



Match Policy: What Applicants Need to Know

Before participating in the **Main Residency Match**, each applicant must agree to the terms and conditions of the [Match Participation Agreement \(MPA\) for Applicants and Programs](#). Every applicant should read the MPA thoroughly because **the entire Agreement is binding**; however, this document highlights sections of the Agreement that are especially relevant to applicants.

- ✓ **NEW** Applicants must attest that they have read, understand, and agree to the terms of the Match Participation Agreement, including an understanding that a Match made between a program and an applicant creates a binding commitment for the program to offer a training position to the applicant and for the applicant to accept such position absent a waiver from the NRMP. (Section 1.0)
- ✓ **UPDATED** 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** a student enrolled in a medical school accredited by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) at the time of registration for the Match; or
 - a graduate from an LCME or AOA COCA-accredited medical school during the period beginning June 30 of the year registration for the Match opens and ending at 9:00 pm eastern time on the Rank Order List Certification Deadline in the year of the Match.

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)

- ✓ Any two applicants may participate in the **Main Residency Match** as a couple. If two applicants who registered as a couple do not obtain a match as a couple, the **Main Residency Match** will not try to find a separate match for either of them individually. A U.S. medical school that is not the home school of a partner also enrolled in a U.S. medical school may receive and notify that partner of Match results for the purpose of Match Day ceremonies, provided the applicants and medical schools approve. (Section 2.2.3)
- ✓ Prior to the Rank Order List Certification Deadline, the NRMP will verify that the applicant has completed the necessary examination requirements for ECFMG certification; however, it is the responsibility of ECFMG to determine whether the applicant is granted ECFMG certification. (Section 2.3)
- ✓ Sponsored applicants (U.S. MD and DO seniors) who obtain positions in U.S. military graduate medical education programs are obligated to notify their medical schools. Applicants with military positions shall be withdrawn from the Match by their medical schools prior to the Rank Order List Certification Deadline. Such applicants will be ineligible to participate in **SOAP** for concurrent year NRMP positions. (Section 2.4.1)
- ✓ Independent applicants who obtain positions in U.S. military graduate medical education programs shall withdraw from the **Main Residency Match** prior to the Rank Order List Certification Deadline. Such applicants will be ineligible to participate in **SOAP** for concurrent year NRMP positions. (Section 2.4.2)
- ✓ Applicants shall not apply for, discuss, interview for, or accept a position through any other national matching plan or by agreement outside the **Main Residency Match** after the Rank Order List Certification Deadline. (Section 2.4.4)
- ✓ **UPDATED** The NRMP's decision to grant or deny the waiver is at the sole discretion of the NRMP, is final, and is not subject to challenge in arbitration, by judicial review, or by review of any kind by any third party. (Section 2.5)

- ✓ Applicants may request a waiver of a match commitment based on unanticipated serious and extreme hardship. Waivers based on change of specialty must be requested by January 15 prior to the start of training. (Section 2.5)
- ✓ **NEW** If a waiver request is denied and an applicant declines to accept the matched position, the applicant may instead agree to the following remedy in lieu of an investigation and the potential imposition of sanctions: i) to be barred from accepting or starting a position, regardless of the start date, in any residency training program sponsored by a Match-participating institution that would commence training within one year from the date of the NRMP's final decision to deny the waiver; ii) to be barred from the Match for one year; and iii) agree to be flagged in the R3 system for one year, all effective immediately upon acceptance of such agreement by the NRMP. (Section 2.5.4)
- ✓ **UPDATED** Applicants are at all times responsible for the completeness, timeliness, and accuracy of the information they provide to their medical schools and programs. Sponsored applicants who obtain positions in U.S. military graduate medical education programs are obligated to notify their medical schools prior to the Rank Order List Certification Deadline. The submission of information by an applicant to a program at any time during the matching process that is incomplete, misleading, false, or plagiarized from another source is a violation of this Agreement. For purposes of the Match Participation Agreement, the term "matching process" includes all aspects of the matching process, from the submission of information or an application through the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) or other application process, interviews with program representatives (regardless of when an applicant registered for the Match), the Match Week **Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program (SOAP)**, as well as information submitted in the course of waiver requests, violation investigations, and arbitration proceedings. The omission of information that would reasonably be considered pertinent to a program's decision whether to rank an applicant, to determine an applicant's ability to satisfy program requirements or standards, or to identify circumstances that may reasonably be expected to delay or affect adversely the applicant's medical school graduation or current training date, licensure status, visa status, or ability to start the training program, shall be considered a violation. (Section 4.5)
- ✓ If a Match 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)
- ✓ **UPDATED** The information submitted to the NRMP on both applicant and program rank order lists is confidential. It is the policy of the NRMP not to disclose such information in any manner that permits individual identification of either applicants or programs. The NRMP may, however, anonymize rank order list information and use or contribute such anonymized information for research purposes. (Section 4.6)
- ✓ Applicants have the right to keep their rank order lists and SOAP preferences confidential and not to share them with any other individual or entity. It is not a violation of this Agreement if 1) students choose voluntarily to share their rank order lists with their medical school advisors, or 2) schools offer to review rank order lists to support students in the Match process. (Section 4.6)
- ✓ Absent a waiver from the NRMP, an applicant who gives notice of resignation, resigns, or vacates a position within 45 days of the start date specified in the relevant appointment contract shall be presumed to have breached the Match Participation Agreement. A program that terminates a resident within 45 days of the start date specified in the appointment contract absent a waiver from the NRMP shall be presumed to have breached the Agreement. (Section 5.1)
- ✓ After the Rank Order List Certification Deadline, the NRMP will certify an applicant or program rank order list on behalf of the applicant or program only upon the written request and consent of the applicant or program. Such written request and consent must be received by NRMP within 48 hours of the applicable Rank Order List Certification Deadline. Only the rank order list displayed in the **R3** system at the time of the deadline will be certified through this courtesy certification process. The NRMP will not create or modify a rank order list at any time for any reason. (Section 5.3)

- ✓ **UPDATED** Applicants shall at all times be free to keep confidential all information pertaining to interviews, their ranking preferences, and the names or identities of programs to which they have or may apply. (Section 6.2)
- ✓ **UPDATED SOAP** concludes on Thursday of Match Week. Until such time, **SOAP**-eligible candidates can apply **only** to unfilled Match-participating programs that are participating in **SOAP** and **only** through ERAS. **SOAP**-ineligible applicants cannot contact or apply to **any** Match-participating program, regardless of the program's **SOAP** participation status, until **SOAP** concludes on Thursday of Match Week. (Section 7.1)
- ✓ Applicants who violate **Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program (SOAP)** policies may be barred for one year from participating in **SOAP**. Repeat violators of **SOAP** policies may be barred from the Match. (Section 8.2.1)

Failure to comply with all the terms and conditions of the Match Participation Agreement, whether intentionally or not, may result in an investigation and the imposition of penalties including but not limited to being barred from accepting or starting a position in any program sponsored by a Match-participating institution, being barred from participating in future NRMP Matches, and being identified as a Match violator in the *Registration, Ranking, and Results*[®] (*R3*[®]) system.