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COASTWISECOUNSELINGCENTER.COM

HIMS & FAA Recertification

As a pilot having your license suspended for substance abuse is difficult, and there can be confusion in understanding what you need to do to meet the criteria for [FAA recertification](#).

[At Coastwise Counseling Center](#) we help pilots in this journey, which is typically a minimum 2 years for full reinstatement as an aviation pilot by the FAA.

As part of this process Coastwise Counseling Center provides a HIMS Aftercare group the first 3 Thursdays of the month from 6-7:30 pm which meets FAA requirements and has a safe, supportive atmosphere that focuses on building sobriety in service to your pursuits as an aviation pilot. As a member of this group you will receive outstanding care and a quarterly letter, sent to your AME Doctor updating them to your recovery progress. Additionally, we provide onsite drug and alcohol testing which will be sent to your AME Doctor as added physical proof of your commitment to your sobriety, possibly expediting recertification by the FAA.

Coastwise Counseling Center is also partnered with [Pilot Medical Solutions](#) Inc, who can assist in compiling all of the complicated paperwork required for recertification, including physically walking your paperwork into the FAA in Oklahoma City, OK.

The goal of this process is to get you in a stable recovery situation with all treating professionals in agreement that you are ready for return to flight status.

We assembled the checklist below to help start you on your journey toward getting back in the air. We are committed to helping you in any way we can.

Sincerely,
Stephen Taus II, MS, LMFT.



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HIMS Checklist For FAA Recertification

1. Get an AME Doctor (Aviation Medical Examiner)

This doctor will serve as your Medical Sponsor. This Doctor is the only one who can submit your case as a recovering pilot for FAA certification.

A [qualified AME](#) has typically been [HIMS-trained](#) and is approved by the FAA to perform the duty of submitting paperwork for a pilot for certification. Often the medical director of an involved airline will perform this duty, however some airlines rely on an independent AME.

2. Inpatient Treatment for Substance Abuse

You must attend an Inpatient treatment program as part of your journey towards certification.

Once you graduate your treatment program your AME Doctor will want a copy of the entire treatment record including diagnosis, chart notes, medication list, psychological testing etc. The FAA will also want and receive a copy of this record as part of your full submission moving towards certification.

3. Intensive Outpatient Program for Substance Abuse:

This typically is an extension from the Inpatient treatment program you were attending and is continued until you have shown significant progress to be moved into a step down weekly after care group. This is a mandatory step in the certification process.

4. HIMS Aftercare Group:

The aftercare group is mandatory for the FAA and is seen as essential for sobriety after return to flight duties and will be a mandate in the special issuance to fly. The group must meet weekly as the FAA expects that all pilots in the program must attend at least half of the meetings for the entire period of the special issuance. This is an important step in the road to certification with the FAA. Failure to provide documentation for the aftercare program in the FAA submission will result in delays



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in FAA certification. We sincerely hope you will join us at [Coastwise Counseling Center](http://CoastwiseCounselingCenter.com).

5. Alcoholics Anonymous:

[Alcoholics Anonymous](#) is a powerful tool for recovery and is viewed as highly important by the FAA en route to pilot certification. While it is not mandatory it is highly encouraged which is why it is included here as an important step. It is suggested that you as a pilot keep a written record of your AA attendance and document that you have an AA sponsor. No written documentation is required from AA however your AME may be well served to see your attendance record and or potentially speak to your AA sponsor who can advocate for your current state of sobriety.

6. Peer & Company Sponsors

As part of your path back to being a fully licensed aviation pilot you will need a company sponsor and a peer sponsor. A Company Sponsor will be your chief pilot at the commercial airline in which you are employed or your direct boss or superior in other aviation businesses. A peer sponsor is a pilot colleague of yours who ideally has been in the HIMS program and who can speak to the degree of your current sobriety. You are required to have monthly meetings with both your company sponsor and your peer sponsor and they are required to send a monthly report to your AME. Important to note that your AME needs to document for you that your sponsors are in place when they submit their Summary to the FAA.

7. Psychological and Psychiatric Examinations

The FAA has designated pairs of psychologists and psychiatrists around the country who provide psychological and psychiatric examinations. These examinations should not be scheduled until all of the above steps are in place and all agree that the pilot is ready for return to flight duty. A full copy of the above records should be sent to them prior to the examinations, which are very demanding testing procedures. The pilot should not have any of these tests if there is evidence of any residual cognitive dysfunction due to chronic alcohol abuse. More time should elapse to allow recovery. If the pilot is not in solid recovery, he will very often be identified as needing more time in treatment before flight duties. This in turn may require repeat testing several months later.



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8. FAA Examination and Submission

This is the final review before the case is submitted. The AME has full discretion to give or hold the process until the pilot is thought to be in good recovery. The FAA package will contain the following information:

- Diagnostic records
- Full inpatient treatment records
- Summary from IOP or individual therapy
- Summary from aftercare group with schedule
- Full Psychological and Psychiatric report
- Deferred 8500-8 (FAA Examination)
- Summary from medical sponsor

The AME then carefully reviews all records to ensure that there is not a mention of an overlooked issue. The summary from the medical sponsor must have enough detail for the FAA to determine that the AME does indeed “know” the pilot and can legitimately endorse his return to flight status. The pilot then must be otherwise qualified on the 8500-8 FAA examination. After that, the case should then be sent to the Federal Air Surgeon’s office in a package with a signed receipt to confirm retrieval.

9. FAA Recertification

The special issuance letter is very specific in its requirements. The pilot is then made responsible for seeing that each provision of the letter is met. Understand, the AME is authorized at any time to revoke the medical certificate. At this time you now will be given your special Issuance (SI) and have been certified to return to becoming a working pilot.

Recommended Partners

AME Doctor

Dr. William Brath MD (AME)
[Express Care Medical Clinic](#)
(310)641-8111



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Dr. Samir Shahin MD (AME)
[Express Care Medical Clinic](#)
(310)641-8111

Dr. Daner Reider MD (AME)
[Flight Physical](#)
(714) 522-8020

Neuro-Psychologist

Bob Elliot PHD
(310) 545-6400

Psychiatrist

Dr. Paul Sargent MD
(760) 730-2535

Robert Elliott PhD
(714) 522_8020

Dr. James Jones MD
(415) 235-7749

Inpatient and Intensive Outpatient Treatment for Substance Abuse

[Laguna Hospital](#)
24552 Pacific Park Drive Aliso Viejo, CA 92656
1-888-971-2565
Contact: Brian Whisenant
(424)333-6456
bwhisenant@contactaac.com

[Ventura Recovery Center:](#)
555 St. Charles Dr #103
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
1-877- 976-7390
Contact: Jim Buch
1-805-660-7150



Aeromedical Management

[Pilot Medical Solutions](#)

1-800-699-4457

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