

To: OTA/ ACGME Trauma Fellowship Program Directors

From: OTA Fellowship Committee and OTA Board of Directors

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

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 into the fall, which has the potential to affect a resident's ability to attend the OTA annual meeting fellowship information sessions and 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. Committing to this decision early will allow more time for programs to develop strategies and create necessary infrastructure to support the virtual interview process. The OTA Fellowship Committee and the OTA Board of Directors have approved this recommendation for the 2020-2021 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. Onsite interviews will **not** be allowed at the OTA Annual Meeting
2. Information sessions will be allowed at the Annual Meeting. Programs are encouraged to have a virtual option for those applicants who are unable to travel.
3. Traditional onsite interviews are **not** allowed. **All interviews should 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 20 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).