



Critical Care Anesthesiology Fellowship Match 2026

Match Exceptions Policies

SOCCA Program Directors Advisory Council (PDAC)

SOCCA Match Exceptions

- [SF Match](#) is the official portal endorsed by the SOCCA PDAC for fellowship applications and matching.
- SOCCA recognizes an “Exception Agreement” process that may occur before rank list submission but must align with the timeline set by the SOCCA PDAC.
- There are six agreed-upon instances where a program and an applicant may agree to use an Exception Agreement.
- All programs and applicants must still register and submit rank lists in the SF Match, even if they use an Exception Agreement.

Eligibility for Match Exception Agreements



Applicants may participate in a Match Exception Agreement with a single program if they meet any of the following criteria:

1. Active military service at the time of application
2. Making a commitment to come to the institution of the ACCM fellowship for more than one year (for example, second fellowship year for EM candidates, Anesthesiology Cardiothoracic Anesthesia, or other approved second year)
3. Enrolled in an anesthesiology residency outside of the USA at the time of the application
4. Residing outside of the USA at the time of the application or who are not eligible for ABA certification due to non-US training.
5. Spouse or partner applying for a GME-approved post-graduate training program in the same region.
6. Internal candidates (i.e., applicants who are currently in the anesthesiology or emergency medicine residency programs at the same institution as the ACCM fellowship)

Active Military Exception Agreement: Clarification and Purpose



- This agreement has been specifically developed for individuals who will have service obligations during the fellowship period and who may not have received leave approval at the time of their fellowship application.
- This exception agreement supports candidates awaiting leave approval or with pending applications to their respective services. By securing an early match to a specific fellowship program, candidates may strengthen their case for obtaining the necessary service leave for the fellowship.

Match Exception Agreement: Key Details

- **Opens: April 15, 2026 at 8:00 a.m. EST**
 - Any exception agreement offers before this date are prohibited.
- **Process:**
 - Program Directors may contact eligible applicants starting **April 15, 2026**.
 - Offer Window: Applicants have **72 hours** to accept or decline.
 - If accepted:
 - The program submits the [Program Exception Agreement Form](#) on the SOCCA website.
 - Applicant receives an email with a link to complete their Applicant Exception Agreement Form.
 - Once both forms are completed, each party receives a confirmation email.
- **Important:**
 - Agreement is **not finalized** until both forms are submitted and confirmatory emails are received.
 - Finalized exceptions will be listed on the SOCCA Fellowships Overview page.

Exception Agreement: Commitment Details



- **Commitment to Match:**
 - The Exception Agreement guarantees a match between the program and the applicant.
 - Both parties are **required to rank to match each other** in the SF Match to formalize the agreement.
- **Timeframe:**
 - All exception Agreements must be offered and finalized between **April 15 – May 15, 2026**.

Match Exception Agreement: Candidate Guidance



- **Understand the Process:**
 - Review the rules for the Match Exception Agreement Process.
 - If you qualify, notify programs during your interview.
- **Program Participation:**
 - Confirm with Program Directors if they participate in the process.
 - Not all programs use exception agreements and may follow standard SF Match timelines.
 - Some programs may limit exception agreements to specific cases—clarify directly with each program.
- **Key Dates & Actions:**
 - Be prepared to discuss offers starting **April 15, 2026**.
 - You will have **72 hours** to accept or decline an offer.
 - Be mindful—holding multiple offers may delay opportunities for others.
- **Interview Day Discussions:**
 - It's acceptable to ask about the process during interviews, but **no offers can be made before April 15, 2026**.
- **For Candidates Not Eligible for Exceptions:**
 - Ask programs how many positions they allocate to the Match Exception Agreement Process.
 - Finalized exceptions will be posted on the SOCCA website starting April 15, 2026.

Clarifications



- **Purpose:**
 - The exception agreement process is designed for applicants with extenuating circumstances that limit full participation in the Match.
- **Important Clarifications:**
 - Match Exception Agreements are **not "out of the match" positions**.
 - The SOCCA PDAC does **not endorse "out of the match" positions** and encourages all programs to use the SF Match process.
- **Compliance:**
 - Agreements completed within the outlined rules are not considered match violations.
 - The Match Exception Agreement process details are available on the SOCCA fellowship overview page.
- **Accountability:**
 - Applicants and programs are encouraged to **report any potential violations** of SF Match or SOCCA Match Exception rules ([Match Exception Violation Form](#))

Information



- All the Match Exceptions will be available to view on the SOCCA 2026 Fellowship Match Exceptions Page.
- Please reach out to the following people with concerns or questions:
 - Babar Fiza, MD (PDAC Chair): bfiza@emory.edu
 - Nazish Hashmi, MBBS (PDAC Vice Chair): nazish.hashmi@duke.edu