Program Directors Association Guide for Residency Applicants

Public Health and General Preventive Medicine

The *Program Directors Association Guide for Residency Applicants* is a collaborative effort between the Organization of Program Directors Association (OPDA), Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), and American Medical Association (AMA). Its purpose is to provide specialty-specific guidance, application information, and resources. This guide outlines specialty-level guidance and policies for applicants to Public Health and General Preventive Medicine programs.

Specialty responses in this guide were provided through a standardized web form. The corresponding questions from that form are referenced in the footnotes. If a specialty indicated "No specialty recommendation to programs," it means the specialty does not provide guidance on how programs should approach that aspect of the selection process.

Please note that not all aspects of the residency application process are standardized at the specialty level. Applicants should review individual program requirements in Residency Explorer™ tool, FREIDA™, or on program websites.

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Specialty Guidance for the 2025–2026 Cycle

Public Health and General Preventive Medicine has published a statement: All PH/GPM Programs require successful completion of at least PGY-1 including 10 months of direct patient care. Activities in Pathology will not count towards direct patient care. Rarely, one or two programs may have one or two slots for a three-year residency training program that includes preliminary/PGY-1.

Application Process

Application Process Details	Specialty Recommendation
Main Residency Match Season	AAMC Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS)
Supplemental Offer and Acceptance Program (SOAP)	AAMC Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS)
Application deadline to be considered for interview[1]	When programs start receiving applications from ERAS (Beginning September 24; The typical interview offer window is between October 2025 and January 2026.) While applications can be submitted after September 24 through the interview period, later submissions may or may not receive interview dates as offers to interview will occur in accordance with interview availability within the desired program.
Application materials accepted after the deadline[2]	Letters of recommendation, MSPE, Step 1 or Level 1 transcripts, Step 2 or Level 2 transcripts

Additional Deadline Guidance: Applicants are recommended to submit additional materials as soon as possible after the initial application is submitted. Delayed submission of materials may result in delays in interview offers.

Match Platform

Public Health and General Preventive Medicine participates in the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) and Military Match.

Additional Guidance: Military programs participate in the military match. The list of programs participating in the match is available in the NRMP Directory.

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[1] By when should applicants submit applications to programs to be considered for interview?: Date applications are released to programs; Universal interview offer date for the specialty; Other
[2] Is it acceptable for applicants to submit some application materials after the initial application?: Yes; No

Program Signals

Program Signals Details	Specialty Recommendation
Number of signals	3
Signal home institution or away rotation sites?	No specialty recommendation to programs

Additional Guidance: None noted.

Use of USMLE and/or COMLEX-USA Scores

License Exam Details	Specialty Recommendation
Deadline to submit license exam transcripts to be considered for interview[3]	Applicants should ideally have their Step 1, Step 2CK transcripts, or COMLEX Level 1 or Level 2-CE available for program's review by the application opening date. Most programs require successful completion of Step 3 by the program start date.
Deadline to submit license exam transcripts to be ranked[4]	Prior to rank order list opening
USMLE transcripts required for DO applicants?[5]	No specialty recommendation to programs

Additional Guidance: None noted.

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[3] By when must an applicant submit a USMLE Step 2 CK or COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE score to be considered for interview?: Initial application deadline; Other
[4] By when must an applicant submit a USMLE Step 2 CK or COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE score to be ranked?: Initial application deadline; Prior to rank order list opening
[5] Does your specialty require that DO applicants submit USMLE scores in addition to COMLEX-USA scores?: Yes, USMLE scores are required for all applicants; No, USMLE scores are not required for DO applicants

Letters of Recommendation (LORs)

LOR Details	Specialty Recommendation
Required number of LORs	Three (including one from current residency director)
Required specialty-specific letters[6]	One of three recommendation letters must be from a current or previous residency program director

Additional Guidance for Specialty-Specific Letters: It is recommended that the letters provided are recent (within the last year) specific to the specialty to which you are applying (except for letter from your residency program director).

Guidance for Transitional Year/Prelim Programs: One of three recommendation letters must be from a current or previous residency program director. It is recommended that the letters provided are recent (within the last year) specific to the specialty to which you are applying (except for letter from your residency program director).

Guidance for IMG Applicants: One of three recommendation letters must be from a current or previous residency program director. It is recommended that the letters provided are recent (within the last year) specific to the specialty to which you are applying (except for letter from your residency program director).

Supplemental Information

Supplemental Application Materials	Specialty Recommendation
Supplemental application materials recommended	No specialty recommendation to programs

Additional Supplemental Application Materials: None noted.

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[6] Which specialty-specific letters of recommendation should an applicant submit to a program? (Select all that apply): Specialty-specific standardized letter(s) of evaluation (e.g., SLOE, SEL, SLOR); Letter from a Chair; Letter from someone in the specialty (e.g., faculty, attending); Other letters

Away Rotations

Away Rotation Details	Specialty Recommendation
Away rotations in the specialty[7]	Not required or recommended
Number of away rotations in the specialty	–

Additional Guidance: None noted.

Interviews

Interview Details	Specialty Recommendation
Universal interview offer date(s)	–
Typical interview offer window	October 2025 - January 2026
Interview scheduling platform	–
Interview format(s)[8]	No specialty recommendation to programs

Additional Guidance: None noted.

Applicant Communications

Pre-Interview Communication Guidance: None noted.

Post-Interview Communication Guidance: None noted.

Open Houses / Second Looks

Open Houses: Most PH/GPM programs may not offer Second Look/Open house planning. Please contact the programs directly for more information.

Second Looks: Most PH/GPM programs may not offer Second Look/Open house planning. Please contact the programs directly for more information.

NRMP Voluntary Rank Order List (ROL) Lock Pilot Initiative: No

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[7] Does the specialty expect or strongly recommend that applicants complete away rotations in the specialty?: No; Strongly recommended; Expected
[8] Which interview format does the specialty recommend that programs use? (Select all that apply): Virtual; In-person; Hybrid