



**Association of Pathology Chairs  
Statement on Fellowship Recruitment  
May 2021**

Consistent with the Association of Pathology Chairs' (APC) advocacy priority to "collect data on unexpected fellowship openings and resident concerns about the fellowship recruitment process to inform recommendations for systemic changes", APC Council and PRODS Council have noted and discussed the increasing numbers of unexpected fellowship openings (defined as fellows withdrawing their commitments within 18 months of matriculation). The Councils jointly approved the following statement concerning this urgent matter:

*In light of a concerning trend of increasing numbers of unexpected fellowship openings (fellows withdrawing their commitments within 18 months of matriculation) and the stresses caused to residents and programs by earlier fellowship recruitment processes and commitments (many now as early as PGY2, before most residents have received adequate training to make an informed subspecialty choice), the APC Council and the PRODS Council have deliberated what we can do in the short-term to impact this intractable situation. We recognize that, in the absence of a fellowship match or widespread commitment to a common timeline, each program is leveraging its unique situation to thrive, or simply survive, in the current set of circumstances. We are compelled to speak out against practices that are currently causing increasing strain to residents and programs. APC Council and PRODS Council have unanimously agreed to advocate that fellowship recruitment must not begin earlier than 24 months in advance of matriculation. We further recommend that program directors band together, by subspecialty, in support of each other and the greater good of Pathology, to mutually agree not to accept applications or interview candidates or require candidates to make commitments to their programs more than 24 months in advance of matriculation. We remain actively engaged with the Fellowship Directors Ad Hoc Committee (FDAHC) to gauge each program director community, by subspecialty, to determine how APC can further support improvements in the recruitment process for those subspecialties that are seeking change in the longer term. We expect to publish a comprehensive report in the late summer on the state-of-the-state of fellowship recruitment that will include joint recommendations from the APC and FDAHC, and recruitment process improvement plans.*

APC Council and PRODS Council ask academic departments to consider the best interests of residents, pathology and training, as a whole, in deciding their fellowship recruitment practices. To assist APC, PRODS and the [Fellowship Directors ad hoc Committee \(FDAHC\)](#) in addressing this and other critical issues in fellowship training, we invite and encourage APC members to give us constructive feedback and relevant data. For comments, questions and concerns about this statement or fellowship recruitment practices, in general, please contact the APC Office at [info@apcprods.org](mailto:info@apcprods.org) or 302-660-4940.