

APDS Recommendations for 2021-2022 Residency Recruitment Cycle

The APDS has convened our Residency Selection Task Force, and the APDS officers and executive committee have met on multiple occasions to discuss the upcoming residency recruitment cycle. Below are the recommendations of the APDS for 2021-2022. We realize that some of these recommendations may be controversial. I can assure you that these recommendations developed out of much thoughtful investigation and discussion and are intended to promote equity and fairness while addressing many of the challenges faced by programs and applicants. I also encourage you to read the task force recommendations, which are attached.

Number of applications by applicant: – Although we do not recommend a limit on the number of applications an applicant should submit, we recommend that the number of submitted applications should be guided by available data and consider a candidate’s unique characteristics.

Number of interviews – We do not recommend a limit on the number of interviews an applicant should accept or that a program should offer.

Review of applications – Holistic review is strongly recommended as part of the General Surgery residency selection process.

Program transparency – Programs should be transparent about their selection criteria, which may include standardized testing minimums and requirements, medical training type, visa sponsorship, and other program requirements. Interview release dates and planned interview days should be posted on individual program websites.

Standardized testing – Because of the upcoming transition to pass/fail grading, USMLE Step 1 and COMLEX Level 1 numerical scores should be de-emphasized in the 2021-2022 Application Cycle.

Interview invitations – The following are recommended to minimize interview hoarding and limit medical student distractions:

- All general surgery programs send out their offers for the first round of interviews from Wednesday, October 27 to Tuesday, November 2, 2021. This week was chosen as it is the week when, historically, most interview invitations are sent.
- Programs should offer only the number of interviews available.
- Programs should allow candidates at least 48 hours to respond to the invitation before offering the position to another candidate.
- Programs should disclose expectations about interview response and cancellation.

Interview Format – The APDS recommends virtual interviews for the 2021-2022 application season to promote equity among applicants and programs.

AAMC/ERAS Pilot – General Surgery residency programs should strongly consider taking part in the AAMC ERAS Application Pilot Study

As a reminder, these are recommendations and not requirements. We do think this is the best approach for us as an association of diverse residency programs. Please reach out to me (Doug) with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

APDS Executive Committee
Doug Smink, MD, MPH (President)
Kyla Terhune, MD (President-Elect)
Val Nfonsam, MD (Treasurer)
Jennifer Choi, MD (Secretary)
Ben Jarman, MD (Past President)
Amit Joshi, MD (Member-at-Large)
Lily Chang, MD (Member-at-Large)
Sylvia Martinez, MD (Member-at-Large)

We would like to acknowledge the thoughtful work of the Residency Selection Task Force for providing important guidance to the APDS Executive Committee. The task force members are listed below.

Task Force Members

Jennifer LaFemina, MD, Chair
Cary Aarons, MD
Kareem Abdelfattah, MD
Jennifer Choi, MD
Karole Collier, MD (Resident member)
Jamie Hillas, MD (Resident member)
Kari Rosenkranz, MD
Jennifer Serfin, MD
Doug Smink, MD, MPH
Vance Sohn, MD
Kyla Terhune, MD
Paul Wise, MD