

APD Residency Program Directors Section

Recommendations on away dermatology electives for the 2021-2022 academic year
April 15, 2021

On April 14, 2021, the Coalition for Physician Accountability released updated [recommendations](#) on away rotations for medical students for the 2021-22 academic year.

The recommendations include:

- For the 2021-2022 academic year, away rotations resume no earlier than July 1, 2021, with the following guidance:
 - After April 15, learners may begin applying for and scheduling in-person away rotations with a start date of July 1, 2021 or later.
 - Programs hosting learners for away rotations are encouraged to adhere to no earlier than May 1 as the date to begin processing away rotation applications.
 - Medical schools are encouraged to limit approved away rotations in any specialty *to one per learner*. Residency programs are encouraged to take into consideration if a learner exceeded the one-away-rotation limit during the residency selection process.

In alignment with the Coalition for Physician Accountability's recommendations, we encourage dermatology programs to offer in-person (if in line with local health authority and institutional recommendations) and/or virtual dermatology electives this cycle. Away electives, whether in-person or virtual, should not be perceived as required or necessary for matching into dermatology residency.

For students with home dermatology programs, it is recommended to participate in no more than one in-person away dermatology electives. For students without a home dermatology program, students could complete up to two away in-person dermatology electives if allowed by home institutional policies. Students without a home dermatology program should not be penalized during the application process if they complete two away in-person dermatology electives. Some programs may choose to look unfavorably on applicants who have done more than the recommended away in-person dermatology electives. We also recognize that some institutions have agreements with other clinical campuses or schools to allow for students to rotate without it being considered an "away" elective; these students should not be penalized for this approach, and can still perform a true "away" elective outside of that system.

Given that there are limited away elective opportunities this year, students may apply to multiple programs in order to secure an away elective. We recommend that programs not look unfavorably on applicants for declining or canceling an away elective in a timely manner.

Students should review program websites for more specific details about away elective availability, timing, and application processes, as these vary by institution. Some programs may choose to open applications later in the spring and may have later start dates for rotations based on institutional guidelines.