

Tips for Writing Medical Student Letters of Recommendation

TO: Faculty Member
 FROM: CUNY School of Medicine, Office of Student Affairs

Your letter of recommendation is a critical part of a student's Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) application. Agreeing to write a strong and thoughtful letter will tremendously help the students' application. If you feel that you cannot write a strong LoR, please tell the student right away. It is okay to say, "I can write you a letter, but it won't be my strongest letter. I encourage you to approach another letter writer."

We are grateful for your help in this process. Typically, authors may begin to upload LoRs in early June, exact dates will be provided. We respectfully request that you submit your letter of recommendation **BEFORE ERAS opens to residency programs (date changes annually)**. Your timely submission to the LoR Portal is extremely important for the student's ability to submit a complete application for residency.

All letter writers will receive a notification email from ERAS to upload their letters directly to ERAS through the Letter of Recommendation Portal. There is no longer an option to submit the LOR to the school. Ensuring high quality (proper spelling of the student's name, correct pronouns, etc.) of the letter is especially important.

Below are some helpful tips for letter of recommendation authors:

DO:	Example:
Use Letterhead	Hospital or University
Include the student's name, AAMC ID number, and note whether the student has waived their rights to see the letter.	Student A AAMC ID Number: 45648748 NOTE: Student A has waived her rights to see this letter
Address your letter to the appropriate person.	"Dear Program Director:"
Use the correct name and pronoun. This is a really common error.	If you use a template, please pay extra attention to ensure you are using the correct name and pronoun
Consider including an opening statement expressing your enthusiasm for writing this letter	"I volunteered to write this letter because..."
Describe how you know the student and how long you have known him/her. Avoid personal remarks (ex. age, race, marital status)	"I worked with Student A for four weeks on inpatient medicine as her attending physician."
Use specific examples. Comment on medical knowledge, bedside manner, teamwork, procedural skills, motivation and leadership, and other important qualities for residents in their field.	"Student A is an excellent communicator. For example, on rounds, patients directed their questions to Student A instead of the senior resident."
End with a clear summary statement . Indicate how well qualified the student is for residency and as a future physician. Comment on whether you would select this applicant for a residency program. Include anything that may distinguish this applicant from others.	"I would recruit this student for my program." "I give this student my highest recommendation." "In my last ten years, this was one of the top 5% of students with whom I have worked."
Include your contact information.	"Feel free to contact me at"
List your job title, academic rank, and hospital affiliation.	Martin Short, MD, PhD Director of Medical Intensive Care Unit Professor of Medicine University Hospitals Case Medical Center
Sign and scan the letter. Upload your letter as a PDF.	as directed to ERAS LoR portal

Resources:

1. ERAS Letter of Recommendation portal: https://www.aamc.org/services/eras/282520/lor_portal.html
2. ERAS HelpDesk is open from Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and available by phone at 202-862-6249. You can also use their electronic support form by using the link below.
<https://www.aamc.org/services/eras/397214/erascontactform.html>