VERTICAL AVIATION INTERNATIONAL

VAI DEBRIEF

FAA Final Rule re: Removal of Expiration Dates from Flight Instructor Certificates; Additional Qualification Requirements to Train Initial Flight Instructor Applicants

For full text, see: Final Rule

I. Who is affected by this rule?

1. Flight instructors

II. When does this rule take effect?

1. This rule is effective as of Dec. 1, 2024. Note, however, that the amendment to 14 CFR 61.51(h)(2)(ii), which aligns pilot logbook training time descriptions with the removal of the flight instructor certificate expiration date, is not effective until Mar. 1, 2027.

III. What does this rule do?

1. Removes the expiration date on flight instructor certificates.
   a. The FAA no longer will issue physical certificates every time an instructor renews or reinstates their flight instructor certificate. Under the new rule, to exercise the privileges of an airman certificate, that person must regularly demonstrate that they meet appropriate recent experience requirements of 14 CFR Part 61, specific to the operation or activity.

2. Updates language for renewal requirements and recent experience requirements for renewal of flight instructor certificates.
   a. Current methods for flight instructor certificate renewal (14 CFR 61.197(a)) are maintained but referred to as “Flight Instructor Recent Experience Requirements.”
   b. Instead of renewing their certificate every 24 months, a flight instructor will now need to establish recent experience at least once every 24 calendar months.
   c. Note that FAA Forms 8710-1 or 8710-11 remain the only acceptable methods for a flight instructor to identify, validate, and track their recent experience.

3. Adds an FAA-sponsored pilot proficiency program (such as the FAA WINGS Pilot Proficiency Program) to the five methods listed in 14 CFR 61.197(a) that can be used to establish recent flight instructor experience.

4. An instructor with a lapse of no more than three months since the expiration of their certificate can now reinstate privileges via an approved flight instructor refresher course instead of a practical test.

5. Modifies and adds additional methods for flight instructors to qualify to train initial flight instructor applicants, in addition to retaining the requirement for the instructor to have given at least 200 hours of flight training as a flight instructor.
   a. In the preceding 24 calendar months, a flight instructor must have trained and endorsed at least five applicants for a practical test for a pilot certificate or rating, and at least 80% of those applicants must have passed that test on their first attempt.
   b. After having given at least 200 hours of flight training as a flight instructor, a flight instructor must have graduated from an FAA-approved flight instructor enhanced qualification training program (FIEQTP).

6. Codifies requirements for relief for US military and civilian personnel who have served outside the United States in support of US Armed Forces and who seek to renew their expired flight instructor certificates.