NRMP Statement on Professionalism

The NRMP maintains the highest professional standards in the conduct of its Matches and in its interactions with all participants, and expects all Match participants to conduct their affairs in an ethical and professionally responsible manner. During the registration process, you electronically affixed your password to the Match Participation Agreement (“Match Agreement”). In doing so, you agreed to comply with the terms and conditions of the Match Agreement, which details participant rights and responsibilities and which is binding on you and all other Match participants. You may re-read the Match Agreement at any time by logging on to http://www.nrmp.org

How Do I Avoid Engaging In A Match Violation?

Participants can avoid engaging in a Match violation by observing practices that respect the right of programs and applicants to make their selections in the absence of unwarranted pressure. The right of applicants to freely investigate program options prior to submission of their final rank order lists must be respected.

Participants also can avoid a Match violation by respecting the binding nature of a Match commitment. The Policies and Procedures for Waiver Requests and the Policies and Procedures for Reporting, Investigation, and Disposition of Violations of NRMP Agreements are incorporated by reference into the Match Agreement and are available for review at http://www.nrmp.org

The Applicant Match History available in the Registration, Ranking, and Results® (R3®) system allows program directors and NRMP institutional officials to determine whether an applicant has a binding concurrent-year Match commitment to another program, has requested a waiver of a Match commitment, and/or has been involved in an NRMP violation investigation. The Applicant Match History is available throughout the year and shall be used by program directors and NRMP Institutional Officials to determine an applicant's eligibility for appointment prior to offering the applicant an interview.

An Institution and Program Violations Report also is available in the R3 system to allow applicants and medical school officials to determine whether an institution or program has been involved in an NRMP violation investigation.

Most Commonly Reported Violations

The violations most commonly reported to the NRMP include:

1. After a Match, an applicant who obtained a position does not accept that position. The Match Agreement states that the listing of a program on the applicant's certified rank order list and the listing of an applicant on a program's rank order list establishes a binding commitment to accept/offer an appointment if a match results and to start training in good faith on the date specified in the appointment contract. The same binding commitment is established when positions are obtained through the Main Residency Match Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program® (SOAP®).

2. A program director requires verbal or written confirmation from an applicant about where the applicant has applied or interviewed and/or the applicant's ranking preferences. Although the Match Agreement does not prohibit either an applicant or a program from volunteering how one intends to rank the other, it is a violation
of the Match Agreement for either party to request such information or for a program director to require applicants to identify programs to which they have or may apply.

3. An applicant with a binding commitment applies for, discusses, interviews for, or accepts a position in another program prior to receiving a waiver from the NRMP. Similarly, a program director discusses, interviews for, or offers a position to an applicant prior to receiving a waiver from the NRMP. The Match Agreement prohibits applicants and programs from releasing each other from a Match commitment. Once parties have matched or a position has been accepted during SOAP, a waiver of the binding commitment may be obtained only from the NRMP.

4. A program director discusses, interviews for, or offers a position to an applicant who has a concurrent-year position in another program. The Match Agreement prohibits programs from discussing, interviewing for, or offering a position to an applicant who has a concurrent year position in another program and who has not been granted a waiver by the NRMP.

5. An applicant fails to provide complete, timely, and accurate information to programs. The Match Agreement stipulates that the submission of information by an applicant during the interview and/or matching process that is false, misleading, incomplete, or plagiarized from another source is a violation of the Agreement. Similarly, a program fails to provide complete, timely, and accurate information to applicants regarding institutional policies and eligibility requirements. The contract the applicant will be expected to sign and information related to the appointment process must be communicated to interviewees in writing prior to the rank order list certification deadline.

Misleading Communications

Each year, the NRMP is contacted by applicants who believe that an error has occurred in a Match because they did not match to programs whose directors had promised them positions (i.e., had promised to rank them high enough to ensure a match). In every case, the NRMP has determined that the applicant did not match to the desired program because, contrary to the applicant's expectation, the program did not rank the applicant high enough on the program's rank order list for a match to occur.

The Match Agreement permits program directors and applicants to express interest in each other but prohibits the solicitation of statements implying a commitment. However, some applicants may misinterpret statements of encouragement to signify a commitment on the part of the program and some programs may make misleading statements. For example, the following have been made by program directors to applicants who later did not match to those programs:

- "We plan to rank you very high on our list."
- "We hope to have the opportunity to work with you in the coming year."

Such statements are not binding and frequently are misinterpreted, and applicants should not rely on them when creating their rank order lists. Program directors, institutional officials, and applicants should avoid misleading statements and at all times display a professional code of behavior in their interactions. The NRMP recommends that each program director and applicant read carefully the Match Communication Code of Conduct and Match Tips for information on acceptable methods of interaction during the interview and matching processes.

NOTE: The foregoing examples are illustrative only. They are not meant to be an exhaustive list of the types of activities that violate the NRMP's Match Participation Agreement.

Additional information about the NRMP can be found online. "Like" us on Facebook and "Follow" us on Twitter to obtain important information throughout the residency and fellowship selection process.

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