Association of Directors of Forensic Psychiatry Fellowships

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**FORENSIC PSYCHIATRY FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

*Approved: December 1, 2019*

*Revised: November 15, 2023*

**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*

ADFPF’s guidelines allow internal candidates (i.e., those applying from the institution’s general psychiatry residency or another fellowship program) to submit application materials, interview, and accept fellowship positions at any time. However, some fellowship programs ask that internal candidates follow the same application procedures and timelines as external candidates, so it is advisable for applicants to check with their home institution if planning to apply internally.

*External Candidates*

***For the 2025-2026 fellowship year, programs will begin reviewing applications from external candidates on May 1, 2024.*** If applicants submit materials earlier, programs can acknowledge receipt but will not review the applications or contact applicants to schedule interviews until May 1. ***Programs will conduct interviews beginning on August 1, 2024.*** Applicants areencouraged to submit their materials as soon as possible to provide ampletime for application review and interview scheduling.

Since there are usually more fellowship positions available than applicants across the U.S., it is certainly possible to apply after August 1 and find a suitable fellowship position. However, many programs receive more applications than available positions, so applying before August 1, 2024, is encouraged.

**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 at most institutions for the 2025-2026 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 2024 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**

ADFPF has agreed that, ***for the 2025-2026 fellowship year, no offers can be made or accepted before 12 pm Eastern time (9 am Pacific time) on September 16, 2024.*** ***Once an offer has been made, the applicant has seven (7) calendar days to accept or decline the offer.*** If the program does not receive an affirmative response from the applicant by close of business on the seventh day (in the program’s time zone), they may withdraw the offer.

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. However, even in these cases, no interviews can be conducted prior to August 1, 2024, and no offers can be made or accepted prior to September 16, 2024.

**Post-Acceptance Obligations**

***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 2025-2026 Fellowship Year:**

* **May 1, 2024:** First day that programs can review applications and/or contact applicants to schedule interviews.
* **August 1, 2024:** First day that programs can conduct interviews.
* **September 16, 2024:** First day that programs can offer positions to candidates.
* **7 calendar days after offer of position:** Programs can withdraw an offer if they have not received an acceptance from the applicant.
* **24 hours after accepting a position:** Applicants must inform all other programs to which they have applied that they have accepted a position and are withdrawing their candidacy.

**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.