



Federal Aviation Administration

Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) Designee Information

Student Pilot Rule Changes FAQs

Beginning April 1, 2016, the combined FAA Medical Certificate and Student Pilot Certificate will no longer be able to be issued by an AME. Student Pilots will have a separate Student Pilot Certificate and a separate FAA Medical Certificate.

The process for obtaining both of these certificates along with expected frequently asked questions is shown below.

1.) The Medical Certificate

The airman, student pilot airman, and non-FAA Air Traffic Control Specialist will continue to require a medical exam which will continue to be issued by the AME.

AME questions/8500-8 questions:

A. What if the airman chooses the wrong option in MedXPress?

Beginning April 1, 2016, MedXPress users will ONLY have the option to select "Airman Medical Certificate" for Item #1.

The "Class of Medical Certificate Applied For" will stay the same as 1st, 2nd, or 3rd. The applicant will have to select which class certificate they want.

B. If the airman fills out his/her MedXPress prior to April 1, 2016 but does not come for an exam until after April 1, 2016 what should the AME do?

If the airman completes a MedXPress application prior to April 1, he/she will still have an option to select Airman Medical and Student Pilot Certificate in item #1. However, if the exam is performed on April 1, 2016 or later, the AME will not be able to select Student in Item 62 or print a student certificate. Item #1 will not be changed because the airman did, in fact, apply for a student certificate.

The AME should explain to the student that, based on the new changes, they can only issue only the medical certificate. They should note this in Block 60. The AME should also inform the student of the information below on how to obtain a student pilot certificate.

- C. **If the AME performs an exam prior to April 1, 2016, but does not print a certificate because they are waiting for the airman to bring in information such as a for a CACI or SI condition, what should the AME do?**

If the AME performed the exam prior to April 1, 2016 and the airman is otherwise qualified, they should issue a combined certificate based on the exam date.

- D. **If the AME performs an exam prior to April 1, 2016 and has to defer, how will it be handled?**

Any exam deferred by the AME and worked by AMCD/RFS after April 1, 2016 will be processed under the new rule.

- E. **I still have paper copies of the FAA Form 8500-8. What do I do with the yellow copies of the Medical Certificate and Student Pilot Certificate?**

The only AMEs using the paper FAA Form 8500-8 are those who have been designated as FAA Employee Examiners and perform the exams on FAA Air Traffic Control Specialists (ATCS who are directly employed by the FAA).

If you are not an FAA Employee Examiner, then destroy existing forms as they cannot be used. Only AMCS may be used by a designee to generate a valid medical certificate.

If you are an FAA Employee Examiner, tear off and shred all certificates attached to the 8500-8. Print from AMCS when issuing a medical certificate to an ATCS/Pilot.

- F. **What if the airman needs a Medical Flight Test (MFT)?**

If the AME determines a MFT is needed, they should defer the exam. The AME should ask the airman which FSDO they want to use and it should be noted in Block 60 so AMCD/RFS office can prepare the MFT authorization letter.

- G. **Restrictions:**

Should the AME still use the following restrictions?

26 Valid for flight test only

No. That option will be removed. The MFT authorization will come from AMCD.

37 Valid for student pilot purposes only

No. That option will be removed.

78 "Not valid until (date of 16th birthday)"

No. That option will be removed. The medical portion certificate can be done at any age, but should be timed so that the medical certificate is valid for the solo flight. The minimum age for the student pilot certificate is 16.

H. Age Requirement:**Can I give a medical certificate to a student under the age of 16?**

Yes. The age restriction is only for the student pilot certificate, not the medical certificate. However, the medical certificate must be valid during the time of the solo flight.

I. English language:**If the student does not speak English, what do I do?**

The ability to speak English is not required for a medical certificate. This should be addressed by the person granting the student pilot certificate.

2) The student pilot certificate

The student pilot certificate will now be issued by a Flight Standards District Office (FSDO), an FAA-designated pilot examiner, an airman certification representative associated with a part 141 flight school, or a certificated flight instructor (CFI).

When do I need a student pilot certificate?

- You will need a student pilot certificate before you can fly solo.
- You do not need a student pilot certificate to take flying lessons or fly with an instructor.

What if I currently have a valid paper student pilot certificate?

- A current paper student pilot certificate will maintain valid until its expiration date or when superseded with another airman certificate.
- A new student pilot certificate issued on a plastic card does not have an expiration date. However, some of the endorsements that authorize and limit a student pilot's privileges are valid for 90 days from the date of endorsement.

Is there a charge for the student pilot certificate?

There is no charge for application made directly to the Flight Standards District Office (FSDO). However, an FAA-designated pilot examiner, an airman certification representative associated with a part 141 flight school, or a certificated flight instructor can charge a reasonable fee for processing an application for student pilot certificates

Why did this happen?

This change is due to a new Final Rule published 01/12/16 [81 FR 1292] and effective on April 1, 2016. It is in response to section 4012 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act and facilitates security vetting by the TSA of student pilot applicants prior to certificate issuance.

Additional Resources:

- Resident and US citizen student pilots follow [Student Pilots Certificate Requirements \(www.faa.gov/pilots/become/student_cert/\)](http://www.faa.gov/pilots/become/student_cert/).
- For foreign student pilots (non-resident), follow the [Alien Student Program \(https://www.flightschoolcandidates.gov/\)](https://www.flightschoolcandidates.gov/).
- [Advisory circular/AC 61-65 \(http://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory_Circular/AC_61-65F.pdf\)](http://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Advisory_Circular/AC_61-65F.pdf) (PDF)

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