



COTH FAQ: What do I need to know about resident transfers?

FOR RESIDENTS

Podiatric medical students and other applicants are matched with residency positions in the CASPR Residency Match, but not every match is made to last. If, from your perspective, your residency position starts to feel like a mismatch, a move may be possible—but you should know that switching residencies will be a different experience than the Match. Transfer seekers are largely on their own. Transferring involves paperwork, planning, interviewing and often travel to secure a position, but without the framework of the Match process expressly designed to move things along. It's like looking for a new job. Networking, reaching out to residency directors and searching online are commonly cited approaches to making the switch.

CMS funding can be a complication. The Medicare program bases payment for podiatric residents on three years of funding total. This can be an institutional consideration when considering a transfer although it is rarely a deciding factor.

Unlike job hoppers in other professions, many of whom quietly find a new position, give two weeks' notice and leave, that won't happen in transferring residencies. Before a transfer can be finalized, paperwork documenting your experience in your initial residency must be provided to the new program, along with all your performance data from residency, and any other materials the receiving program may require.

The receiving residency program director will communicate with the director at your current program. The reasons for a departure and your progress in the program will be part of that discussion. It's best to clarify how these matters will be discussed in an open conversation with your program director before that contact is made.

Here are a few things to keep in mind when considering a transfer to a new residency.

-I am a resident and interested in transferring out of my current program. What should I do?

- Be sure a switch makes sense. Residency is, in every respect, very difficult. Stress and burnout are common, and given that context, it is doubly important to be clear-headed about a transfer decision.
- Is your interest in transferring a response to a temporary situation—one that might not be all that different in another setting—or a firm conviction that a change in residency is essential?
- Talk to your current program director about your concerns and feelings! The earlier the better! An open line of communication and dialogue is nearly always best in all situations.
- Research your transfer options and seek advice from trusted colleagues and mentors early in the process. Check out available open and approved residency positions on the

AACPM website: <https://aacpm.org/aacpm-caspr-crip-programs/open-residency-positions/>

-Are all available open and approved residency positions found on the AACPM list?

-NO. Residency programs must electively agree to post that they have an open and approved position. It is certainly possible that there are other programs with open and approved positions not posted on the AACPM site.

-What if a residency program I am interested in doesn't currently have an open approved position, but the program director assures me that they can "easily take another resident"?

-That's great, but it's not up to the program director. Programs either have an open approved position or they don't.

-HOWEVER, a residency program can apply for either a temporary or permanent increase in positions through the CPME. This must be initiated by the program director and sponsoring institution, not a resident. The application form can be found here: <https://www.cpme.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/CPME-345-Increase-Reclassification-Form-Fillable.pdf>

-This process doesn't happen overnight and typically takes a little bit of time.

-OK I've definitely decided to transfer, and I have talked to another residency program with an available approved position who said they are going to accept me. What should I do next?

-Talk to your current program director! The earlier the better!

-Put your current program director into direct contact/communication with your future program director as quickly as possible. The transfer process will be handled by them, not by you, and must be approved by CPME.

-DO become familiar with the CPME "Resident Transfer Form" (<https://www.cpme.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Resident-Transfer-Request-Form-Fillable.pdf>). There is a lot of information that the releasing program director needs to provide, and it is likely that you can help them collect and organize this information.

-If my transfer is accepted by the CPME, what information transfers with me?

-All of your verified clinical and surgical logs in PRR.

-All of your completed non-podiatric rotations (assuming there is a signed/dated assessment form).

-What if my current program director refuses to let me transfer?

-Then you are expected to complete residency with the program.

-Alternatively, you could resign from your current position. This would involve you starting over in residency, losing your current verified clinical and surgical logs in PRR, and losing all your completed non-podiatric rotations.

-Do transfers only occur on July 1st at the beginning of an academic year?

-No. A transfer might occur at any point of training, although most commonly happens closer to the beginning vs the end of a training commitment.

-If I transfer halfway through my PGY1 year, can I simply start fresh as a PGY1 on July 1st?

-It's possible, but that's up to the accepting program director. Open and approved positions are for a specific PGY term, and there are CMS funding considerations with this as well.

FOR PROGRAMS

There is minimal information available about resident transfers. Fit, family obligation, and geographic preference have been cited as common reasons for a resident to seek a transfer to another program. Regardless of the reason for transfer, the loss of a resident can be disruptive to a program and it may increase the likelihood that other residents will also consider leaving.

When a resident expresses a desire to transfer, residency programs should approach the situation with professionalism, support, and a clear process. If a residency program is approached by a resident who wants to transfer, there are several key points to consider:

-I am a program director, one of my residents informs me that they want to transfer. What do I do?

-Encourage the resident to have an honest conversation about their reasons for wanting to transfer. Discuss whether transferring is the best option.

-Take their comments seriously. Explore ways that you can make it work for them and your program.

- Provide resources and advice to help the resident explore their options, including researching other programs and understanding the transfer process.

-Become familiar with the CPME "Resident Transfer Form"

(<https://www.cpme.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Resident-Transfer-Request-Form-Fillable.pdf>). CPME must approve resident transfers and even if you begrudgingly release a resident to transfer, there is a fair amount of paperwork that you will need to submit to the CPME in order to obtain this approval.

-It's best to open a line of dialogue/communication with the program director who might accept your resident who wants to transfer. An open line of communication and dialogue is nearly always best in all situations.

-Can I tell a resident no?

-Sure. You have committed to the resident and they have committed to you through a contract. If you do not release them, even if you submit all the required paperwork as outlined on the CPME “Resident Transfer Form”, then the resident cannot transfer.

-It is still possible for the resident to resign their position?

-Of course.

-If my resident wants to transfer, and has a program willing to accept them, has the transfer essentially happened?

-Absolutely not. All resident transfers need to be approved by the CPME...full stop.

-What’s the difference between one of my residents transferring versus me firing a resident?

-If a resident transfers, then all their logs and completed rotations transfers with them. If a resident is fired (or quits) without a formal transfer approved by the CPME, then they essentially start over from day #1 as a PGY1 resident.

-What if I am interested in having one of my residents transfer out of my program. What are my options?

-Not much honestly. Resident transfers are effectively resident initiated, not program initiated.

-What if a resident approaches me for a transfer and I would like to take the resident into my program but I don’t currently have an open approved position? I do have sufficient volume and resources to take another resident.

-That’s great, but it’s not up to you. CPME must approve all increases in positions.

-HOWEVER, a residency program can apply for either a temporary or permanent increase in positions from the CPME. The application form can be found here:

<https://www.cpme.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/CPME-345-Increase-Reclassification-Form-Fillable.pdf>

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