



## COUNTY ATTORNEY

Fort Bend County, Texas

BRIDGETTE SMITH-LAWSON  
County Attorney

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August 12, 2025

Federal Aviation Administration  
Unmanned Aircraft Tactical Operations, AJV-115  
490 L'Enfant Plaza SW Suite 7105  
Washington, DC 20024

RE: Fort Bend County's Public Declaration Letter in Support of a Certificate of Waiver and Authorization

Dear Sir or Madam:

Fort Bend County is submitting this request for Certificate of Waiver and Authorization on behalf of the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office. Fort Bend County is a political subdivision of the State of Texas pursuant to Article 9, §1 of the Texas Constitution. Further, counties are corporate and political bodies in the State of Texas. See Tex. Loc. Gov't Code Ann. § 71.001 (West, 2020). Fort Bend County qualifies as a "political subdivision" and should be permitted to operate public aircrafts pursuant to 49 U.S. C. §40102(a)(41)(C.).

The Public Declaration Letter in Support of a Certificate of Waiver and Authorization is being submitted on behalf of the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office, a Constitutional Office pursuant to Texas Local Government Code Chapter 85 and law enforcement agency pursuant to Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Article 2A.001. The Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement services, including emergency management services for both disaster preparedness, response, and recovery within Fort Bend County, the political subdivision. The Sheriff's Office is also part of the Houston Urban Area Security Initiative responsible for homeland security and management of terrorism threats and vulnerabilities.

Fort Bend County requests that the FAA grant a Certificate of Waiver and Authorization to the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office so that they may acquire and operate an Unmanned Aircraft system ("UAS") to assist in law enforcement services, emergency operations, homeland security, terrorism vulnerability and threat analysis, and training. The Sheriff's Office first began its program upon approval by the FAA in July 2020.

As will be operated by the Fort Bend County Sheriff's office, this UAS qualifies as a "public aircraft" as defined in 49 U.S.C §4012(a)(41)(C.) and will be operated to fulfill "governmental functions(s)" pursuant to 49 U.S.C. §40125(a)(2). The Sheriff's Office UAS operations will not be for Commercial purposes (compensation or hire) in compliance with 49 U.S. C. §40125(a) and Sec. §40125 (b).

The Fort Bend County Sheriff has read this Public Declaration Letter and by his signature below affirms that the statements and assurances made in this document are true. The Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office point of contact is Sergeant Dustin Medlin, 281.341.8707, [Dustin.Medlin@fortbendcountytx.gov](mailto:Dustin.Medlin@fortbendcountytx.gov).

Please contact me if you have any questions or if I may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

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Bridgette Smith-Lawson  
Fort Bend County Attorney

Read and Agreed:

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Eric Fagan  
Fort Bend County Sheriff

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Date