

Audition Rotations and Residency

OUTCOMES FOR OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL STUDENTS

The research on audition rotations and residency outcomes for osteopathic medical students was initiated using data from the 2022-2023 AACOM Graduating Senior Survey. This is the first time audition rotation data was collected, offering a unique opportunity to explore its relevance in the match process. Given ongoing discussions questioning the effectiveness of audition rotations in securing residency matches, this analysis aims to examine whether such assumptions hold true.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- Audition rotations align closely with specialty match outcomes, especially in more competitive fields where they can significantly enhance match success. At the program level, their influence is also notable, with up to 80% of students in the most competitive specialties matching at the same program where they auditioned, while outcomes vary across other specialties.*
- Although USMLE scores were often requested, lack of a score did not significantly limit students' ability to secure audition rotations.
- Perceived fee bias exists but does not appear widespread enough to limit DO participation in away rotations.

1. Does having an away rotation impact the likelihood of an osteopathic medical student matching into a residency program?

- 82% of matched students attended an audition rotation in their 4th year.
- 89% did an audition rotation in their matched specialty.
- Match rates for those who attended an audition at the specialty level were consistently high, but program-level matches varied widely.
- With 45% matching into auditioned programs, students benefit from these opportunities, especially in more competitive specialties.

- 95% of students who matched into a PGY1, sought audition rotations in their fourth year.

2. Does Taking the USMLE examination have an impact on likelihood of having an away rotation?

- More than half of the respondents (57%) reported providing USMLE scores when applying for VSLO or non-VSLO rotations.
- About 10% of VSLO applicants were restricted from one or more rotations due to not having USMLE.
- Audition rotation acceptance remained high overall: 89% of VSLO applicants and 99% of non-VSLO applicants secured at least one rotation.

3. Do higher fees for away rotations for DOs impact the likelihood of having an away rotation?

- Most DO students did not perceive fee bias, with about two-thirds (68%) reporting no higher rotation fees than MD peers.
- A minority (15%) reported higher fees, though reports varied by specialty and were more common in larger, high-volume fields such as Internal Medicine and Emergency Medicine.
- Fee bias perceptions were similar across VSLO and non-VSLO rotations, suggesting the issue is not limited to one rotation platform.
- Overall, perceived fee bias appears limited, though monitoring remains important to ensure equitable access to audition and visiting rotations.

Limitations:

- The survey had substantial non-response, so findings should be interpreted with caution.
- Self-Reporting Bias: The dataset relies on students' recollections of their audition experiences, which may introduce inaccuracies.
- Institutional and Specialty Variability: Audition rotation structures, selection criteria, and match outcomes differ widely across institutions and specialties, impacting generalizability.
- Program-Specific Guidelines: The suggested number of auditions should ideally be based on program requirements, as broader trends may not capture institutional expectations.

* Competitiveness classifications are based on 2023 NRMP Main Residency Match data (Results and Data Report) and reflect national trends, which may not fully represent osteopathic applicant experiences.