

**To: Trauma Fellowship Applicants**

**From: OTA Fellowship Committee**

**Re: Adoption of Virtual Interview Platform for 2020-2021 Trauma Fellowship Application Cycle**

**Rationale:** The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in significant disruptions to medical care and has limited access to hospital and clinical facilities. Many institutions have implemented restrictions on individual and work-related travel. Some have already extended these restrictions, which has the potential to affect a resident's ability to attend on-site interviews in the fall and winter.

The Coalition for Physician Accountability (CoPA) has recently published a recommendation that all residency programs commit to online interviews for medical students. The Council of Orthopaedic Residency Directors (CORD) has endorsed this recommendation and issued a formal statement requesting that all programs commit to virtual residency interviews for the upcoming application cycle. The AAOS Board of Specialties (BOS) fellowship committee convened with representatives from all the subspecialty societies to discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on orthopaedic fellowship interviews and the CoPA and CORD recommendations. There was consensus that significant uncertainty exists with the upcoming interview season and that the pandemic has the potential to disrupt the interview process and potentially create disparities in access to both applicants and programs (i.e. applicants quarantined or travel restricted by institution or program in "hot spot"). In order to address these issues and "level the playing field", it was recommended that adoption of a virtual format would result in a more consistent interview experience for all. The OTA Fellowship Committee and Board of Directors have approved this recommendation for the 2020-2021 Trauma Fellowship interview cycle. **All trauma fellowship programs will adhere to the guidelines listed below as a condition of participating in the 2020-2021 SF Match process.**

1. A virtual information session format has been adopted for this year's interview cycle. The OTA will maintain a master calendar which will be posted on the Prospective Fellows page of the OTA website. Information sessions will occur from September 1 – October 30. Programs were encouraged to record a session and provide the link for inclusion on the master calendar.
2. November 2 is the deadline for applicants to submit their applications.
3. Traditional onsite interviews are **not** allowed.  
**All interviews will be performed in a virtual format.**
4. In order to provide sufficient opportunity to candidates, respect applicants and program faculty time, avoid abuse and provide equitable access of the virtual interview format, applicants should interview at no more than 15 programs and programs should offer interviews to no more than 20 applicants for first position and 10 applicants for each subsequent position (ie a program with 3 fellows should not interview more than 40 applicants).

### **Trauma Fellowship Interviewee Etiquette**

- 1. Research Programs you have interest by attending virtual information sessions.**
- 2. Apply to no more than 20 programs.**
- 3. Respond promptly to interview invitations 48 hours.**
- 4. Limit interviews to 15 programs.**
- 5. Interview cancellation should occur 2 weeks prior to scheduled date.**
- 6. No contact should occur with program after interview.**

The fellowship committee appreciates the challenges associated with the interview process this year and is committed to creating an environment that is fair and equitable to both applicants and programs. Please reach out to [oconnell@ota.org](mailto:oconnell@ota.org) with questions