



AMERICAN
ORTHOPAEDIC
ASSOCIATION

**AOA/CORD 2021-2022 Application Cycle and Universal Interview Offer Day
Updated Recommendations for Orthopaedic Surgery Residency Programs
September 22, 2021**

BACKGROUND

The July 13, 2021 AOA/CORD [Recommended Guidelines on 2021-2022 Residency Recruitment](#) suggested best practices in two key areas: Away Rotations and Interviews. These guidelines were written in response to the Coalition for Physician Accountability's (COPA) preliminary recommendations regarding the conversion to virtual interviews unrelated to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since that July recommendation, COVID-19 cases began surging across the United States, with hospitalizations surpassing those in the first months of the pandemic in many parts of the country. Because of the continued impact and uncertainty of the pandemic, AOA/CORD is updating recommendations for the 2021-2022 Match Cycle, outlined below.

VIRTUAL INTERVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

- **AOA/CORD encourages the use of virtual interviews for the 2021-2022 application cycle**

Rationale:

Considering the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, delta variant and support for the health and safety of applicants, students, faculty and patients, AOA/CORD encourages the use of virtual interviews for the 2021-2022 application cycle, given current public health issues. Many medical schools and health centers have already made this a requirement.

AOA/CORD continues to encourage ongoing discussion with the Coalition for Physician Accountability's Undergraduate Medical Education-Graduate Medical Education Review Committee regarding their "[Recommendations for Comprehensive Improvement of the UME-GME Transition](#)" specifically as they relate to residency interviews and away rotations. As outlined in [AOA/CORD's February 2021 statement](#), the AOA/CORD community of orthopaedic surgery residency program directors thinks the permanent elimination of in-person interviews and away rotations is detrimental to students and residency programs.

UNIVERSAL INTERVIEW OFFER DAY (UOD) AND INTERVIEW SCHEDULING RECOMMENDATIONS

- AOA/CORD encourages the use of virtual interviews for the 2021-2022 residency match cycle

- **Universal Interview Offer Day will be Monday, November 15, 2021, 12:00pm EST**
- Interview Invitation and Scheduling Process:
 - **All programs will send interview offers on Monday, November 15, 12:00pm EST.**
 - Programs should only offer as many interview spots as they have available.
 - A **48-hour moratorium** on accepting or scheduling interviews will follow.
 - During the moratorium, applicants should review their invitations with faculty mentors, advisors, family or others who can help create a plan for which and how many interviews to accept.
 - Applicants should not reach out to programs during these 48 hours.
 - Programs should not accept or confirm early responses during these 48 hours.
 - Beginning **Wednesday, November 17, 12:00pm EST**, applicants can accept interview offers.
 - Each applicant will have **24 hours to respond to the program** without fear of the offer being rescinded (this does not ensure the specific date a student may desire, but solely the opportunity for an interview).
 - If an applicant declines an interview or there is no response by **Thursday, November 18, 12:00pm EST**, the program may extend an invitation to another applicant.
- There will be no set timeline for the second or any subsequent waves of interview offers, which may be offered at the program’s discretion.
- Programs sending interview offers according to this UOD timeline can add this information on their profiles in the AOA/CORD Orthopaedic Residency Information Network (ORIN).

Rationale:

Last year, the AOA/CORD Universal Offer Day strived to make the process more transparent for applicants. Applicants knew when offers would be made, by which programs, and how long they had to respond. In a survey of 2021 Match applicants, 93% favored the continuation of the UOD process for this year. The majority felt the UOD improved the process and significantly decreased their personal stress and anxiety.

One challenge with last year’s interview cycle was the observed and perceived effects of “interview hoarding” (accepting more interviews than required for a successful match, i.e. in excess of 20 interviews.) To help mitigate this phenomenon, AOA/CORD recommends a 48-hour moratorium from the time invitations are sent to the time an interview can be scheduled. Applicants will have time to assess their interview invitations, schedules and have the ability to make more informed decisions about which offers to accept and which can be declined. AOA/CORD encourages Program Directors and faculty advisors to review interview invitations with students to help determine which and how many interviews they should attend.

Program Directors who participated in the CORD Townhall on August 30, 2021, cautioned against interviewing at more than one program per day. Program directors also encouraged consideration of interview caps as have been exercised in other specialties; however, the logistics of implementing interview caps is not feasible in our current system. In the absence of an interview cap, Program Directors generally felt that students should not interview at more than 20 programs unless there were extenuating circumstances (i.e. couples match).