

# Pediatric Component Membership Requirements

## Frequently Asked Questions

### My program already performs pediatric transplants. Do I still have to apply?

Yes. The Bylaws approved by the OPTN Board of Directors (Board) in 2015 created a new requirement that all kidney, liver, heart, lung, and pancreas programs registering candidates less than 18 years old must have an approved pediatric component. Since this is a new requirement, all transplant programs intending to register pediatric candidates must apply and be approved for a pediatric component.

### Do I have to submit an application for each organ?

Yes. Each organ-specific pediatric component has its own requirements. There are no pediatric requirements for intestine or islet. Please refer to the organ-specific bylaws for additional information.

### What is the process for pediatric component membership applications?

**Notice:** UNOS will notify transplant hospitals 30 days prior to the pediatric component applications being available. The notice will include the timeline for submission and review of the applications, as well as the expected effective date of the bylaws.

**Applications:** Programs will have 90 days to submit their application. UNOS Membership staff will work with the programs to ensure all required documentation is included to complete the application.

**Staff & OPTN Membership & Professional Standards Committee (MPSC) review:** UNOS Membership staff typically receive 300 plus applications a year. In addition to these, UNOS estimates more than 700 applications may be submitted as part of this process. The timeline reflects 14 months for staff to assist members in completing all pieces of the application to facilitate the review process. Your application will ultimately undergo several layers of review, in which UNOS Membership staff may notify you of needed revisions:

- A UNOS Membership Analyst will review it for completeness.
- A subcommittee of the MPSC will review it and provide an initial recommendation for the MPSC.
- The MPSC will review the application and make a final recommendation for the Board.

**Board approval:** The Board will review the applications and make the final decision. UNOS Membership staff will notify programs of approval decisions. The Bylaw changes will become effective at the same time.



### How do I get the new application?

After the 30-day notice has expired, UNOS Membership staff will automatically distribute the pediatric component program applications to any member transplant program that has had at least one pediatric candidate on its waiting list in the last five years. Programs who do not meet this criterion can request an application by contacting UNOS Membership staff. If you receive an application but do not wish to apply, simply reply to the email from UNOS Membership that your program is opting out from applying.

### **If I am a current primary transplant surgeon or physician, what requirements will I need to meet to qualify as a primary pediatric transplant surgeon or physician?**

Kidney, liver, and heart pediatric key personnel will need to meet the additional pediatric specific requirements found on the membership applications for these organs. Approved primary program transplant surgeons and physicians will not need to document that they meet the program primary surgeon or physician requirements.

There are no “pediatric specific requirements” for key personnel at pediatric lung and pancreas components. The proposed primary pediatric transplant surgeon and primary pediatric transplant physician must be the approved primary key personnel for the program or must document that they meet all current requirements to serve as the primary transplant surgeon or physician for that program. Please note that neither the MPSC nor the Board can grant ANY exceptions to membership requirements in the OPTN Bylaws.

### **In addition to the new pediatric component requirements, what else will my program need to complete?**

The application for a pediatric component includes key personnel applications for the primary pediatric transplant surgeon and primary pediatric transplant physician and an OPTN Staffing Report for the pediatric component. The program will be asked to provide contact information and roles for personnel who will be involved in the pediatric component on the OPTN Staffing Report.

### **If I miss the deadline, is UNOS able to fast track my application through the approval process?**

No. UNOS will still accept applications after the deadline, but we cannot guarantee that late applications will be processed prior to the implementation date. UNOS must review all applications for completeness before sending them to the MPSC for review. If the MPSC recommends the application be approved, it will be sent to the Board for final approval. The MPSC and Board will not review incomplete applications. This is a fixed process with a pre-determined timeline. See OPTN Bylaws *Appendix A: Membership Application and Review* for more details.

### **Will my program be able to perform pediatric transplants if our application is not approved?**

Application approval by the Board and implementation of the bylaws occur on the same day. If your program has pediatric patients on the waiting list and your application is not approved on the effective date, you should follow applicable provisions of *Appendix K*, relating to temporary, long-term, and permanent inactive programs. If your program continues performing pediatric transplants, without a Board-approved pediatric component, it will be considered a potential noncompliance with OPTN obligations and may result in an action according to *Appendix L: Reviews and Actions* of the OPTN Bylaws.

A designated heart or liver transplant program that does not have an approved pediatric component may register and transplant a patient less than 18 years old on the waiting list if certain criteria are met as stated in *Appendix H.4.E. Emergency Membership Exceptions for Candidates Less than 18 Years Old* and *Appendix F.7.E. Emergency Membership Exceptions for Candidates Less than 18 Years Old* of the OPTN Bylaws. Please reference the policy notice titled “Revise pediatric emergency membership exception pathway” available on the OPTN website.

If you have additional questions about the application process, please contact the UNOS Membership team by email at [MembershipRequests@unos.org](mailto:MembershipRequests@unos.org) or by phone at 833-577-9469.