

FAA “BasicMed COMPREHENSIVE MEDICAL EXAMINATION”

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It is the position of the North Carolina Board of Chiropractic Examiners that NC-licensed Doctors of Chiropractic are “state-licensed physicians” and are eligible to provide the FAA BasicMed Comprehensive Medical Examination.

In 2017 the FAA announced parameters around a new exam option that allows non-commercial pilots to obtain a “BasicMed Comprehensive Medical Examination” in lieu of a third-class flight physical administered by an Aviation Medical Examiner (“AME”). *The FAA defers to individual state regulatory agencies, and their Boards, to determine if the licensees they oversee are “licensed physicians” and therefore eligible to provide the BasicMed Comprehensive Medical Examination.*

North Carolina licensed chiropractic physicians interested in performing the BasicMed Comprehensive Medical Examination must contact the FAA to obtain the forms and other information prior to engaging in this service.

It is the recommendation of the Board that licensees register with the National Registry of Certified Medical Examiners (NRCME) prior to applying for the FAA BasicMed Program.

Of special note for Doctors of Chiropractic is the BasicMed requirements around the discussion of all prescription and non-prescription drugs a pilot applicant reports taking. The FAA rule requires the examining physician to “Discuss all drugs the individual reports taking (prescription and non-prescription) and their potential to interfere with the safe operation of an aircraft.” The Board believes that the limited discussion of prescription drugs required for the BasicMed exam is within chiropractic scope in North Carolina if the North Carolina chiropractic physicians limits the discussion to the impact of the drug on a person’s ability to safely operate an airplane and makes **no recommendations** to examinees regarding taking or not taking their prescription medication(s).

North Carolina chiropractic physicians must be extremely cautious not to exceed their scope of practice. It would be **beyond the scope of practice** to directly advise a pilot applicant to use or not use a prescription medication when flying or at any other time. Additionally, when providing information to a pilot applicant who currently uses a medication, the North Carolina chiropractic physician should be very cautious not to **persuade or imply** that a pilot applicant should cease taking prescription medications. Instead, if the situation warrants a recommendation for further action regarding prescription medications, the North Carolina chiropractic physician should direct the applicant to contact their prescriber.

To clarify this point further, below are examples of permitted and prohibited statements by a chiropractic physician. The scenario is a pilot applicant who has a prescription for oxycodone.

Permitted Statements

“Because you have a prescription for oxycodone, here are the possible effects of oxycodone that can occur while a person is flying an aircraft, which you should be aware of. If you have specific questions, consult your prescriber.”

The DC examiner has not made any recommendation regarding whether the examinee should use or not use the prescribed oxycodone.

PROHIBITED Statements:

“Because you have a prescription for oxycodone, here are the possible effects oxycodone presents when flying. You should stop taking the drug.”

“Because you have a prescription for oxycodone, here are the possible effects of oxycodone presents when flying. You need to consider not taking this medication prior to flying.”

Both of the above statements **would not be permitted** as it contains a recommendation regarding the usage or stopping of a prescription medication.

For more information on BasicMed:

Go to the FAA webpage concerning BasicMed, with links to forms and other information:

https://www.faa.gov/licenses_certificates/airmen_certification/basic_med/

The Comprehensive Medical Examination Checklist may be found at:

https://www.faa.gov/documentLibrary/media/Form/FAA_Form_8700-2_.pdf