



COVID-19 Prevention Information and Protocol for 2021 MAASTO Conference

If you are experiencing COVID-related symptoms or know you have been recently exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID, please do not come to the conference.

We strongly encourage that attendees take specific precautions to protect yourself and others. The more of these we can take, the safer we all will be at the conference. No one measure alone is enough to prevent the spread of COVID-19, but together, we can reduce the risk and spread of the disease.

People without symptoms can still spread COVID-19 to others. Consistent with other large public events in the City of Chicago, we will have the following protocols in place at the beginning of conference.

- At registration, all attendees will be asked to show proof of vaccination for COVID-19. Acceptable forms include a vaccination card or a photo(copy) of the vaccination card showing the name and date(s) of vaccination.
- If the attendee is not vaccinated, they will be required to show proof of a negative PCR (not rapid test) COVID-19 test within 72 hours prior to arrival.¹
- PCR Testing will be available from 9-11 a.m. with results anticipated by the next morning, however not guaranteed in that timeframe.

Masks

Masks **will be required** when indoors and on busses while attending the conference except while enjoying food and beverages. Proper fit of the mask is essential for effectiveness. Wear your mask over your nose and mouth, secure it under your chin, and make sure it fits snugly against the sides of your face. Keep a spare mask handy in case your mask becomes moist from moisture in your breath or from rain. Spare masks will be available at the conference.

In addition, masks are required when travelling by bus, air, train, or even automobile if with others not of your household.

Conference speakers who maintain at least a 10-foot buffer from their audience may remove their mask when presenting.

Distancing

Please refrain from shaking hands and hugging when greeting others. An elbow bump, or better yet a bow or wave will reduce the risk of transmission from direct contact.

When seated at the conference, we recommend you maintain a physical distance of six feet from others as much as possible. We will do our best to space seating to encourage social distancing, however, there is limited capacity compared to how many have registered. Please do your best to maintain social distancing.

Hygiene

Washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds will reduce the risk of COVID-19. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Wash or sanitize your hands especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing and before eating. Between hand washing and sanitizer use, avoid touching your mask, eyes, nose, and mouth. Hand sanitizer will be provided at the conference. Perhaps consider bringing extra hand sanitizer with you for personal use.

Thank you for your cooperation with these protocols and requirements for the MAASTO conference to help keep you and your colleagues safer from COVID-19.

¹ If a negative test is not provided, The Illinois Department of Public Health will be on hand to conduct rapid test and precautionary PCR testing of all non-vaccinated and no proof of negative test attendees.

If the rapid test is negative, attendees are free to attend the conference with the PCR test pending unless they are symptomatic or have been identified as a close contact to someone who has tested positive for COVID.

Those who arrive without having been fully vaccinated or providing a negative test within 72 hours of arrival and receive a test on site will be responsible for all accommodations (hotel and travel) if they do test positive.