**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Admissions Traffic Rules for Physical Therapist Education Programs**

**Updated October 2020**

**Q. What are the admissions traffic rules?**

The admissions traffic rules were adopted by the ACAPT membership in 2015 and went into effect in the 2016-17 admissions cycle. The rules were primarily developed to enhance the admissions process for both applicants and physical therapist education programs by reducing number of applicants who hold multiple acceptances, submit multiple deposits, or withdraw from one program after start of classes to attend another program. The rules were modeled after those that exist in numerous other health professions education program admissions processes.

**Q: What changes were made to the traffic rules in 2020?**

The admissions traffic rules for physical therapist education programs were modified by a vote of the ACAPT membership at their Annual Business Meeting in October 2020 by eliminating Rule 5: *Programs should not knowingly accept or enroll applicants who have started classes at another program*. The rationale for eliminating this rule is related to a decision in 2019 by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) to remove similar language from its Code of Ethics and Professional Practice in response to concerns about possible violations of antitrust laws. The concerns relate to limiting student choice. The recent action by PTCAS to eliminate the early decision process is related to the same antitrust concern. While this issue is currently playing out in the undergraduate admissions world, ACAPT has taken proactive action on this matter by removing this rule. Similar language has been removed from the admissions traffic rules for applicants.

**Q. Who do the rules apply to?**

The rules apply to all physical therapist education programs, but exclude those programs with *exclusive* early assurance admissions models. For programs that have mixed admissions models (i.e., a combination of the above), the rules apply to the regular admission component of the admissions model. The rules also do not pertain to post-professional or dual-degree education programs, such as DPT-PhD. There are also admissions traffic rules for applicants.

**Q. What is the rationale behind not mandating applicant deposits before January 15?**

The January 15 date was selected after much dialog among the ACAPT member institutions. The date was largely selected from a student-centered perspective with the belief that most applicants receive notices from their top choice institutions by that date. In that context, this date minimizes the number of deposits an applicant will need to make to “hold a seat” at one program while awaiting word about acceptance from another program.

**Q. Can an applicant submit a deposit prior to January 15?**

Yes, an applicant may *voluntarily* submit a deposit prior to January 15. Programs are discouraged from informing applicants that, while they are not required to deposit prior to January 15, a seat cannot guaranteed if they wait until that date. We have heard that from the applicant’s perspective, this practice places undue pressure requiring them to deposit before January 15.

**Q. What if a program does not follow the rules?**

Like other professional associations, there is an understanding that we all hold ourselves mutually accountable in adhering to the rules. There is no formal compliance or enforcement arm of ACAPT. When the ACAPT Board receives a complaint/concern about a program not following the rules, the approach has been to contact that program directly to engage in a conversation about the concern that was brought to our attention to a) confirm the accuracy of the complaint/concern and b) if accurate, explore the challenges/barriers to that program following the rules. A small work group involved in developing the rules continues to monitor program experiences with the rules through analysis of questions that are included in the annual PTCAS survey to programs.

**Q. Who do I contact with further questions?**

We are interested in learning more about your experience with the traffic rules. If you have a question or concern, please contact us at [acapt@apta.org](mailto:acapt@apta.org)