



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY  
7700 ARLINGTON BOULEVARD  
FALLS CHURCH VA 22042

BUMEDINST 6410.10  
BUMED-N10  
21 May 2026

## BUMED INSTRUCTION 6410.10

From: Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

Subj: DESIGNATION OF NAVY AEROSPACE MEDICINE PHYSICIANS AS FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION SENIOR AVIATION MEDICAL EXAMINERS

Ref: (a) FAA Order 8000.95D, Designee Management Policy, 21 Jan 2025

1. Purpose. To provide guidance for the application and selection of Naval Aerospace Medicine physicians seeking designation as a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) senior aviation medical examiner (AME). This instruction formalizes the designation process to ensure equitable application of selection standards and recommendation of prospective military AMEs for approval by the Surgeon General of the Navy.

2. Scope and Applicability. The provisions of this instruction apply to physicians who are designated as naval flight surgeons (FS) and are board-certified or board-eligible in Aerospace Medicine. In exceptional circumstances, physicians who are designated as an FS, but are not board-certified aerospace physicians, may be recommended, if otherwise adequately qualified and there is a clear benefit to the Navy. Non-physicians are not eligible for FAA AME designation.

### 3. Background

a. The FAA has three primary classes of flight physical: first-class, second-class, and third-class. All AMEs may perform second-class and third-class flight physicals, but the privilege of performing first-class flight physicals is restricted to senior AMEs. Military physicians may complete FAA training to become designated as military AMEs, but are restricted to performing second-class and third-class FAA flight physicals and only for TRICARE beneficiaries. First-class physicals are a requirement for all airline pilots and many other commercial pilot operations, which creates a high demand for these physicals from retiring or separating Naval Aviators, reservist Naval Aviators, and military members pursuing aviation training.

b. Reference (a) permits the Service Surgeon General to request FAA senior AME designation for selected military AMEs to meet military needs. This was previously done in an ad-hoc manner without clear eligibility guidelines. This instruction establishes eligibility requirements and provides a clear mechanism for routing requests to the Surgeon General of the Navy for approval.

c. The recruitment, training, and retention of Aerospace physicians is crucially important to the continued success of Naval Aviation. FAA senior AME designation allows full scope of practice for Aerospace physicians and serves as an additional incentive for this specialty. Aerospace physicians are highly qualified for this designation and are best positioned as regional aeromedical experts to ensure appropriate geographic coverage. Reference (a) permits direct designation as a FAA senior AME. The availability of FAA first-class flight-physicals at no cost may also act as a positive motivator for members to choose to serve in the Reserves or remain on active duty while pursuing civilian flight training, as well as assisting with separation or retirement transition.

#### 4. Policy

a. Eligibility for military senior AME status is limited to active-duty individuals currently performing duty as an FS within the groups listed in subparagraphs 4a(1) through 4a(3):

(1) Physicians who have completed the Navy's Residency in Aerospace Medicine and are board-eligible or board-certified in Aerospace Medicine.

(2) Physicians who have completed a comparable civilian or military residency in Aerospace Medicine, with at least one completed tour as a designated FS.

(3) Physicians who have completed at least 3 years as a designated FS, in exceptional circumstances meriting consideration with clear benefit to the Navy, and with written endorsement by the physician's Regional Senior Flight Surgeon.

b. Aerospace Medicine, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED-N10F1) will maintain a list of all current military senior AMEs and will be the primary point of contact for any inquiries regarding eligibility or status. Individuals already designated as a military senior AME prior to this instruction effective date will retain that status unless otherwise directed by the Surgeon General of the Navy or the individual fails to adhere to FAA renewal requirements. BUMED-N10F1 will coordinate with the FAA Regional Flight Surgeon: International, Federal, and Military annually to verify that Navy military AMEs are active and within standards.

c. The Surgeon General of the Navy may choose to recommend all, some, or none of the requests based on recommendations from Aerospace Medicine leadership and the needs of the Navy. Military senior AME status authorization may be withdrawn at any time and for any reason at the discretion of the Surgeon General of the Navy, who will notify the FAA in writing of such authorization withdrawal.

d. The FAA retains final authority for senior AME designation and renewal. All military senior AMEs must adhere to all applicable FAA training, monitoring, and practice requirements when performing FAA flight physicals. Designation as a military senior AME confers no authority or privilege to perform civilian examinations or charge for services and must be renewed per FAA requirements.

## 5. Procedure

a. Physicians seeking FAA designation as a military senior AME will submit a letter of intent to BUMED-N10F1. The letter must state an intent to seek military senior AME status and confirmation of eligibility, along with any supporting information the applicant deems appropriate to assist aeromedical leadership in the selection process. Supporting information may include, but is not limited to, such items as local demand for FAA first-class physicals, previous experience as an FAA AME, and Senior Regional Flight Surgeon letter of endorsement (for non-Aerospace physicians).

b. BUMED-N10F1 will collate applications and present them for consideration at the next meeting of the Aerospace Medicine Corporate Board (AMCB). The AMCB will consider applications in the context of applicant qualifications, location and number of current senior military AMEs, and any special circumstances pertinent to the application. The AMCB will vote on each applicant and subsequently create a list of those physicians recommended for approval which BUMED-N10F1 will route for Surgeon General of the Navy approval and signature.

c. Following Surgeon General of the Navy approval, the letter will be routed for FAA approval and designation to the FAA Regional Flight Surgeon: International, Federal, and Military.

## 6. Action

a. The Naval Aerospace Medicine Institute is directed to incorporate the intent of this instruction into the curriculum for the Residency in Aerospace Medicine and for the student FS course.

b. BUMED-N10F1 will establish a list of all current military senior AMEs in the Navy and make this list available to the AMCB.

7. Point of Contact. BUMED-N10F1 can be reached via phone at (703) 681-9323 or by e-mail at: [usn.ncr.bumedfchva.list.bumed---avmed@health.mil](mailto:usn.ncr.bumedfchva.list.bumed---avmed@health.mil).

## 8. Records Management

a. Records created as a result of this instruction, regardless of format or media, must be maintained and dispositioned per the records disposition schedules found on Directives and Records Management Division portal page at <https://portal.secnav.navy.mil/orgs/DUSNM/DONAA/DRM/Records-and-Information-Management/Approved%20Record%20Schedules/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

b. For questions concerning the management of records related to this instruction or the records disposition schedules, please contact the local records manager or the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) Records Management Program (DNS-16).

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9. Review and Effective Date. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, BUMED-N10F1 will review this instruction annually around the anniversary of its issuance date to ensure applicability, currency, and consistency with Federal, Department of War, Secretary of the Navy, and Navy policy and statutory authority using OPNAV 5215/40 Review of Instruction. This instruction will be in effect for 10 years, unless revised or cancelled in the interim, and will be reissued by the 10-year anniversary date if it is still required, unless it meets one of the exceptions in OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 9. Otherwise, if the instruction is no longer required, it will be processed for cancellation as soon as the need for cancellation is known following the guidance in OPNAV Manual 5215.1 of May 2016.



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Releasability and distribution:

This instruction is cleared for public release and is available electronically only via the Navy Medicine Web site, <https://www.med.navy.mil/Directives>