

Frequently Asked Questions: 2021 APHSA Hybrid Conferences

The following frequently asked questions (FAQ) will assist you in preparing for your visit with us at our upcoming conferences. This FAQ is for guidance only and may change based on public health guidelines as we get closer to the event (i.e., a “required” item may become an option and/or an “optional” item (not wearing a mask, if vaccinated) may become required). APHSA will follow the current public health guidelines of the host city/state where the conference is being held.

APHSA CHATBOT “ASK ABBY”

What is the chatbot “Ask Abby” for? Do I need to opt in to receive conference updates? How do I connect to the chatbot?

“Ask Abby” is the APHSA chatbot (“bot”) and replaces our conference app. A bot is “trained” to answer many questions specific to an event. The “Ask Abby” bot will have all the answers you need to navigate prior to and during the conference – from agenda, floor plans, connecting to attendees, local attractions, HealthShield (below) and much more. All attendees will, at minimum, need to engage with the bot for the daily Wellness Check. When the bot goes live for each event, attendees will be invited to join via a “text to” number for the bot. The bot will provide a prompt to attendees, and an attendee can opt in and out by following the instructions provided by the bot.

WELLNESS CHECK, CONTACT TRACING, COVID EXPOSURE

Will temperature screenings or other measures be in place at entrance doors and/or at registration during the event?

Yes, all attendees will be required to participate in a wellness check through the “HealthShield” in our conference chatbot by sending a text to activate the screening. There will be three CDC-compliant questions to answer to proceed into the meeting space (see below). Some venues may have additional temperature screenings at the door and/or on entry into the building. Any temperature readings of 100.4/38C or above will be denied entry. Attendees who have a temperature will be asked to return to their hotel room.

Questions in HealthShield

1. In the past 24 hours, have you had any signs or symptoms of fever, such as chills, sweats, feeling “feverish” or having a temperature that is elevated for you, or 100.4F or greater?
2. Do you have new onset or worsening of any of the following symptoms in the last 48 hours NOT related to allergies: Cough, shortness of breath, or chest tightness, sore throat or unexplained loss of taste/smell, diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting?
3. In the last 14 days, have you: Traveled outside of the United States, been in contact with anyone who has a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis, or been notified that you may have been exposed to COVID-19?

Is information collected for contact tracing?

Yes, all attendees are required to provide a cell phone number at the time of registration for contact tracing purposes and will also be used for event announcement push notifications. This information is not shared with any sponsors and/or other attendees.

Will COVID testing be available or required?

As we move out of COVID pandemic mode, many of you are curious regarding the COVID testing protocol. As of now, APHSA nor venues where we are meeting will not require attendees to show a negative test. However, for those attendees who desire to be tested prior to coming to or leaving an event, we are providing a way to have a NO-COST COVID test. Please use this link to [order your test kit](#). One will be sent to you with easy to use instructions. Take the test, send the kit back and obtain your results confidentially. All at NO-COST to you.”

Q: What should I do if I have a positive COVID result during the event or immediately following the event? Who should I contact?

A: Should you become exposed or have a positive COVID result during the event, please contact the designated event staff. The assigned event staff will begin the protocols for contact tracing. Prior to each event, attendees will be informed in a specific contact tracing protocols email who the assigned event staff is for that specific event.

Q: Do I need to provide proof of vaccination to attend the event?

A: We encourage people to be vaccinated; however, proof of vaccination is not required nor will APHSA be collecting any information relating to vaccinations from you to attend or participate in the event.

PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

Q: Will attendees be required to wear a mask or face covering?

A: Yes, in accordance with the CDC guidance, all attendees will be required wear masks at all indoor functions. Masks may be removed when eating or drinking. The registration desk and each check-in area will have a supply of masks should someone not have one with them.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING MEASURES

Q: Will entry and exits have a one-way entry to key areas (keynote, breakout sessions, and expo)?

A: Yes where possible, we plan to have one-way entry and exits in meeting rooms. We will maintain one-way line queuing with physical distancing noted.

Q: Will space layouts for the conference ensure physical and social distancing?

A: Yes, we will be following the guidelines from the CDC and the local jurisdiction to ensure proper room sets including one way entry/exit to rooms.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

Q: Will all breakout rooms and other event areas be cleaned between each session?

A: Yes, all session rooms and common areas will be cleaned between session times. There will also be hand sanitation stations placed in all high-traffic areas.

FOR THE ISM CONFERENCE ONLY

Q: Will EMTs or licensed health professionals be available onsite from setup to tear down?

A: Yes, per the convention center guidelines, an EMT is required for any event of 500+ persons. EMTs will be on-site for both set-up and tear down of the event.

Q: Will there be a dedicated area for attendees who are sick but cannot leave the venue?

A: Yes, there will be a triage area located with the EMT personnel and will include the necessities (water, juice, packaged snacks, etc.), a first-aid kit, and seating with social distancing.

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