



Policy Corner – March 2026 Rules for Participating in SOAP

The Match Week Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program (SOAP) provides a uniform system for programs to offer unfilled positions to eligible unmatched or partially matched applicants. There are specific policies that govern SOAP, so we want to share a few highlights and reminders to make sure you are informed.

SOAP-PARTICIPATING PROGRAMS:

- Programs can only accept and consider applications from SOAP-eligible applicants during SOAP.
- Program staff can initiate contact with SOAP-eligible applicants only after receiving the applicant's application as part of SOAP.
- Programs cannot ask SOAP-eligible applicants to indicate, verbally or in writing, whether they will accept an offer of a position if one is extended during SOAP.
- Programs can only offer positions to SOAP-eligible applicants until SOAP concludes on Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 9:00 p.m. ET. All positions must be offered and accepted only through the NRMP's R3 system.
- Offers extended and accepted during SOAP constitute a binding commitment.

NON-SOAP-PARTICIPATING PROGRAMS:

- Match-participating programs that elect not to participate in SOAP cannot solicit or consider applications from or extend offers of unfilled positions to any applicants until SOAP concludes.

MEDICAL SCHOOLS:

- Neither SOAP-eligible applicants nor their representatives may contact or communicate, verbally or in writing, with any SOAP-participating programs until the program has first initiated contact.
- SOAP-eligible unmatched applicants who wish to pursue an alternate course during Match Week. Specifically, those applicants may pursue interests other than clinical residency training in lieu of participating in SOAP provided:
 - the position sought is not affiliated with a Match- or SOAP-participating residency program;
 - the position does not qualify for training credit in an ACGME-accredited residency program; and
 - the applicant does not submit any applications to SOAP-participating programs during Match Week.

- Unmatched applicants who are SOAP-ineligible will not have access to the *List of Unfilled Programs* during SOAP and should not be provided with the list by the school official.
- Unmatched applicants who are SOAP-ineligible can only apply to, interview, and accept positions with non-Match-participating programs at the published time during Match Week.
- Unmatched applicants who are SOAP-ineligible can only apply to, interview, and accept positions with Match-participating programs after SOAP concludes.

Please visit the [Match Policies](#) page on the NRMP website for access to Match Participation Agreements and the Codes of Conduct. For questions regarding Match policies, please contact NRMP Policy at policy@nrmp.org. We are here to help!