

To ensure the continued resiliency of the air traffic control system amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the FAA is temporarily adjusting operating hours of approximately 100 air traffic control towers nationwide. Making these adjustments allows for continued safe operations throughout the national airspace system while minimizing health risks to their workforce. Manassas Tower will be implementing reduced operating hours.

EFFECTIVE MAY 4, 2020 – Reduced Tower Operations

Until further notice, the Manassas Air Traffic Control Tower will be reducing daily operating hours to 8:00AM to 4:00PM local. Outside of those operating hours, Manassas Regional Airport (HEF) will become a non-towered airport under the control of Potomac TRACON.

FAQs

Is the Airport closed?

No. The Manassas Regional Airport (HEF) continues to remain open for business. The airport just becomes a non-towered airport outside of these new operating hours.

Why is the beacon on during the daytime?

With the reduced hours, it is not possible for personnel to turn the beacon on at its appropriate time. After Manassas Tower closes, the controller turns the beacon on until they resume operations at 8:00AM the following day. A NOTAM has been issued (HEF 04/026) to reflect this irregular activity.

What does this mean for pilots?

During the hours in which the tower is open, procedures remain the same. Aircraft can contact Manassas Tower for their clearances, taxi instructions, and runway clearances. Outside of these new hours, Manassas Regional Airport becomes Class E airspace and is a non-towered airport. Arriving and departing aircraft should contact Potomac TRACON on 120.20Mhz for their SFRA clearance. Communications will be on the Common Traffic Advisory Frequency (CTAF) 133.10Mhz. Best practice is to self-announce your positioning.

What does this mean for authorized individuals who operate on the movement area?

During the hours in which the tower is open, you can still contact Manassas Ground on 121.8Mhz for clearance onto the movement area. Outside of these reduced hours, Manassas Regional Airport becomes a non-towered airport. Vehicle operators MUST self-announce their positioning when operating on the movement areas. Attached is a refresher on vehicle communications during non-towered operations. Business operators should take time to conduct refresher training with their staff on these type of operations. In the interest of safety, try to limit activity on movement area to the hours in which the tower is open. Utilize the interior service road or public roads whenever possible to get to your destination on the airport.

When will Manassas Tower resume normal operations?

According to the FAA, they "...will continually assess the operating environment throughout the National Airspace System (NAS). The FAA will ensure there is adequate staffing to meet traffic needs. As operational traffic counts and our resource factors associated with COVID-19 change, the FAA will make appropriate adjustments consistent with the agency's mandate to operate the NAS safely and efficiently https://www.faa.gov/coronavirus/regulatory_updates/#tctha