Who Do I Need to See? Navigating FAA Mental Health Evaluators

(Updated 11/18/2026)

Term/Type of Provider	Who they are	What they do	Where to locate
Treating provider	A licensed clinician—such as a Psychiatrist (MD/DO), Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP), or Primary Care Physician (PCP)—with whom you have an active doctor-patient relationship.	• Diagnose and treat medical/mental health conditions. • Prescribes and manages medications or psychotherapy. • Monitors clinical stability and progress over time. • Generates the formal clinical notes and treatment summaries required for FAA review.	Your existing personal doctor or clinic. • Local outpatient clinics or hospital networks. • Your health insurance provider directory. *(Note: This is separate from your Aviation Medical Examiner [AME], who performs certification exams rather than ongoing treatment.)*
Aviation Medical Examiner (AME)	Physician MD or DO who has been designated by the FAA to perform medical examination on pilots for aviation safety purposes.	Complete the in-person portion of the medical certification exam. Make determination on issuing a medical certificate or deferring to the FAA based on guidance in the AME Guide.	Find an AME
HIMS AME (Human Intervention Motivation Study Aviation Medical Examiner)	A specialized subset of AMEs who have completed advanced FAA training in how to evaluate and monitor pilots and Air Traffic Control Specialists (ATCS) with a history of substance use disorders.	• Assists applicants seeking an FAA Special Issuance medical certificate. • Guides pilots/ATCS through FAA requirements, reviews outside evaluations (psychiatric, neuropsychological, treatment records), and submits comprehensive medical documents and recommendation to the FAA. • Conducts mandated periodic face-to-face evaluations, reviews ongoing monitoring reports (e.g., random testing, treating provider notes), and submits required maintenance updates directly to the FAA.	• FAA AME Locator: filter the AME Type/Designation dropdown specifically for "HIMS AME." • HIMS Program Directory: Search the dedicated provider list Find a HIMS AME • FAA Regional Flight Surgeon (RFS) office for local recommendations.

Board Certified Psychiatrist **MD or DO**	A medical doctor who completed specialty residency training in psychiatry and passed rigorous examination and credentialing through the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology (ABPN) or the American Osteopathic Board of Neurology and Psychiatry (AOBNP).	• Evaluates, diagnoses, and manages complex psychiatric conditions. • Prescribes and manages psychotropic medications. • Conducts formal psychiatric evaluations. • Provides independent diagnostic opinions and detailed clinical documentation required for FAA medical clearance.	• ABPN Directory: Verify credentials and search specialists at verifyCERT® • Academic & Hospital Centers: Outpatient psychiatry departments at regional hospitals or university health systems. • Referrals: Primary care physicians, your Aviation Medical Examiner (AME), or your health insurance specialist network.
FAAR Psychiatrist MD/DO (FAA Recognized Psychiatrist) **Note:** Previous term was HIMS psychiatrist	A **board-certified psychiatrist** who has received training by the FAA on the aviation environment and the requirements for comprehensive independent psychiatric evaluations. They are uniquely qualified to perform evaluations for aeromedical safety determinations. FAAR Psychiatrists undergo recurrent training and periodic report reviews to ensure their evaluations provide the appropriate data for FAA safety decisions. To guarantee an objective, independent, unbiased evaluation, the FAAR Psychiatrist evaluator **MUST NOT** be the treating physician or involved in the care of the pilot, ATCS, or applicant.	**Perform Comprehensive Independent Psychiatric Evaluations.** A Comprehensive Independent Psychiatric Evaluation (CIPE) Combines an extensive longitudinal record review with a direct clinical examination; it establishes diagnostic clarity, treatment history, current functional status, insight, prognosis, and recurrence risk to support safe medical certification decisions. It may be required for: Aviators with complex mental health histories to provide the FAA with an expert aeromedical risk assessment. Prior to entry into the HIMS program for substance dependence. At designated milestones under the HIMS Step Down Plan for Substance Dependence to assess recovery quality (e.g., transitioning from Initial Phase-1 to Early Phase-2) and ongoing mental health status when indicated.	Ask your AME

FAAR Neuropsychologist **PhD or PsyD** (FAA Recognized Neuropsychologist) **Note:** Previous term was HIMS Neuropsychologist	Doctoral-level Licensed Psychologists With 2 or more years additional training in clinical neuropsychology. To guarantee an objective, unbiased evaluation, the FAAR Neuropsychologist evaluator **MUST NOT** be the treating provider or involved in the care of the pilot, ATCS, or applicant.	Neuropsychologists can assess all psychological conditions and conditions with neurocognitive/neuropsychological features. They can perform diagnostic neuropsychological testing to assess brain function or impairment.	FAAR Neuropsychologist
FAAR Psychologist **PhD or PsyD** (FAA Recognized Psychologist) **Note:** Previous term was HIMS Psychologist	FAAR Psychologists are Doctoral-level Licensed Psychologists. To guarantee an objective, unbiased evaluation, the FAAR Psychologist **MUST NOT** be the treating provider or involved in the care of the pilot, ATCS, or applicant.	**Assessments limited to the following conditions:** ADHD Fast Track; Antidepressant; Psychological; and Follow-up monitoring: HIV. They must refer to a FAAR Neuropsychologist if the cognitive screening is not favorable.	FAAR Psychologist