



## The Match® Terms and Topics

### AAMC

Association of American Medical Colleges. [AAMC](#) represents allopathic medical schools located in the U.S.

### AAMC ID

The AAMC ID is a unique identification number assigned by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) to students, residents, and others who register with a service it sponsors. If not beforehand, Match applicants will receive an AAMC ID number when they register with ERAS®, the Electronic Residency Application Service sponsored by the AAMC. *The AAMC ID is a required field for applicants during registration for the Main Residency Match.*

### ACGME

Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. The [ACGME](#) accredits residency and fellowship programs in the United States to ensure training programs meet specialty-specific quality standards.

### All In Policy

Any program that registers for the Main Residency Match must attempt to fill all of its positions through the Match or another national matching plan. Fellowship programs in the NRMP Specialties Matching Service® may voluntarily implement the [All In Policy](#).

### AOA

American Osteopathic Association. The [AOA](#) supports training programs dedicated to teaching the principles of osteopathic medicine and is the accreditation authority for osteopathic postdoctoral training programs until June 30, 2020. The AOA Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation is given authority by the U.S. Department of Education to accredit colleges of osteopathic medicine.

### AACOM

American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine. AACOM represents osteopathic medical schools located in the U.S.

### Applicant Status

The terminology displayed in the NRMP Registration, Ranking, and Results (R3) system to identify an applicant's status for any Match:

- **Initial:** The applicant has started the registration process.
- **Active:** The applicant has completed the registration process.
- **Ranking:** The applicant has started entering a rank order list but has not certified it for use in a Match.
- **Certified:** The applicant has finalized a rank order list and it is ready to be used when the matching algorithm is processed.
- **Withdrawn:** The applicant has been withdrawn from the Match. U.S. allopathic medical school seniors cannot withdraw themselves from the Match. The NRMP can withdraw applicants from a Match for non-payment or other reasons.

## Applicant Type

The classification system used by NRMP to designate applicants participating in Matches:

- **Senior of U.S. Allopathic Medical School (U.S. Senior):** A fourth-year medical student in a U.S. allopathic school of medicine accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) who has a graduation date before July 1 in the year of the Match. U.S. seniors are sponsored by their medical schools and may be referred to as Sponsored Applicants.
- **Graduate of U.S. Allopathic Medical School (U.S. Grad):** A graduate of a U.S. allopathic school of medicine accredited by the LCME who has a graduation date before July 1 in the year before the Match. Previous U.S. graduates are not sponsored by the medical school.
- **Student/Graduate of Canadian Medical School:** A student or graduate of a Canadian school of medicine accredited by the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS).
- **Student/Graduate of Osteopathic Medical School (DO):** A student or graduate of a medical school accredited by the AOA Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA).
- **Graduate of Fifth Pathway Program:** A graduate of a U.S. Fifth Pathway program. The Fifth Pathway Program ceased issuing certificates in 2009.
- **U.S. Citizen Student/Graduate of International Medical School (U.S. IMG):** A U.S. citizen who attends or graduated from an international medical school.
- **Non-U.S. Citizen Student/Graduate of International Medical School (Non-U.S. IMG):** A non-U.S. citizen who attends or graduated from an international medical school.

*Independent Applicants include all applicant categories EXCEPT U.S. allopathic seniors.*

## COMLEX-USA

Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination. The [COMLEX](#), administered by the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners, is a three-step examination that assesses medical knowledge and clinical skills and serves as the osteopathic physician's primary pathway to licensure. Students in U.S. osteopathic medical schools typically take the Level 1 examination at the end of their second year. The Level 2-Cognitive Evaluation examination and the Level 2-Performance Evaluation Examination must be taken and passed before graduation. The Level 3 examination typically is taken during or after the first year of residency training.

## Couple

Any two applicants who link their rank order lists in an NRMP Match. Applicants who participate in the same Match as a [couple](#) form pairs of choices on their primary rank order lists, which are considered in rank order when the matching algorithm is processed. A couple matches to the most preferred **pair** of programs where each partner has been offered a position.

## Couple Status

The status in the R3 system that lets an applicant know whether couple registration for a Match is complete.

- Couple Status reads "Pending" for the partner who initiates a Couple Request in the R3 system.
- Couple status reads "Request Received" for the other partner after a notification to confirm the Couple Request is received.
- Couple Status reads "Accepted" for BOTH partners when the Couple Request has been confirmed.

Electing to uncouple later in the process will remove the Couple Status from the applicants' account in the R3 system. *Couple fees are non-refundable, even if applicants later decide to uncouple.*

### **ECFMG**

Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates. [ECFMG](#) assesses the readiness of international medical school students and graduates (IMGs) to enter graduate medical education in the United States. To be eligible to train in an ACGME-accredited program, IMGs must obtain ECFMG certification, pass Step 3 of the USMLE, or secure an unrestricted state medical license.

### **ERAS**

Electronic Residency Application Service. [ERAS](#), administered by the AAMC, is a centralized application service that transmits applications and supporting documentation to ERAS-participating residency and fellowship training programs selected by applicants. *ERAS and NRMP are separate organizations with separate registration processes.*

### **IMG**

International medical graduate. An applicant who attends or graduated from a medical school located outside the United States and Canada.

### **Joint A/P**

A feature in the NRMP's R3 system that allows Match-participating institutions and programs to link an advanced ("A") PGY-2 program with a preliminary ("P") PGY-1 program to create a full course of training for applicants interested in specialties that begin in the PGY-2 year. "Joining" an advanced program to a preliminary program - Joint A/P - ensures only applicants who match to the advanced program can match to that preliminary program.

### **Main Residency Match®**

The Match sponsored by the NRMP that places students and graduates of U.S. and international medical schools into ACGME-accredited core residency training programs in the United States.

### **Match Participation Agreement (MPA)**

The contract all Match participants electronically sign as part of the online Match registration process. It outlines the [policies and procedures](#) for participating in a Match and the steps all Match participants must take to engage in ethical and professionally responsible behavior. *Participants are urged to read the document thoroughly because it becomes a binding contract to honor the results of the Match once participants click the "I Accept" button in the R3 system and the Match registration process is completed.* Match registration **CANNOT** be completed without accepting the terms and conditions of the MPA.

## Matching Algorithm

The proprietary mathematical formula used by the NRMP to place applicants into residency and fellowship training programs. The NRMP [matching algorithm](#) is “applicant proposing,” meaning the preferences expressed on the rank order lists submitted by applicants, not programs, initiate placement into training.

## NBME

The National Board of Medical Examiners. [NBME](#) develops assessment tools used in medical education, licensure, and certification. It co-owns and administers the United States Medical Licensing Examination, or USMLE.

## NBOME

The National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners. [NBOME](#) is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit assessment organization committed to protecting the public by providing the means to assess competencies for osteopathic medicine and related health care professions. NBOME’s COMLEX-USA examination series is a requirement for graduation from colleges of osteopathic medicine and provides the pathway to licensure for osteopathic physicians in the United States and numerous international jurisdictions.

## NRMP ID

A unique identifier Match applicants receive as part of their registration for an NRMP Match. The NRMP ID is generated by the R3 system and randomly assigned. Although participants must re-register every time they participate in an NRMP Match, the same NRMP ID will be assigned in subsequent Matches. An NRMP ID number is **NOT** necessary to register for ERAS, but applicants should return to ERAS and enter their NRMP ID into the Personal Information section of their MyERAS application after Match registration is completed.

## Osteopathic Recognition

Osteopathic Recognition is conferred upon ACGME-accredited programs that provide training in Osteopathic Principles and Practices. Programs in the Match that have achieved ACGME Osteopathic Recognition can create an osteopathic-focused program or program track for some or all of their positions.

## Participant Types

The classification system that designates individual roles in a Match:

- **Applicant:** A medical student, medical school graduate, or physician-in-training who ranks programs in hopes of matching to a residency or fellowship position.
- **Institutional Official:** The NRMP Institutional Official usually is the ACGME Designated Institutional Official and is responsible for oversight of all Match-related activities for the institution’s programs. Upon Match opening, the institutional official must complete a few steps in the R3 system to activate the institution and all programs that will participate in the Match. Programs must be activated before program directors and coordinators can update program information, change the program’s quota, and enter rank order lists. Additionally, institutional officials must approve all quota changes, reversions, and program withdrawals. [View the Match 101 Primer for Institutional Officials](#)
- **Institutional Administrator:** An individual assigned by the institutional official to assist with oversight and management of the institution’s programs in the Match. Institutional administrators can add, monitor, and modify program status and information for the institution.
- **Program Director:** The primary contact for managing Match activities for a designated

program. The program director enters quota changes and rank order lists and must certify the program's rank order list.

- ✓ **Program Coordinator:** An individual designated by the program director to assist the program director in managing Match activities. The program coordinator can view, create, and edit rank order lists; however, program coordinators are **PROHIBITED** from certifying rank order lists or editing a certified list.

- **School Official:** An individual designated by the medical school to manage all Match-related activities for the school and to serve as primary contact to the NRMP on all matters regarding applicants from the school. Through the R3 system, the school official verifies the graduation credentials and SOAP eligibility of all senior students and graduates registered for the Main Residency Match.
- **School Administrator:** An individual designated by the school official to assist with oversight and tasks to manage the Match activities for the school. School administrators can view the school's registered applicants and verify graduation credentials and SOAP eligibility.

### Password

A unique, **8-character-minimum** combination of letters and numbers that Match participants use to access the R3 system. Passwords must contain three of the following: English uppercase letter, English lowercase letter, number, special character. All Match participants enter a username and password on the R3 system login page as part of a two-step verification process. **Match passwords are case-sensitive and should not be shared with anyone.**

### PGY-1 & PGY-2

Post-graduate year one and post-graduate year two training positions. PGY-1 and PGY-2 positions are offered in the Main Residency Match.

### PRISM®

NRMP's **Program Rating and Interview Scheduling Manager (PRISM®)**. A free [mobile app](#) that allows residency and fellowship applicants to track programs during the interview process and create program ratings that can be used to generate a rank order list.

### Program Code

The 9-digit coding scheme used by the NRMP to identify programs participating in a Match:

- Digits 1-4: the code specifying the institution
- Digits 5-7: the first three digits of the 10-digit ACGME number specifying the specialty
- Digit 8: the one-letter designation specifying the type of program
- Digit 9: the number specifying the track number (track number will be "0" unless an institution has more than one track in a specialty of the same program type)

### Program Status

The terminology displayed in the R3 system to identify the stage the program is in for any given Match:

- **Initial:** The program activation process has not been completed by the institutional official.
- **Active:** The program is ready to participate in the Match. The program director should update program profile information and verify the program quota.
- **Ranking:** The program has begun entering a rank order list.
- **Certified:** The program has finalized the rank order list and it is ready to be used when the matching algorithm is processed.
- **Withdrawn:** The program has been withdrawn from the Match.
- **Not Participating:** The program is not participating in the Match.

## Program Track

The classification system that allows programs to identify multiple training opportunities. Program tracks are used to distinguish between training locations (rural or specific clinical site), focus (e.g. clinical, research, global health, osteopathic recognition) or other distinguishing features within the same program.

Example:	9999140C0	Utopia Medical Center - Internal Medicine
	9999140C1	Utopia Medical Center - Internal Medicine/Research
	9999140C2	Utopia Medical Center - Internal Medicine/Rural-Watertown

## Program Type

The NRMP classifies programs into six types:

- **Advanced (A) programs:** Programs that begin in the PGY-2 year after a year of prerequisite training.
- **Categorical (C) programs:** Programs that begin in the PGY-1 year and provide the full training required to be eligible for specialty board certification.
- **Fellowship (F) programs:** Programs that begin subsequent to completion of a core residency training program.
- **Primary (M) programs:** Categorical programs in primary care Internal Medicine and primary care Pediatrics that begin in the PGY-1 year and provide the full training required to be eligible for specialty board certification.
- **Preliminary (P) programs:** One-year programs that begin in the PGY-1 year and provide prerequisite training for advanced programs.
- **Physician (R) programs:** Programs that offer PGY-2 positions that begin in the year of the Match and are reserved for physicians who have had prior graduate medical education. Physician (R) programs are not available to senior medical students.

## Quota

The number of positions a program wishes to fill through an NRMP Match.

## Registration, Ranking, and Results® (R3®) system

The web-based software application through which all NRMP® Matches are managed. The [R3 system](#) is used to register for a Match, create rank order lists, and view Match results and reports.

## Reversions

The option for institutions to revert, or donate, unfilled positions in one program to another program during the matching process. If a donor program does not fill its quota, 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 reversion process offers some degree of protection against the possibility that positions at an institution will go unfilled and is available for all Matches. A reversion can be created in the R3 system by the program director, but it must be approved by the Institutional Official.

## Rank Order List (ROL)

The list of preferences submitted electronically by applicants and programs via the R3 system that is used by the NRMP® matching algorithm to place applicants into residency and fellowship positions.

### **Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program® (SOAP®)**

During Match Week for the Main Residency Match, the process through which eligible unmatched applicants apply for and are offered positions by programs that did not fill when the matching algorithm was processed.

### **Specialties Matching Service® (SMS®)**

The collection of Fellowship Matches sponsored by the NRMP that places applicants into subspecialty training programs in the United States. The SMS includes more than 25 Fellowship Matches representing more than 60 subspecialties.

### **Token**

A randomized combination of letters and numbers that NRMP sends to new institutional officials, program directors, and school officials to complete the Match registration process. The token allows new users to access the R3 system, create a profile, and set a username and password.

### **Username**

A unique, **8-character-minimum** word that Match participants create as part of the Match registration process. All Match participants enter a username and password on the R3 system login page as part of a two-step verification process. **Match usernames case-sensitive and should not be shared with anyone.**

### **USMLE**

United States Medical Licensing Examination. The [USMLE](#) is a three-step examination designed to assess an individual's ability to apply knowledge, concepts, and principles to the practice of medicine. Seniors in U.S. allopathic medical schools typically take the Step 1 Basic Sciences examination, the Step 2-Clinical Knowledge examination, and the Step 2-Clinical Skills examination before they graduate. The USMLE Step 3 examination typically is taken during or after the first year of residency training. IMGs must pass Step 1, Step 2 CK, and Step 2 CS of the USMLE to be eligible to participate in the Main Residency Match.

### **Verification Status**

The status in the R3 system that lets applicants know whether their credentials have been verified for Match participation. Medical school officials verify the graduation credentials of students and graduates of U.S. allopathic and osteopathic and Canadian medical schools. ECFMG verifies the credentials of U.S. citizen and non-U.S. citizen students and graduates of international medical schools. Credentials must be verified before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline for the applicant's rank order list to be used when the matching algorithm is processed and prior to Match Week for the applicant to be eligible for SOAP.

- Status reads "Not Verified" when the medical school official or ECFMG has not yet verified the applicant's eligibility to enter graduate medical education on July 1 in the year of the Match
- Status reads "Verified" when the medical school official or ECFMG has verified the applicant's eligibility to enter graduate medical education on July 1 in the year of the Match

### **Violation**

A breach of NRMP policy subject to sanction based on the severity of the infraction.

### **Waiver**

Release of a match commitment granted only by the NRMP to an applicant or program. **Applicants and program directors are not authorized to release each other from a binding commitment.**