PILOT INFORMATION: Certification Steps for Anxiety, Depression, and Related Conditions (On Treatment)

(Updated 11/18/2026)

FAA ATCS: STOP. Do not use this guide. Refer to the *FAA ATCS Information – Antidepressant* Initial Consideration document and contact your Regional Flight Surgeon (RFS).

STEP 1: SAFETY & STABILIZATION

- Prioritize Your Health: See your treating physician, therapist, and/or psychiatrist and get healthy.
- Self-Ground: Do not fly, in accordance with 14 CFR § 61.53, until you have an Authorization from the FAA.
- Consult Your AME: Contact your Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) early to map out the process.
- Reach the 90-Day Mark: Before your AME can submit your package, you must be on a stable medication dose with no symptoms and no side effects for the last 90 consecutive days.

STEP 2: BUILD YOUR DOCUMENT PACKAGE

- Gather Your Records: You must collect all required clinical records before your AME exam.
- Use the Checklist: Refer to the [Antidepressant Initial Certification: Document Verification Checklist] for the exact list of medical records, personal statements, and evaluations required to build your Special Issuance package.
- Not sure what needs to be in each report? See the FAA Certification Aid – Antidepressant Initial.

STEP 3: AME EXAM & FAA SUBMISSION

Once you reach 90 days stable and your document package is 100% complete:

- See your AME for a new FAA 8500-8 exam (if due) and bring all documents for your AME to review.
- Mandatory Deferral: Your AME is required to submit your exam as DEFERRED. They cannot issue a certificate in the office.
- Coordinate with your AME to ensure your COMPLETE document package is uploaded to the FAA within 14 days of your exam.

⚠ **WARNING:** Partial or incomplete packages will NOT be reviewed by the FAA and will cause significant delays in your certification.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

1. FAA Review. The FAA will review your complete submitted package. If the FAA needs more information to make a safety determination, you will receive a letter detailing what is required. Please submit any requested information promptly. [You can return it to your AME for upload or mail to the FAA].

2. Special Issuance Authorization (pilots). If you are determined to be medically qualified, you will receive an Authorization for Special Issuance (AASI/SI) letter in the mail, accompanied by a time-limited medical certificate (which will list an expiration date, e.g., "Not valid after XX/XX/XXXX").

Recertification:

If your Authorization letter places you in the AME Assisted Special Issuance (AASI) program (this will be listed at the top of your letter), your AME may be able to issue your future certificates in the office, provided you remain stable and provide the required documentation.