

What to do when “unfit to fly”?



The purpose of this memo is to provide guidance to members on what to do when they become “unfit to fly”. This document has to be used in coordination with the rules in force in their company.

When becoming unfit to fly

- First contact your company.
- Advise your roster/scheduling department. In most companies, you must send a medical certificate to your company as of the first day of incapacitation.
- In case of decrease in medical fitness (see MED.A.020 on the back of your medical certificate), the holder of a Class 1 medical certificate shall seek advice of an aero-medical center.
- If you are unfit to fly for more than 20 days, your medical will become invalid. If you suspect your medical condition will last longer than 20 days, IMMEDIATELY alert the aero-medical center and send them your medical certificate (make sure to keep a proof that you sent it, e.g. in attachment of an email or registered letter). This will shorten the waiting period in case you need to rely on your LoL later on. After being considered fit for duty again by your own doctor, they will check this during this appointment and revalidate your licence.
- If you expect that your incapacitation will exceed 28 calendar days, advise your medical insurance (mutualiteit/mutuelle) as soon as possible and no later than the end of the first month of incapacitation (check for specific deadlines with your own mutualiteit/mutuelle). The medical insurance will send you a document that has to be filled by you and your employer and to be returned as soon as possible.
- If you expect a temporary or permanent Loss of your Licence (LoL) and if you are covered by your own LoL insurance, contact the insurance company ASAP. Check with your airline company if they have subscribed a LoL insurance for their pilots. And make sure this company is informed about your unfitness.

What about your salary

- During the first month of incapacitation, you will receive from your company your fixed salary. Variable salary (per diem, sector pay, etc.) is normally excluded.
- After the first month, your salary will depend on whether your accident was work related or not:
 - If work related: You will get around 90% of your normal fixed average salary from the year before. This salary will be undertaxed (around 11%), so expect a big correction when the IRS does his

calculations the next year. This income will be paid by the insurance agency of your company.

- If NOT work related: You will receive a replacement income from your medical insurance (Mutualiteit/Mutualité). This new “salary” will be less than your previous one because it is limited to a ceiling. The first year this is around 1825€ net per month. After 12 months, this amount will be adapted on your “family situation” (+/- 1400€/month net for someone who is not head of family, till 1980€ net for a head of family). Be aware that these net sums will only be taxed for around 11%. The IRS will calculate the tax based on your total income per year, it could (most probably will) be that you have to pay a balance of tax.

When “fit to fly” again

- At the end of your period on being unfit to fly:
 - You have to pass a medical examination in an aeromedical center.
 - Plan this examination well in advance with the aeromedical center.
 - The aeromedical center shall assess the medical fitness of the licence holder and decide whether s/he is fit to resume the exercise of his/her privileges.
- Normally you have to inform the roster department of your company that you are again fit to fly.
- You have to perform three takeoffs and landings every ninety days. If it was not the case due to your incapacitation inform your company.

Special rules for pregnant pilots

- A pregnant female pilot has to declare “unfit to fly” as soon as she knows that she is pregnant because most of the insurances subscribed by airline companies to protect the pilots during duties do not cover the case of pregnant female pilots.
- The pregnant pilot must get a specialist obstetric report with foreseen birthdate.
- After aeromedical advice, a fit assessment is possible up to 26 weeks of pregnancy. This assessment will bear an OML limitation ‘Valid only as or with qualified co-pilot’. The medical certificate will be limited in time and in certain operational conditions.
- She has the same rights and obligations as described above.

Beware of daily drugs!

Do not forget that some daily and common drugs may also affect adversely your capacity to fly. Make sure the doctor you visit knows your profession and ask him/her on the possible side effects daily drugs may have on your professional abilities. If unsure about one of the medicines you take, do not hesitate to contact Medex (+32 2 524 97 97 or at medex@health.belgium.be) or Brussels Aviation Medical (+32 2 416 22 70 or at info@brusselsaviationmedical.be).

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