

Deep Dive On Visuals

- ATC needs MVA/MIA plus 500' at airport to offer
- Can accept if ceiling 1000' and visibility 3SM
 - Must report airport or preceding aircraft in sight
 - Must remain clear of clouds
- Approach is IFR but has no missed segment
 - ATC provides IFR separation including go-around
- Expected to proceed to airport in “normal manner” or follow preceding aircraft to same runway
- Most common approach, but often not practiced in training!

Example

- Nashua (ASH) field elevation is 200MSL
- Boston Approach MVA at Nashua is 2000MSL
- Minimum reported ceiling before approach is offered by ATC is $2000 + 500 - 200 = 2300'$ AGL

Few Direct Legal References

- 2016 Lockard Lol: can I just do “anything” on a visual approach? (Short answer: “lol, no”)
- NTSB Order No. EA-3538: Part 121 landed at wrong airport after visual approach
- Not referenced in 14 CFR, but other rules (such as 91.129 for VGSI and left turns) apply

ATC Side

(JO 7110.65AA)

- 4-8-1: clearances assume pilot will follow approach procedure even if in VMC unless pilot asks for and gets contact, visual, or cancels IFR
 - breaking out and going straight to the runway might be a deviation
- 5-6-3 and 5-8-2: ATC does not assume terrain or obstacle clearance during go-around from a visual approach
- 7-4: IFR separation provided until landing or cancelation
ATC can initiate a visual approach
If following an aircraft on a visual, it must be to the same runway

Instrument Procedures

(FAA-H-8083-16B Page 4-56)

- Pilot responsible for safe altitude and separation after reporting airport or aircraft to follow in sight
- Can be offered at an airport without a tower, without instrument approaches, and even without weather reporting
- Can be offered when other aircraft are on parallel approaches

Aeronautical Information Manual

10/5/2023

- 3-2-3: Jets can't descend below Bravo floor on a visual
- 5-4-23: 91.155 cloud clearance isn't applicable
Encouraged to use nav aids for guidance
If towered, clearance includes runway,
otherwise it's just to the airport
Pilot responsible for wake separation

AIM Continued

- 5-4-23 Cont'd: Visual clearance doesn't close IFR flight plan
Radar service terminated on change to advisory
- 5-5-11: If you don't want the visual, you must specify
Must keep airport or aircraft in sight at all times
Must proceed in a "normal manner"
- 7-4-8: Stay on or above glidepath behind heavy

Pilot/Controller Glossary

- GO AROUND: visual approach should overfly the runway, climbing to pattern altitude, and enter pattern