



Consensus Statement from the Association of Directors of Medical Student Education in Psychiatry (ADMSEP) and the American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training (AADPRT) on the 2020-21 Residency Application Cycle

This is our second joint statement regarding standards for both applicants and programs, allowing for the most fair and equitable application process as possible. Our original joint statement was released on May 18, 2020 and all recommendations still stand:

https://www.aadprt.org/application/files/1015/9009/1630/admsep_aadprt_statement_5-17-20.pdf

We would like to reiterate the following-

We strongly support the *Coalition for Physician Accountability* recommendation that all interviews be conducted virtually. In accordance with this recommendation, all contact throughout the interview season with applicants should be virtual. This includes **all** recruitment events.

Program directors should recognize that applicants may have fewer psychiatry specific letters and Step scores may not be available at time of application. Allowances should be made for the COVID-related disruptions that occurred since March of 2020.

We recommend that programs not release more interview offers than they have interview spots, releasing interview offers as late in the day as possible in order to minimize disruptions to clinical work, and allowing 72 hours for response before releasing the interview slot.

New Recommended Standards as of Sept 14, 2020:

- We recommend that programs are as transparent as possible in the interview process. For instance, program website and interview invitations may list dates that interview offers are released, interview dates, and anticipated structure of the interview day (e.g. number of interviews and length).
- Program directors, interviewers, and applicants should not record any portion of interviews, which also includes screen shots and audio recording, without expressed consent by both parties. Programs could consider formal documentation where both parties agree not to record interviews. (An example can be found [here](#))
- Post-interview communication should be avoided, except for the provision of significant updates (e.g. received a Step/COMLEX score or an additional publication since interviewing), asking/responding to specific necessary questions, or basic thank you notes. We will continue to follow NRMP rules for post-interview communication despite our virtual platform.
- Data from NRMP reflects the probability of matching plateaus at >95% after 12 ranked programs. While we recognize that individuals may have unique circumstances, we generally recommend that applicants interview at 15 or less programs. Applicants should discuss their individual circumstances with their psychiatry advisors.
- Applicants should not accept multiple interview dates on the same day.
- If cancellations are necessary, applicants should notify the program as soon as possible and at least 5 business days in advance.
- The Interview day itself should all take place on one day (exception would be if technology fails and rescheduling is truly needed).

- It is reasonable to offer optional “meet and greets” or “open houses” prior to the interview season process. Programs should not take attendance and should ensure that applicants know that these are not mandatory. All true open houses and multiprogram residency fairs should conclude by October 21, 2020. We recognize that some programs may choose to have only a few larger evening virtual gatherings instead of the classic dinner before or on the interview day. Should a program choose to do this given the reduced student exposure that may have occurred with the pandemic, again attendance should not be taken and evening events are considered completely voluntary. We recognize that with this deviation there may be scheduling conflicts and tension, and strongly urge programs to keep all events applicants are expected to attend as part of the formal interview process on one day for each applicant.
- To reduce inequalities in funding between programs, only emailed and on-line materials should be provided to applicants. We strongly recommend no “swag.” If programs plan to mail hard copies of materials it should not include anything of value. This includes gift cards for food.
- Some specialties are currently utilizing “signal token” programs. At this time, AADPRT and ADMSEP are not recommending that Psychiatry utilize this system for the 2020-2021 season.

Conclusion

Despite a moderately compressed timeline, programs will continue to complete holistic reviews of applicants, also fully recognizing that the pandemic changed access to opportunities and experiences. The above recommended standards are put forth to provide the best interview season possible and ensure a fair and equitable process.

Acknowledgements

The original statement and this joint statement were created by the following AADPRT and ADMSEP members: Melissa Arbuckle MD, Anna Kerlek MD, Jessica Kovach MD, John Spollen MD, and Lia Thomas MD. We appreciate the guidance and edits made by the executive committees of both organizations.