



**THE MATCH**<sup>®</sup>  
NATIONAL RESIDENT MATCHING PROGRAM<sup>®</sup>

**Charting Outcomes<sup>™</sup>**

**Applicant Survey Results**  
Main Residency Match<sup>®</sup>

**2025**

*Requests for permission to use these data, as well as questions about the content of this publication or the National Resident Matching Program data and reports, may be directed to [datarequest@nrmp.org](mailto:datarequest@nrmp.org).*

Questions about the NRMP should be directed to  
Donna L. Lamb, D.H.Sc., M.B.A., B.S.N., President and CEO, NRMP, at [admin@nrmp.org](mailto:admin@nrmp.org).

Suggested Citation

National Resident Matching Program, Data Release and Research Committee: Results of the 2025 NRMP Applicant Survey. National Resident Matching Program, Washington, DC. 2025.

Copyright © 2025 National Resident Matching Program. All rights reserved. Permission to use, copy, and/or distribute any documentation and/or related images from this publication shall be expressly obtained from the NRMP.

Charting Outcomes™

Applicant Survey Results  
Main Residency Match®

2023

## Introduction

The first NRMP Applicant Survey was administered in 2008. Historically, the primary purpose of the survey was to identify the factors applicants consider when (1) choosing which programs to apply to, and (2) placing programs on their rank order list (ROL). The NRMP believed this information could be helpful to applicants and programs alike as it could inform and support planning for the application, recruitment, and interview phases of the transition to residency. The survey was conducted biennially in odd years from 2009 until 2019. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and a desire to better understand the impact of the pivot to virtual interviewing for residency training, the Applicant Survey was administered annually from 2020 to 2023. In 2024, the NRMP decided to continue administering the Applicant Survey on an annual basis to ensure information and insights were readily available to the community.

In 2024, the NRMP made moderate changes to the survey based on qualitative work conducted in 2023 where Applicant Survey respondents were asked what questions or information in the survey held the most value. Respondents indicated either 1) they applied broadly at the application stage without focusing on specific program factors, or 2) that the factors influencing their application decisions were the same as those considered when ranking programs. As a result, questions about application decisions were removed from the survey while questions about factors influencing rank order list decisions were retained.

The survey was administered in March 2025 and sent to applicants who certified a ROL as part of the 2025 Main Residency Match. The survey was conducted during the 11 days between the ROL Certification Deadline and the start of Match Week (i.e., March 6-March 16, 2025) to prevent match outcomes from influencing applicants' responses. In 2025, 283 applicants with a certified ROL were withdrawn from Match participation; they were not included in the numerator or the denominator for calculating response rates and are not included in the interactive report.

## Survey

Survey assessment items across many domains are represented in the Applicant Survey Report including:

### Program Characteristics

Program characteristics considered by applicants in selecting which programs to rank and the perceived importance of those characteristics.

### Ranking Strategy

Ranking strategies such as ranking programs in order of true preferences, ranking one or more less competitive programs as a "safety net" or "fallback" plan.

### Recruitment Cycle

Numbers of applications submitted, interview invitations received, interviews attended, and programs ranked in their preferred specialty (specialty of the first program on the ROL) and, separately, in all other specialties where applicable.

## Interactive Report

Applications submitted, interview invitations received, interviews attended, and programs ranked were self-reported by respondents. For these counts, extreme outlier values were removed prior to the inclusion of data in the interactive report.

## Response Rates

The overall response rate across all applicant types was 31.4% (n = 14,820). In accordance with the table below, the report presents survey results by applicant type for 21 specialties where at least 50 responses were submitted. Three applicant type-defined subgroups are included in the response rate table including:

- U.S. MD seniors
- U.S. DO seniors
- All Other Applicant Types: U.S. MD graduates, U.S. DO graduates, U.S. citizen students and graduates of international medical schools (U.S. IMGs), non-U.S. citizen students and graduates of international medical schools (non-U.S. IMGs), and students and graduates of Canadian medical schools

The “All Other Specialties” category as reflected in the table aggregates 23 specialties, including 16 combined programs (e.g., Emergency Medicine/Family Medicine, Internal Medicine/Dermatology), where fewer than 50 total responses per specialty were submitted. Applicants who ranked Transitional Year or PGY-1 preliminary programs first on their ROLs were considered to have “No Preferred Specialty”. These applicants were not included in the preferred specialty calculations and subsequent tabs of the interactive report.

## Highlighted Results

### Overall Applicant Ranking Behaviors

Although there was some variability by applicant type, the considerations applicants most frequently endorsed by percentage regarding ranking decisions were:

- interview day experience;
- overall goodness of fit;
- desired geographic location;
- quality of residents in the program;
- reputation of the program; and
- work/life balance.

Overall, all top considerations contributing to ranking decisions in 2025 were also the most frequently endorsed in 2024.

### Applicant Ranking Behaviors by Preferred Specialty

Applicants' consideration of program characteristics in ranking is likely influenced by their preferred specialty and what applicants perceive as important to those specialties. For example, consider these comparisons of program characteristics considered in ranking decisions between applicants who preferred Emergency Medicine versus Obstetrics and Gynecology:

- Among U.S. MD seniors who preferred Emergency Medicine, 34% said they considered the opportunity and support to conduct research and/or attend conferences in their ranking decisions, compared to 52% of U.S. MD seniors who preferred Obstetrics and Gynecology.
- Of U.S. DO seniors who preferred Emergency Medicine, 48% percent said they considered future job opportunities in their ranking decisions, compared with 28% of U.S. DO seniors who preferred Obstetrics and Gynecology.
- Of All Other Applicant Types who preferred Emergency Medicine, 48% said they considered salary in their ranking decisions, compared with 23% of those who preferred Obstetrics and Gynecology.

## Distribution and Response Rates by Preferred Specialty and Applicant Type<sup>1</sup>

Specialty	U.S. MD Seniors			U.S. DO Seniors			All Other Applicant Types <sup>2</sup>		
	Surveys Sent	Number Responding	Response Rate (%)	Surveys Sent	Number Responding	Response Rate (%)	Surveys Sent	Number Responding	Response Rate (%)
Anesthesiology	1,721	479	27.8%	456	159	34.9%	747	176	23.6%
Child Neurology	126	48	38.1%	33	11	33.3%	63	23	36.5%
Dermatology	666	191	28.7%	101	34	33.7%	215	28	13.0%
Emergency Medicine	1,393	371	26.6%	1,098	289	26.3%	708	204	28.8%
Family Medicine	1,440	365	25.3%	1,366	340	24.9%	1,816	615	33.9%
Internal Medicine	3,965	1,044	26.3%	1,861	455	24.4%	8,742	3,893	44.5%
Internal Medicine/Pediatrics	337	118	35.0%	59	18	30.5%	58	30	51.7%
Interventional Radiology	186	60	32.3%	24	10	41.7%	67	19	28.4%
Neurological Surgery	326	101	31.0%	21	7	33.3%	115	21	18.3%
Neurology	666	189	28.4%	217	58	26.7%	663	288	43.4%
Obstetrics and Gynecology	1,268	410	32.3%	438	145	33.1%	329	93	28.3%
Orthopedic Surgery	1,031	289	28.0%	279	81	29.0%	229	34	14.8%
Otolaryngology	441	140	31.7%	35	13	37.1%	63	14	22.2%
Pathology-Anatomic and Clinical	280	84	30.0%	117	45	38.5%	536	218	40.7%
Pediatrics	1,448	425	29.4%	627	201	32.1%	1,006	464	46.1%
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	330	84	25.5%	314	95	30.3%	137	32	23.4%
Plastic Surgery (Integrated)	294	78	26.5%	10	2	20.0%	80	14	17.5%
Psychiatry	1,585	386	24.4%	645	157	24.3%	755	244	32.3%
Radiation Oncology	137	42	30.7%	18	10	55.6%	58	19	32.8%
Radiology-Diagnostic	825	260	31.5%	216	74	34.3%	391	121	30.9%
Surgery-General	1,247	356	28.5%	350	80	22.9%	1,023	161	15.7%
All other specialties <sup>3</sup>	376	110	29.3%	60	25	41.7%	236	62	26.3%
No preferred specialty <sup>4</sup>	269	9	3.3%	42	2	4.8%	396	97	24.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,357</b>	<b>5,639</b>	<b>27.7%</b>	<b>8,387</b>	<b>2,311</b>	<b>27.6%</b>	<b>18,433</b>	<b>6,870</b>	<b>37.3%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Excludes a total of 283 applicants withdrawn from the Match after the ROL Certification Deadline for reasons related to ineligibility or participation in an early Match.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. citizen students and graduates of international medical schools (U.S. IMG), non-US citizen students and graduates of international medical schools (non-U.S. IMGs), U.S. MD graduates, U.S. DO graduates, and students and graduates of Canadian medical schools.

<sup>3</sup> Diagnostic Radiology/Nuclear Medicine, Emergency Medicine/Anesthesiology, Emergency Medicine/Family Medicine, Family Medicine/Preventive Medicine, Internal Medicine/Dermatology, Internal Medicine/Emergency Medicine, Internal Medicine/Medical Genetics, Internal Medicine/Preventive Medicine, Internal Medicine/Psychiatry, Neurodevelopmental Disabilities, Nuclear Medicine, Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Osteopathic Neuromusculoskeletal Medicine, Pediatrics/Anesthesiology, Pediatrics/Emergency Medicine, Pediatrics/Medical Genetics, Pediatrics/Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Pediatrics/Psychiatry/Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Preventive Medicine, Psychiatry/Family Medicine, Psychiatry/Neurology, Thoracic Surgery, Vascular Surgery.

<sup>4</sup> Applicants who listed Transitional Year or PGY-1 preliminary programs first on their rank order lists.

## Application, Interview, and Ranking Behaviors

- The largest median numbers of applications were submitted by applicants preferring Internal Medicine, Plastic Surgery, General Surgery and Psychiatry. By contrast, the largest numbers of interviews offered, interviews attended, and median programs ranked were among applicants preferring Emergency Medicine, Radiation Oncology, and Interventional Radiology.
- The median numbers of applications submitted by Other Applicant Types were higher than those submitted by U.S. MD seniors and U.S. DO seniors, regardless of whether they ultimately matched, which is consistent with findings from previous years' Applicant Surveys.
- Across all applicant types, unmatched applicants reported applying to more programs than matched applicants.
- Both matched and unmatched U.S. MD and U.S. DO seniors reported being offered and attending considerably more interviews than Other Applicant Types regardless of their match status.
- U.S. MD and U.S. DO seniors who matched reported having obtained a similar number of interviews, consistent with Applicant Survey data since 2021.
- U.S. MD and U.S. DO seniors who were unmatched reported having obtained a similar number of interviews, consistent with Applicant Survey data since 2022.