

FOREWORD

The people who run the National Airspace System are the most vital element of it.

Their health is important to morale, efficiency, economy, and most of all to safety.

This order sets out new program standards and procedures for choosing air traffic control specialists and, most importantly, helping them to remain fit and on the job.

This order means that no one with health problems need be afraid to seek help.

The purpose of the FAA's Air Traffic Controller Specialist (ATCS) Health Program is to help every controller stay in good health, to maximize the productive working life of ATCSs, and to maintain a safe and efficient air traffic system.

Langhorne Bond

Administrator

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APPENDIX 1. MEDICAL QUALIFICATION STANDARDS (10 pages) 1**CHAPTER 1. GENERAL**

1. **PURPOSE.** This order prescribes policy, methods, and procedures for the administration of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Air Traffic Control Specialist (ATCS) Health Program and, by Appendix 1, Medical Qualification Standards, transmits the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) medical standards for Air Traffic Control Specialists.

2. **DISTRIBUTION.** This order is distributed to the branch level in the Offices of Aviation Medicine, Budget, Chief Counsel, Labor Relations, and Personnel and Training, and the Air Traffic Service; to the

branch level in the regional Aviation Medical, Air Traffic, Budget, and Personnel Management Divisions, and to the Regional Counsels; to the division level at the Civil Aeromedical Institute, and the FAA Academy at the Aeronautical Center; to division level in the Medical Staff at NAFEC; and a maximum distribution and to all Air Traffic field offices and facilities.

3. CANCELLATION. Order 3930.3, Air Traffic Control Specialist Health Program, dated May 3, 1977, is cancelled.

4. EXPLANATION OF CHANGES. Specific responsibilities are assigned to the aviation medical, air traffic, and personnel management organizational elements.

5. DEFINITIONS.

a. Regional Flight Surgeon chiefs of the 11 regional aviation medical divisions herein referred to as Flight Surgeon except when denoting review and action as division chief.

b. Flight Surgeon Assistant Regional Flight Surgeons in regional offices and in ARTCC medical offices; medical officers in the Aeromedical Clinical Branch (AAC160); and medical officers in the Clinical Specialties Division (AAM700) and the NAFEC Medical Staff (ANA6).

c. Medical Examination any and all examinations performed under the ATCS Health Program.

d. Required Examination any and all examinations required at any time to determine that medical standards are met and/or that an ATCS is medically cleared to operate an ATCS position.

e. Periodic Examination a required basic medical examination performed at scheduled frequency to determine whether medical standards

are met.

f. Referral Examination examination authorized by a Flight Surgeon to be performed by an FAA-appointed consultant physician or other wellqualified specialist to provide additional medical information.

g. Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) a private physician designated by the FAA, and specifically authorized to perform ATCS Health Program examinations.

h. Applicant any individual who is a candidate for initial employment into an ATCS Position.

i. Qualified a medical determination that the established medical standards are met in full.

j. Qualified with Special Consideration a medical determination that the established medical standards are not fully met; however, the Flight Surgeon and Air Traffic determine that the ATCS may engage in air traffic control duties without compromising safety.

k. Disqualified a medical determination that the established medical standards are not met, and Special Consideration is not granted.

l. Incapacitation a medical condition of short term (12 months or less), or indefinite duration (more than 12 months) because of which an ATCS is incapable of performing normal air traffic control duties

whether or not medical standards are met.

m. **Medical Restriction** an administrative decision, based on medical advice to remove an ATCS from air traffic control duties, and to place on leave status or assign to noncontrol duties.

n. **Interval Medical Problem** a question regarding an ATCS's medical condition which is identified at any time not in connection with the periodic examination.

o. **Medical Status Determination** medical determination of Flight Surgeon, in consultation with air traffic management, regarding medical status of an ATCS as it affects ATCS operations.

p. **Medical Status** one of the following: full duty, medical restriction; medical disqualification; incapacitated.

q. **Employment Status Determination** an air traffic management decision regarding the operational suitability and feasibility of employee retention in the Air Traffic Control System.

r. **Reinstatement Candidate** any former ATCS seeking reemployment into an operational ATCS position.

6. **POLICY.** It is in the interest of the agency to develop and maintain the best possible Air Traffic Control Specialist Workforce. This goal requires the development and operation of a health program that will ensure optimal selection of ATCSs and promote retention of experienced employees in the system without compromising air safety. It is the policy of the agency to apply medical standards and medical state-of-the-art technology concurrent with effective management to achieve these objectives. When an ATCS experiences health problems, it is agency policy to utilize the employee in the performance of productive air traffic work as long as safety is not affected.

7. **SCOPE.** This order:

a. Applies to:

(1) Applicants for employment, reinstatement and reassignment to, and incumbents of, ATCS positions in FAA towers, centers, and flight service stations which perform flight assistance services, including cooperative education employees.

(2) Immediate supervisors of ATCSs engaged in air traffic control.

(3) Employees in supervisory or staff air traffic positions who are required, however infrequently, to operate a control position.

(4) ATCSs having return rights.

(5) Employees in any position who are required by Air Traffic management to maintain current medical clearance for ATCS duties.

b. Provides guidance for:

(1) Aviation medical officials who shall apply medical standards, make medical determinations, and make recommendations to air traffic management officials.

(2) Air traffic and personnel management officials who must make administrative decisions based on medical recommendations.

(3) Aviation Medical Examiners (AMEs), other selected physicians and consultant physicians who are authorized to perform ATCS medical examinations.

8. AVIATION MEDICAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. The Federal Air Surgeon shall:

- (1) Develop and recommend policy for the medical administration of the program.
- (2) Develop and recommend revision to medical standards.
- (3) Provide medical advice to regions.
- (4) Evaluate the effectiveness of the program.
- (5) Coordinate with the Director, Air Traffic Service, and the Director of Personnel and Training, appropriate aspects of program administration.
- (6) Evaluate results of ATCS applicant psychological screening.
- (7) Establish and manage a system for collection of medical information on the ATCS workforce, and provide statistical summaries and reports to assist FAA officials in making management decisions.
- (8) Act on requests for review of medical disqualification.

b. Regional Flight Surgeons shall:

- (1) Act upon requests for reconsideration of medical determinations of disqualification.
- (2) Coordinate with the Chief, Air Traffic Division to make or review determinations of special consideration.
- (3) Review all medical disqualifications.
- (4) Provide medical advice to air traffic management officials to consider in determining employment status of disqualified and incapacitated ATCSs.
- (5) Provide guidance to Flight Surgeons engaged in local administration of ATCS Health Program.

c. Flight Surgeons shall:

- (1) Arrange for and/or conduct ATCS medical examinations.
- (2) Obtain and evaluate all pertinent medical information.
- (3) Specify and authorize referral and follow-up examinations.

- (4) Determine if examinees meet the applicable medical qualification standards with consideration of the functional and operational requirements of the position to which an examined ATCS is assigned.
 - (5) Notify, according to established procedures, appropriate air traffic facility and/or personnel management officials of medical determinations.
 - (6) Coordinate with the facility chief to make determination of special consideration.
 - (7) Select and monitor the performance of designated AMES or other selected physicians.
 - (8) Coordinate with air traffic and/or personnel management officials to facilitate administrative action based upon, or affecting, the medical status of ATCSs.
 - (9) Provide health maintenance advice to ATCSs in the interest of preserving career longevity.
- d. AME and consultant physicians shall conduct all medical examinations in accordance with this order.

9. AIR TRAFFIC RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. Director, Air Traffic Service shall:

- (1) Develop and recommend policy and procedures for the operational administration of the program.
- (2) Act upon requests for retention of medically disqualified ATCSs.
- (3) Evaluate the effectiveness of the program.
- (4) Coordinate with the Federal Air Surgeon and Director of Personnel and Training on appropriate aspects of program administration.

b. Chief Air Traffic Division shall:

- (1) Coordinate with the Regional Flight Surgeon to make or review determinations of Special Consideration.
- (2) Determine the employment status of disqualified and incapacitated ATCSs.
- (3) Recommend retention to Director, Air Traffic Service of ATCSs after determining suitability and feasibility of retention of individual ATCS in the air traffic control system.

c. Facility management officials shall:

- (1) Ensure that all ATCSs are fully advised of the details and overall objectives of the program.
- (2) Receive, discuss, and act upon determinations of Flight Surgeons to facilitate administrative management of ATCSs when a medical action affects operational status.
- (3) Consult with Flight Surgeon when the medical status of an ATCS is questioned or appears to interfere with safe and effective air traffic control.

(4) Participate with medical officials to arrange for outside medical examination when an agency medical facility is not available or cannot provide the service.

(5) Schedule ATCSs for periodic exams and ensure that a medical determination is received.

(6) Participate with the medical official when required, in obtaining additional medical information or special medical evaluation.

d. ATCSs shall:

(1) Report for medical examinations as scheduled by the agency.

(2) Inform facility management and/or the Flight Surgeon of any health problems and results of medical examinations occurring between periodic exams.

(3) Authorize access to or submit medical information obtained outside of the agency which may be required in determining current medical status.

10. PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. Director of Personnel and Training shall:

(1) Provide guidance to management on informing and counseling employees about the nature of, and eligibility for, employee benefits.

(2) Develop policy and procedures for assuring placement consideration.

(3) Evaluate the effectiveness of the employee benefits information and counseling program and the placement consideration program.

(4) Coordinate with the Director, Air Traffic Service, and the Federal Air Surgeon on appropriate aspects of total program administration.

b. Chief, (Servicing) Personnel Management Division shall:

(1) Provide advice and guidance to local management officials and employees regarding agency placement opportunities, employee benefits, and procedures for processing personnel/administrative actions.

(2) Assure, in concert with other management officials, that employees are informed and counseled about their rights and benefits.

(3) Determine eligibility, as necessary, for various actions initiated by management officials and/or employees.

(4) Assist and prepare or process, on a timely basis, actions initiated by management officials and/or employees.

(5) Schedule applicant for required initial entry medical exams.