

70

100

STATE SCORE

Scores are on a 100-point scale; maximum points are noted in lower-right corners.

Factors Helping the State Score

25

25

Avigation Easement Law

North Dakota law creates an avigation easement, which means drone operators are protected from nuisance and trespass laws as long as their drones do not disturb people on the ground.¹

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Task Force or Program Office

The state has a drone program office—the Northern Plains Unmanned Systems Authority—overseen by state agencies and chaired by the lieutenant governor.² The program office develops policies that advance UAS operations.

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Law Vesting Landowners with Air Rights

North Dakota law expressly provides air rights to landowners, which reduces litigation risk for drone operators.³

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Sandbox

North Dakota's Vantis program offers airspace access to drone companies, is affiliated with the state transportation department, and has a prominent, open invitation to drone companies to test their services.⁴

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Jobs Estimate

North Dakota is in the top quintile when it comes to the number of drone-related jobs per 100,000 people.

Factors Hindering the State Score

0

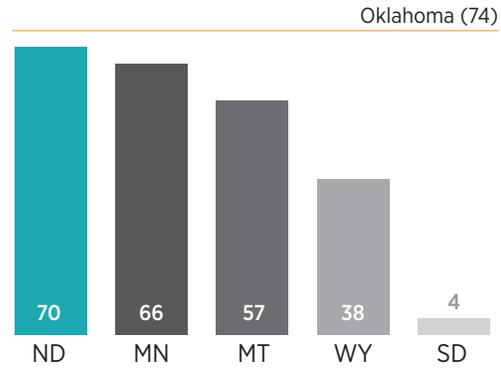
30

Airspace Lease Law

North Dakota law does not allow public authorities to lease low-altitude airspace above state and local roads. An airspace lease law would allow state or local officials to create drone highways above these roadways.

Peer State Comparisons by Score

Commercial drone-readiness scores vary across the nation. To give state leaders and residents insight into how their state compares, we have provided the scores of four state peers. In most cases, these peers are neighboring states. (Top line illustrates the top score in 2022.)



Definitions

Airspace Lease Law

States receive points for having laws that allow state and local authorities to lease airspace above public roadways. These laws allow officials in the future to create drone highways safely, away from airports and residential areas.

Avigation Easement Law

States receive points for expressly creating an avigation easement, meaning that drones (and planes) are free to fly over private property as long as they do not disturb those on the ground.

Task Force or Program Office

States receive points if they have an active statewide task force or a program office dedicated to commercial drone services.

Law Vesting Landowners with Air Rights

States receive points for expressly vesting landowners with air rights. This law reduces litigation risk by putting drone operators on notice that drone flights that are too low or disruptive to landowners are not permitted.

Sandbox

States receive points if they have dedicated state facilities and airspace for commercial drone testing.

Jobs Estimate

This score is based on the number of drone jobs per 100,000 people; estimated using ZipRecruiter data.

Notes

1. N.D. CENT. CODE § 2-03-04 (2019).
2. "Executive Team," Northern Plains UAS Test Site, accessed June 7, 2022, <https://www.npuasts.com/team>.
3. § 2-03-03.
4. See "Space to Grow," Vantis, accessed March 17, 2022, <https://www.vantisuas.com/why-north-dakota>.