

Guidelines for submitting records to AOPA Pilot Protection Services

As a member of the Pilot Protection Services program, you will be providing records to the AOPA medical certification staff for review prior to sending the records to the FAA in support of an airman medical certificate. The process we use internally here at AOPA is similar (though not quite as bureaucratic!) to the way the FAA operates, but on a much smaller scale. Our staff of four medical certification specialists reviews your records, but also answers many phone calls and emails during the course of the day, and in between taking calls, we're making calls to the FAA to track the progress of member's medical certificates, so our workdays are generally very full.

We'd like to offer a few tips that will help us get to your case more quickly, and by following those guidelines, the FAA may get to your case sooner as well, meaning your medical certificate is issued sooner.

1. Organize the records in chronological order with the **oldest** information on top, the **newest** on the bottom. That way, we and the FAA will review the most current information last. Generally, the FAA needs basic hospital records, including admission history and physical, diagnostic test results, surgical reports, pathology reports, and discharge summary, plus physicians consultation notes and status reports. You don't need to include insurance billing reports and any handwritten notes or reports that are clearly illegible. If you can't read them, probably no one else can either.
2. When you make copies, be sure to generate three identical sets of records. One, you will keep, one will come to AOPA for review (and we will retain those records after we review them), and one that goes to the FAA.
3. Please do not package your records in a spiral, three-ring, or other type of binders. We have limited file space in which to secure your records, so we have to disassemble the binder and rearrange the records before reading the case. This can take as much as an hour, so you can save yourself, us, and the FAA some time by just arranging the records chronologically and mail them loose, or with a large rubber band or binder clip. When the records arrive at the FAA, they are scanned and converted into an electronic record before the case can be routed to a reviewer. That nicely bound volume that you painstakingly assembled is then dismantled and trashed, so just keep it simple.
4. Although the FAA generally wants to see the "raw data," including scans, X-rays or, increasingly common nowadays, CDs of your test results, we do NOT need any of that information for our review.
5. We will securely retain our copy of your records in our files, but we do not send records for you to the FAA. In fact, we **strongly** suggest that you do not rely on anyone else to send your records to the FAA; not your AME, your treating physician, or the hospital where you were treated. Many cases are delayed for months because the pilot relied on someone else to send records to the FAA, only to find out much later that the records never got to the FAA. Make that

your priority so you know when the records were mailed, that they were mailed to the correct address, and that each page had adequate identifying information (your full name, date of birth, address, Social Security number, or, preferably, if you have one, an FAA PI#.)

6. Our review is generally done within about 30 days of receipt of your records; however, our workload can sometimes extend that by a few days, so we ask that you be patient and we will get to your case as soon as possible.
7. Unless otherwise noted, we will retain the records you send us in our files for three years. During our review of the records, we will also purge and destroy any records that we do not consider necessary for retention. We won't return your records to you unless you ask, so it's best to make a set of copies for your records, one set for us, and one for the FAA. If you want us to return your records to you, please include a prepaid express mailer or stamped envelope and we will be happy to return them.
8. Mailing address is:

AOPA Medical Certification Services

421 Aviation Way

Frederick, MD 21701