



## Match Participation Agreement for Applicants

### 2024 Main Residency Match<sup>®</sup> and Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program<sup>®</sup> (SOAP<sup>®</sup>) TABLE OF CONTENTS

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE MAIN RESIDENCY MATCH AND SOAP**

The Main Residency Match (“the Match”) is sponsored by the National Resident Matching Program<sup>®</sup> (NRMP<sup>®</sup>), an independent, non-profit organization founded in 1952 for the purpose of providing an orderly and fair mechanism for matching the training preferences of applicants to U.S. residency positions with the preferences of residency training program directors.

The Match:

- Provides a system for the confidential selection of applicants to graduate medical education programs using an electronic, proprietary mathematical algorithm;
- Establishes an equitable and uniform time for applicants and programs to submit rank order lists that express their respective preferences;
- Enables applicants to make informed decisions about their chosen medical specialty or residency training program(s) free of persuasion; and
- Establishes a binding commitment between the applicant and the program(s). Neither the applicant nor the program may release the other from the binding commitment without a waiver or deferral granted by the NRMP (Section 11.0).

The Match is managed through the NRMP’s proprietary Registration, Ranking, and Results<sup>®</sup> (R3<sup>®</sup>) system which processes an applicant’s certified rank order list using a mathematical algorithm to match the preferences of the applicant to the preferences of the program(s).

Applicants learn whether they matched, and if matched, where they matched according to published schedules provided by the NRMP.

Applicants who are unmatched or who are partially matched after the algorithm has been processed, and who meet eligibility requirements, may seek to obtain unfilled position(s) during the NRMP Match Week Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program<sup>®</sup> (SOAP<sup>®</sup>).

SOAP is a process occurring during Match Week wherein positions left unfilled in the Match (i.e., after the matching algorithm has been processed) are offered to SOAP-eligible applicants. During Match Week and until SOAP concludes, all positions offered by unfilled programs and accepted by SOAP-eligible applicants, shall only be through the R3 system. Not all unfilled programs participate in SOAP.

Applicants are advised to carefully read this Agreement and retain a copy of it for future reference.

## **2.0 ELIGIBILITY**

To participate in the Match and SOAP, applicants must register with the NRMP and meet all requirements for entry into graduate medical education as prescribed by:

1. The U.S. senior applicant's medical school;
2. The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education ("ACGME") as outlined in the Institutional Requirements and the Program Requirements for the applicant's specialty; and if applicable,
3. The Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates ("ECFMG").

Sponsoring institutions (e.g., teaching hospitals) and residency training programs may have additional eligibility requirements. Those requirements must be made available to each applicant during recruitment and before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline, either electronically or in writing.

Applicants are responsible for understanding their eligibility to enter their selected training program(s) before certifying their rank order list.

Applicants may not withdraw from the Match after the Rank Order List Certification Deadline.

### **3.0 CATEGORIES OF APPLICANTS AND VERIFICATION OF CREDENTIALS**

#### **3.1 Sponsored Applicant**

A "sponsored applicant" is:

1. A student enrolled in a U.S. medical school accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education ("LCME") or the American Osteopathic Association ("AOA") Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation ("COCA"); or
2. A student who graduated from an LCME or AOA COCA-accredited medical school between June 30 of the calendar year the Match opens and 9:00 pm eastern time on the Rank Order List Certification Deadline in the year of the Match.

##### **3.1.1 Verification of Sponsored Applicant Credentials**

A sponsored applicant's eligibility to participate in the Match and in SOAP to enter graduate medical education training on July 1 in the year of the Match shall be based on the graduation requirements of the medical school. The sponsored applicant's medical school must verify the student's anticipated eligibility to graduate no later than the Rank Order List Certification Deadline. Students deemed ineligible to graduate by the Rank Order List Certification Deadline will be withdrawn from the Match and SOAP.

#### **3.2 Independent Applicant**

An "independent applicant" is:

1. An applicant who graduated from a LCME-accredited or AOA COCA-accredited medical school prior to the year of the Match;

2. A student enrolled in, or a graduate of, a medical school accredited by the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools; or
3. A student enrolled in, or a graduate of, a medical school outside the United States and Canada that is not accredited by the LCME, the AOA COCA, or the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools, hereafter referred to as an International Medical Graduate (IMG).

### **3.2.1 Verification of Independent Applicant Credentials**

The following credentials of independent applicants will be verified by NRMP:

1. MD or DO graduate credentials will be verified with the applicant's medical school.
2. Fifth Pathway program enrollment will be verified with the respective LCME-accredited medical school and the ECFMG.
3. If required, IMG credentials will be verified with the ECFMG.
  - a. Before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline, NRMP will verify with the ECFMG that IMG applicants have completed the medical science examination, clinical skills, and communication skills requirements for ECFMG certification.

An independent applicant must be eligible to participate in the Match and SOAP before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline.

### **3.3 Couples**

"Couples" are:

1. Any two individuals registered as a couple, participating in the Match, and who agree to pair their rank order lists for the purpose of matching to a ranked pair of programs;
2. Sponsored or independent applicants.

#### **3.3.1 Change in Eligibility of Individual in a Couple**

After the Rank Order List Certification Deadline, if one individual who registered as a couple is withdrawn from, or is determined to be ineligible to participate in the Match, and the individuals have not "uncoupled" in the R3 system, the NRMP will:

1. Notify both individuals of the status of the couple; and
2. Uncouple the individuals, remove duplicate programs and "no match" ranks from the rank order list of the eligible individual, and process the rank order list of the eligible individual.

3. If the eligible individual wishes to be withdrawn from the Match, they must notify NRMP in writing within 24 hours of being notified of the removal of the couple status.

### **3.3.2 Failure to Certify Rank Order List**

Individuals registered as a couple, and who are eligible to participate in the Match, where at least one individual's rank order list was not certified by the Rank Order List Certification Deadline, may contact NRMP within 24 hours of receiving notification of an uncertified list and submit an electronic or written request and consent to [support@nrmp.org](mailto:support@nrmp.org) for NRMP to certify their list. Courtesy certification requests received more than 24 hours after notification of an uncertified list will not be processed by NRMP.

If the individual does not request NRMP to certify their rank order list within 24 hours of receiving notification of an uncertified list, NRMP will:

1. Notify both individuals of the status of the couple; and
2. Uncouple the individuals, remove duplicate programs and "no match" ranks, and process the rank order list of the individual with the certified list through the Match.
3. If the individual with the certified list wishes to be withdrawn from the Match, they must notify NRMP in writing within 24 hours of being notified of the removal of the couple status.

If applicants participating in the Match as a couple do not match to a pair of ranks, the NRMP will not subsequently uncouple the applicants and attempt to match them to a program based on their individual rank order lists.

## **4.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE MATCH**

By clicking on the "I Accept" button on the "Sign Match Agreement" screen of the R3 system, the applicant attests to having read this Agreement, and after having done so, agrees to and understands:

1. The applicant will participate in the Match and may participate in SOAP;
2. The terms and conditions of the Match Participation Agreement;
3. The NRMP is not an employment service and does not oversee the terms of any contract between applicants and training programs;
4. The NRMP does not oversee or conduct services related to the application;
5. The NRMP is not involved in establishing the eligibility requirements for any residency position. Training programs have sole responsibility for establishing and communicating all program and institutional eligibility requirements for any residency position;
6. The applicant must adhere to all rules of communication for the Match and SOAP as

- outlined in the applicable Match Participation Agreement;
7. The applicant must register for the Match and they must apply directly to the program(s) in which they desire to obtain a position(s);
  8. The applicant must fully disclose academic, professional, and personal experiences that may impact their ability to begin training at the time specified in the appointment contract;
  9. Once a Match is made between a program and an applicant, a binding commitment exists 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;
  10. The binding commitment requires applicants to request a waiver from the NRMP should they determine, they cannot attend the matched training program(s); and
  11. All communications from the NRMP will be transmitted electronically to the email address provided by the applicant at the time of registration, or through an update, in the R3 system. Applicants are solely responsible for the accuracy of their contact information. If an applicant unsubscribes from NRMP emails or notices, the NRMP has no responsibility for sending NRMP information or providing for its receipt.

## **5.0 REGISTRATION DATES AND MATCH FEES**

### **5.1 Registration Dates**

The annual registration and Match calendar are published annually on the NRMP website: [www.nrmp.org](http://www.nrmp.org).

### **5.2 Match Fees**

Match fees are published annually on the NRMP website. Match fees provide applicants access to the R3 system, the ability to participate in the Match and SOAP as individuals or as part of a couple, and access to certain Match-related lists and reports. To complete the Match registration procedure, fees must be paid in U.S. dollars through the R3 system. Applicants with unpaid fees will be withdrawn from the Match.

All Match fees are non-refundable. Applicants who authorize a credit card chargeback of fees without the NRMP's written consent may be barred permanently from participation in the NRMP Matching Program.

## **6.0 PARTICIPATION IN THE MAIN RESIDENCY MATCH AND SOAP**

The Match process enables applicants to investigate program options and to make selection decisions based on their true preferences, on a uniform schedule without coercion or undue or unwanted pressure.

### **6.1 Duty to Act in an Ethical and Professional Manner**

All Match participants are required to conduct their affairs in an ethical and professionally responsible manner. The duty under this Agreement:

1. Extends throughout the application, interview, matching processes, and SOAP; and
2. Through the 45th day following the start date of training as listed in the appointment contract; or
3. Upon conclusion of any NRMP-related waiver review, violation investigation, or appeal process.

NRMP's Code of Conduct for Applicants is available to review at [www.nrmp.org](http://www.nrmp.org).

## **6.2 Interview Period**

The recruitment phase for the Main Residency Match must be transparent, grounded in equitable practices, reflect mutual respect for the needs of applicants and programs, and minimize unnecessary pressure. To that end, applicants and programs are bound by the terms of the applicable Match Participation Agreement to demonstrate ethical behavior when engaging in interview offers and acceptances.

During the recruitment phase, applicants shall:

1. Make judicious assessment of and decisions about interview offers, accepting only those they intended to fulfill; and
2. Apply reasonable measures of notification (e.g., one-to-two weeks' notice) when needing to cancel or request rescheduling of an interview.

During recruitment applicants may expect programs to extend interview offers that equal, not exceed, the total number of available interview slots, provide applicants no less than 48 hours to accept or reject an interview invitation, and apply reasonable measures of notification (e.g., one-to-two weeks' notice) when needing to cancel or reschedule an interview.

## **6.3 Completeness, Timeliness, and Accuracy of Information**

Applicants are responsible for ensuring the completeness, timeliness, and accuracy of all information provided to programs. This includes:

1. All written, electronic, and verbal information provided to the medical school and representatives of the medical school;
2. All information entered on the application either through the Electronic Residency Application Service ("ERAS") or other application process or service;
3. All information provided to agencies and organizations that provide visa services and ECFMG certification;
4. All written, electronic, and verbal information provided to programs and program representatives throughout recruitment, the onboarding cycle, and through the 45<sup>th</sup> day following the appointment start date; and



5. All written, electronic, and verbal information provided to the NRMP.

Applicants who submit incomplete, misleading, false, or plagiarized information may be deemed to have violated this Agreement.

The omission of any information pertinent to a program's decision to rank an applicant may be deemed a violation of this Agreement. The applicant is responsible for disclosing any information regarding, among other things, the ability to satisfy program requirements; circumstances that may delay or adversely impact an applicant's ability to commence training with a matched program on the program's start date; or information relevant to licensure status or visa status.

The applicant's obligation to submit complete, timely, and accurate information extends through the 45<sup>th</sup> day following the start date as listed in the appointment contract for the program position obtained through the Match or SOAP.

#### **6.4 Confidentiality**

Applicant information contained in the R3 system is confidential and accessible only to authorized users. Unauthorized use or disclosure of such information by an applicant is a violation of this Agreement.

At all times, applicants have the right to:

1. Freely investigate all programs participating in the Match;
2. Keep confidential all information pertaining to the names and identities of programs to which they have applied or may apply;
3. Keep confidential all information pertaining to preference signals sent to programs if the applicant is participating in a specialty that has implemented preference signaling;
4. Keep confidential all information pertaining to offers and acceptance of interviews; and
5. Keep confidential all information pertaining to ranking preferences and SOAP preferences.

Applicants may voluntarily share their rank order lists or SOAP preferences with their medical school advisor(s) so the advisor(s) may support the applicant in the Match process.

#### **Before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline:**

1. Applicants may voluntarily communicate their interest to a program(s); however, applicants may not solicit verbal or written statements from a program(s) implying a commitment to rank the applicant.
2. A program may voluntarily communicate to an applicant that they are viewed favorably and will be ranked by the program; however, programs may not solicit verbal or written statements from an applicant implying a commitment

to rank the program.

## **6.5 Restrictions on Persuasion**

Applicants have a right to be free of persuasion and should report to the NRMP any violations of these rights. Programs are not authorized to:

1. Request that applicants reveal the numbers, names, specialties, geographic locations, or other identifying information about any program(s) to which they have applied or may apply or with which they have interviewed or may interview;
2. Request that applicants reveal any information about the programs to which they may have sent a preference signal, if applicable;
3. Request that applicants reveal preference signal(s) if in a specialty participating in preference signaling;
4. Request that applicants reveal their ranking preferences;
5. Suggest or inform applicants that placement on a rank order list or a SOAP preference list is contingent upon submission of a verbal, electronic, or written statement indicating the applicant's preference;
6. Make any written, electronic, or verbal offer or contract for appointment to a concurrent year residency or fellowship position before the release of the *List of Unfilled Programs*; or
7. Have any written, electronic, or verbal contact with a matched applicant not matched into their program for the purpose of offering an interview, offering placement in the program, or requesting the applicant apply to a program.

## **6.6 Three-Year Medical Education Curriculum**

Applicants participating in a 3-year medical education curriculum may not enter into agreements or be compelled to enter into agreements for training outside of the Match. Applicants may not:

1. Promise or guarantee (verbally or in writing) to enter into residency training positions outside of the Match;
2. Enter into an agreement for "conditional acceptance," "pre-match," or a "matched" position(s) to a residency training program(s) outside of the Match;
3. Commit to a specific training program prior to release of Match results; or
4. Be prevented from exploring, applying to, interviewing, or ranking programs of their choice.

Applicants subjected to any of the conditions above, or who are unsure if a violation has

been committed, may review the Match Violations Policy at [www.nrmp.org](http://www.nrmp.org) and should report any suspected violation(s) to the NRMP for investigation.

## **7.0 MAIN RESIDENCY MATCH**

To participate in the Match, eligible applicants must register, pay all fees, and submit a certified rank order list electronically through the R3 system before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline. All registered users must enter a unique username and password and must not provide their login credentials to another individual.

### **7.1 Categories of Program Positions**

1. Categorical Position (“C”): Post graduate year one (PGY-1) position in programs that provide the full training required for board certification in a specialty.
2. Categorical Primary Care (“M”): PGY-1 positions in medicine and pediatrics that provide a training emphasis on primary care.
3. Preliminary Positions (“P”): One-year positions in transitional or specialty programs.
4. Advanced Position (“A”): Positions in specialty programs that begin the year after the Match and after one or more years of required preliminary training.
5. Reserved Positions (“R”): PGY-2 positions in specialty programs that begin in the year of the Match and are reserved for physicians with prior graduate medical education. These positions are also known as “Physician Positions”.

### **7.2 Submission of Rank Order Lists**

To participate in the Match, applicants must enter and certify their final rank order list in the R3 system before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline. Certification of the rank order list will confirm the applicant’s full participation in the Match and agreement to:

1. Adhere to the binding commitment to accept an appointment if a match result(s); and
2. Start training in good faith (i.e., with the intent to complete training) on the date specified in the appointment agreement.

Non-U.S. citizen applicants requiring a visa are responsible for confirming the institution’s willingness to sponsor the visa-type intended by the applicant before certifying their rank order list.

The NRMP will not create or modify any applicant’s rank order list except where noted in this Agreement.

### 7.2.1 Submitting a Rank Order List

Applicants may enter their rank order lists in more than one session and may modify their lists multiple times before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline.

1. All entries or modifications to a rank order list require applicants to certify or recertify the list before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline
2. Applicants whose rank order lists are not certified before the published deadline may, within 24 hours of receiving notification of an uncertified list, submit an electronic or written request and consent to support@nrmp.org for the NRMP to certify their list.
  - a. Courtesy certification requests received more than 24 hours after the notification of an uncertified list will not be processed by the NRMP.
  - b. Only the rank order list displayed in the R3 system at the time of the Rank Order List Certification Deadline will be certified.
  - c. Once the courtesy certification is complete, the NRMP will not uncertify the rank order list.

### 7.3 Notification of Match Status

At the published time during Match Week, the NRMP will notify all applicants who submitted a certified rank order list of their matched status (i.e., if the applicant matched) via the R3 system and through a courtesy email.

Upon the release of match status, applicants are considered:

1. **Fully matched** if matched into all positions (e.g., applicant intended to enter a five-year general surgery training position and matched into a five-year general surgery training position); or
2. **Partially matched** if not fully matched (e.g., applicant intended to enter a preliminary general surgery position and a three-year anesthesia position and only matched into the anesthesia position or the preliminary general surgery position but not both); or
3. **Unmatched** if not matched into any position.

Unmatched and partially matched applicants may be eligible to participate in SOAP. Applicants must adhere to communication policies as outlined in this Agreement.

### 7.4 Notification of Match Results

At the published time during Match Week, the NRMP will release the Match results (i.e., where the applicant matched) to applicants via the R3 system and through a

courtesy email.

Applicants who are fully or partially matched:

1. Are in a binding commitment and must accept the appointment(s) offered by the training program(s); and
2. Must meet all eligibility and hiring requirements of the program(s) and the institution(s) in which the training appointment(s) is located.
  - a. Each appointment is subject to the official policies of the appointing program(s) and institution(s) in effect on the date the program(s) submits its rank order list.
  - b. Applicants requiring a visa must confirm the institution's willingness to sponsor the visa-type intended by the applicant before certifying their rank order list.

Programs and matched applicants may freely communicate, and programs may initiate their institution's onboarding processes after Match Results are made available on Match Day, as published in the Match calendar.

## **7.5 Communication About Appointments**

Violations of any policies pertaining to communication between programs and applicants must be reported to the NRMP at [policy@nrmp.org](mailto:policy@nrmp.org).

### **7.5.1 Between the Rank Order List Certification Deadline and the notification of Match status**

Applicants may not apply for, discuss, interview for, or accept any position that would run concurrent with positions offered in the Match.

### **7.5.2 Between the notification of Match status and the conclusion of Match Week**

1. Fully matched applicants and programs may not contact each other for any reason until the general announcement of the Match results.
2. Partially matched applicants will receive email notification of the city, state, and zip code of their matched program to facilitate the applicant's participation in SOAP. Partially matched applicants may also access this information through the R3 system and may contact their medical school beginning at the published time on Monday of Match Week. If unable to reach the medical school advisor, applicants may contact NRMP at [support@nrmp.org](mailto:support@nrmp.org). Partially matched applicants must follow all SOAP communication rules.
3. Individuals who are partially matched U.S. medical student couples will receive email notification of the city, state, and zip code of their matched program to facilitate the partially matched applicant's participation in SOAP. Partially matched applicants may also access this information

through the R3 system and, if approved by each applicant, and the medical schools agree, each of the couple's medical schools may communicate with each other to receive and notify their respective applicant of the city, state, and zip code of the partner's matched program to facilitate participation in SOAP. If unable to reach the medical school advisor, applicants may contact NRMP at support@nrmp.org. Partially matched applicants must follow all SOAP communication rules.

4. For partially and fully matched U.S. medical student couples, if approved by each applicant, and the medical schools agree, each of the couple's medical schools may communicate with each other to receive and notify their respective applicant of their partner's Match results for the purpose of Match Day ceremonies.

## **8.0 WITHDRAWAL FROM THE MATCH**

Applicants may not withdraw themselves from the Main Residency Match after the Rank Order List Certification Deadline. Withdrawn applicants will not have their rank order list used in the Match.

### **8.1 Sponsored Applicants**

A sponsored applicant may only be withdrawn from the Match by the applicant's medical school official or administrator.

#### **8.1.1 Withdrawal Due to Ineligibility**

Sponsored applicants withdrawn from the Match because of ineligibility to enter the matched training program on July 1 in the year of the Match:

1. May submit applications to a non-Match participating program(s) after applications open during Match Week;
2. May accept a position in a non-Match participating program(s) upon the initiation of the first SOAP offer round;
3. May seek a position in a Match participating program(s) upon conclusion of SOAP; and
4. May participate in the Match the following year and may be considered a sponsored applicant.

#### **8.1.2 Withdrawal for Reasons Other Than Ineligibility**

Sponsored applicants withdrawn from the Match for reasons other than ineligibility may accept a position outside the Match upon the conclusion of SOAP.

#### **8.1.3 U.S. Military Applicants**

Sponsored applicants who obtain a position(s) in U.S. military GME training programs must notify their medical schools. The applicant must be withdrawn

from the Match by their medical school before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline. Applicants are ineligible to participate in SOAP for concurrent year NRMP positions.

## **8.2 Independent Applicants**

Independent applicants may withdraw from the Match on their own initiative for any reason if the NRMP receives their withdrawal request before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline.

### **8.2.1 Withdrawal to Accept Position Outside the Match**

Independent applicants who accept a concurrent year residency or fellowship position outside the Match or through any other national matching plan must:

1. Withdraw from the Match through the R3 system; and
2. Withdraw before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline.

### **8.2.2 U.S. Military Applicants**

Independent applicants who obtain a position(s) in U.S. military GME training programs must withdraw from the Match before to the Rank Order List Certification Deadline and are ineligible to participate in SOAP for concurrent year NRMP positions.

## **8.3 Withdrawal of Applicants by NRMP**

In addition to the causes noted above, NRMP may withdraw an applicant from the Match and SOAP for the following causes:

1. Sponsored applicants whose graduation from a LCME- or an AOA COCA-accredited medical school is not verified by the medical school;
2. Independent applicants whose credentials cannot be verified. These applicants will not have their rank order lists used in the Match and will not be eligible to participate in SOAP;
3. Applicants registered in both the Canadian Resident Matching Service (“CaRMS”) and the Match and who match through CaRMS to a concurrent year position.
  - a. In those years in which CaRMS has an earlier schedule, applicants who match through CaRMS are ineligible to match and to participate in SOAP for concurrent year NRMP positions. Applicants will be withdrawn by the NRMP after the Rank Order List Certification Deadline.
  - b. In those years when CaRMS has a later schedule, applicants registered for CaRMS who match in the NRMP will be withdrawn from the CaRMS Match.
4. Applicants who obtained advanced positions to begin in the current Match year,

either through the NRMP Specialties Matching Service<sup>®</sup> or the prior Match, who have not received a waiver of the match commitment to the advanced position;

- a. Applicants will be eligible for the Match only if the appropriate waiver request is received and approved by the NRMP before the Rank Order List Certification Deadline.
5. Applicants with unpaid NRMP fees. Those applicants will be withdrawn from the Match, will not be allowed access to the *List of Unfilled Programs*, and will not be eligible to participate in SOAP.
6. Applicants for whom the NRMP believes it has credible evidence that they have violated the terms of this Agreement.

Upon withdrawal from the Match, the applicant's status in the R3 system will note "Pending Action," which will remain in effect until the applicant has waived or exhausted all avenues of appeal. Applicants withdrawn from the Match may appeal the action through the NRMP "Violations Policy", which may be found on the NRMP website.

The NRMP's authority to withdraw an applicant from the Main Residency Match under this section is in addition to its authority to impose sanctions for violations of this Agreement. The decision by the NRMP to withdraw an applicant under this section shall remain in place and shall not be subject to any suspension in the event the applicant contests the withdrawal or other action by the NRMP under the dispute resolution process set forth in Section 18.0.

## **9.0 SUPPLEMENTAL OFFER AND ACCEPTANCE PROGRAM (SOAP)**

The Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program ("SOAP") provides a uniform system for programs to offer unfilled positions to eligible unmatched or partially matched applicants through a series of offer rounds during Match Week. SOAP is not another Match.

Positions offered and accepted during SOAP constitute a binding commitment under this Agreement.

### **9.1 SOAP Eligibility**

To participate in SOAP, eligible applicants must be:

1. Registered for the Main Residency Match;
2. Verified as eligible to enter graduate medical education on July 1 in the year of the Match as outlined in Section 3.0; and
3. Partially or fully unmatched on Monday of Match Week.

SOAP-eligible applicants may apply only to SOAP-participating programs until SOAP has concluded.



### **9.1.1 Applicants also participating in the Canadian Resident Matching Service (“CaRMS”)**

In those years when the CaRMS schedule overlaps with the NRMP Match schedule, unmatched applicants who are eligible to participate in the CaRMS match will be marked ineligible to participate in SOAP and will not have access to the *List of Unfilled Programs*.

## **9.2 SOAP Communication**

SOAP-eligible applicants may submit applications or other materials pertaining to the application to Match-participating programs that are participating in SOAP either through the Electronic Residency Application Service (“ERAS”) or another application service, as required by the program.

Neither SOAP-eligible applicants nor their representatives may initiate any verbal, written, or electronic communication with any program until and unless specifically contacted by a program representative after the published time on Monday of Match Week and after receipt of the application. If a program does not contact the applicant or the applicant’s representative, there may be no communication to the program.

SOAP-eligible applicants may not receive communication from a program unless and until the applicant has submitted an application to that program. SOAP-eligible applicants receiving communication from a program to which they have not applied must report the communication to the NRMP at [policy@nrmp.org](mailto:policy@nrmp.org).

At the published time, SOAP communication rules end, and unmatched or partially matched applicants may contact unfilled programs freely.

## **9.3 SOAP Applications and Process**

Eligible partially matched and fully unmatched applicants shall have access only to the categorical, preliminary, or advanced unfilled positions for which they are eligible, without restriction by specialty, through the R3 system.

At the times published in the Match Week and SOAP calendar, SOAP eligible applicants may:

1. Access the *List of Unfilled Programs* in the R3 system;
2. Prepare and send applications to programs of interest;
3. Begin receiving communications from SOAP-participating programs; and
4. Receive offer(s) through the R3 system.
  - a. Applicants may accept or reject program offers. If the applicant does not accept an offer, they may access the updated *List of Unfilled Programs*.

Upon conclusion of SOAP, applicants who remain unmatched or partially matched:

1. May access the *List of Unfilled Programs* in the R3 system;

2. May contact all remaining unfilled programs; and
3. May not seek to replace any matched position and/or position obtained through SOAP.

#### **9.4 Exception - Unmatched SOAP-Eligible Applicants**

Fully unmatched SOAP-eligible applicants who wish to refrain from participating in SOAP, and who desire to pursue interests other than clinical residency training (e.g., research, Masters academic program, etc.), may do so in lieu of participating in SOAP, provided:

1. The applicant does not submit any applications to Match- or SOAP-participating programs during Match Week;
  - a. Applicants who have submitted any applications during Match Week will be ineligible to participate in the SOAP exception.
2. The position sought is not affiliated with a Match- or SOAP-participating residency program; and
3. The position does not qualify for training credit in an ACGME-accredited residency program.

Neither the applicant, nor their advocates, may contact SOAP-participating programs for the purpose of discussing or seeking a clinical training position until the conclusion of SOAP.

#### **9.5 SOAP-Ineligible Applicants**

Applicants who are ineligible to enter graduate medical education on July 1 in the year of the Match will be considered SOAP-ineligible, may not participate in SOAP, and will not have access to the *List of Unfilled Programs* in the R3 system during SOAP.

Unmatched applicants who are SOAP-ineligible may apply only to positions in non-Match participating programs at the published time during Match Week.

SOAP-ineligible applicants shall not contact or apply to non-Match participating programs prior to the published time during Match Week.

Unmatched applicants who are SOAP-ineligible may not contact Match-participating programs until after SOAP concludes.

Unfilled programs may not initiate contact with any SOAP-ineligible applicants until after SOAP concludes.

#### **9.6 List of Unfilled Programs**

The *List of Unfilled Programs* will remain available to unmatched and partially matched applicants through 11:59 p.m. ET on May 1.

## 10.0 BINDING COMMITMENT

Upon conclusion of the Match and SOAP, matched applicants:

1. Are in a binding commitment with the program and must accept an appointment as matched or offered:
  - a. Applicants with a Match or SOAP commitment who seek a concurrent year position, absent a waiver or deferral from the NRMP, shall be presumed to have violated this Agreement.
2. Must begin training on the start date specified in the appointment contract with the intent to complete the program:
  - a. The binding commitment will be deemed to have been honored by the applicant so long as the applicant enters and remains in the training program through the first 45 calendar days after the start date of the relevant appointment contract.
  - b. The binding commitment exists through the first 45 calendar days of the start date of the relevant appointment contract.
  - c. Programs terminating a resident within 45 days of the start date specified in the appointment agreement, without having an approved waiver or deferral from the NRMP, will be in violation of this Agreement.
  - d. Applicants who give notice of resignation, resign, or vacate a position within 45 days of the start date specified in the appointment agreement, without having an approved waiver or deferral from the NRMP, will be in violation of this Agreement. Programs must report such violations to [policy@nrmp.org](mailto:policy@nrmp.org).

Each appointment is subject to the official policies of the appointing institution and program (e.g., expected training credentials, background checks, drug screens, visa status) in effect on the Rank Order List Certification Deadline or when the program submits its preference list if the program participates in SOAP.

## 11.0 WAIVER OR DEFERRAL OF MATCH RESULTS

**Waiver:** The release of Match participants from the binding commitment following the Match.

**Deferral:** A one-year delayed start of training mutually agreed to by the matched applicant and the program.

Neither applicants nor programs may release each other from a matched position, or an offer accepted during SOAP. A waiver or deferral of the binding commitment may be obtained only from the NRMP. Applicants are encouraged to review the Waiver and Deferral policy on the NRMP website. The terms of the Waiver and Deferral Policy are incorporated herein and binding upon all Match participants.

A waiver or deferral may be considered by the NRMP:

1. For circumstances demonstrating an unanticipated serious and extreme

- hardship or change of specialty; or
2. If NRMP determines the applicant is ineligible to begin training.

Applicants considering a waiver or deferral request:

1. Shall review the Waiver and Deferral Policy on the NRMP website ([www.nrmp.org](http://www.nrmp.org));
2. Shall submit the request in accordance with the directions provided on the NRMP website;
3. Shall demonstrate to the reasonable satisfaction of the NRMP that the criteria necessary for approval and issuance of a waiver or deferral are present;
4. Shall provide complete, timely, and accurate information to the NRMP in connection with its waiver or deferral review;
5. Shall not decline the matched position until the waiver or deferral request has been decided; and
6. Shall not apply, interview for, or accept a position in another program until the waiver or deferral request has been approved.

Applicants shall promptly notify the NRMP of waiver or deferral request(s) received from a program.

NRMP's decision is final and is not subject to challenge in arbitration, by judicial review, or by review of a third party. NRMP may grant a deferral of up to one year at the request of either a program or an applicant if arbitration proceedings have been initiated and the outcome is pending.

Absent a waiver or deferral from the NRMP failure to honor this binding commitment will be considered a violation of this Agreement.

## **12.0 VIOLATIONS**

Applicants are responsible for conducting their affairs in an ethical, professional, and responsible manner throughout the application, interview, and matching process.

Applicants have a right to expect medical schools, institutions, and programs also to conduct their affairs in an ethical, professional, and responsible manner throughout the application, interview, and matching processes.

Known or suspected violations of any applicable Match Participation Agreement, by Match and SOAP participants, must be reported to the NRMP. Reports of a violation of Match and/or SOAP policy may be made anonymously.

### **12.1 Alleged Violations**

At its discretion, the NRMP will investigate alleged violations of this Agreement, including but not limited to:

1. Failure to provide complete, timely, and accurate information during the application, interview, matching, and SOAP processes;
2. Discrepancies in graduation credentials;
3. Attempts to subvert or circumvent eligibility requirements, the matching process, or SOAP;
4. Failure to offer or accept an appointment as required by the results of a Match outcome;
5. Failure to engage in ethical and/or professionally responsible behavior; or
6. Any other irregular behavior or activity that occurs in connection with registration, the submission or modification of a rank order or SOAP preference list, and/or the participant's commitment to honor the Match outcome.

## **12.2 Violations Policy and Procedure**

The NRMP Policies and Procedures for Reporting, Investigation, and Disposition of Violations of NRMP Agreements ("Violations Policy") may be found on the NRMP website and shall govern the handling of match violations. If the NRMP receives sufficient, credible information that a violation of this Agreement may have occurred, the NRMP may initiate an investigation in accordance with the Violations Policy. Applicants must provide complete, timely, and accurate information to the NRMP in connection with its violation investigation. The terms of the Violations Policy (including, but not limited to, the consequences of a confirmed violation) are incorporated herein and binding upon all Match participants.

## **12.3 Withdrawal of Applicant Due to Suspected Violation**

**12.3.1 Authority:** The NRMP's authority to withdraw an applicant or program from the Match under this section is in addition to its authority to impose sanctions for violations of this Agreement. At any time before the Match results are released, the NRMP may withdraw any applicant from the Match or SOAP and without first affording an opportunity for a hearing if the NRMP believes it has credible evidence that:

1. The applicant has violated the terms of this Agreement; and
2. Absent such summary withdrawal, the integrity of the Match is in jeopardy.

### **12.3.2 Pending Action**

Upon withdrawal from the Match and/or SOAP due to an alleged violation, the applicant's status in the R3 system will note "Pending Action," which will remain in effect until the applicant has waived or exhausted all avenues of appeal as outlined in the NRMP Violations Policy.

The matched program(s) may not fill the applicant's position during the NRMP's investigation until the NRMP has issued a Final Report or granted a waiver, whichever is earlier.

If the violation investigation has not concluded by the start date of training, the program shall begin training the matched applicant unless NRMP has granted a waiver or issued a deferral to the next training year.

#### **12.4 Confirmed Violations**

If the NRMP's investigation of an alleged violation results in a finding that an applicant has committed a violation of this Agreement, the applicant will be withdrawn from the Match and SOAP and sanctions levied as outlined in the Violations Policy.

### **13.0 USE OF MATCH INFORMATION**

#### **13.1 Applicant Use of Match Information**

Applicants may use the R3 system and the information contained therein solely for the purpose of their participation in the Match and/or SOAP. Applicants may not share with any individual any Match information from or maintained in the R3 system, including but not limited to, information from the *List of Unfilled Programs*, and/or *Regional Match Statistics by Specialty*.

Applicants may not copy, distribute, post, or make publicly available in any other way, any Match information from or maintained in the R3 system, including information from the *List of Unfilled Programs*, and/or *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.

Unauthorized disclosure of Match information by applicants is considered a violation of this Agreement and may result in sanctions to the applicant.

#### **13.2 NRMP Use of Match Information**

Each applicant authorizes the NRMP to request, obtain, transmit and receive identifying information (including information in the R3 system, individual applicant USMLE scores, COMLEX scores, Alpha Omega Alpha membership, and information regarding demographics and volunteer and work experiences) to and from authorized users, including the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, the American Osteopathic Association, the Association of American Medical Colleges, the American Medical Association, the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates, the Canadian Resident Matching Service, the National Board of Medical Examiners, the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners, U.S. MD-grating medical schools, U.S. DO-grating medical schools, and other organizations engaged in postgraduate medical education for purposes of:

1. Collecting and verifying data submitted by the applicant;
2. Establishing postgraduate training databases;

3. Conducting a Matching Program;
4. Performing research;
5. Establishing a Match;
6. Providing technology applications and service tools offered by authorized providers or the NRMP.

### **13.2.1 Disclosure**

The NRMP will not disclose applicant personal information that is clearly and uniquely identifiable to any applicant, program, institution, or medical school except in response to a subpoena or an order from a court of competent jurisdiction. For each applicant who authorizes the NRMP to use applicant information for research purposes, the NRMP may provide such identifiable information only to reputable organizations engaged in undergraduate, graduate, or postgraduate education solely for the purposes of performing joint research under strict, binding terms of a confidential data sharing agreement. At no time will the NRMP allow applicant personal information that is clearly and uniquely identifiable to be disclosed in publications, presentations, and reports resulting from such research.

The NRMP may anonymize and/or aggregate applicant information and use it for its own reporting purposes and contribute such anonymized, aggregated information to national databases or for NRMP-approved research purposes, technology applications and service tools offered by the NRMP.

### **13.2.2 Ranking and Match Outcome Information**

For the avoidance of doubt, a rank order list submitted by an applicant is confidential and the NRMP will not disclose or release applicant ranking information that is clearly and uniquely identifiable to any applicant, program, institution, or medical school except in response to a subpoena or an order from a court of competent jurisdiction. For each applicant who authorizes the NRMP to use applicant information for research purposes, the NRMP may provide such identifiable information only to reputable organizations engaged in undergraduate, graduate, or postgraduate education solely for the purposes of performing joint research under strict, binding terms of a confidential data sharing agreement. At no time will the NRMP allow applicant ranking and/or match outcome information that is clearly and uniquely identifiable to be disclosed in publications, presentations, and reports resulting from such research.

The NRMP may anonymize and/or aggregate rank order list and/or match outcome information and use it for its own reporting purposes and contribute such anonymized, aggregated information to national databases or for NRMP-approved research purposes, technology applications and service tools offered by the NRMP.

Each applicant authorizes the NRMP to release applicant Main Residency Match results to each program that ranked the applicant on the program's rank order

list, to the applicant's school of medicine or osteopathy, and to those program directors who request such information to verify whether an applicant was matched.

Each applicant also authorizes the NRMP to release any information provided by such applicant to other matching programs for the purpose of ensuring the applicant does not match to concurrent year positions. Each applicant also authorizes the NRMP to post appointment information in the R3 system Applicant Match History.

#### **14.0 REPRESENTATION AND WARRANTIES**

Each applicant represents and warrants to the NRMP that all of the information provided, or that will be provided, by such applicant to the NRMP is at all times complete, timely, and accurate to the best of such applicant's knowledge at the time such information was or will be provided. Each applicant further represents that they have authorized all institutions and individuals who may possess this information to disclose it to the NRMP for purposes of verification. Each applicant further represents their unique log in information to access the R3 system will not be shared with or used by any other individual to access the system.

Moreover, each applicant represents that they have read, understood, and agrees to the NRMP's Privacy Statement.

#### **15.0 DISCLAIMERS**

The parties acknowledge that the fees charged by the NRMP for participation in the Main Residency Match include no consideration for any assumption by the NRMP of the risk of any damages that may arise in connection with any program's or applicant's participation in the Main Residency Match or utilization of the R3 system.

Each party agrees that neither:

1. the NRMP,
2. any vendor providing equipment, software, or services to the NRMP ("Vendor"), nor
3. any director, officer, employee, affiliate, or agent of the NRMP, or any Vendor,

will be liable for any loss, damage, cost, or expense whatsoever, direct or indirect, regardless of the cause, that may arise out of, or be in any way related to, this Agreement, the use of the Main Residency Match, the R3 system, or the automated systems and services utilized by the NRMP to implement the Main Residency Match or to send notices, including, but not limited to: (a) the suspension or termination of, or the inability to use, all or any part of the R3 system; (b) the erroneous transmission of any data or the transmission of any erroneous data; (c) any failure or delay suffered or allegedly suffered by any party in receiving or sending any rank order list or other information or in certifying a rank order list, however, caused; (d) the delivery or transmission of any virus, worm, or other disruptive device; or (e) any other cause in connection with the furnishing of services or notices by the NRMP or the performance, maintenance, or use of, or inability to use, all or any part of the R3 system. The foregoing will apply regardless of whether a claim arises in contract, tort, negligence, strict liability, or otherwise.

The automated systems and services utilized by the NRMP to implement the Main Residency



Match and the R3 system are provided "AS IS" and "AS AVAILABLE." NONE OF THE NRMP, ANY VENDOR, OR ANY OF THEIR DIRECTORS, OFFICERS, AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, OR AFFILIATES MAKES ANY WARRANTY OR REPRESENTATION OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, WITH RESPECT TO SUCH SERVICES, THE R3 SYSTEM, OR THE MAIN RESIDENCY MATCH OR SOAP, OR TO THE ACCURACY, COMPLETENESS, SECURITY, TIMELINESS, OR RELIABILITY OF THE INFORMATION TO WHICH ANY PARTY HAS ACCESS OR TRANSMITS OR RECEIVES THROUGH THEM OR THROUGH ANY OTHER AUTOMATED SYSTEM. ALL IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, TITLE, AND NON-INFRINGEMENT ARE EXPRESSLY EXCLUDED. No oral or written information or advice given by the NRMP, any Vendor, or any of their directors, officers, agents, affiliates, or employees will create a warranty, and no party may rely on any such information or advice. There is no assurance that the information to which the parties have access through the R3 system will be accurate, complete, secure, timely, or reliable, or that the R3 system or the automated services utilized by the NRMP will be error-free or operate without interruption. In particular, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the NRMP makes no warranty that certified rank order lists processed through use of such automated services will be properly executed. Each program and applicant is solely responsible for verifying that the certified rank order list has been duly entered and certified.

## **16.0 LIMITATION OF LIABILITY**

IN NO EVENT WILL THE NRMP OR ANY VENDOR OR AFFILIATE BE LIABLE FOR ANY DAMAGES AS A RESULT OF ANY NEGLIGENT ACT OR OMISSION OF THE NRMP OR ANY VENDOR OR AFFILIATE, IRRESPECTIVE OF WHETHER THE INJURED PARTY IS A PROGRAM, AN APPLICANT, OR A THIRD PARTY.

## **17.0 NOTICES**

All notices to the NRMP, must be given either by email at [support@nrmp.org](mailto:support@nrmp.org) or through the R3 system and are effective upon receipt. The NRMP is not responsible for delays in email or Internet service. Any notices or documents received by the NRMP after the relevant deadline date will not be considered.

All notices, to applicants or programs will be given either by (a) email to the email address provided by such party to the NRMP upon submission of such party's registration in the R3 system or (b) through the R3 system while the applicant or program is logged on to the site. Such notices to applicants or programs given by email will be deemed given twenty-four (24) hours after sending, unless the sending party is notified that the email address is invalid or that the message was not delivered, or if the receiver has voluntarily unsubscribed from NRMP emails or notices. All notices given by the NRMP during an applicant's or program's session on the R3 system will be deemed given at the time of such session.

## **18.0 DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

Except for waiver determinations that are final when made by the NRMP and not subject to arbitration, judicial review, or review by any third party, as provided in this Agreement, all other disputes arising out of, or related to, the Main Residency Match, this Agreement, or the breach thereof, between or among the NRMP and any applicant or program participating, or seeking participation, in the Main Residency Match shall be settled by arbitration in accordance with the Commercial Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association then in effect (as modified below and excluding Procedures for Large, Complex Disputes), unless the parties to the dispute mutually agree otherwise. The arbitration hearing shall commence within six months of filing the

demand for arbitration or at another time agreeable to the NRMP. Notwithstanding the foregoing, no arbitrator shall have power to adjudicate any dispute as a class arbitration or as a consolidated arbitration without the express consent of all the parties to any such dispute, and every arbitrator shall return a reasoned award in writing, setting forth the factual findings and legal conclusions that are the basis for the determination. In addition, no arbitrator shall have the power to modify any sanctions imposed by the NRMP unless: (1) the arbitrator determines there is no basis in fact for a finding of violation; or (2) the arbitrator finds that the sanctions imposed by the NRMP are either arbitrary and capricious or outside the scope of potential sanctions set forth in this Agreement and the Violations Policy.

Notice of the demand for arbitration must be filed in writing with all other parties to the arbitration and with the American Arbitration Association. A demand for arbitration in a matter that is covered by the Violations Policy must be made in accordance with the Violations Policy. The arbitrator(s) must conduct all arbitration proceedings in the Office of the NRMP in Washington, DC or at such other location in Washington, DC as mutually agreed upon by the parties. Each party will share equally in the cost of arbitration, except that the party requesting arbitration shall be solely responsible for paying the filing fee required by the AAA Standard Fee Schedule, including the Initial Filing Fee and the Case Service Fee, and the party requesting arbitration must further file the AAA form entitled "Demand for Arbitration – Commercial". The burden shall be on the party requesting arbitration to demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that an adverse decision by the NRMP was without basis-in-fact or in violation of this Agreement. The award by the arbitrator or arbitrators shall be final. Judgment upon the award rendered may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof, so long as the arbitrator(s) acted in good faith. The arbitrator(s) may construe and interpret, but may not vary or ignore, the terms of this Agreement. The arbitrator(s) shall not have the power to make an award that is inconsistent with the provisions of this Agreement or with District of Columbia substantive law.

## **19.0 LIMITATION OF ACTION**

No claim or cause of action, regardless of form, arising out of or related to the Main Residency Match, this Agreement, or the breach thereof, or any other dispute between the NRMP and any applicant or program participating, or seeking participation, in the Main Residency Match, may be brought in any forum by any party more than 30 calendar days after the cause of action has accrued, regardless of any statute, law, regulation, or rule to the contrary ("Limitation Period"). The Limitation Period shall commence the day after the day on which the cause of action accrued. Failure to institute an arbitration proceeding within the Limitation Period will constitute an absolute bar and waiver of the institution of any proceedings, whether in arbitration, court, or otherwise, with respect to such cause of action. A cause of action that has become time-barred may not be exercised by way of counter claim or relied upon by way of exception.

In addition, any party who desires to contest a decision of a Review Panel of the NRMP must notify the NRMP in writing of its intent to seek arbitration within 10 business days from that party's receipt of the Panel's report and must file a written demand for arbitration within 30 calendar days of receipt of such report, in accordance with the terms of the Violations Policy. If notice of a party's intent to seek arbitration is not received in writing by the NRMP within 10 business days from that party's receipt of the Review Panel Report, or if the party does not file a written demand for arbitration within 30 calendar days of receipt of the Review Panel Report, that party is deemed to have waived and is barred from later filing a demand for arbitration or seeking other relief.

## **20.0 GENERAL**

This Agreement is governed by the laws of the District of Columbia, excluding its choice of laws, provisions, and the agreed upon venue for any dispute arising from this Agreement is the District of Columbia.

The headings of the Sections of this Agreement have been inserted for convenience of reference only and shall in no way restrict or otherwise affect the construction of the terms or provisions of this Agreement. Unless indicated otherwise, references in this Agreement to Sections are to Sections of this Agreement.

If any provision of this Agreement is found in any arbitration proceeding or by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable, that provision shall be modified to the minimum extent necessary to achieve the purpose originally intended, if possible, and the validity, legality, and enforceability of the remaining provisions will not be affected or impaired and are to be enforced to the maximum extent permitted by applicable law. If any remedy set forth in this Agreement is determined to have failed of its essential purpose, then all other provisions of this Agreement will remain in full force and effect.

Failure of any party to act or exercise its rights under this Agreement upon the breach of any other terms hereof by any other party is not to be construed as a waiver of such a breach or prevent such party from later enforcing compliance with any or all of the terms hereof. This Agreement contains the entire agreement between the parties with respect to the Main Residency Match and its results. Any representations, promises, or conditions not incorporated in this Agreement will not be binding upon any of the parties. No modification of this Agreement shall be effective unless in writing and executed by the party against whom it is to be enforced.

## **21.0 APPLICANT AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF TEST SCORES AND ANONYMIZED DATA**

By my electronic signature and as of the date this Agreement is submitted to NRMP, I hereby authorize my medical school to release, verify, and transmit to NRMP upon its request certain test score data, in particular my USMLE scores, COMLEX scores or other test score(s) utilized in the Match process. I also authorize the National Board of Medical Examiners and the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners to transmit to NRMP my USMLE or COMLEX score (as the case may be). I understand and agree that the test score data shall be used to verify test score information provided by me or about me by a testing service or other entity relevant to the graduate medical education matching process.

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