

BASICMED FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
(Revised February 17, 2017)

General

Q: 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.

Q: 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.

Q: Is there a grace period for meeting BasicMed?

A: You can operate a covered aircraft either with a medical certificate, or by using BasicMed privileges. If you don’t meet all of the BasicMed requirements, then you must hold an FAA medical certificate.

Q: 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. BasicMed privileges are not intended to be exercised by sport pilots, who can exercise Sport Pilot privileges with only a driver’s license.

Q: 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.

Q: 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).

Q: What documentation do I need to keep?

A: You only need to keep a copy of your Comprehensive Medical Examination Checklist 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 representation of these documents at the request of the FAA. You don't have to carry these documents while flying under BasicMed.

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

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

Q: 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.

Q: 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.

Q: 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 CMEC (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.

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

A: Yes. 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.

Q: 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).

Q: 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.

Q: 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.

Q: 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.

Hold, or Have Held, a Medical Certificate Since July 15, 2006

Q: 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, Medical Certification Branch, AAM-331, P.O. Box 26200, Oklahoma City, OK 73125-9914 (phone: 405-954-4821) to ask when your most recent medical certificate expires or to request a copy of your most recent medical certificate.

Q: 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.

Q: 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. You can't operate under BasicMed and switch to operating using your medical, or vice versa, during flight.

Q: 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 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.

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

A: No. If your most recent medical certificate was suspended (even if it was later reinstated) you must obtain a new FAA medical certificate of any class before operating under BasicMed.

Q: 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 15, 2006. If you meet that provision, then you never have to hold a medical 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.),

Comprehensive Medical Examination

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

A: Any physician who is familiar with your complete health history would be a good choice. Also, some AMEs may elect to provide medical examinations under BasicMed.

Q: My state-licensed physician who conducted my medical examination refused to sign the CMEC. What can I do?

A: You should check 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.

Q: 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 may assist 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, he or she can delegate some or all elements of the actual physical exam to a physician extender.

Q: 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.

Q: I had cardiac valve replacement in 1988, and held a special issuance for that condition until March of 2007, when my most recent special issuance/medical certificate expired. In December of 2009 I had a myocardial infarction (heart attack) but I was not flying at the time and did not have a current medical certificate. I have not applied for an FAA medical certificate since my previous medical certificate expired in 2007. Can I fly under BasicMed?

A: No. You have to first get a special issuance for your 2008 heart attack, per 14 CFR 68.9. When you apply for that medical certificate with special issuance, you will have to report your 1988 cardiac valve replacement, but the new special issuance is only specifically required because of your 2008 heart attack. This is because the special issuance issued to address your 1988 cardiac valve replacement was not revoked, suspended, or withdrawn. Any new diagnosis of any of the mental, neurological, or cardiac conditions identified in 68.9 require a special issuance for those conditions. However, in order to receive a new special issuance medical certificate, you must meet all requirements to hold a medical certificate. This includes not only being eligible with your history of a 2008 heart attack, but also remain eligible for your 1988 heart valve and any other medical conditions that you may have.

Q: 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.

Q: I had a cardiac valve replacement as an infant. I'm now 35 and have held a medical for 15 years, and have reported the valve replacement on previous applications for medical certificate. Do I need to get a special issuance to fly under BasicMed?

A: Yes. That the FAA may have not required you to have a special issuance with your previous medical certificates is immaterial. You have to apply for a medical and special issuance for the cardiac valve replacement, pursuant to 14 CFR 68.9(a)(3).

Q: 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 special issuance for BasicMed under FESSA, and then later you are diagnosed with one or more additional conditions, then you would need apply for a new medical certificate through the special issuance process.

Q: I showed my physician the draft checklist for the comprehensive medical examination from Advisory Circular 68-1 and she is willing to sign it. May I have my physician complete the comprehensive medical examination prior to the effective date of BasicMed?

A: The physician may not conduct a comprehensive medical examination for BasicMed until the Comprehensive Medical Examination Checklist (CMEC) is approved by the Office of Management and Budget. The version of the CMEC in AC 68-1 is a draft unapproved version, but the AC will be revised once the approved version is available. The CMEC will likely be approved by OMB before the BasicMed effective date (May 1, 2017), and the FAA will make an announcement when the form is approved and available. After that point, you may accomplish the BasicMed comprehensive medical examination. (updated 2/17/2017)

Q: 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: 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 may only declare 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 declaration.