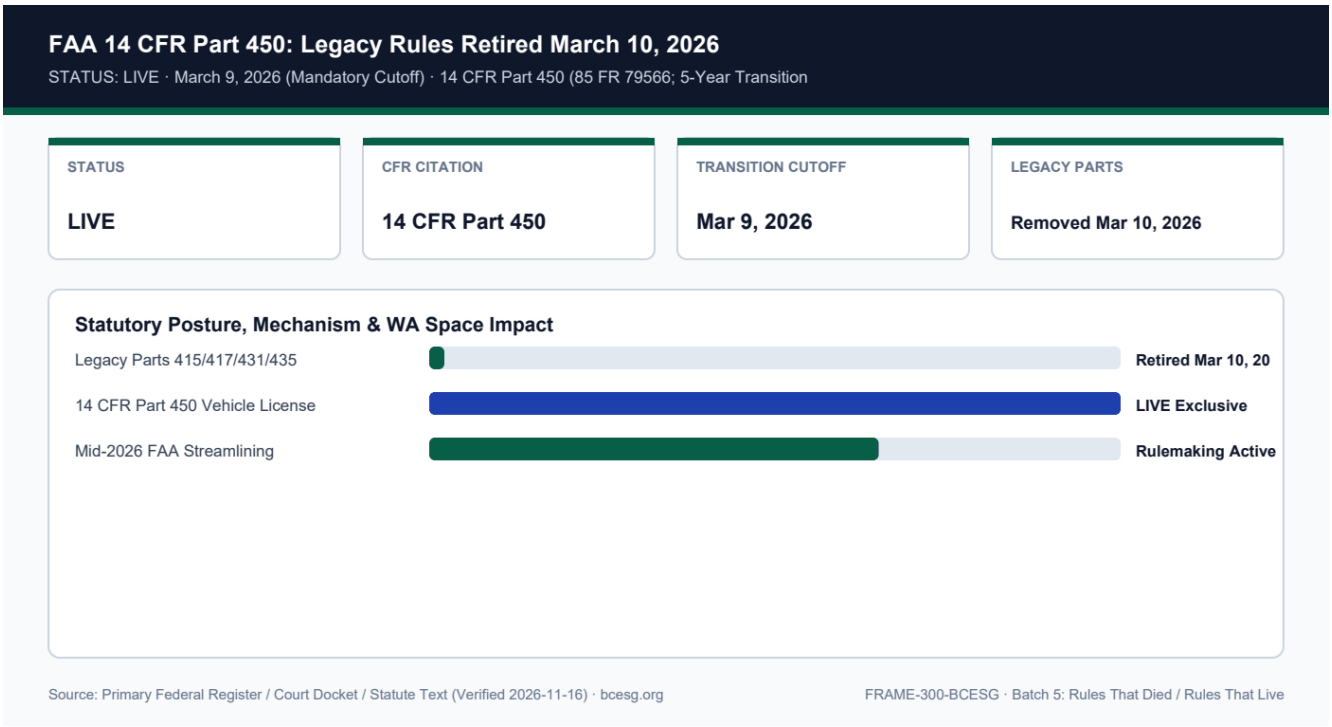
FAA Part 450 Launch & Reentry Licensing (14 CFR Part 450): LIVE — Mandatory After Mar 9, 2026 Cutoff

Published: November 16, 2026 · Canonical URL: https://bcesg.org/wa-space-rule-faa-part-450-launch-live/

Rule: FAA Streamlined Launch and Reentry License Requirements (14 CFR Part 450) | **Status:** LIVE | **Instrument:** 14 CFR Part 450 (85 FR 79566; 5-Year Transition Ended Mar 9, 2026) | **Date:** March 9, 2026 (Mandatory Cutoff)

Verdict & Proof: FAA 14 CFR Part 450 is LIVE and exclusive. The 5-year transition period expired on March 9, 2026, and legacy Parts 415, 417, 431, and 435 were removed from the Code of Federal Regulations on March 10, 2026. All U.S. commercial launch and reentry operators must hold a Part 450 Vehicle Operator License.



FAA Licensing Part	Prior Role	Status After March 10, 2026
14 CFR Parts 415, 417, 431, 435	Legacy expendable/reusable launch licenses	DEAD — Expired Mar 9 & removed Mar 10, 2026
14 CFR Part 450	Consolidated Vehicle Operator License	LIVE — Mandatory for all commercial launches

Who Owes What by When: Exclusive Part 450 Regime

When 14 CFR Part 450 took effect in March 2021, the FAA granted a 5-year grace period for legacy launch and reentry licenses issued under Parts 415, 417, 431, and 435. That grace period expired on March 9, 2026, and the legacy parts were removed from the CFR on March 10, 2026.

Today, every commercial launch and reentry operator—including Washington launch developers such as Blue Origin (Kent), Stoke Space (Kent/Moses Lake), and Cowboy Space (Kent)—must obtain and maintain a performance-based Part 450 Vehicle Operator License covering flight safety analysis, ground hazard analysis, and system safety.

Supply-Chain Flow-Downs for WA Launch Suppliers

Part 450's flight safety and critical-software verification rules flow directly into supplier test data packs, flight-termination hardware, and propellant system qualification.

Verified Primary Sources & Internal Bridges

- eCFR 14 CFR Part 450: https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-14/chapter-III/subchapter-C/part-450
- FAA Commercial Space Licenses: https://www.faa.gov/space/licenses