

Match Results

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Article will explain what to do when the match results come out (what to do if not matched anywhere or if not matched to a place of your choice), how to secure a contract including nuances of signing a contract, how to finalize the visa once the contract is sealed, etc.

Yehey! You Matched! Now What?:

After you receive notification that you've matched to a residency position, you would want to contact the residency program coordinator to find out what to do next. Generally the residency program will fax or mail you a letter of offer, which you will have to accept and sign before sending it back to them. Later on the residency program will send you a contract to sign and send back to them. If you are lucky to live in the same city as the hospital this process might be easier.

Ideally you should have your contract before you return to the Philippines. But sometimes this is not the case, and the contract is sent to you after you leave the United States; make sure though that you have a letter of offer before you leave the US.

Along with the contract, your residency program should send you appropriate papers for visa application.

Post-Match Scramble:

What happens if you don't match? You have to (a) give up and go home, or (b) scramble. Scrambling for a position is a stressful experience.

Two days before the match results are released, you are notified as to whether or not you have matched with a hospital. This presumably gives you (and other unmatched people) time to "scramble", meaning to look for unfilled residency positions. The NRMP grants the unmatched applicant access to a dynamic online list of vacant residency spots, after which you are pretty much on your own. Armed with the list, you (and hopefully some kind souls who agree to help you) phone these unmatched programs to ask them whether they will be interested in you. Phone lines are extremely clogged at this point and you may be only able to leave a message rather than speak to a live person. Some programs have a recorded message saying, "If you are interested in our unmatched position, please apply through ERAS". If you do speak to a live person, he or she will usually say, "Give us your information, and we'll call you back if we like you" or something to that effect. If they do call back, you may be granted a phone interview, or in some cases these hospitals would like you to do a full interview day with them. Sometimes this is a waste of time, as while you are traveling to the hospital, they may have made a decision already to accept someone else.

Essential equipment for scrambling include a computer with internet access, preferably a broadband DSL or cable connection, so that you can call and email at the same time; a fax machine; and phone line(s) – either cell phone or land line. If you have both, use the land line for faxing and the cell phone for calling. If you have multiple people helping you call residency programs, it would also be nice to have multiple cell phones to maximize time and effort.

Most people scrambling obtain a position within a few days or a week after match day. It may be necessary – if acceptable to you – to apply to medical specialties other than your original choice. However, historically some people have received calls from unfilled programs up to a month after the match. The lesson here is to continue trying to find a position until some hospital gives you one!