

Program Directors Association Guide for Residency Applicants

Neurology

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 Neurology 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

Neurology has published a statement: The American Academy of Neurology (<https://www.aan.com/>) released a consensus statement (<https://www.aan.com/siteassets/home-page/tools-and-resources/academic-neurologist--researchers/program-and-fellowship-directors/24-statement-on-20242025-residency-fellowship-application-cycle.pdf>) in favor of virtual interviewing for the 2025 Match cycle. Updates to this statement for the 2026 cycle are still pending and will be found here (<https://www.aan.com/tools-resources/program-director-resources>).

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 interview¹	There is no deadline, but applications open Sept 3, 2025 and programs begin reviewing Sept. 24, 2025. It is generally acceptable to add LORs within a month after the initial submission. Applicants are encouraged to review program's websites.
Application materials accepted after the deadline²	Letters of recommendation

Additional Deadline Guidance: Applicants are encouraged to review program's websites or contact Program Coordinators to learn about individual program's application requirements and policies regarding the use of the supplemental ERAS application. A directory of Adult Neurology programs and contact information can be found through the ACGME specialty directory (<https://apps.acgme.org/ads/Public/Reports/Report/1>).

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

Match Platform

Neurology participates in the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP).

Additional Guidance: None noted.

Program Signals

Program Signals Details	Specialty Recommendation
Number of signals	8
Signal home institution or away rotation sites?	No specialty recommendation to programs

Additional Guidance: Select Neurology programs may participate in program signaling (8 signals per adult neurology). Please visit the ERAS application webpage (<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-residencies-eras/program-signaling-2026-myeras-application-season>) for information, guidance, timelines, and resources on completing the ERAS application.

Please note that there are no universal practices across programs in the use of program signals (e.g., signaling acceptance/usage, need for signaling for home institution, etc.), LOR requirements/format, or interview invitation release dates.

Applicants are encouraged to review programs' websites or contact Program Coordinators to learn about individual programs' application requirements and policies regarding the use of the supplemental ERAS application. A directory of Adult and Child Neurology programs and contact information can be found through the ACGME specialty directory (<https://apps.acgme.org/ads/Public/Reports/Report/1>).

The American Academy of Neurology (<https://www.aan.com/>) released a consensus statement (<https://www.aan.com/siteassets/home-page/tools-and-resources/academic-neurologist--researchers/program-and-fellowship-directors/24-statement-on-20242025-residency-fellowship-application-cycle.pdf>) for the 2025 Match cycle. Updates to this statement for the 2026 cycle are still pending and will be found here (<https://www.aan.com/tools-resources/program-director-resources>).

Use of USMLE and/or COMLEX-USA Scores

License Exam Details	Specialty Recommendation
Deadline to submit license exam transcripts to be considered for interview³	Applicants should ask their respective programs about the exact date.
Deadline to submit license exam transcripts to be ranked⁴	Applicants should ask their respective programs about the exact date.
USMLE transcripts required for DO applicants?⁵	Yes, USMLE scores are required for all applicants

Additional Guidance: Applicants should ask their respective programs whether they should submit both scores. Generally, neurology programs do not have a minimum score for their USMLE/COMLEX scores.

Letters of Recommendation (LORs)

LOR Details	Specialty Recommendation
Required number of LORs	3
Required specialty-specific letters⁶	Letter from someone in the specialty (e.g., faculty, attending)

Additional Guidance for Specialty-Specific Letters: Most programs do not require letters from away rotations.

Guidance for Transitional Year/Prelim Programs: Transitional year students are generally expected to have a LOR from their Program Director.

Guidance for IMG Applicants: IMGs are generally expected to have at least one LOR from a U.S. Neurologist.

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

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

Supplemental Information

Supplemental Application Materials	Specialty Recommendation
Supplemental application materials recommended	No

Additional Supplemental Application Materials: None noted.

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: The utility of an away rotation largely depends on the individual circumstances of the applicant. While away rotations are often recommended, they are typically not a strict requirement. However, for those without access to a neurology clerkship at their home institution, completing an away rotation is often strongly encouraged or even expected.

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	Virtual

Additional Guidance: The American Academy of Neurology (<https://www.aan.com/>) released a consensus statement (<https://www.aan.com/siteassets/home-page/tools-and-resources/academic-neurologist--researchers/program-and-fellowship-directors/24-statement-on-20242025-residency-fellowship-application-cycle.pdf>) in favor of virtual interviewing for the 2025 Match cycle. Updates to

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

this statement for the 2026 cycle are still pending and will be found here (<https://www.aan.com/tools-resources/program-director-resources>).

Applicant Communications

Pre-Interview Communication Guidance: There is no specific guidance on Pre-Interview communication. Applicants should contact programs individually on their communication policies.

Post-Interview Communication Guidance: The American Academy of Neurology (<https://www.aan.com/>) released a consensus statement (<https://www.aan.com/siteassets/home-page/tools-and-resources/academic-neurologist--researchers/program-and-fellowship-directors/24-statement-on-20242025-residency-fellowship-application-cycle.pdf>) including guidance on post-interview communication for the 2025 Match cycle. Updates to this statement for the 2026 cycle are still pending and will be found here (<https://www.aan.com/tools-resources/program-director-resources>).

Open Houses / Second Looks

Open Houses: The American Academy of Neurology (<https://www.aan.com/>) released a consensus statement (<https://www.aan.com/siteassets/home-page/tools-and-resources/academic-neurologist--researchers/program-and-fellowship-directors/24-statement-on-20242025-residency-fellowship-application-cycle.pdf>) including guidance on open houses for the 2025 Match cycle. Updates to this statement for the 2026 cycle are still pending and will be found here (<https://www.aan.com/tools-resources/program-director-resources>).

Second Looks: The American Academy of Neurology (<https://www.aan.com/>) released a consensus statement (<https://www.aan.com/siteassets/home-page/tools-and-resources/academic-neurologist--researchers/program-and-fellowship-directors/24-statement-on-20242025-residency-fellowship-application-cycle.pdf>) including guidance on second looks for the 2025 Match cycle. Updates to this statement for the 2026 cycle are still pending and will be found here (<https://www.aan.com/tools-resources/program-director-resources>).

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