How to Successfully Perform Aircraft Maintenance for Civil Air Patrol (CAP)



Purpose and Value of This Guide

This guide explains how maintenance facilities can successfully perform aircraft maintenance for CAP in a way that enables faster approvals, fewer payment delays, and clear authority for work performed. CAP operates a nationally managed, corporate-owned aircraft fleet with specific approval, funding, and documentation requirements that differ from typical general aviation customers. Following the processes in this guide helps maintenance facilities avoid unauthorized work, prevent invoice rejection or funding delays, and ensure maintenance actions are approved, funded, and paid without disruption.

- **Maintenance performed without the approvals described in this guide may be delayed or not funded.**

Who We Are

Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is a federally chartered nonprofit organization and the official U.S. Air Force Auxiliary, operating under Congressional authority rather than as a private aircraft owner. This federal charter makes CAP fundamentally different from typical general aviation customers. CAP manages a nationwide, federally governed fleet of corporate-owned aircraft, with standardized approval, funding, and oversight requirements that must be followed for maintenance actions to be authorized and paid. These aircraft support emergency services, disaster response, cadet orientation flights, and training missions, and their maintenance is subject to centralized control, defined authority, and documented compliance expectations.

CAP Maintenance Philosophy

- Safety and airworthiness first – missions, aircrews, and passengers depend on it
- Maintain aircraft to approved standards – FAA, CAP, and manufacturer requirements
- Quality over convenience – fix it right the first time
- Central approval and early communication – coordinate and authorize before work
- Professional stewardship and partnership – accountability and trusted relationships

What this means for maintenance facilities: maintenance must be coordinated, approved, performed, and documented in accordance with CAP processes in order to be authorized and paid.

Point of Contact

- The Wing Maintenance Officer (MO) and CAP/LGM Mx Coordinator are your primary maintenance points of contact
- Only a MO or CAP/LGM Mx Coordinator can approve maintenance or repairs - do NOT proceed without their approval.
- Pilots are not authorized to approve maintenance or repairs.
- Pilots may not accept aircraft with incomplete or unapproved maintenance

Maintenance Approval Policy and Required Flow

Policy: All maintenance performed on CAP aircraft must be approved in writing by MO or CAP/LGM Mx Coordinator before work begins. Maintenance performed without proper approval may not be funded or paid.

Why this policy exists:

CAP aircraft are federally owned, centrally managed assets. Funding, authority, and oversight are controlled at the national level. This process prevents unauthorized work, scope creep, billing disputes, and delayed or denied payment.

❖ **Failure to follow this process is the single most common cause of payment delays and non-payment.**

Required Maintenance Approval Steps

1. Identify Required Maintenance

Determine the maintenance required based on inspection results, discrepancies, or findings.

- **Decision point:**

  Do not begin work at this stage.

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2. Submit Written Estimate for Approval

Provide a detailed written estimate (labor, parts, and scope) to the MO or CAP/LGM Mx Coordinator.

- Estimates must reflect **only the work proposed**.
- Verbal discussions **do not** constitute approval.

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3. Receive Written Approval

Wait for **explicit written authorization** (email or approved system record) before proceeding.

- **Decision point:**

  Written approval received → proceed

  No written approval → **do not begin work**

Do not begin maintenance without written approval. Work started without approval may not be paid.

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4. Perform Only the Approved Work

Complete **only** the tasks authorized in the approved estimate.

- Do not add tasks, parts, or labor beyond the approved scope.
- Convenience, efficiency, or customer expectation does **not** override approval limits.

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5. Work Scope Changes? Stop and Re-Approve

If additional issues are discovered:

- Stop work related to the new scope
- Submit an **updated written estimate**

- Obtain **new written approval** before proceeding
- **Decision point:**

  No updated approval → **do not continue additional work**

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6. Submit Invoice Matching Approved Scope

Invoice must:

- Match the final approved estimate
- Reflect only authorized labor and parts
- Include required documentation
- Be sent to CAPCONSMX@capnhq.gov for the prompt payment

Invoices that exceed approved scope **will be delayed, reduced, or rejected**.

Consequences of Not Following This Process

- Unauthorized work **may not be funded**
- Invoices may be **delayed, short-paid, or denied**
- Disputes will default to **written approval records**
- Repeated non-compliance may affect future authorization to perform CAP maintenance

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Bottom Line

If the work is not approved in writing, it is not guaranteed to be paid.

Emergency / AOG Maintenance

Only the Wing AMO or CAP/LGM Mx Coordinator may authorize emergency or AOG maintenance. Maintenance facilities must coordinate all maintenance and repairs before proceeding with any unscheduled or time critical repairs.

Parts and Materials

- All parts must meet FAA and manufacturer specifications.
- CAP reserves the right to supply any parts as they deem necessary.
- Returning cores is the responsibility of the maintenance facility, lost or unreturned cores will be charged to the maintenance facility.
- Cores must not be left in the aircraft.

Cannibalization Policy

Cannibalization—removal of parts from one aircraft to support another—is not permitted on CAP aircraft, including for troubleshooting or temporary substitutions. Cannibalization undermines configuration control, breaks airworthiness and part traceability, and creates unacceptable liability risk for the aircraft, the maintenance provider, and CAP. These risks prevent accurate maintenance records, compromise regulatory compliance, and may invalidate approval and payment for the affected maintenance actions.

Insurance Requirements

Maintenance facilities must carry a minimum of $1 million in liability insurance per occurrence. A current Certificate of Insurance identifying coverage and including products and completed operations must be on file with the Wing and CAP National Headquarters.

Invoice Submission and Fiscal Year Close-Out Requirements

All invoices must be submitted via email to CAPCONSMX@capnhq.gov to ensure proper tracking and timely payment. CAP's fiscal year runs from 1 October through 30 September, and year-end closeout is a firm financial cutoff. Invoices for work completed prior to the end of the fiscal year must be submitted prior to 15 October. Late or incomplete invoices submitted after fiscal year close-out risk delayed payment or may be denied if funding is no longer available. Early submission and proactive coordination are essential to avoid end-of-year funding issues.

Working Together

When questions arise regarding authorization, scope, or billing, pause work and contact the Wing AMO or NHQ/LGM Mx Coordinator. Early coordination helps ensure safe aircraft, proper approval, and prompt payment. We appreciate your support of Civil Air Patrol and your commitment to safe, professional maintenance practices.

Thank you for your partnership.

V/r
The Civil Air Patrol National Aircraft Maintenance Team

