

BASICMED FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

(Revised April 19, 2017)

General

Q1: How did the FAA come up with these BasicMed requirements?

A: The FAA did not develop these requirements. The requirements are from the U.S. Congress, which enacted the FAA Extension, Safety, and Security Act of 2016 (PL 114-190) (FESSA) on July 15, 2016. Section 2307 of FESSA, Medical Certification of Certain Small Aircraft Pilots, directed the FAA to “issue or revise regulations to ensure that an individual may operate as pilot in command of a covered aircraft” if the pilot and aircraft meet certain prescribed conditions as outlined in FESSA. The FAA regulations implement the provisions in § 2307 of FESSA.

Q2: How does BasicMed affect FAA medical certificates? Does FAA still offer the third class medical?

A: BasicMed does not affect medical certificates at all. Nothing about the FAA’s medical certificate program has changed with BasicMed, and you can still apply for a first, second, or third class medical the way you always have. BasicMed is merely an additional qualification you can use to fly, in lieu of holding a medical certificate.

Q3: Is there a grace period for meeting BasicMed?

A: No. You must meet all BasicMed requirements before you can use BasicMed. However, you can still operate a covered aircraft with a medical certificate as long as that certificate is unexpired. If you don’t meet all of the BasicMed requirements, then you must hold an FAA medical certificate.

Q4: I can’t remember if my medical certificate was valid after July 15, 2006. How can I find out if I meet the BasicMed requirements?

A: You may contact Federal Aviation Administration, Aerospace Medical Certification Division AAM-331, PO Box 25082, Oklahoma City, OK 73162 (phone: 405-954-4821) to ask when your most recent medical certificate expires or to request a copy of your most recent medical certificate. You may also obtain this information directly from: <https://amsrvs.registry.faa.gov/airmeninquiry/>.

Q5: Do I need to keep my expired paper medical certificate as proof that I held a medical since July 15, 2006?

A: It’s not a bad idea to hold on to your expired medical certificate (or documentation from the FAA of that medical certificate) but there is no requirement for that.

Q6: I took my Comprehensive Medical Examination Checklist (CMEC) with me to my yearly physical exam with my primary care physician. She signed it but kept the original and emailed me a copy of it in .pdf. Can I still fly under BasicMed even though I never possessed the original CMEC that I filled out?

A: You can have an electronic and/or paper version of your CMEC, as long as you can produce an accurate representation of these documents at the request of the FAA. We'd recommend you have both electronic and paper copies, since the FAA won't have a copy of the CMEC. Again, you don't have to carry these documents while flying under BasicMed.

Q7: Can I exercise BasicMed and hold a medical certificate at the same time?

A: Yes. If you are operating under BasicMed, then you must comply with the BasicMed operating limitations (e.g. flying only within the U.S. and at or less than 250 knots). When operating under BasicMed, you are not exercising the privileges of your medical certificate.

Q8: My medical certificate expired in 2011 and I submitted an application for an FAA medical certificate using MedExpress but I never went to an AME for my physical exam. Does this application prevent me from using the previous medical certificate to meet the requirement to hold a medical certificate at any point after July 15, 2006?

A: No. Since an AME never accessed or imported your application, you didn't complete the application process and you may use the previous medical certificate (before you submitted your MedXpress application) to comply with BasicMed.

Q9: My most recent medical certificate was suspended for legal action by the FAA and then later reinstated. May I operate under BasicMed?

A: No. If your most recent medical certificate was suspended due to legal action (even if it was later reinstated) you must obtain a new FAA medical certificate of any class before operating under BasicMed. However, if your application was previously denied and you subsequently received a new medical certificate or a special issuance, you may operate under BasicMed.

Q10: Do I have to always "hold or have held a medical certificate" in the past 10 years?

A: No. There is no 10-year requirement, or a 10-year "look-back". You only need to have held a medical certificate at any point after July 14, 2006. If you meet that provision, then you never have to hold a medical certificate again, unless you develop one of the conditions identified in 14 CFR 68.9 that require you to get a special issuance (i.e., psychosis, epilepsy, heart replacement, etc.).

Special Issuance Medical Certificates

Q11: I thought BasicMed did away with special issuances! Why is the FAA requiring this?

A: The FAA still issues special issuances along with medical certificates. Under BasicMed, getting a special issuance for certain medical conditions is a requirement of the FESSA legislation passed by Congress. The BasicMed rules have to follow the law.

Q12: I had a special issuance in the past. When do I need to get another one?

A: You need to undergo the FAA process for special issuance if you newly develop (or have never held a special issuance for) any of the following medical conditions since the last time you received a FAA medical certificate:

Mental Health:

- (i) Personality disorder severe enough to have repeatedly manifested itself by overt acts
- (ii) Psychosis
- (iii) Bipolar disorder
- (iv) Substance dependence within the previous 2 years

Neurologic:

- (i) Epilepsy
- (ii) Disturbance of consciousness without satisfactory medical explanation of the cause
- (iii) A transient loss of control of nervous system functions without satisfactory medical explanation of the cause

Cardiac:

- (i) Myocardial infarction (heart attack)
- (ii) Coronary heart disease that has required treatment
- (iii) Cardiac valve replacement
- (iv) Heart replacement

For more information on the conditions requiring special issuance, please see faa.gov/go/basicmed

Q14: When I was 13 years old I had a clinical diagnosis of bipolar disorder. I'm now 35 and have always been symptom-free as an adult. Do I really need to get a special issuance to fly under BasicMed?

A: Yes. To operate under BasicMed, 14 CFR 68.9(a)(1)(iii) requires you to undergo one special issuance if you have ever had a diagnosis of bipolar disorder. You still have to apply for a medical certificate with special issuance even if you are, or have been asymptomatic for a long time.

Q14: I have coronary heart disease that has required treatment, and I also have epilepsy. I understand 14 CFR 68.9 requires me to get one special issuance for each condition. Do I get two separate special issuances, one for each?

A: No. A special issuance addresses all conditions you may have, whether just one or several. You need to apply for a special issuance medical certificate and, if you are eligible, the FAA will grant a special issuance covering all of your conditions. If you have been granted a special issuance for your current condition(s) that require one special issuance for BasicMed under FESSA, and then later you are diagnosed with one or more additional conditions, then you would need to apply for a new medical certificate and receive a new special issuance.

Pilots

Q15: Does BasicMed affect sport pilots?

A: No. If you are exercising sport pilot privileges in an aircraft that meets the definition of a light-sport aircraft, then you may continue to operate using either a driver's license or an FAA medical certificate. Sport pilots can fly with only a driver's license, and are not required to comply with BasicMed.

Q16: The driver's licenses that are currently issued by my State don't meet the REAL ID requirements. Will I be in compliance with BasicMed if I use my non-REAL ID-compliant driver's license?

A: Yes. Any valid driver's license issued by a State, territory, or possession of the United States can be used to meet the driver's license requirement in BasicMed.

Q17: What happens if I have a restriction on my driver's license?

A. Any restrictions on the driver's license also apply to exercising pilot privileges under BasicMed. A typical example would be the requirement to use glasses or corrective lenses while driving, so that restriction would apply while flying, too.

Q18: What documents do I need to carry during flight to exercise BasicMed?

A: Only a valid driver's license, in addition to the other required documents not identified under BasicMed, such as your pilot certificate and photo ID. Your driver's license that's required to be in your possession when operating under BasicMed can also be used as your required photo ID.

Q19: What documentation do I need to keep?

A: You only need to keep the original or a legible copy of your Comprehensive Medical Examination Checklist (all pages) and your medical education course completion certificate. You can store these in your logbook, or you can store them electronically in any format, as long as you can produce an accurate and legible representation of these documents at the request of the FAA. You don't have to carry either of these documents in any form while flying under BasicMed.

Q20: Can I fly outside the United States under BasicMed?

A: No. At this time (April 2017), you cannot fly under BasicMed outside the United States when operating under BasicMed.

Q21: Can I exercise my CFI, as PIC, under BasicMed?

A: Yes, as long as you are flying a covered aircraft.

Q22: Can I use BasicMed to act as a safety pilot, rather than holding a medical?

A: Only if you're acting as PIC while performing the duties of safety pilot. The statutory language prescribing BasicMed said it only applies to people acting as PIC. BasicMed cannot be exercised by safety pilots who are not acting as PIC but are required crewmembers.

Q23: Do I still have to have a flight review required by § 61.56?

A: Yes. BasicMed does not affect any pilot requirement other than the holding an FAA medical certificate.

Q24: I've mislaid my BasicMed course completion certificate. Can I still fly under BasicMed?

A: No. Although you don't need to have them in your personal possession, you must be able to produce the BasicMed course completion certificate and the completed Comprehensive Medical Examination Checklist (or an accurate and legible representation of those documents) if you are asked by a representative of the FAA Administrator. You should contact the provider of the medical course to obtain a replacement course completion certificate.

Q25: Can I use BasicMed privileges to take an Airline Transport Pilot practical test?

A: Yes, as long as you're flying an aircraft covered by BasicMed for that practical test. A person taking any FAA practical test is exercising no more than private pilot privileges because the operation is not being conducted for compensation or hire.

Q26: I'm a Designated Pilot Examiner. Can I give check rides while using BasicMed?

A: No. You have to hold a medical certificate when performing the duties as an Examiner in an aircraft when administering a practical test or proficiency check, per 14 CFR 61.23(a)(3)(vii).

Q27: I use an electronic pilot logbook. Can I use this to store my BasicMed documentation?

A: You can attach those documents to your electronic logbook, or you may store them in any other fashion as long as an accurate and legible representation of those documents can be made available upon request, the same as for your pilot logbook.

Q28: The medical course required that I enter my personal information and the name and license number of the physician who conducted my individual medical examination. Why is the FAA collecting this information?

A: The legislation (FESSA) requires the FAA to collect that information. The pilot's personal information will be used to conduct the NDR check. The FAA will store the information it is required by FESSA to collect in the airman's record.

Q29: Some States allow active duty service members to continue to use an expired driver's license for the purposes of operating a motor vehicle, for a specified period. Would these expired driver's licenses be valid under BasicMed?

A: Individuals can use expired driver's licenses in this circumstance, as long as the individual possesses documentation from the State, territory, or possession (along with their expired driver's license) indicating the continued validity of the driver's license, based on that state's active duty military status exception you cited. The documentation can be information from a website of that State/territory/possession. The individual must also possess documentation indicating their active duty military status.

Comprehensive Medical Examination Checklist (CMEC): Pilots and Physicians

Q30: How do I find a physician to conduct the BasicMed medical examination?

A: Any state-licensed physician who is familiar with your complete health history would be a good choice.

Q31: Can my AME provide the medical examinations under BasicMed?

A: All AMEs are state-licensed physicians and may conduct physical examinations required under BasicMed. But the FAA does not require AMEs to provide medical examinations under BasicMed, and AMEs will decide whether to offer BasicMed medical examinations based on medical practice considerations.

Q32: What should my physician do if he or she is not sure whether they can do the BasicMed physical examination?

A: The determination by the physician is their professional choice, and the FAA does not direct any physician to do the BasicMed physical examination. The conditions of their state medical license and other medical practice considerations will probably be important in their decision.

Q33: Is the examination covered by medical insurance or do I have to pay out of pocket?

A: That is a billing decision between you and your physician. There is no FAA prohibition against using your annual physical exam with your general practitioner (typically covered for free as by health insurers) as an opportunity to conduct your BasicMed physical examination.

Q34: My physician is willing to do the examination, but what should he or she do if they have questions? Can they call the FAA for medical advice about my conditions and whether they can sign off?

A. No, BasicMed provides an alternative to third-class medical certification that allows your physician to make a determination based on their clinical judgment. The FAA (e.g., the Federal Air Surgeon and all FAA aerospace medicine representatives) may only address questions relating to 14 CFR part 67 and the standards for airman medical certification, and then only when there is a current application on file. Your physician should consider consulting available aeromedical resources on the flight hazards associated with medical conditions/medications. The FAA provides these resources for informational purposes only, to include:

- The FAA Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners (AME Guide) at <http://www.faa.gov/go/ameguide>;
- The FAA Pharmaceuticals (Therapeutic Medications) Do Not Issue – Do Not Fly list at <http://www.faa.gov/go/dni>;
- Chapter 8 of the FAA’s Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM 8-1-1), which addresses medical facts for pilots and is available at http://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/;
- www.faa.gov/go/basicmed;
- www.faa.gov/GO/AME.

Q35: Can my physician call an Aviation Medical Examiner for advice?

A: Yes, but the AME may only address questions as a private physician, not in any official capacity as a FAA designee. The AME may determine to what extent he or she may wish to offer information, advice, or an opinion, outside of their designated AME capacity.

Q36: I don't have a doctor who is a M.D. (Doctor of Medicine) or D.O. (Doctor of Osteopathy). I do use a chiropractor physician and a naturopathic physician. Can I use them?

A: The FAA relies on the determination of each state (as well as each territory and possession of the United States) as to which persons it will license as physicians. If the person holds a license as a Physician issued by any state, territory, or possession, then he or she meets the requirement as a state-licensed Physician. However, the FAA recommends that you check with the medical licensing board or authority in your state for clarification as to whether other classes of "state-licensed physicians" are felt to have the privileges, training and experience to conduct all portions of the Comprehensive Medical Examination Checklist (CMEC).

Q37: I just received a 3rd class medical certificate. Can I use my medical certificate to meet the requirements for a comprehensive medical examination?

A: No. Section 2307 of FESSA did not allow for an exam associated with an FAA-issued medical certificate to substitute for a comprehensive medical examination. An AME is not prohibited from conducting a comprehensive medical examination concurrently with an examination for an FAA issued medical certificate.

Q38: My state-licensed physician who conducted my medical examination refused to sign the Comprehensive Medical Examination Checklist (CMEC). What can I do?

A: You should talk with your physician to see what the medical reasons were behind his or her decision not to sign the CMEC. You may not operate under BasicMed without a completed CMEC, and the FAA strongly recommends addressing those medical issues before flying under any circumstances.

Q39: Can't I just go to another physician if my state-licensed physician refused to sign the Comprehensive Medical Examination Checklist (CMEC)?

A: As stated in the previous question, you ought to know the reason(s) why your original physician refused to sign. What were the medical conditions and/or medications that affected the physician's opinion about your ability to safely fly aircraft? It may be something as simple as managing your medical conditions better or changing medications. Or, there might be something more serious that, once addressed, would allow the physician to sign the CMEC. Under 14 CFR 61.53, you must not fly if you know (or have reason to know) of a medical condition that would make you unsafe to fly.

Q40: Can a physician extender (such as a nurse practitioner or physician assistant) conduct the medical exam?

A: A physician extender is a health care provider who is not a physician but who performs medical activities typically performed by a physician, on behalf of the physician. Physician extenders are generally nurse practitioners or physician assistants. Registered nurses, medical technicians, and medical support personnel also assist with certain elements of an examination but are not considered physician extenders. Section 2307 of FESSA requires that the examination must be performed by a state-licensed physician, but the language of the statute did not specifically exclude participation of a physician extender. As long as the physician is the signatory for the medical checklist and actually performs the physical exam, a physician extender may participate with the process.

Q41: Q: The CMEC requires that I list medications and visits to health care professionals. On my application for medical certificate, I used to just write, “previously reported, no change”. Can I still do that with the CMEC?

A: No. The CMEC isn’t routinely collected by the FAA; the pilot and physician fill it out and it’s kept by the pilot. So, using the phrase “previously reported, no change” would not have any value for the physician reviewing your CMEC.

Q42: Can a physician place restrictions or conditions on the airman in conjunction with the sign-off of the comprehensive medical exam? Can a physician later rescind his sign-off?

A: No. The physician declaration is simply yes-or-no. Section 2307 of FESSA provided no provision for the physician to allow conditional approval of an airman in BasicMed or to later withdraw approval. The physician is only declaring at the time of the examination that he or she is not aware of any medical condition that, as presently treated, could interfere with the individual’s ability to safely operate an aircraft. If a physician has reservations regarding an airman’s current or future health status, he or she should discuss the concerns with the airman and use clinical judgment to determine whether he or she should sign the CMEC.

Aviation Medical Examiners

Q43: Does my Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) designation require me to do a medical examination under BasicMed?

A: No. Your AME designation only allows you to perform examinations for purposes of airman medical certification under 14 CFR Part 67. BasicMed is completely separate, and it is your professional decision whether or not to participate in BasicMed.

Q44: What should I do if I get a call from a local non-AME physician doing a BasicMed examination who is looking for advice because I am an AME?

A: Though you are trained and designated as an AME, that designation only applies to FAA medical examinations conducted for airman medical certification under 14 CFR part 67. Any advice that you give would be under the scope of your non-AME medical practice and would be fully at your discretion. You may direct the physician to publically available resources below. The FAA provides these resources for informational purposes only, to include:

- The FAA Guide for Aviation Medical Examiners (AME Guide) at <http://www.faa.gov/go/ameguide>;
- The FAA Pharmaceuticals (Therapeutic Medications) Do Not Issue – Do Not Fly list at <http://www.faa.gov/go/dni>;
- Chapter 8 of the FAA’s Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM 8-1-1), which addresses medical facts for pilots and is available at http://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/;
- www.faa.gov/go/basicmed;
- www.faa.gov/GO/AME.

Q45: Why did the FAA use an old 8500-8 as the basis for the BasicMed Comprehensive Medical Examination Checklist, and not the current MedXPress version?

A: Congress specified in the legislation that the 3-99 version of the 8500-8 be used as the basis for the medical history questions.