



Re: GEM Policies

From Glenn Macdonald [CONTACT REDACTED]

Date Tue 9/1/2026 6:10 PM

To [REVIEWER DETAILS REDACTED]

[REVIEWER]

1. You are not authorized to use our aircraft for solo flight. We will not schedule or dispatch an airplane to you for solo until a current instructor has flown with you, determined you are proficient, and issued a new solo endorsement.
2. The instructor has also withdrawn the solo authorization that endorsement represented. The § 61.87 solo endorsement in your logbook was based on a determination that you were proficient and prepared to fly that aircraft solo. That determination is no longer in effect. The instructor communicated that withdrawal to you. The fact that the original entry has not yet been lined out does not keep the authorization current. Please present your logbook so the withdrawal can be noted on the existing endorsement.

You remain a student pilot. Dual instruction and a path toward a Private Pilot Certificate are still available. What is not available is solo flight on the prior endorsement.

If you want to continue here, [THIRD PARTY REDACTED] is available to fly with you, reassess proficiency, and, if appropriate, issue a new endorsement. He can be reached at [PHONE REDACTED]

Kindest regards,

Glenn Macdonald [PHONE REDACTED]

On Tue, Sep 1, 2026 at 4:21 PM [REVIEWER DETAILS REDACTED] wrote:

Thanks. Just so I clearly understand what you mean by "Jose has withdrawn his endorsement," are you saying:

1. Jose has withdrawn his permission for me to use GEM's aircraft for solo flight, or
2. Jose is asserting that the existing §61.87 solo endorsement in my logbook has itself been withdrawn and is no longer valid?

My logbook endorsement has not been modified, cancelled, or superseded by another endorsement, so I just want to make sure I understand exactly what you and Jose mean by “withdrawn.”

From: Glenn Macdonald [CONTACT REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 1, 2026 3:48 PM
To: [REVIEWER DETAILS REDACTED]
Subject: Re: GEM Policies

[REVIEWER]

Jose has withdrawn his endorsement and you would need to get a new endorsement from a different CFI, here or elsewhere. I am sorry for the difficulty but your endorsement’s authority is derived from the CFI who signed it.

Glenn

On Tue, Sep 1, 2026 at 3:20 PM [REVIEWER DETAILS REDACTED] wrote:

Thanks, Glenn. One thing in your response is actually very helpful. I did not know that, once endorsed, I was supposed to be able to view aircraft availability and book my own solo flights directly through Flight Schedule Pro.

My understanding from Jose was that I NEEDED to go through him to check aircraft availability and book solo time. I find that discrepancy significant. If I had understood from the beginning that endorsed students are expected to book their own solo flights directly through Flight Schedule Pro, much of the scheduling friction that led to this situation likely would have been avoided.

I agree that the best approach is to find a path forward. I would like to take some time to think about whether that means working with [THIRD PARTY] or continuing elsewhere. For now, I would simply like to continue building solo time in N57309 within the limitations of my current solo endorsement. Any issue with that?

I will, of course, comply with the endorsement limitations and weather limitations.

Since you have confirmed that endorsed students can book solo aircraft directly through Flight Schedule Pro, I would like to continue doing that while my current solo endorsement remains valid and within its limitations.

If GEM has any separate restriction that would prevent me from doing so, please let me know.

REVIEWER

From: Glenn Macdonald [CONTACT REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, September 1, 2026 2:32 PM

To: [REVIEWER DETAILS REDACTED]

Subject: Re: GEM Policies

REVIEWER

I appreciate you sharing your position on the 90-day solo currency requirement and the confusion around additional training before another solo. I also understand Jose's position on what is required to keep a solo endorsement current.

At this point, rather than trying to resolve those differences, it is more productive to focus on a path forward for your training goals.

If you feel you would be better served at another flight school or flying club, I understand. If you would like to continue with us, I recommend [THIRD PARTY REDACTED] CFI/CFII. I recently brought [THIRD PARTY REDACTED] on board, and you are welcome to speak with him about continuing toward your Private Pilot Certificate. He can be reached at [PHONE REDACTED]

Regarding aircraft scheduling, availability and the ability to book solo time are always shown in Flight Schedule Pro. Because our instructors are independent contractors, they manage their own calendars, so dual time must be scheduled through your CFI. Once [REDACTED] are endorsed to solo, you should book your own solo flights directly in Flight Schedule Pro. If you prefer, you may give [ASSISTANT] your login so she can monitor and schedule on your behalf. Alternatively, I can give [ASSISTANT] her own login with monitor-only access.

Thank you for the feedback. I am always looking for ways we can improve. If you would like to discuss this further, please feel free to call me.

Kindest regards,

[PHONE REDACTED]

On Tue, Sep 1, 2026 at 8:08 AM [REVIEWER DETAILS REDACTED] wrote:
Glenn,

Thank you for the clarification. Your response confirms that GEM has no separate solo recency policy beyond FAA requirements and that solo authorization is left to the individual CFI.

Since you asked if something is bothering me, yes. I am extremely displeased with how Jose handled this.

On August 29, we flew together for approximately three hours. He later confirmed in writing that I "flew great overall." During the postflight discussion, he did not tell me that my local solo readiness had changed, that I needed additional dual instruction, or that any new recency requirement applied.

On August 30, I raised the aircraft availability issue because I specifically wanted to practice solo that day. GEM has only one aircraft available to me and I do not have visibility into its schedule, so I was trying to coordinate my professional and personal schedule, aircraft availability, and a suitable weather window.

As Jose has understood from the beginning, aviation is a hobby for me, not my full-time focus. ASSISTANT manages both my professional and personal calendar, and my point was simply that if she could see aircraft availability and general weather windows, she could help identify workable times. I fully understand that the final weather review and go/no-go decision remain my responsibility as PIC.

During that discussion, Jose told me the airplane would be available at 5:00 p.m. I also explained that the recurring availability problem might require me to consider THIRD PARTY NAMES REDACTED another aircraft or instructor so I could fly more consistently.

I then decided to use the 5:00 opening he had already identified and asked him to reserve the aircraft for solo practice.

My original plan included touch-and-goes at KLBX. When Jose raised concerns about another-airport operations, I accepted that and removed KLBX from the plan. I limited the request to the southwest practice area and touch-and-goes only at KAXH.

Jose then told me that because my last solo had been more than three weeks earlier, he could not authorize the flight.

That was difficult to reconcile with the fact that my solo endorsement was still within its 90-day period, contained no three-week limitation, and, as you have now confirmed, GEM itself has no separate three-week recency policy.

More importantly, Jose had flown with me the previous day. If he believed that flight demonstrated I was no longer safe for local solo, I would have expected that to be communicated during the debrief. It was not. Only after I questioned what had changed did he cite the slow KCLL approach and high KAXH approach as the reasons.

I am not disputing a CFI's authority to make conservative safety decisions. My concern is the inconsistency in how that discretion was exercised and communicated. Based on the sequence, the decision felt reactive and arbitrary, particularly

because it arose immediately after a tense discussion about aircraft availability and my considering other training options.

I also want to be candid about another concern this created for me. When solo practice is denied and the alternative is additional dual instruction, that also creates additional billable CFI time. I cannot prove that financial incentive drove Jose's decision, and I am not stating that as fact. However, given the timing, the changing explanation, and the separate billing issues I had already experienced, it materially contributed to my loss of trust in the objectivity of the decision.

I also think GEM should take the broader customer experience seriously. GEM is a small school still building its reputation, and aircraft availability, scheduling transparency, instructor consistency, and communication can have an outsized impact.

IRRELEVANT PERSONAL BACKGROUND REDACTED

I appreciate you answering my question directly.

REVIEWER S,

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Glenn Macdonald CONTACT REDACTED

Sent: Monday, 21 August 2016 15:24:00

To: REVIEWER DETAILS REDACTED

Subject: Re: GEM Policies

REVIEWER

GEM Aviation does not require any renter's insurance currently. We do recommend our students consider renter's insurance as it can help with subrogation from our insurance company should there be a claim.

With regards to Solo Policies and Procedures, GEM Aviation currently has nothing beyond those that are in effect because of FAA Regulations. Even if we were to have a specific policy it could only serve to provide stricter limitations than might be prescribed by an individual CFI. The authorization to solo comes from the CFI and their experience and qualifications and not through the flight school.

That said, 14 CFR 61.87 and 61.89 effectively cover many of the requirements and limitations. Overall, it says that a student pilot has no inherent solo privileges and every solo flight is allowed only because a CFI endorses it. 61.87 effectively gives the CFI the authority to determine proficiency and 61.89 sets FAA limitations that CFIs may add to.

While I have attached some of the applicable CFRs, please be aware that there are other regulations and guides (such as FAA Advisory Circular 61-65K) that provide guidance to the CFIs.

In short – all solo flight at any flight school is at the discretion of the CFI.

Please feel free to give me a call to discuss it further. (If something is bothering you, please let me know)

Kindest regards,

Glenn

PHONE REDACTED

On Sun, Aug 30, 2026 at 7:30 PM

REVIEWER DETAILS REDACTED

wrote:

Glen,

One additional request for my records. Can you please send me GEM's current written policies and procedures that apply to student solo flights, including any recency requirements, instructor approval or re-approval requirements, weather or operational limitations, aircraft dispatch/rental requirements, and any insurance requirements specific to student solo operations?

If GEM does not have written policies covering any of these items and they are instead left to the individual CFI's discretion, please let me know that as well.

Thanks,

REVIEWER

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)