphaven office at (414) 207-4567.

Getting a mission to fly

You may secure a mission by one or more of the following:

1. **Uphaven Volunteer Portal**: You can view and request available missions on the Available Mission page. (Note: This is the most current information on mission availability and the most expeditious way of requesting a flight.)
2. **Email distribution**: You are subscribed to an email distribution list that sends a list of available missions twice each week. To opt out of this email list, please let us know at operations@flyuphaven.org.
3. **Calling Uphaven Operations directly**: You may call the office at (414) 207-4567 to inquire about current available missions. You may be able to connect to a mission at the time of your call. You are also encouraged to inform the office of any trip you are making when you have space available on your airplane.
4. **A call or text from an Uphaven Coordinator**: You may receive a call or text message from Uphaven Operations staff or from a volunteer requesting you to fly a mission that we think fits your particular availability and aircraft. You are never obligated to fly a mission.
5. **Periodic Email Requests to Fly a Mission**: Uphaven Operations occasionally sends out emails requesting pilots for upcoming missions that have not been covered, for last minute pilot cancellations, or in rare cases for last minute mission requests.

List of available missions & requesting a mission

On the Available Missions page of the Volunteer Portal, when you see a mission you are interested in flying, click on the “Request this mission!” button. The status of the mission will change to “Pending” and Uphaven Operations will be notified of your request.

You will receive an email from Uphaven Operations acknowledging your request and asking you to sign the Volunteer Affirmation form prior to assigning you the mission. Click the link in the email to fill out the quick form and sign.

After Uphaven Operations has reviewed your request and received your signed Affirmation, you will receive an email confirming your flight assignment and outlining details of your flight, including a PDF copy of your Mission Itinerary.

View information for upcoming missions assigned to you.

You can view a list of the missions you have requested (status is "Pending") and missions you are assigned to (status is "Assigned") by clicking the "My Missions" link at the top of the page on the Volunteer Portal.

Once your mission has officially been assigned, you will also see a button with the option to Download the Mission Itinerary for those trips.

Once you have accepted a mission.

Uphaven Operations staff will always have qualified a passenger for a mission. The qualification process includes:

- ➔ In the case of a medically related mission, obtaining a medical release from the passenger's physician, and
- ➔ Determining that the circumstances warrant Uphaven services.

If you have any questions regarding criteria for qualifying for a mission, please contact the Operations staff.

A copy of the Mission Itinerary with details for the family you will be flying will have been emailed to you. *Please read the entire form before making any phone calls*. The form will include:

1. Family member's name(s), address and phone number(s),
2. Uphaven volunteer driver name(s), address, and phone number(s) (if applicable),
3. Name(s) of any family members/companions flying,
4. Weights of all passengers and of baggage,
    a. NOTE: If you are flying the "to treatment" flight and passengers make last-minute changes in the weights or additional companions listed on the Mission Itinerary that result in an increased weight or passenger numbers, it is imperative that you contact the Uphaven office before departing. Please remember that the pilot flying the return flight may not have the same weight or seat capabilities.
    b. You as Volunteer Pilot have the prerogative of denying or accommodating the increased weight or additional passenger(s), including excess baggage.
5. Flight and/or appointment times,
6. Agency name, contact person(s) and phone numbers,

7. Medical situation of child or other compelling need,
8. Scheduled date of flight,
9. Origin and destination airports,
10. Destination lodging and facility information, if applicable, and
11. Baggage and/or any medical equipment description, (e.g. wheelchair, oxygen, car seat).

Contacting a passenger.

Once you are assigned to a mission and receive the Mission Itinerary, Command Pilots are to contact the family directly, unless informed otherwise by Uphaven Operations.

This must be done as soon as possible, regardless of when the flight is scheduled, even if you don't have all the details at that moment. Passengers can get anxious when they do not know a pilot has been assigned to their flight.

Your normal communications will be directly with the parent or guardian involved, unless Uphaven Operations has informed you that you are to contact the requester (for example, a social worker) instead of the parent/guardian).

Following is an example checklist for your initial contact with the family:

1. Inform passenger of appropriate rendezvous point. Be very specific, e.g. the exact airport (especially in areas where there are multiple airports); which building; inside or outside; etc. Remember, many passengers may not be familiar with General Aviation airports/FBOs etc. so please make sure they understand where at the airport to meet.
2. Describe yourself and ask the passenger to describe himself/herself. Wearing Uphaven logo clothing can help with this process.
3. Describe the airplane and provide the tail number.
4. Inform passengers of the flight's estimated arrival time so he/she can notify pick up people on the other end of the flight.
5. Although passengers have already been informed that they should have backup plans in case of a cancellation, it would be wise to remind them to do so. They should either be able to change their appointment or have an alternate transportation plan.
6. Ask the passenger if they have planned for ground transportation at their destination.

Uphaven provides ground transportation when and where available. In those cases, Uphaven will provide Ground Guardian (Volunteer Driver) contact information to pilots as part of the Mission Itinerary. All other instances, passengers are expected to make their own arrangements. The pilot is not obligated to provide ground transportation.

Note: It is important to remind the passenger that flight planning is based on the information provided to the Uphaven office and changes to the number and weights of the passengers and baggage may not be able to be accommodated.

Contact the passenger again the day before the mission to reconfirm details of the flight.

Cancellations and changes.

If the mission must be cancelled:

1. If the passenger or requester calls the Uphaven office to cancel a mission, you will be informed immediately by Uphaven Operations.
2. If the passenger or requester calls you to cancel, please inform Uphaven Operations at (414) 207-4567 immediately.
3. If you make any major changes in the mission schedule with the passenger and/or requester, please inform Uphaven Operations at (414) 207-4567 immediately, even after-hours (please leave a message if your call is not answered).
    a. If you must cancel because of weather, mechanical or other reasons:
        i. Call passenger immediately
        ii. Call Uphaven, even if after-hours, at (414) 204-4567.
    b. You are strongly encouraged to cancel a mission whenever you feel a situation warrants a cancellation. Safety is our top priority. There is no passenger situation that should ever cause you to compromise the safety of a flight.

Linked flights.

Uphaven is established to support Wisconsin and the surrounding region, but family needs may need to extend to other parts of the country beyond what may be comfortable for our network of pilots. With the growth of other volunteer pilot organizations across the country, there will be an increase in linking flights where passengers will be flown on more than one plane.

If you are one leg of a linked flight, you will always be given the names and phone numbers of the pilot(s) flying the other leg(s), as well as the contact information for other linking organization(s) involved in the flight.

Make immediate contact with the other pilot(s) to verify location and time of the link, and exchange phone and aircraft information.

Waiver of liability.

Uphaven Operations will collect a one-time waiver from all passengers. The one-time waiver is collected as part of the clearance process for all missions and will apply towards all future missions for each passenger.

Exception: Liability Waivers for Undisclosed Companions

If a family brings along a family member or companion traveling on the day of the flight that isn't listed on the itinerary, then it's possible that Uphaven Operations hasn't collected a one-time waiver for that passenger. This new passenger is required to sign the mission liability

waiver through an online link or paper form. We will include this link on all Mission assignment confirmation emails and Mission Itinerary PDFs should you need to access it plane-side. You may also choose to print and carry a blank form with you should you need it.

Liability Waivers for Mission Assistants

The only way to eliminate the need to collect a plane-side mission liability waiver is for Mission Assistants (spouses, family, friends) to sign up as Uphaven Volunteers in advance of the mission date. We encourage you to bring your family members and friends as Mission Assistants, but we ask that they take a few minutes to sign up on our website prior to the trip.

If your Mission Assistant changes on the day of the mission, the mission liability waiver must be signed plane-side by the Mission Assistant.

All passengers, including Mission Assistants or other personal companions, must sign the waiver before traveling on an Uphaven mission.

Flight Plans, Flight Following, the Compassion Callsign, and ADS-B.

Uphaven requires all pilots to file a VFR or IFR flight plan for that portion of the flight when Uphaven passengers are on board. When flying VFR, use of Flight Following is required where available.

Uphaven is currently registering with the ACA. Once this is complete, we will notify you and provide additional information about the Compassion Callsign and how to use it, should you so choose.

On board.

Uphaven identification

An Uphaven badge will be provided to you when you become eligible to fly a mission. Always wear your Uphaven badge when flying a mission. If you lose your badge, please call or email the Uphaven office and a new one will be provided. Wearing any Uphaven clothing is also recommended, e. g. shirt, hat, sweatshirt.

Note: Uphaven Clothing is periodically available for purchase. Contact us at volunteer@flyuphaven.org or (414) 207-4567 to inquire about availability.

Use restroom

Prior to boarding, suggest to passengers that they may wish to use the restroom before the flight, reminding them there are no facilities onboard.

Safety check

Assist passengers into plane and ensure that all are securely buckled in.

Give all instructions pertinent to your aircraft:

- ➔ Explain how seatbelts work.
- ➔ Indicate door handles and how they are operated.
- ➔ Show where exits are and how they work.
- ➔ Offer headsets if you have them available and explain their operation.
- ➔ Point out locations of airsick bags but keep them out of sight.

Passenger comfort

Bring a light blanket and some water or juice with you and offer to your passengers. Consider other items that you think will make the passengers more comfortable.

Give a brief explanation of what they may expect during flight, e.g. sounds, ATC communications, turbulence, length of flight, etc. This is especially important for first-time passengers on a small airplane. Encourage flight-related questions.

Be sensitive to passenger's wishes regarding talking about their medical condition. Some are very eager to converse about their health. Others prefer not to share that information.

Secure Oxygen Tank (if applicable)

On occasion passengers request permission to bring oxygen canisters with them.

If a passenger requests oxygen…

- ➔ Uphaven will notify them ahead of time that only gas oxygen is allowed (no liquid oxygen).
- ➔ Uphaven will notify you in advance and your acceptance of the mission with this condition will be at your discretion.

If you agree to carry the oxygen tank…

- ➔ Be certain it is firmly secured.
- ➔ Passenger or companion must operate the oxygen container.

No Medication

Never give passengers medication of any kind.

Completion of mission.

After you have landed:

1. Be of assistance as needed in connecting passengers with those picking them up or with other ground transportation.
2. Wish the passenger well, thanking them for the opportunity of flying them. Many passengers will be enthusiastic in their expression of thanks to you. Do not be surprised, however, if some passengers express little thanks. Their preoccupation with their health challenges and their often-weakened condition can leave them little margin to be expressive of their feelings of appreciation, even though it is there
3. File your Mission Report online within 24 hours of completing the mission. Details included in section below.
4. Share photos using the Mission Report on the Volunteer Portal or email pictures to the Uphaven office at operations@flyuphaven.org soon after the mission. You can upload photos at the time you file your mission report. Follow the provided directions or reach out to Uphaven Operations for support.

Thank you for your willingness to fly for Uphaven. Your generous and compassionate spirit is a part of the healing and treatment process for the families that you will fly.

Post-flight: filing a mission report online

After a flight, you will need to file a Mission Report. Filing the report online saves tremendously on staff and volunteer time.

1. Once you have logged on to the Volunteer Portal, click on “My Missions” at the top of the page.
2. Locate the mission for which you need to file the Mission Report and click the “File Mission Report” button.
3. Refer to the details at the top of the page and complete the short form below with Mission ID number, aircraft make/model, tail number, Hobbs time, mission comments, and mission photos.
    - ➔ For Hobbs time, include all hours of a round-trip even if the passenger was only on board for part of the flight. Similarly, if you needed to fly from your home base to the origin airport, include those hours as well.
    - ➔ We welcome any helpful suggestions you may have to assist us in serving you and our passengers better in the future. You can do this by making remarks in the comment section of the report.

If you do not file a mission report after repeated reminders, Uphaven will estimate your Hobbs time based on your aircraft type and the distance of your roundtrip mission from home base and back.

If you have any questions or problems, please call the office and we would be glad to assist.

Note that you can view a list of the missions you have flown or that have been cancelled in the past, by clicking the “My Missions” link at the top of the page.

Mission Assistant opportunities for Volunteer Pilots.

As a Volunteer Pilot, you can also volunteer to fly as a Mission Assistant. Many Volunteer Pilots are very receptive to having another pilot on board. In some cases, VFR pilots have requested an IFR Volunteer Pilot to be a Mission Assistant, who could also be a Volunteer Pilot in cases where VFR conditions could become marginal and require an IFR flight for safety reasons.

Mission photographs.

Uphaven encourages you to take pictures of your missions. We cannot guarantee that all pictures and information will be used, but general guidelines are to

- ➔ Take pictures close-up, and
- ➔ Use high-resolution digital camera or smartphone.

There is an option to submit your photos when completing your mission report.

Permission for photographs

Before taking pictures, be certain anyone in the photo has initialled the item on the liability waiver giving permission for photographs. (Signatures would typically be obtained at this point by Uphaven staff.) Even if permission has already been given, please ask before taking photos, as the family may not always be feeling up to it in the moment.

Your privacy.

Uphaven takes your privacy very seriously. Since your personal data is stored in our database, we have established a privacy policy which is available for viewing on the web site. In addition, anyone who gains access to private information must agree to an acceptable use policy covering the use and protection of private data.

Frequently Asked Questions

How does this all work?

1. The family submits a request (online, by phone, text, or email).

2. We process the request, making sure all the details are in place, eligibility is confirmed, and necessary waivers are collected.
3. We create a preliminary itinerary.
4. The itinerary is then shared with volunteers via the Volunteer Portal, email, phone, or text.
5. Volunteers can then choose to request the trip or not.
6. The coordination team finalizes the itinerary once a volunteer has requested it and notifies them that they've been officially assigned the trip.
7. The volunteer reaches out to the family to coordinate the details, with Uphaven here to help every step of the way.

How should I communicate with Uphaven staff and passengers?

Once you're signed up and accepted for an Uphaven mission, please:

- ➔ Reach out to the passenger(s) to introduce yourself, explain what they can expect, confirm weight/baggage details, and share logistical information (like where and when to meet).
- ➔ If you have trouble reaching them, contact the Coordination Team, and we'll step in to help connect you.

For mission changes, cancellations, or after-hours emergencies, call us at (414) 207-4567.

Should I sign up if the weather is uncertain?

Absolutely! We encourage pilots to sign up in advance. Families are required to have a backup plan or the ability to reschedule, and our Coordination Team ensures that contingencies are in place. Just keep us informed about any weather concerns as the mission date approaches, and we'll work together to adapt.

Can I change mission details like dates, airports, or timing?

Yes, within reason! If you need to adjust:

- ➔ Airports: Origin, destination, or hand-off airports can often be changed to a nearby alternative.
- ➔ FBO: You can select your preferred FBO at any airport.
- ➔ Timing: Check with the Coordination Team about flexible scheduling.

While changes aren't guaranteed, we'll always do our best to accommodate.

What's the deal with waivers and medical releases?

- ➔ Waiver of Liability: Uphaven secures an electronically signed, one-time waiver from passengers before their first mission. You don't need to worry about collecting this on-site.
- ➔ Medical Release: We also require an annual medical release from the child's healthcare provider, confirming they're stable and safe for non-pressurized flight.

All passengers listed on your Mission Itinerary that you receive after being assigned a mission have completed their waiver of liability and medical release. If the family shows up for a mission with an unlisted passenger, you can contact the Uphaven office to verify whether that person has a waiver on file and/or ask them complete one plane-side. We provide an online link for this purpose on all Mission Itineraries.

How often do I need to fly with Uphaven?

You can fly with Uphaven as often or as little as you'd like. It is entirely up to you.

Do I need my instrument rating?

No, you do not need your instrument rating. Many of our pilots fly under VFR. However, if you do so, we encourage you to take full advantage of all resources available to you. If flying under VFR, filing a VFR flight plan and utilizing flight following is required, where available.

An Instrument Rating is required if flying at night. A pilot must be instrument current and file an IFR flight plan for all night flying.

How old do I need to be?

Volunteer Pilots must be 18 years of age or older to fly as PIC for an Uphaven mission.

Can I rent an airplane to fly an Uphaven mission?

Yes, many of our pilots rent their aircraft. Renter pilots (or flying club pilots) must supply proof of a checkout from the FBO or flying club CFI for the aircraft to be used on Uphaven missions.

What type of insurance do I need?

Volunteer pilots must supply a copy of the Certificate of Insurance, applicable to the aircraft that will be used for Uphaven missions. If you are insured through a flying club, rental organization, or another person, you must supply the Certificate of Insurance from the club, business, or aircraft owner.

You must have in force liability insurance applicable to the flight providing minimum coverage of $500,000 per occurrence and $100,000 per seat.

What liability protection do I have?

First, it's important to note that all Uphaven flights done through our Volunteer Pilot Program are conducted under Part 91 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs). This means your liability is no different than if you were flying a friend or family member for a personal trip.

In addition to requiring all volunteer pilots to carry a minimum level of liability insurance as outlined in the previous question, federal law also has your back! The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 provides a strong layer of protection specifically for volunteer pilots like you. This law ensures that when you fly missions for nonprofit organizations like Uphaven, your liability is limited to the coverage of your insurance policy.

More still, every passenger flying on an Uphaven mission must complete and sign a Waiver of Liability before boarding, adding yet another layer of protection.

What about Child Restraint Systems?

FAR 91.107 Compliance Quick Reference for Child Restraints:

- ➔ Under 1 year & under 20 lbs: Rear-facing child seat in a forward-facing seat (back seat if available).
- ➔ 1+ year & 20+ lbs, but under 4 years or 40 lbs: Forward-facing child seat in a forward-facing seat (back seat if available).
- ➔ 4-8 years, 40-80 lbs, under 4'9": Booster seats are not allowed. The child should sit in the seat with the lap belt fastened, using the shoulder harness only if it fits properly.

Installation and Usage:

- ➔ The child restraint must be secured to a forward-facing seat.
- ➔ The child must be properly secured within the restraint, which should not exceed its weight limit.
- ➔ The restraint must have the correct FAA approval labels.

Important Notes:

- ➔ Child in Lap: Although the FAA allows children under 2 to sit on a lap, this is not permitted by Uphaven and is not recommended by the FAA.
- ➔ Flying and driving have different rules. For example, booster seats are not allowed on aircraft, so a child may need a different seat for the flight and the drive. It's important to coordinate with the parent or guardian about the correct seat.

Need a Child Restraint?

If a family doesn't have a legal, required child restraint and you do, feel free to use it. If not, Uphaven is working on providing seats for trips. Contact us at operations@flyuphaven.org or call (414) 207-4567 to check availability.

Support Our Mission:

We are always looking for more child restraints to help families. Let us know if you'd like to donate to this cause!

What if I'm a bit uncomfortable flying strangers?

Feeling this way is pretty common. Many pilots are most familiar with flying family and close friends, so flying new passengers can feel like a big step. If this is a concern, consider easing into it by starting as a Mission Assistant or teaming up with a more experienced pilot for your first few missions. These smaller steps can help build your confidence and comfort.

Pilots often find these missions deeply rewarding. The immense gratitude from families and the heartfelt hugs you'll receive make the experience truly unforgettable. When you're ready, the impact you'll have is worth every moment.

Do you allow experimental aircraft?

We do not allow experimental aircraft for passenger missions. All aircraft must have a Standard Airworthiness Certificate.

What happens if I need to cancel a flight?

If you need to cancel a flight, as Pilot in Command, you have the authority to make that decision for any reason, whatsoever. Safety is one of Uphaven's values and is of the utmost importance to us. We encourage all passengers to have a backup plan in place, including driving or rescheduling.

Can pilots get fuel discounts and waived fees from FBOs?

Not always but often, FBOs will offer discounts to pilots flying for Uphaven. When refueling, tell the FBO that you just completed a flight for Uphaven, show them your Uphaven badge and itinerary, iff requested. Not all FBOs offer a discount but it's worth asking before paying. Uphaven is a relatively new organization, and this will become more widespread as time goes on. We appreciate any awareness you're able to spread along the way!

Is Uphaven part of the Phillips 66 Compassion Flight Rebate Program?

Upahven is currently in the process of becoming an eligible organization. We will let you know through our Volunteer Portal when this program becomes available to you.

Can I share my Uphaven story on social media?

Yes, with permission! Sharing your experience helps us reach more volunteers, passengers, and supporters.

- ➔ Photos: Ask passengers for permission before posting flight pictures. Respect their privacy—many prefer to keep their medical details private.
- ➔ Tag us: @flyuphaven
- ➔ Submit photos: Share your mission highlights in your Mission Report, and we'll ensure photo releases are on file before posting.

Check out our Volunteer Communications, Internet & Social Media Policy for more tips!