

San Francisco Match Information Sheet
For Program Directors

Important Links:

- [SF Match](#)
- [SF Match for Pediatric Anesthesiology](#)
- [SPA Pediatric Anesthesia Fellowship Info](#)
- [CAS \(Central Application Service\)](#)

Timeline (2025):

- Monday, January 6 – Applicant Registration Begins
- Wednesday, March 5 – Central Application Service (CAS) Target Date
 - Each program sets their own application deadline and applicants may continue submitting applications until the program’s deadline. Most are currently set between April-June.
- January – June – Interview season (may vary by program)
- Tuesday, May 27 – Exception Deadline (see explanation below)
- Tuesday, June 10 – Rank list submission deadline (12:00pm PT)
- Tuesday, June 24 – Match Results (9:00am PT)
- Wednesday, June 25 – Post-match Vacancies are listed

Application and Match Process:

Event	Explanation
Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs: \$500 initial registration, then \$225 annually. • Applicant: \$150 (non-refundable).
Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants apply through the Central Application Service (CAS). The fee is \$60 for up to 10 programs. Additional programs are charged a sliding scale fee. • CAS distributes applications directly to the programs. Programs will use the SF Match website to categorize and read applications, schedule interviews, and to create and submit rank lists.
Interview Season	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All interviews should be conducted virtually. • Interview dates are set by each program (typically between January – June).
Match Exception Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs may offer Match Exceptions, which are binding, pre-match agreements between programs and applicants that they will rank each other to match. Details for this process are listed below. • The deadline for match exceptions to be finalized is May 28. Any agreements received up to and including this date must be honored.
Rank List Submission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rank lists are due by June 10, 2025. • All programs and applicants must submit a rank list, even if they are using Match Exceptions.
Match Verification and Publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SF Match runs the match, which is then reviewed by three members of the PAPDA Executive Board. The board will verify that all Match Exceptions were completed correctly. If any errors or irregularities are found, individual programs and applicants will be contacted to correct their rank lists. The match will be run and results will be reviewed again. • Final match results will be released publicly on June 24, 2025.

Post-Match

- All programs with post-match vacancies will be listed on the SF Match website on June 25. Interested applicants can use this as a one-stop resource to find open positions.
- Post-match vacancies are visible to the public. However, only registered applicants can use the CAS service to distribute their application.
- Post-match vacancies listings are managed by individual programs. Openings will remain on the list until the program removes them.

Match Exceptions

Match Exceptions are **binding**, pre-match agreements between programs and applicants that they will rank each other to match in the SF Match. This is essentially the same as “out of match” offers in the NRMP system. The difference is that, although the program and applicant have a binding agreement, **they must both submit a rank list for the match**. This process keeps the match transparent and allows applicants, programs, and PAPDA to understand the interests and behaviors of both the applicants and programs.

There are four qualifying reasons that a program may offer a match exception:

- Military applicants, when separately approved and funded by the US Military
- Applicants who are also accepting an advanced fellowship position (24-months total)
- Internal program applicant (applicant from a core residency or affiliated program, defined by a Program Letter of Agreement)
- Couples match, where both applicants are applying to Pediatric Anesthesiology Fellowship

Match Exception Rules

- A program cannot have more Match Exceptions than the number of positions it has available.
- Match Exceptions are binding agreements between a fellowship program and an applicant.
- Match Exception Agreements cannot be used to coerce an applicant in any way.
 - Unless the applicant rejects the offer or accepts a Match Exception at a different institution, the exception offer cannot be withdrawn by the program.
 - Match Exception Agreements must be filed with PAPDA by May 28 at 5:00pm PT to be enforced in the match. A program cannot set any earlier deadline for the applicant to accept their offer, as that could coerce the applicant to accept a position early in the interview process and before they have explored other programs.
 - Once a Match Exception Agreement is offered, the program has essentially committed a spot to that applicant until the applicant decides otherwise. These offers should only be extended to applicants that the program is completely dedicated to recruiting.

Match Exception Procedure:

- If a program would like to commit one of their spots to an applicant for one of the approved reasons listed above, the fellowship PD will issue a standardized Match Exception Agreement to the applicant. The Match Exception Agreement form is found [here](#).
- The applicant has until May 28 at 5:00pm PT to independently decide to accept or decline the agreement.
- If the applicant accepts the Match Exception agreement, it will be sent to exceptions@pedsanesthesia.org and filed on the PAPDA website. Once the final agreement is uploaded to the website, it can be viewed by all PAPDA members for transparency in the match.

- Programs and applicants with a completed Match Exception Agreement must still submit a rank list in the match. After the match is completed, results will be reviewed by the PADPA Executive Board to ensure compliance with Match Exception Agreements. If there are any violations of Match Exception Agreements, the rank lists will be updated and the match will be run again to resolve disparities prior to releasing the results publicly.

Questions/Scenarios:

How can I explain the Match Exception process to applicants?

PAPDA has created an SF Match Information Sheet, similar to this one, for applicants. It can be found [here](#). Programs are welcome, but not required, to distribute this resource to applicants. In explaining this process to applicants, the following points should be made clear:

- The Match Exception Agreement is a binding agreement. The applicant should not sign it unless they are fully committed to attending that training program. Applicants can only sign Match Exceptions to ONE institution.
- The Match Exception process is transparent. A list of finalized Match Exception Agreements will be published on the PAPDA member website. The applicant will not be included on other program's rank lists if they commit to a Match Exception.
- Once a Match Exception offer is made, the applicant can either accept, decline, or ignore it. If they chose not to respond to the Exception, the program will still include them on their rank list (though a top spot may not be guaranteed).
- Match Exceptions must be signed and emailed to exceptions@pedsanesthesia.org by May 28 at 5:00pm PT to be honored in the match.
- Applicants are still required to submit a rank list, even if they have signed a Match Exception Agreement.

What if I issue Match Exception and the applicant does not respond?

Am I allowed to "remind" applicants about pending Match Exception Agreements?

Once a Match Exception has been offered, the applicant can accept, decline, or ignore the offer. The Match Exception cannot be used to coerce an applicant. If an applicant does not respond, the program cannot rescind the offer. The spot is committed to that applicant until they decide otherwise. However, if Match Exception is not accepted by May 28, it is no longer valid. The program may continue to rank that applicant in a rank-to-match position or they may drop them lower on the rank list. A program may remind the applicant of the May 28 deadline, but cannot require any earlier deadline for response from the applicant.

How can I see if the applicant has signed a Match Exception Agreement with another institution?

What if I issue a Match Exception, but the applicant signs and Exception at a different institution?

The Match Exception process is meant to be transparent. A list of finalized Match Exception Agreements and the reason for the exception will be published in the [Members section of the PAPDA website](#). We strongly recommend checking this list before submitting your rank list. If you notice that an applicant has signed a Match Exception to another institution, you can rescind your offer. Please notify the applicant that you are doing so.

Can I still offer a rank-to-match position that is not a match exception?

Yes, you may tell an applicant that you will be ranking them to match. Such statements are referred to as "statements of intent" according to the San Francisco Match Rules. Any statement of intent made

must be unilateral, voluntary, and unconditional. Statements of intent are non-binding, but in fairness to our applicants, please do not tell them you will rank them to match unless it is true. Most importantly, you CANNOT ask them to reciprocate with any information about their rank list.

Who qualifies as an internal candidate for my program?

Internal applicants are residents who are training in the core residency or a residency program affiliated with the fellowship, defined by a Program Letter of Agreement.

- An affiliated residency is a program that uses the fellowship as their primary pediatric anesthesia training site. A fellowship program may have more than one affiliated residency program.
- An applicant rotating from an outside institution that does not use the fellowship as their primary pediatric anesthesia training site is not considered an internal applicant.

Once a Match Exception Agreement is signed and filed with PAPDA, can either party rescind it?

The Match Exception Agreement is meant to be a binding commitment and all efforts should be made to honor it. However, we understand that life events happen which may cause drastic changes in an applicant's decisions. Should either party wish to rescind this agreement, they must first work to an amicable decision between the applicant and program. Once a resolution has been made, both parties must inform that PAPDA board, who will have final ruling on the outcome. The PAPDA board will decide each appeal on a case-by-case basis.

Why must the program and applicant pay to enter the SF Match when making an exception agreement? I thought this was an "out of match" agreement?

- In order for the match to be successful, we need participation of 100% of programs and registration of 100% of positions with the match. This will give us the best understanding of resident interest and demographics in our specialty over time. Measuring resident interest in our specialty is essential as we continue to grapple with fluctuating numbers of fellows. Understanding resident demographics will help us provide better healthcare to our patients and provide proper care for children. Equally important, having all programs and all positions in the match will provide everyone with transparency, fairness, and equality.
- Trainees prefer the match. It allows them the ability to choose a program that best fits their needs without pressure. It is in the best interest of our trainees to continue to use this system.
- The financial cost for this system is \$225 annually per program (after an initial \$500 registration fee) and \$210 per applicant.

What if I withdraw my positions from the match?

If a program withdraws positions from the Match, they must refund application fees to any applicants who have applied to their program prior to withdrawal of the positions from the Match. They may also be subject to a fine set by the PAPDA board which will go towards membership budget for events, honorariums, and other expenses. Please note that using the Match Exception process does not count as withdrawing positions from the match. Even with a finalized Match Exception, both the program and applicant must still submit a rank list and participate in the match.