



Match Policy: What Program Directors Need to Know

Before participating in the *Main Residency Match*®, each program director must agree to the terms and conditions of the [Match Participation Agreement \(MPA\) for Applicants and Programs](#). Every program director should read the MPA thoroughly because **the entire Agreement is binding**; however, this document is intended to promote compliance with policy by highlighting sections of the Agreement that are new and/or may require a program director's specific attention.

- ✓ **NEW** The term "sponsored applicant" means an applicant who is a student enrolled in a medical school accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education ("LCME") **OR** the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) at the time of registration for the Match (U.S. MD and DO senior students). If any of an institution's graduate medical education programs participates in the Main Residency Match, all the institution's programs, regardless of Match participation status, must offer positions to sponsored applicants through the Main Residency Match or another national matching plan. (Section 2.2.1)
- ✓ A program director participating in the Main Residency Match agree to register and attempt to fill all of their positions through the Match or another national matching plan. (Sections 1.0 and 3.1)
- ✓ Programs cannot reduce their quotas to zero. (Section 3.3.1)
- ✓ Any registered program that does not want to offer positions through the **Main Residency Match** must officially withdraw from the Match through the **Registration, Ranking, and Results (R3)** system by the Quota Change Deadline. (Section 3.3.2)
- ✓ If a **PGY-1** position becomes vacant due to applicant dismissal, termination, or transfer or as the result of an approved waiver from the NRMP, the program director may fill the position outside the Match provided training begins before February 1, 2020. If training will not begin before February 1, 2020, the position shall be placed in the Match. If a **PGY-2** position becomes vacant
 - before the quota change deadline in the year of the Match: the program director may fill the position outside the Match provided training begins before February 1 in the year of the Match;
 - before the rank order list deadline in the year of the Match: the program director must place the position in the Match as a "physician" or "R" track;
 - after the rank order list deadline in the year of the Match: the program director may fill the position outside the Match until prior to the day registration opens for the next Match. (Section 3.3.3)
- ✓ Program coordinators shall access the **R3** system only with a username and password separate and distinct from the program director. Program coordinators are prohibited from modifying quotas or certifying rank order lists or **SOAP** preference lists. (Section 3.5)
- ✓ Programs and applicants are not authorized to release each other from their binding commitment; a waiver from the NRMP must be obtained. Programs cannot discuss, interview for, or offer matched positions until a waiver has been granted. Programs are prohibited from encouraging or supporting a matched applicant from seeking a concurrent year appointment absent a waiver from the NRMP. (Sections 3.6)
- ✓ Program directors, regardless of Match participation status, cannot discuss, interview for, or offer positions to applicants between the Rank Order List Certification Deadline and 3:00 p.m. eastern time on Monday of

Match Week (Section 4.2). Program directors are required to ensure that representatives of the program follow the same policy. (Section 3.4.3.4).

- ✓ **NEW** If the participant unsubscribes from NRMP emails or notices, the NRMP shall have no responsibility for sending NRMP information or providing for its receipt. (Section 4.1)
- ✓ All Match participants are prohibited from sharing **any** information from or maintained in the **R3** system, including but not limited to the *List of Unfilled Programs* and the *Regional Match Statistics by Specialty*, with any individual not registered for the **Match**. All participants are also prohibited from copying, distributing, or posting or in any way making publicly available, any Match Week information to any website or non-NRMP-related matching service, including but not limited to the *List of Unfilled Programs* and the *Regional Match Statistics by Specialty*. URLs that link to information from the **R3** system or PDFs that have been created, copied, or downloaded from the **R3** system shall not be made public or redistributed in any form even if the information already is in the public domain. (Section 4.4)
- ✓ **NEW** Programs have the right to keep their rank order lists and SOAP preference lists confidential and not to share them with any other individual or entity. (Section 4.6.2)
- ✓ Program directors must provide complete, timely, and accurate information to applicants, including a copy of the contract the applicant would be expected to sign and all institutional policies regarding eligibility for appointment to a position, in writing, prior to the Rank Order List Certification Deadline. (Section 4.5)
- ✓ Program staff cannot discuss, interview for, or offer a position to any applicant who has a binding commitment to a concurrent year position in another program. PDs must use the Applicant Match History in the **R3** system to determine the applicant's eligibility for appointment prior to offering the applicant an interview. (Section 5.2)
- ✓ Program staff are at all times prohibited from requesting applicants reveal ranking preferences or the names, specialties, geographic locations, or other identifying information about programs to which they have or may apply. (Section 6.2)
- ✓ Program directors cannot create positions for partially matched applicants until SOAP concludes at 11:00 a.m. eastern time on Thursday of Match Week. In addition, directors of unfilled programs may not initiate contact with SOAP-ineligible applicants until SOAP concludes. (Sections 7.2 and 7.3)

Failure to comply with all the terms and conditions of the MPA, whether intentionally or not, may result in an investigation and the imposition of penalties, including but not limited to being identified as a Match violator in the **R3** system and notification of the violation being issued to the appropriate program director association.