

AOFAS CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ORTHOPAEDIC FOOT AND ANKLE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMS

1. Shall advise each applicant of receipt of his/her application.
2. Shall not demand, imply, nor mandate a pre-interview visit by an applicant as a necessary component in the fellowship selection and/or evaluation process.
3. Shall extend interview invitations, rejections or wait list status to applicants within 30 days of the individual program's application close date, which should allow adequate time for the program to process all applications. An applicant on a program's wait list should be notified that his/her application has been received and that he/she will be informed regarding an interview as soon as possible. Applicants who apply late may be considered at the program's discretion.
4. Shall not suggest or imply in any way that the applicant communicate with the program after the date of the applicant's formal interview.
5. Shall not communicate by mail, electronically or phone call with applicants after the interview except under certain circumstances listed below. The goal of this policy is to avoid any perception of impropriety regarding the match process.
 - a. If an applicant contacts the program and the program would like to respond, the program's response must be in writing and sent to all applicants to the program.
 - b. If there is new or additional information that the program feels would be beneficial for the applicants, it should be sent in writing to all applicants to the program.
 - c. If the applicant decides after a telephone interview or an off-site interview (such as at the AAOS meeting) that he/she wants to visit the program to see the facilities, the applicant is allowed to do so and to talk to fellowship faculty as if it is the principal interview.
 - d. It is acceptable for an applicant to contact a non-physician fellowship coordinator to ask routine logistical questions by phone or email. The program should keep a record of these communications and their nature.
6. Shall not ask an applicant about where he/she intends to rank ANY fellowship program, shall not seek assurances from any applicant as to his/her intent to "rank" a fellowship program in a certain order, and shall similarly not state or imply in any way that the applicant's position on the program's match rank list is at all dependent upon the applicant's relative level of interest in the fellowship program.

7. Shall provide a fair interview process to include an overview of the program, the chance to meet the faculty and current fellow(s) and residents involved during the fellowship year, expected experience (clinical, research, and teaching), salary and other logistical information. The program should also provide contact information for current and past fellows.
8. The Fellowship Program reserves the right to change the interview format within 30 days of the schedule interview. Any changes after 30 days the Program will provide within reason why the change in format. Reimbursement for travel expenses will be at the discretion of the Fellowship Program

Approved, AOFAS Board of Directors, 5/6/12; Reaffirmed May 12, 2026

Item #2 recommended by BOS; Approved, Fellowship Committee, 3/17/17

AOFAS CODE OF CONDUCT FOR APPLICANTS FOR ORTHOPAEDIC FOOT AND ANKLE FELLOWSHIPS

1. The application and related materials should be filled out accurately and honestly. Failure to do so may result in the applicant not being allowed to participate in the Foot and Ankle Fellowship Match or to complete a fellowship obtained under false pretenses.
2. Interview Etiquette:
 - a. An applicant should only accept those interview invitations in which he/she intends to actually participate. Accepting an interview and then cancelling it may deprive another deserving applicant of a chance to have an interview.
 - b. If an applicant needs to cancel an interview, he/she should contact the program as soon as possible by telephone or email and consider explaining the reason for the cancellation.
3. An applicant should not ask a program how he/she will be ranked.
4. Once an applicant matches at a fellowship program, he/she should honor that commitment and should not commit to any alternative training during the duration of the fellowship.
 - a. Any extenuating circumstances may be considered by the matched program, and a mutual agreement may be reached regarding release from a matched program. The AOFAS should be informed of this arrangement and the reasons for not matriculating or completing the matched fellowship.
 - b. If an applicant submits a rank list to more than one subspecialty match, the applicant must accept and hold the position to which he/she matched first. The applicant should withdraw from any subsequent matches. This will happen automatically only if all of the rank lists were submitted to subspecialty matches administered by the SF Match.
5. If an applicant drops out of the Foot and Ankle Fellowship Match for any reason, the applicant should notify the AOFAS, SF Match, and the programs to which he/she has applied within 5 business days of the decision to withdraw.
 - a. If the applicant accepts a program outside of the Foot and Ankle Fellowship Match, the applicant is to inform the AOFAS of the outside fellowship program that he/ she has accepted.



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- b. If the applicant decides to drop out of the Foot and Ankle Fellowship Match for any other reason, including matching in another subspecialty, he/she should provide an explanation to the AOFAS.
6. All match-related comments and complaints should be submitted to both the AOFAS and the SF Match.
7. Applicants who elect to write to a fellowship program either in print or electronically following an interview should understand that the fellowship faculty members are not allowed to respond to individual applicants without distributing that response to all applicants to that program. A non-physician fellowship coordinator may answer routine logistical questions.
8. Thank you letters and emails to program faculty or the program director are discouraged.

Approved, AOFAS Board of Directors, 5/6/2012; Reaffirmed 5/12/2026