



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** Programs 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)

- ✓ 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. (Section 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, transfer, or as the result of an approved waiver from the NRMP, the program director may fill the position outside the 2021 Match provided training begins before February 1, 2021. If training will not begin before February 1, 2021, the position must 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)
- ✓ **NEW** The institutional official has the authority to modify and certify program rank order lists; however, such modifications and certifications should be done in concert with and approved by program directors. (Section 3.4.1)
 - ✓ 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)
 - ✓ **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 3.6)

- ✓ 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 and 5.1)
- ✓ 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).
- ✓ 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)
- ✓ 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)
- ✓ **UPDATED** Program directors must provide, in writing prior to the Rank Order List Certification Deadline, complete, timely, and accurate information to applicants, including a copy of the contract the applicant would be expected to sign and institutional policies regarding eligibility for appointment including visa or employment requirements, although program information, contract element, and eligibility requirements may be subject to change as determined by the program. (Section 4.5)
- ✓ **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 4.7)
- ✓ 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 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 6.0)
- ✓ **NEW** Program staff are prohibited from requesting applicants reveal any information pertaining to interviews, including the number of applications sent, and/or the number of interviews offered, accepted or attended. (Section 6.2.b)
- ✓ Program directors cannot create positions for partially matched applicants until SOAP concludes 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.