

Association of Directors of Forensic Psychiatry Fellowships
One Regency Drive, P.O. Box 30
Bloomfield, CT 06002-0030

FORENSIC PSYCHIATRY FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION GUIDELINES

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Overview

Forensic psychiatry fellowship programs in the U.S. and Canada do not have a match process for obtaining a fellowship position. However, in October 2019, the Association of Directors of Forensic Psychiatry Fellowships (ADFPF), a council of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, agreed to utilize a common application and decided upon clear timelines regarding interview and acceptance dates for fellowship applicants. These standards took effect on January 1, 2020, and have been revised several times since then. This document provides an overview of the application procedures and minimum requirements for forensic fellowship applications across the U.S.

The “Common Application” Process

The ADFPF common application consists of a common application form, photo, curriculum vitae, personal statement, writing sample, medical school diploma, current medical license(s), USLME scores, ECFMG scores (if applicable), and documentation of visa status (if applicable). In addition, the application requires three letters of reference, including one from a program director if the applicant is currently a trainee or graduated from training within the last five years, an official medical school transcript, and a Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE, formerly known as a Dean’s Letter). The common application can be downloaded from the AAPL fellowship page:

<https://aapl.org/fellowship>

All application materials except for letters of reference and medical school transcript/MSPE should be submitted by the applicant at once, electronically, to programs of interest. Letters of reference, as well as the medical school transcripts and MSPE, should be sent by letter writers and the school, respectively, directly to programs.

Of note, the ADFPF common application reflects the minimum required information that programs will use when making selection decisions. Individual programs may request more materials, such as university-specific forms or additional letters of reference. ***Applicants should visit program websites and/or contact programs directly to inquire about supplemental application requirements.*** Contact information for programs can be found on the AAPL fellowship page:

<https://aapl.org/fellowship>

Application and Interview Timeline

Internal candidates (i.e., those applying from the institution’s general psychiatry residency or another fellowship program) can submit application materials, interview, and accept fellowship positions at any time. They are exempt from the timelines articulated in this document.

For the 2024-2025 fellowship year, programs will begin reviewing applications from external candidates on June 1, 2023. If applicants submit materials earlier, programs can acknowledge receipt but will not review the applications or contact applicants to schedule interviews until June 1. ***Programs will conduct interviews between September 1, 2023, and October 31, 2023.*** Applicants are encouraged to submit their materials as soon as possible to provide ample time for application review and interview scheduling.

Since there are usually more fellowship positions available than applicants across the U.S., it is possible to apply after September 1, interview after October 31, and find a fellowship position. However, many programs receive more applications than available positions, so applying before September 1, 2023, is encouraged. Applicants should contact the programs they are considering in order to determine availability of positions if applying after October 31.

Interview Process

The structure of the interview process varies widely by program. Typically, applicants will spend at least one half-day interviewing at the program and will have an opportunity to meet with program leadership, faculty, and trainees during that time. Additional information about interview logistics can be obtained from program coordinators and/or directors. Remote interviews, which began during the COVID-19 pandemic, are anticipated to continue for the 2024-2025 fellowship year in order to promote equitable, low-cost access to programs for applicants. Applicants should check with the programs where they are applying about whether in-person or “hybrid” interview options are available, as university regulations about these matters vary. For some programs, interviewing at the AAPL Annual Meeting in late October 2023 may be an option.

All program directors and faculty are expected to abide by the ADFPF Communication Guidelines during the interview and selection period. These guidelines can be found on the AAPL fellowship page:

<https://aapl.org/fellowship>

Selection Process

Offers for fellowship positions are typically made on a rolling basis after the program begins interviewing applicants (i.e., in September 2023 for the 2024-25 fellowship year). In contrast to the match process, applicants may receive offers from more than one program. In order to give applicants time to interview at different programs and consider their options before making a choice, ADFPF has agreed that, ***for the 2024-2025 fellowship year, no offers can be made or accepted before 12 pm Eastern time (9 am Pacific time) on September 21, 2023.***

After 12 pm on September 21, 2023, programs may contact applicants to offer positions, but no applicant can be asked to accept or decline a fellowship offer before 11:59 am Eastern time (8:59 Pacific time) on October 31, 2023. The goal of this process is to allow applicants time to

attend interviews and weigh their preferences without undue pressure from programs to make a decision.

If an applicant knows that a particular program is their top choice (or their only choice), they are entitled and encouraged to notify the program director of their interest at any time during the interview period between September 1 to October 31, 2023. ***If an applicant is clear that they have selected a program as their top choice, have completed their interviews, and the director wishes to offer a position before October 31, a contract can be finalized between the program and the applicant at any time between September 21 and October 31.*** However, it is ADFPF's position that all program directors will encourage applicants to take the two-month interview period to look at programs of interest and not pressure candidates to accept an offer before 11:59 a.m. Eastern time (8:59 a.m. Pacific time) on October 31, 2023. For example, if an offer is extended to a candidate on September 22, 2023, the candidate can accept the offer at any time if they choose, but they will not be required to give the program an answer until 11:59 a.m. on October 31, 2023. At noon on October 31 (9 a.m. Pacific time), the "scramble" period begins, and programs can make offers to candidates as they see fit.

Applicants are required to notify each fellowship program to which they have applied, within 24 hours of accepting a position, that they have accepted an offer elsewhere. Program directors will report acceptance of applicants to a centralized ADFPF database within 24 hours of acceptance.

Summary Timeline for 2024-2025 Fellowship Year:

- **June 1, 2023:** First day that programs can review applications and/or contact applicants to schedule interviews.
- **September 1, 2023:** First day that programs can conduct interviews.
- **September 21, 2023:** First day that programs can offer positions to candidates.
- **October 31, 2023 -- 11:59 a.m. Eastern time:** First time that applicants can be asked to accept or decline offers for 2024-2025 fellowship positions, with exemption of internal candidates.

Questions or Concerns: If applicants encounter any deviations from these guidelines or have any questions or concerns about the application process, they are encouraged to contact the president of ADFPF, Dr. Reena Kapoor, at reena.kapoor@yale.edu.