



STRONGERTOGETHER



ASCP International Medical Graduates (IMGs) Pathology Training Handbook (U.S.)

ORIENTATION & TRANSITION GUIDE FOR IMGs

Developed for Education, Professionalism, and Workforce Readiness



SECTION A

Core Checklist

BEFORE ARRIVAL (3–6 MONTHS)

- ☐ Confirm visa type (J-1 vs H-1B); entry dates aligned with contract
- ☐ State training license / permit submitted
- ☐ USMLE transcript & ECFMG status verified
- ☐ Immunizations, TB testing, drug screen completed
- ☐ Secure short-term housing (1–2 months)
- ☐ Arrange U.S. bank, phone plan, and transportation plan
- ☐ Review requirements for National Provider Identifier (NPI) registration (if applicable)

FIRST 30 DAYS

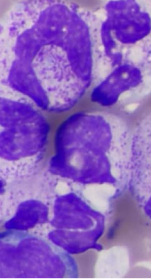
- ☐ Apply for Social Security Number (SSN)
- ☐ Complete hospital onboarding & EMR training
- ☐ Learn specimen tracking, paging, and call escalation pathways
- ☐ Identify chief resident(s), program coordinator, and key faculty contacts

MONTHS 1–6

- ☐ Master grossing fundamentals and institutional dictation style
- ☐ Use CAP synoptic templates correctly
- ☐ Practice concise differentials at sign-out
- ☐ Learn basic autopsy dissection techniques and institutional autopsy report structure
- ☐ Request mid-rotation feedback and document action items
- ☐ Attend tumor boards and clinical pathology conferences

ONGOING

- ☐ Log cases and procedures accurately
- ☐ Track evaluations and milestones
- ☐ Update CV quarterly
- ☐ Maintain wellness routines



SECTION B

PGY-1 Survival Version (Residency)

CORE EXPECTATIONS FOR PGY-1 RESIDENTS

- Consistent reliability and follow-through are essential
- Diagnostic safety takes precedence over diagnostic novelty
- Clear, timely communication is prioritized over linguistic perfection

ANATOMIC PATHOLOGY WORKFLOW STANDARDS

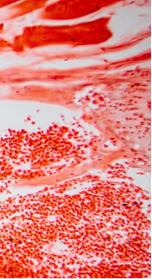
- Preview cases with focused, realistic differentials (2–3 entities)
- Verbalize diagnostic uncertainty early and clearly
- Do not speculate on margins, grading, or staging without confirmation
- Integrate gross findings, histology, and clinical context in all cases

CLINICAL PATHOLOGY CALL STANDARDS

- Early escalation is expected and appropriate
- All critical values and communications must be documented
- When uncertainty exists: stabilize the situation, notify supervising faculty, and document actions taken

EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

- Performance assessment is continuous and competency-based
- Absence of feedback does not imply satisfactory performance
- Residents are expected to actively seek specific, actionable feedback



SECTION C

Fellowship Transition Version

NEW EXPECTATIONS

- Independence with backup, not supervision
- Management decisions, not just diagnosis
- Teaching residents and clinicians

FELLOWSHIP SUCCESS CHECKLIST

- ☐ Know institutional protocols cold
- ☐ Be available and responsive
- ☐ Communicate uncertainty early
- ☐ Build subspecialty expertise (read daily)
- ☐ Network intentionally (USCAP, ASCP)

SECTION D

Things No One Tells IMGs

COMMUNICATION PITFALLS

- Asking questions is seen as engagement, not weakness
- Direct feedback is cultural, not personal
- Over-apologizing undermines confidence

PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

- Being quiet may be misread as disengaged
- Advocacy for yourself is expected
- Documentation protects you

SECTION E

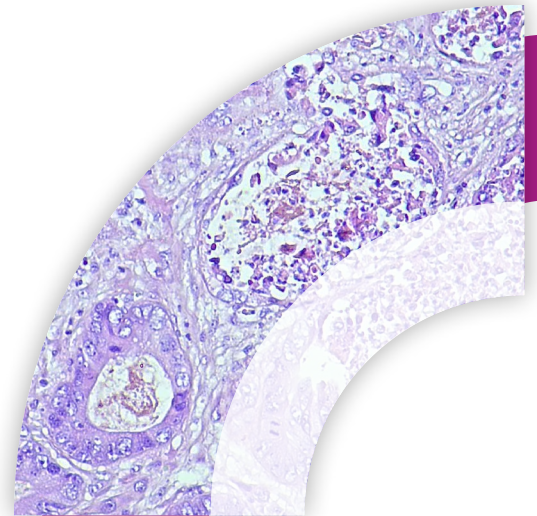
Program Orientation / Mentorship Version

HOW PROGRAMS CAN USE THIS

- Orientation packet insert
- IMG peer-mentorship curriculum
- First-90-day milestone checklist
- Faculty advising framework

MENTOR TALKING POINTS

- Normalize adjustment period (3–6 months)
- Clarify hidden expectations
- Review evaluations early
- Support visa-related stressors



Final Message to IMGs

This resource is provided to support international medical graduates as they integrate into U.S. pathology training programs. Success in residency and fellowship is grounded in professionalism, patient safety, clear communication, and continuous learning.

ASCP USE & DISTRIBUTION

- Suitable for ASCP educational programming and IMG support initiatives
- Appropriate for residency and fellowship orientation packets
- May be incorporated into mentorship and professional development resources
- Designed to align with ACGME expectations and ASCP educational standards