



# Federal Aviation Administration

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## Memorandum

Date: August 17, 2020 (revised testing verbiage September 8, 2020)  
To: AAM-200, AMCD, Regional Flight Surgeons  
From: Penny M. Giovanetti, D.O. Director, Medical Specialties Division,  
AAM-200  
Subject: HIMS Step Down Plan

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On April 1, 2020, the NTSB accepted an FAA proposal which met safety recommendation A-07-43, and extended follow up for airmen with a diagnosis of substance dependence. Subsequent to that decision, AAM reevaluated the minimum requirements of the HIMS recovery program, in consultation with the airline HIMS chairs and addiction psychiatry consultants. Note that the time course below is nominal and indicates usual, uncomplicated progression of recovery but may be modified on a case-by-case basis. The testing frequencies listed are minimums and may be increased at the discretion of the HIMS AME.

Effective immediately:

Permanent abstinence from mind and mood altering substances is expected for the duration of the flying career.

Initial phase (Year 1, beginning with initial special issuance)

Aftercare weekly for 1 year

HIMS psychiatrist/addictions specialist one visit at end of year 1

Random testing 14 screens in 12 mos and/or mobile alcohol testing e.g. Soberlink

Attendance at peer support group e.g. AA twice weekly

Chief pilot/management assessment monthly

Peer pilot assessment monthly

HIMS AME of record every 3 months (half the visits may be virtual)

Early phase (Years 2-4)

Random testing 14 screens in 12 mos and/or mobile alcohol testing e.g. Soberlink

Attendance at peer support group e.g. AA twice weekly

Chief pilot/management assessment monthly

Peer pilot assessment monthly

HIMS AME of record every 3 months (half the visits may be virtual)

Advanced phase (Years 5-7)

Random PEth testing (plus drug screens if indicated) 4 times in 12 months

Attendance at peer support group e.g. AA weekly

HIMS AME of record every 6 months

Maintenance phase (Year 7 on) –

HIMS AME of airman's choice at each exam