# 2026 ERAS® Program Director's WorkStation (PDWS) Getting Started Guide

## Welcome to the 2026 ERAS recruitment season!

The AAMC Electronic Residency Application Service® (ERAS®) team will share important information throughout the recruitment season. This guide provides a summary of what is new this season and an overview of improvements to the Program Director's WorkStation (PDWS).

For answers to questions or additional information, please contact the AAMC Support Center at 202-828-0413 or (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. ET).

## Contents

# Content Update

## What's New for the 2026 MyERAS® Application

MyERAS® application updates are made every season based on research and community feedback. All changes are intended to improve the application process for applicants and programs and support holistic review. Several updates were made this year to streamline information in the application. Please review these changes in detail on the [What You Need to Know About the 2026 ERAS Application Season](#) webpage.

Please note: The ERAS language as it applies to applicants' training interruptions focuses on extensions and interruptions related to academic or professional performance issues and is not intended to solicit information about applicants' health, disability, or family status.

For this section, academic is specified as repeated or remediated coursework, and professional performance issues are specified as professionalism sanctions or any other adverse actions by an applicant's medical school or its parent institution.

Please note that applicants may have leaves or extensions due to factors that are not included in these two questions. More information about an applicant's extensions, gaps, or interruptions may be available in the MSPE, the MyERAS experiences section, personal statement, and programs can also seek clarification through the interview process.

## Specialty Questions

Residents applying to Anesthesiology, Neurological Surgery, and Plastic Surgery-Integrated will be required to provide responses to specialty-specific questions before sending applications to programs in these specialties. Find the updates for the 2026 season and the changed sections by [What's New for the 2026 MyERAS Application webpage.](#)

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## Pilot Projects for the 2026 ERAS Season

| Topic | New for 2026 MyERAS Application |
|---|---|
| Program Signals | **Program Signal Statements:** For Anesthesiology and Plastic Surgery-Integrated, applicants will provide more context. |
| Geographic Preferences | **Geographic Preference Opt-Out:** Otolaryngology and Orthopedic Surgery programs will pilot opting out of geographic preferences. |
| Specialty-Specific Information | Residents applying to Anesthesiology, Neurological Surgery, and Plastic Surgery-Integrated will be required to provide responses to specialty-specific questions before sending applications to programs in these specialties. Find the updates for the 2026 season and the changed sections by What's New for the 2026 MyERAS Application webpage. Review the 2026 ERAS Applicant Worksheet to see the questions. |

## Filter Changes

The table provided below displays the Filters that have been added, updated, or removed from the PDWS. If a program has saved user-defined filter(s), it is necessary for users to remove or update any unavailable data field before using the filter. Also, remember to save the filter again after making any modifications.

| Added/Updated Filter(s) | Category |
|---|---|
| 1. Professionalism Interruptions or Extensions<br>2. Professionalism Interruptions or Extensions Explanation<br>3. Academic Interruptions or Extensions<br>1. Academic Interruptions or Extensions Explanation | Medical Education |
| 1. Postgraduate Training Type - ACGME-I Residency | Professional and Postgraduate Training Experience |
| 4. Data Authorized to Core<br>1. Data Authorized to Cortex | Thalamus |

**Fields with the \* icon have been moved to a different category.**

Access the Filter Categories job aid to see the available filter categories list.

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## ERAS Program Management

To receive applications in the ERAS system, programs must register to indicate that they will have open positions and will use the ERAS program. Programs are encouraged to update their participation status for the upcoming ERAS season before the current season ends on May 31.

### Program Signal Opt Out

Specialties participating in program signals will automatically have their participation status set to "yes." Programs can opt out by selecting "no." The deadline for opting out is as follows, based on program cycles:

a. July Cycle: June 18, 2025, at 5 p.m. ET
b. September Cycle: Aug. 20, 2025, at 5 p.m. ET
c. December Cycle: Oct. 29, 2025, at 5 p.m. EST

Please note that participation status cannot be updated after the deadlines listed above for each program cycle.

### Thalamus Opt In

Programs are automatically opted in to use Thalamus Cortex, Core, Itinerary Wizard, and Cerebellum when they complete registration for the 2026 ERAS season. Bulk onboarding to Thalamus will begin on Wednesday, June 4, 2025, when the 2026 ERAS season opens. Please visit https://www.thalamusgme.com/eras-collaboration for updated information as the season approaches.

## Thalamus Application Programming Interface (API)

The AAMC and Thalamus API streamlines transfer of program/applicant data between the ERAS PDWS and Thalamus products. Only users with institution super user (ISU), alternate institution super user (AISU), program super user (PSU), alternate program super user (APSU), and program coordinator (PC) roles in the PDWS have access to authorize data to Thalamus. It is recommended that programs choose the Selected to Interview status to track applicants who are selected for an interview after reviewing their applications. Once the status is selected, programs can filter for this status to view the applicants who were selected for an interview. Selecting this status is optional, so programs can also choose custom statuses or filter for additional criteria.

Note: The authorize and export process can be completed multiple times to accommodate additional/new applications, and no data will be duplicated and/or deleted. Data can also be managed and/or deleted through Thalamus products.

Access the Authorize Data to Thalamus job aid webpage here.

*New!*

An authorization status will now be displayed on the PDWS applicant details page under the header section. This enables programs to monitor their authorization status and resend the data authorization request to Thalamus if necessary. Additionally, programs have the option to filter applicants based on their authorization status. The filters are listed above in the filter update section.

# Managing Screened Data Fields

In the 2026 ERAS season, PSUs and APSUs have the option to update six screened data fields, and ISUs and AISUs can update all 14 screened data fields. Programs in specialties that are participating in geographic preferences screening will not have access to view applicant geographic preferences.

**Note: Screened data fields will carry over into Thalamus.**

ISU and AISU roles can **view and edit** the following fields:

| ISU and AISU Data Fields | |
|---|---|
| Basis for Work Authorization | Birth Date |
| Current Work Authorization | Designated Pronouns |
| Felony Conviction | Gender |
| Geographic Preference | Hometown(s) |
| Limiting Factors | Misdemeanor Conviction |
| Photograph | Self Identification |
| Visa Sponsorship Needed | Visa Sponsorship Sought |

PSU and APSU roles can **view all data fields** but can only edit the following fields:

| PSU and APSU Data Fields | |
|---|---|
| Basis for Work Authorization | Current Work Authorization |
| Geographic Preference | Hometown(s) |
| Visa Sponsorship Needed | Visa Sponsorship Sought |

Please refer to the Update Screened Data Fields job aid for additional information.

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