

Ranking Applicants in the 2021 Main Residency Match[®] Webinar - Questions and Answers

On Tuesday, January 26, NRMP Chief of Match Operations Jeanette Calli presented a webinar designed to provide program staff with information about the process for ranking Match applicants and how the matching algorithm works. To further assist programs as they rank applicants for the 2021 Main Residency Match, below are the questions received during the webinar as well as the answers prepared by NRMP staff.

For questions asked about program-specific scenarios and concerns, please contact NRMP support at support@nrmp.org or 866-653-6767.

Can you add an additional administrator to your program? Is there a way to allow two coordinators to have accounts? Do associate program directors have access?

The NRMP's Registration, Ranking, and Results[®] (R3[®]) system allows only one program coordinator (PC) and one program director (PD) role for each program. There are no plans to offer access to additional coordinators or directors.

How do I confirm if a PD has registered? Does a PD have to register for the Match each year? What does the PD need to do to register for the Match?

Yes, a PD must register each year for the Match. A returning PD can login to the R3 system using their username and password. Once they have logged in and electronically signed the Match Participation Agreement, they are considered registered. A new PD will be sent a token code link via email which will allow them to create an account and register. A PD who shows in the R3 system under the Program Director/Coordinator Tab as "Pledged" has registered an individual user account and electronically signed the Match Participation Agreement.

My PD is no longer at our facility. How do we get the new or interim PD added to NRMP?

PD and PC information and access to NRMP can be updated at any time during the Match season by the institutional official (IO), institutional administrator (IA), or the NRMP if the PD and PC have been updated on the ACGME website. Send an email to support@nrmp.org with name of your institution and program, the NRMP program code, and the first and last name, email address, and date of birth for the new program staff.

Will only the PD have a username and password for a program or should coordinators have one also? How would one obtain a username and password?

Accounts in the R3 system are individual, not program-specific. All user types including the PD and the PC should have their own, individual accounts. PC information and access to NRMP can be updated at any time during the Match season by the IO, IA, PD, or the NRMP if the PC has been updated on the ACGME website. Send an email to support@nrmp.org with name of your institution and program, the NRMP program code, and the first and last name, email address, and date of birth for program staff who need to be added.

What if a program does not have an Institutional Official (IO)?

All programs participating in the Main Residency Match must be ACGME-accredited and have an ACGME Designated Institutional Official (DIO), who also is the NRMP IO. You can view who is listed as the IO for your institution on your Program Details page in the R3 system under the Program Director/Coordinator tab.

Is the quota the number of resident spots?

The quota is the number of positions your program intends to fill in the Match.

Can program coordinators change a program quota?

No. The quota must be changed by the program director, institutional administrator, or institutional official by the Quota Change Deadline on January 31.

We have requested an increase in complement through the ACGME. If they approve the increase, can we change our quota after the deadline? Or, if there is a loss of program funding, can a quota be reduced?

Yes, quotas will be changed after the January 31 deadline if the ACGME approves an increase in resident complement or in cases of extreme emergency, such as loss of funding or loss of accreditation. Requests for those exceptions must be made in writing by the institutional official and sent to the attention of the NRMP President and CEO by email at support@nrmp.org.

We are waiting to be ACGME-accredited and the decision will be made in early-February. Can we register for the Match and/or the Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program® (SOAP®)?

Yes, programs that receive accreditation after the Quota Change Deadline of January 31 can be added to the Match and SOAP by completing a [New Program Form](#) and sending it to support@nrmp.org.

Does a transfer from another program impact the quota for the Match? We have a transfer for a PGY-3 position.

No, a position being filled in the PGY-3 year does not need to be placed in the Match unless it is in Child Neurology, where training begins at the PGY-3 level.

What does Reversions mean? I have "Reversions" column on my Match Home page in R3 that states "D0 R0." Is this something new? Why would you want to use a Reversion?

Reversions are the ability to revert, or donate, unfilled positions from one program to another program during the matching process and have been a part of the Match for many years. In a reversion, one program is the donor program (D), and the other program is the receiver program (R). If a donor program does not fill its quota when the matching algorithm is processed, a designated number (equal to, or less than, the quota) of its unfilled positions can be added automatically to the quota of a receiver program. The algorithm will then attempt to fill the reverted positions in the receiver program. The information in the Reversions column of your Match Home page lets you know, if you have set up a reversion, whether your program is a donor or receiver program and how many positions are being donated or received. If it says "D0R0" then there are no reversions set up for your program. Reversions offer a degree of protection against the possibility that positions will not fill when the matching algorithm is processed. See the [Creating Reversions for Residency Programs](#) page for additional details.

How do we set up two separate rank order lists (ROLs), for example a non-research track list and a research track list? Would this require a Reversion even though it is technically the same program quota? And if so, is there a deadline for entering a Reversion?

A program can create two separate tracks, each with their own rank order list (ROL). The combined quota for the program tracks should equal the number of positions your program intends to fill in the Match total. You can then create a Reversion to guard against the possibility of one of the tracks going unfilled. Reversions can be added, changed, or deleted but they must be finalized and approved by the Rank Order List Certification Deadline on March 3 at 9:00 p.m. ET. See the [Creating Reversions for Residency Programs](#) page for additional details.

For Joint Advanced-Preliminary (A/P) programs, is it the advanced program or the preliminary program that sets up the arrangement? Can the preliminary program see if this is done?

Creating a Joint A/P program in the R3 system is a two-step process. First, the PD of the preliminary PGY-1 program creates a new preliminary program track that identifies how many positions they are willing to join to the advanced PGY-2 program. And then the PD of the advanced PGY-2 program links the new preliminary PGY-1 program to their advanced program. Once the arrangement has been created, the Joint A/P tab for both program tracks will display the joined program details. Joint A/P arrangements must be created prior to ranking opening on February 1. See the [Joint Advanced-Preliminary Track page](#) for more details and a support guide.

Can you join an advanced program with multiple preliminary programs in a Joint A/P arrangement?

Yes. See the [Joint Advanced-Preliminary Track page](#) for more details and a support guide.

When is the deadline to set the SOAP participation status for my program? Can the PC do this or only the PD?

The deadline has passed. Please have the PD email support@nrmp.org if your SOAP Participation Status is still pending and you would like your program to participate in SOAP.

What is the date applicants can start to rank programs?

Ranking begins on February 1, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. ET for both applicants and programs.

When is the ROL Certification Deadline? Is it the same for applicants and programs?

The ROL Certification Deadline is March 3, 2021 at 9:00 p.m., ET for both applicants and programs.

What is the deadline for applicants to register with the NRMP for the Match?

March 3, 2021 at 9:00 p.m., ET. However, we encourage applicants to register prior to the start of ranking so programs can find them in the R3 system to rank.

When do we find out if we filled our positions?

Programs will learn if they filled on Monday, March 15th at 11 am, ET and that is when SOAP begins.

When do program find out Match results?

Programs will receive their *Confidential Roster of Matched Applicants* report on Thursday, March 18 at 3:00 p.m. ET. Programs cannot contact their matched applicants until after the Match results are released to applicants on Match Day, March 19 at 12:00 p.m. ET.

What time will Match results be released on Match Day?

NRMP will release the Match results to all applicants at 12:00 p.m. ET on Match Day, Friday, March 19, 2021. For details, please consult the [Match Week and SOAP Schedule](#).

Can you rank the same person for both a categorical and preliminary spot for your program?

Yes.

Is ERAS available for looking at applications all the way through March?

The Electronic Residency Application Service® (ERAS®) is a separate organization and system. NRMP cannot speak to how their system and features work. Please contact ERAS at <https://www.aamc.org/contact-eras>.

What is the easiest way to add applicants to NRMP from ERAS?

ERAS is a separate organization and system. NRMP cannot speak to how their system and features work. If the ERAS rank list feature is used to import a list into the NRMP's R3 system, programs are responsible for ensuring the rank order list that is imported is correct and the list is then certified to be used in the Match.

Please confirm what kind of excel sheet I need to import a rank order list into the R3 system.

The electronic applicant file should be a comma delimited (CSV) file containing only the rank number and an applicant identifier field. Identifiers can be the NRMP ID, AAMC ID, or USMLE ID. See the [Entering and Certifying a Program Rank Order List support guide](#) for step-by-step instructions.

If we upload applicants to NRMP with their AAMC IDs and they are not registered with the Match, will the system notify us how many/which IDs are not registered?

Yes. The system will identify the rank number(s) not identified in the upload.

If you import a list, can you then make changes to the list or add additional applicants?

Yes. See the [Entering and Certifying a Program Rank Order List support guide](#) for step-by-step instructions.

What if my PD is not available to certify the ROL?

Both the IO and the IA can certify a rank order list if the PD has registered for the Match. Rank order lists cannot be certified for programs if the PD has not registered and electronically signed the Match Participation Agreement. The IO for your institution is shown in the R3 system under the Program Director/Coordinator Tab.

Can a program edit their ROL after it is Certified?

Yes, changes can be made to a ROL after it has been certified. The PD can click on the "Edit List" button and enter their password to return the list to Ranking status so changes can be made. However, if a certified ROL is changed in any way, the new version MUST be re-certified to be used in the Match. The R3 system does NOT retain previous versions of a ROL, regardless of whether it was certified.

What is the best way to find NRMP ID numbers and AAMC ID numbers?

Applicant NRMP and AAMC IDs are available on the ERAS application or applicants can be searched in the NRMP R3 system using the "Find and Add Applicants" function in the ROL or in the "Current Match Applicants" search under the "Options" menu.

Do applicants have to apply to a program to be able to rank it?

No.

Can you clarify how the matching algorithm works for couples matching? Should we rank partners in a couple next to each other on our rank list?

Participating in the Match as a couple allows two applicants to link their rank order lists, usually for purposes of obtaining positions in the same geographic location. Their rank order lists form pairs of program choices that are considered by the matching algorithm. A couple will match to the most preferred pair of programs on their rank order lists where each partner has been offered a position. You should rank applicants participating in a couple as you would any other applicant, in preference order. Please review the [Couples in the Match video](#) page for additional details.

How many programs can an applicant rank?

Applicants are permitted up to 20 unique programs on their primary ROL and up to 20 programs on all supplemental ROLs combined before extra rank fees are applied. No more than 300 ranks can be placed on any ROL.

If a prelim program used in the past is listed as “Active,” but we do not plan to use that prelim program this year, should we withdraw that prelim program?

Yes, the program will need to be withdrawn.

Will an ECFMG applicant who is not ECFMG certified by the ranking deadline be automatically removed from the Match?

No, the NRMP does not require ECFMG certification to participate in the Match. To participate in the Match and SOAP, IMG applicants must be registered with the NRMP and the ECFMG must verify that they have passed the exams required for ECFMG certification and/or have met the requirements of the applicable pathway for the 2021 Match. The ECFMG must verify this information by the Rank Order List Deadline of March 3rd. Applicants who are not verified will be withdrawn from the Match.

ECFMG certification has been slow and complicated this season. Can applicants register for the Match if they are ineligible to participate?

Yes, applicants who may not be eligible to participate can register because NRMP must know who is intending to participate in the Match to request verification of the applicant’s eligibility from ECFMG.

We matched a candidate last year to a PGY-2 position to start in July 2021 who then received a waiver of the Match commitment. If the position has not been filled, do we need to go through the Match, or can we fill the position outside the Match?

Under the All In Policy, the position would need to be placed in the Match as an “R” or physician-reserved position for applicants eligible to begin advanced training in 2021.

Can a program participating in the Match advertise and make an offer for a vacant PGY-3 or PGY-4 position?

The All In Policy applies to positions for which the NRMP offers matching services including all PGY-1 positions as well as all PGY-2 positions in specialties accredited to begin at either the PGY-1 or PGY-2 level. The policy also applies to Child Neurology, where training begins at the PGY-3 level. Positions NOT subject to the All In Policy include PGY-2 or higher positions in specialties accredited to begin

only at the PGY-1 level. For example, a position that comes open at the PGY-2 or above level in family medicine or internal medicine would not be filled through the Match since those specialties are accredited to begin at the PGY-1 level only.

Can a current transitional year resident be offered a position outside the match for a repeat PGY1 position in another dedicated three-year residency?

No, under the All In Policy, any program registering for the Main Residency Match must register and attempt to fill all positions through the Match or another national matching plan.

In the example video, one applicant did not Match. What course does this student have?

Unmatched students can participate in the SOAP where positions left unfilled are offered to eligible applicants.

How does SOAP work? What are the rounds like? Do we contact applicants on our own during SOAP?

See the [Match Week and SOAP resources](#) for details on the process.

If you elect to SOAP, are you required to participate? Or can you just leave the position unfilled?

If a program has elected to participate and does not get applicants to whom they wish to offer a position, they do not have to enter a preference list. However, as a SOAP-participating program, the program cannot offer positions outside of SOAP until after SOAP concludes on Thursday of Match Week. Programs are encouraged to fill their positions via SOAP if they have elected to participate as applicants receive limited SOAP applications and do not want to waste an application on a program not intending to fill their positions.

Do applicants receive messaging from NRMP to register?

No, NRMP does not know which applicants are intending to participate in the Match until they have registered.

Is it okay to send applicants who have interviewed with my program a reminder to be sure they have registered for the Match in NRMP and to provide our ACGME and NRMP program codes?

Yes, programs can and should provide the NRMP program code(s) to all applicants to assist them in ranking the program.

For applicants that reach out via email to "reiterate their interest", they often state their intention to rank our program highly or number one. How would we best reply to that type of outreach?

Programs can respond thanking the applicant for their email and their interest in the program. Applicants and programs may express interest in each other, but statements implying a commitment are prohibited.

Can a letter be sent to the interviewees letting them know we will be ranking them?

Yes. Applicants and programs may express interest in each other and their intent to rank until the Rank Order List Certification Deadline, but statements implying a commitment are prohibited.

Where can we find the link for the explanation of how the algorithm works?

[How the Matching Algorithm Works video](#)

How does the system determine which applicant to select first when the matching algorithm begins processing?

It is random.

If we find out our program did not fill on Monday of Match Week, can we contact ranked applicants that day or do you have to wait until the SOAP?

Programs that do not fill cannot contact their ranked applicants for SOAP since you do not know which of your ranked applicants matched. You must wait until you receive an ERAS application from the applicant in the SOAP process to make contact and you can only contact applicants from whom you have received an ERAS SOAP application.

Are there any policies that prohibit our residents from seeing the final rank list?

A program is free to share their rank order list however they choose.

Are fellowships matched by NRMP?

Yes, NRMP conducts Fellowship Matches for more than 65 subspecialties through its Specialties Matching Service® (SMS®). See the [Participating Fellowships](#) for more information.