

Student Pilot Rule Change

(Updated 03/29/2023)

As of **April 1, 2016**, AMEs cannot issue the **combined** FAA Medical Certificate and Student Pilot Certificate. Student Pilots must have a **separate** Student Pilot Certificate and a **separate** FAA Medical Certificate.

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

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

The student pilot will need a valid medical certificate prior to solo flight.

What has changed for the AME regarding the MEDICAL CERTIFICATE?

- **Medical Flight Test:**
If the AME determines a MFT is needed (such as for a vision defect, amputation or orthopedic condition), the AME must DEFER the exam.
- **Age Requirement:**
There is no age requirement for a medical certificate. The exam should be timed so that the medical certificate is valid at the time of solo flight.
- **Restrictions no longer used by the AME:**
“Valid for flight test only”; “Valid for student pilot purposes only”; “Not valid until (date of 16th birthday)”.
- **English Proficiency:**
There is no language requirement for medical certification.
- **Transmittal time:**
The AME has **14 days** to transmit exams. The previous requirement to transmit student exams within 7 days no longer applies.

Helpful Resources regarding 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).

The minimum age for the student pilot certificate is 16.

- See [FAQs for AMEs](#). A description of the changes can be found in the [Advisory Circular/AC 61-65](#).
- Resident and US citizen student pilots follow [Student Pilot's Certificate Requirements](#).
- Foreign student pilots (non-resident) follow the [Flight Training Security Program \(FTSP\)](#).