

COUNTERING DANGEROUS DRONES

July 2026

Public fact sheet

A new federal rule lets trained, certified law enforcement and correctional agencies protect the public from drone threats. Here is what it does — and what it means for you.

WHAT THIS RULE DOES

Until now, only a handful of federal agencies could lawfully stop a dangerous drone. In **December 2025, Congress passed the SAFER SKIES Act** to close that gap, and this rule carries out that direction: state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement and correctional agencies can now be **trained, certified, and authorized** to detect drone threats — and, with advanced certification, to safely stop them. Every agency follows **one federal set of standards**, uses only approved equipment, and coordinates through an FBI-operated portal.

WHY IT'S NEEDED

Prisons & jails

Drones routinely drop drugs, cellphones, and weapons over prison walls.

Stadiums & public events

Crowds at games, parades, and festivals face reckless — and sometimes hostile — drone flights.

Critical infrastructure

Power plants, airports, and government sites are probed and surveilled from the air.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

IF YOU FLY A DRONE

Nothing changes for lawful flying. FAA rules still govern where and how you fly. The rule targets **dangerous and unlawful** drone use, and agencies must use approved systems designed to avoid interfering with lawful flights.

YOUR PRIVACY

Agencies may intercept drone signals only to assess threats. Records of drone communications must generally be **deleted within 180 days**, and their use is limited to safety and security purposes. §§ 124.14

ACCOUNTABILITY

Only certified personnel, not contractors, may use the authority. Agencies report every operation to federal oversight, and violations carry civil fines up to **\$100,000** and loss of authority. §§ 124.4, 124.13, 124.16

HOW AGENCIES QUALIFY

1

Adopt safeguards

A written policy covering privacy, safety, and use limits.

2

Get accredited

The agency attests annually through the federal portal.

3

Certify officers

Detection training online; drone-stopping certification by the FBI's National Counter-UAS Training Center.

4

Coordinate & report

Operations are coordinated in advance and reported after.

HAVE YOUR SAY

This is an **interim final rule** — it is in effect now, but the Departments must consider public comments before issuing the final rule. Anyone may comment before the comment period closes — submit at [regulations.gov/docket/FBI-2026-0001](https://www.regulations.gov/docket/FBI-2026-0001).

EFFECTIVE

July 1, 2026

COMMENT PERIOD

60 days

WHERE IT LIVES

6 & 28 CFR Part 124

Identical text in both titles

READ THE RULE

91 FR 41466[federalregister.gov/d/2026-13609](https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2026-13609)

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