

FAA COLOR VISION - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

(Updated 12/12/2024)

1. Why is the FAA Changing their policy now?

Several factors necessitate the change: Proliferation of color displays, concern that current testing might not be adequate for the existing and future color-rich environment, poor standardization in administration of current tests, incorrect testing by some AMEs, and NTSB safety recommendation (for commercial pilots). Advances in testing technology and completion of test evaluations at the Civil Aerospace Medical Institute enabled the change.

2. If I am unable to obtain one of the computer-based tests, can the pilot be tested at a different location?

YES. The testing physician/clinic must provide you with the color vision printout for upload into DIWS. Remember to put the name of the test taken AND scores in Item 59.

If the AME does not have an acceptable color vision test, they can issue a 3rd class medical certification with limitation #104. Do not defer.

3. Does the test need to be performed within 90 days of the AME exam?

NO. The FAA can accept a previous test result provided it is one of the acceptable computer-based tests. (E.g., Some individuals may have had this testing in the military. Those scores may be submitted.)

4. Should the AME defer a new applicant if they are unable to pass any of the acceptable color vision screening tests?

NO. The AME should ISSUE a 3rd class medical certificate (if otherwise qualified) with limitation #104 "Valid for day visual flight rules [VFR] only."

5. Is the individual limited to taking only ONE of the computer-based tests?

NO. The individual can take any of the three acceptable computer-based tests. Passing ANY of the three is acceptable and failure of one test does not preclude an attempt to pass another.

6. Can the individual submit a test taken at home or a free trial version?

NO. If a computer color vision test was done outside the AME's office, the AME must verify that the results belong to the individual. To maintain test integrity, the test must be performed by a practitioner who can verify the individual's identity (similar to an EKG). If the results of the test cannot be linked to a specific individual, it cannot be used.

7. Will the individual be given a more restrictive certificate with this new policy?

NO. Whatever the individual has walking into the AME's office (e.g., LOE, restricted certificate/any class, unrestricted, failed) is what they will walk out with, unless they take a new color test.

8. Does the FAA require normal color vision for pilots?

Pilots must possess the ability to perceive colors necessary to discern cockpit display colors, aircraft signaling, and airport lighting for the safe performance of airman duties.

9. What are common causes of acquired color vision deficiency?

This list is not all inclusive, but common causes include:

- Eye conditions such as glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration, retinal detachment, or cataracts.
- Brain and nervous system conditions such as Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis, or certain tumors.
- Medical conditions such as diabetes, alcoholism, leukemia.
- Medications such as Plaquenil (chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine), blood pressure medications, erectile dysfunction medications.

10. If the pilot has a special issuance for an eye or neurology condition, why do they now need an additional color vision test?

Certain medical conditions or medications may cause a red/green or blue/yellow color deficiency. While we do not need to test everyone for an acquired color vision defect, conditions which may also have a color vision deficiency will require specific testing. The pilot should refer to their Letter of Authorization.

11. How does an individual apply for a Color Vision Limitation removal or upgrade?

The individual can take any or all the acceptable computer-based tests. If they pass, they do not need further testing.

If they don't pass, they need to request review by completing a [Color Vision Limitation Review](#) request. The AME should upload into AMCS:

- An "Eye-Color Vision Limitation Review."
- Results of the Color Vision Test as "Eye- Color Vision Test Results."