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The Brand Promise

An effective brand is a promise—a promise of quality, credibility, and reliability in an increasingly competitive marketplace. Organizations, therefore, must diligently protect their brands. The American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA) does so by federally registering its trademarks and then protecting those marks. The registered trademark symbol is used to alert the public that the mark is registered and therefore to discourage others from illegally using the mark.

Benefits of trademark registration

Owning a federal trademark registration on the Principal Register provides several advantages, according to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), including the following:

- Public notice of your claim of ownership of the mark
- A legal presumption of your ownership of the mark and your exclusive right to use the mark nationwide on or in connection with the goods/services listed in the registration
- The ability to bring an action concerning the mark in federal court
- The right to use the federal registration symbol ®
- Listing in the United States Patent and Trademark Office’s online databases

Symbol placement

While there are no specific requirements regarding where the ® symbol should be placed relative to the mark, the International Trademark Association states the following:

[Trademark] symbols are most often placed adjacent to the mark in superscript (smaller, raised) form. EXAMPLE: COCA-COLA®. The ® need only appear with the first or most prominent mention of a mark in all documentation, such as press releases, articles, and company reports.

Repeating the ® each time the mark is used is not necessary. In addition, it is not necessary to use the ® after the credential in a name or signature.

Style guides

Most style guides recommend avoiding the use of brand names and replacing them with generic names. If a brand name must be used, capitalization is generally considered enough to show the proprietary nature of the mark. The Chicago Manual of Style states the following:

Although the symbols ® and ™ (for registered and unregistered trademarks, respectively) often accompany trademark names on product packaging and in promotional material, there is no legal requirement to use these symbols, and they should be omitted wherever possible. (If one of these symbols must be used at the end of a product name, it should appear before any period, comma, or other mark of punctuation.) Note also that some companies encourage the use of both the proper and the generic term in reference to their products ("Kleenex facial tissue," not just "Kleenex") and discourage turning product names into verbs, but these restrictions, while they may be followed in corporate documentation, are not legally binding.

Consequently, while the AAMA may follow its own organizational standard for branding and registered symbol use, it may encourage, though not insist, that other organizations do so.

Symbol usage guides

Adhering to the following basic usage rules will help the AAMA keep its brands from becoming diluted. In general, AAMA marks should be presented as they are registered. In addition, though not a matter of trademark protections, the AAMA follows style guides that advise against beginning sentences with acronyms and initialisms.

Trademarks

A trademark is a word, phrase, symbol or design, or a combination thereof, that identifies and distinguishes the source of the goods of one party from those of others.
Avoid using the trademark in a possessive form. Because the possessive form is not the registered form, it is best to avoid using the marks in a possessive sense.

Correct: The mission of the American Association of Medical Assistants is to …

Avoid: The American Association of Medical Assistants’ mission is to …

Correct: The mission of the AAMA is to …

Avoid: The AAMA’s mission is to …

Correct: The CMA (AAMA) shows a commitment to excellence by …

Correct: The CMA (AAMA) professional’s commitment to excellence is shown by …

Incorrect: The CMA (AAMA)’s commitment …

Incorrect: The CMA’s (AAMA) commitment …

Avoid: The CMA’s (AAMA)’ commitment …

Avoid: The CMAs’ (AAMA) commitment …

Avoid modifying the trademark using an abbreviation. The spelling of a trademark should reflect its registered form and should not be modified or abbreviated.

Correct: American Association of Medical Assistants

Incorrect: Amer Assn of Med Assists

Correct: Certified Medical Assistant

Incorrect: Cert Med Assist

Correct: CMA (AAMA)

Incorrect: CMA

Footnoted registration notification. An alternate way to designate a registered trademark is to place the ® or ™ (asterisk) or † (dagger) or ‡ (double dagger) symbol near the first use of the trademark. Then provide a footnote that describes the trademark. Sometimes companies list the trademarks used in the material along with the owner in the footer of their website or the bottom of a printed page.

Examples

© American Association of Medical Assistants, AAMA, Certified Medical Assistant, CMA (AAMA), and The CMA (AAMA): Health Care’s Most Versatile Professional are trademarks registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

© American Association of Medical Assistants, AAMA, Certified Medical Assistant, CMA (AAMA), and The CMA (AAMA): Health Care’s Most Versatile Professional. Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off.

® American Association of Medical Assistants, AAMA, Certified Medical Assistant, and CMA (AAMA) are trademarks registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

† American Association of Medical Assistants, AAMA, and CMA (AAMA) are trademarks registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

‡ Certified Medical Assistant and CMA (AAMA) are registered trademarks of the American Association of Medical Assistants.

Creating symbols

The following are ways to create symbols. When typing numbers, make sure Num Lock is on, hold down the indicated key, and use the number pad to type the numerals.

® Registration symbol

• Windows: Alt + 0174
• Microsoft Word:
  o Ctrl + Alt + R
  o From menus: Insert/Symbol/More Symbols/Special Characters and select ®
  o Autocorrect: File/Options/Proofing/Autocorrect Options and check “Replace text as you type.” Type (R) or (r). (Note: Type Ctrl + Z to undo formatting.)
  • Mac OS: Option + R
  • HTML: &reg; or &reg;

† Dagger symbol

• Windows: Alt + 0134
• Microsoft Word:
  o Ctrl + Alt + R
  o From menus: Insert/Symbol and select the † symbol.
  • Mac OS: Option + T
  • HTML: &Dagger; or &Dagger;

‡ Double dagger symbol

• Windows: Alt + 0135
• Microsoft Word:
  o Ctrl + Alt + R
  o From menus: Insert/Symbol and select the ‡ symbol.
  • Mac OS: Shift + Option + T
  • HTML: &Double Dagger; or &Double Dagger;

References


AAMA Logo Usage Policies
The Board of Trustees (BOT) of the American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA) is ever vigilant in maintaining the integrity of the AAMA name and logo and therefore cannot allow the use of the name and/or logo in any legally impermissible manner.

State society and local chapter affiliates are strictly prohibited from using the AAMA name and/or logo.

Please review your current documents to ensure any use of the AAMA logo is in compliance with association standards. If you have any questions regarding the use of the AAMA logo, contact the AAMA Marketing and Communications (MarCom) Department. You may also email a link or attachment or fax a copy of the document in question to the MarCom Department for review and approval.

AAMA Affiliate Logo Usage Policies
The AAMA BOT has approved state and chapter affiliate logos. These logos will create a professional image and consistent look for states and chapters nationwide.

Take advantage of these professionally designed logos. Order online or call or email the AAMA MarCom Department to have an electronic copy of your state or chapter logo emailed to you (only requests from current state and chapter leaders will be approved). AAMA affiliate stationery should be used by the affiliate’s current leaders to conduct the business of the state society or local chapter. It is strongly recommended that affiliates develop policies that require the approval of the leadership for any other use of its stationery and printed pieces.

AAMA MarCom Department
Phone: 800/228-2262
Fax: 312/899-1259
Email: MarCom@aama-ntl.org

If you have a logo already designed that you prefer to continue using, you may do so under the AAMA affiliate logo usage policies. However, because branding a consistent image for the association is an important charge of the AAMA, we encourage you to use the AAMA designed logo and graphic layout guides so that you can join in helping to present a unified image from state to state.

Thank you for your commitment to branding a professional image!
The state society logo uses the name of the state above the AAMA affiliate logo. The affiliate chapter logo uses the name of the chapter above the state society logo.

The affiliate logos cannot be altered from these configurations in any way. The only elements that change are the names of the specific state or chapter. Since the exact graphic design and font is critical to professional branding, affiliates must use the artwork provided by the AAMA MarCom Department. Affiliates must not attempt to design or re-create the logos, nor should they resize electronic copies disproportionately.

Color logo
For affiliate stationery, affiliates must use the color logo provided. The affiliate name is set in PMS 485, AAMA red. The rest of the logo is set in various shades of black.

One-color logo
States and chapters that do not have the budget to print the two-color logo may use the one-color logo. The affiliate may choose whatever color best complements the color(s) of the print piece.

Typography
The typography for the name of the affiliate is set in the serif typeface Tiepolo Black. The “An Affiliate of the American Association of Medical Assistants” is set in the official AAMA typeface. The use of these typefaces for the affiliate logos enhances the overall brand identity for the AAMA.

Applications
The affiliate logos should be used in all internal and external communications materials including, but not limited to stationery, envelopes, business cards, websites, newsletters, signage, and promotional materials (e.g., pens and T-shirts).
This stationery is recommended for all state society and local chapter business correspondence. Refer to the following page for a sample of the recommended layout instructions.

**Note:** The letterhead has been reduced in size. See measurements for actual sizes.

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**Letterhead**

**Size**
8.5“ x 11”

**Affiliate Logo Placement**
The affiliate logo is placed in the upper right-hand corner with an inset of 1 inch from the top and right-hand side.

**Color**
It is recommended that the two-color affiliate logo be used and the date, address, and body text on the stationery be printed in black.

**Affiliate Address Block**
Located at the bottom of the page, the font for the address block is 8 point Arial on 10 point leading. It should be in upper- and lowercase letters, flush left, ragged right. The information should be in the order shown.

**Primary Paper Stock**
It is recommended that a 24 lb. woven white sheet be used for all high-level business communications. Blank sheets of the stock should be used as second sheets.

**Secondary Paper Stock**
If budgets do not allow for the primary paper stock option, a plain white paper is acceptable.

It is recommended that these specifications be used. Additional graphic elements may not appear on this stationery item. The envelope and business cards discussed later in this section are also to be used with no modifications.
This is an example of the state affiliate letterhead. The purpose of this letter is to establish a uniform typing format for the American Association of Medical Assistants® throughout the organization. A common visual presentation of the AAMA to its members will reinforce the ultimate objective of creating a unified purpose. The recommended font to be used is 12 point Times New Roman.

The left margin is 1 1/2 inches and the top margin is 2 inches. The name of the addressee begins two line spaces below the date. The salutation begins two line spaces below the addressee. The body of the letter begins two line spaces below the salutation.

The right-hand margin is 1 inch. The letter is single-spaced, with double-spacing between paragraphs and no paragraph indentations. All of the same margins apply for second sheets, with the exception of the top margin. The top margin should be 1 inch for second sheets. Page numbers should begin on page 2 and be centered at the bottom of the page.

This sample letterhead has been reduced in size.

The complementary close is double-spaced below the last paragraph of the letter. Four spaces are used to accommodate the sender’s signature.

Sincerely,

Name, [credentials]  [Term years] ISMA [Volunteer Position Title]
This is an example of the chapter affiliate letterhead. The purpose of this letter is to establish a uniform typing format for the American Association of Medical Assistants® throughout the organization. A common visual presentation of the AAMA to its members will reinforce the ultimate objective of creating a unified purpose. The recommended font to be used is 12 point Times New Roman.

The left margin is 1 1/2 inches and the top margin is 2 inches. The name of the addressee begins two line spaces below the date. The salutation begins two line spaces below the addressee. The body of the letter begins two line spaces below the salutation.

The right-hand margin is 1 inch. The letter is single-spaced, with double-spacing between paragraphs and no paragraph indentations. All of the same margins apply for second sheets, with the exception of the top margin. The top margin should be 1 inch for second sheets. Page numbers should begin on page 2 and be centered at the bottom of the page.

This sample letterhead has been reduced in size.

The complementary close is double-spaced below the last paragraph of the letter. Four spaces are used to accommodate the sender’s signature.

Sincerely,

Name, [credentials]
[Term years] Aux Plaines Chapter [Volunteer Position Title]
**Business Card**

**Size**
3 1/2” x 2”

**Logo Placement**
The logo is placed in the upper left-hand corner with an inset of 1/8–1/4 inch from the top and left-hand side.

**Color**
It is recommended that the two-color affiliate logo be used and the name and contact information be printed in black.

**Address Block**
The font for the title, address, phone number(s), e-mail and Web address is 8 point Arial on a 10 point leading. It should be in upper- and lowercase letters, flush left, ragged right. The typeface used for the cardholder’s name is Arial Black. The name and title should be flush right, ragged left. Information should follow in order as shown on the example.

**Paper Stock**
The recommended stock is a white cover weight (e.g., 80 lb.) sheet.
The following page features sample layouts for #10 business envelopes.

**Note:** The envelope has been reduced in size. See measurements for actual sizes.

#10 Business Envelope

**Size**

#10 envelope

**Affiliate Logo Placement**

The affiliate logo is placed in the upper left-hand corner with an inset of 3/8 inch from the top and left-hand side.

**Color**

It is recommended that the two-color affiliate logo be used and the name and address be printed in black.

**Typography**

It is recommended that the typeface Arial be used. The top margin is 1 3/4 inches. The addressee information is single-spaced, flush left, 4 inches from the left edge of the envelope. Type should be ragged right, in capital letters as required by the U.S. Postal Service.

**Return Address Block**

The return address information prints black and should align with the left side of the affiliate logo. The font is 8 point Arial on a 10 point leading. It should be in upper- and lowercase letters, flush left, ragged right.

**Paper Stock**

It is recommended that a 24 lb. woven white sheet be used for all high-level business communications. If budgets do not allow for the recommended stock, a plain white stock is acceptable.
### Sample #10 Envelopes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3/8&quot;</th>
<th>1 3/4 inches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 inches</td>
<td>NAME OF ADDRESSEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TITLE OF ADDRESSEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COMPANY NAME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STREET ADDRESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CITY, STATE ZIP CODE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### ILLINOIS Society of Medical Assistants

Name, [credentials]
ISMA [Title]
Address
City, State ZIP Code

#### Aux Plaines

Aux Plaines Chapter [Title]
Address
City, State ZIP Code

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American Association of Medical Assistants® | AAMA® Branding and Logo Usage Guide
The name and/or logo of the American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA) are limited to the exclusive use by the AAMA and its grantees. State societies and local chapters affiliated with the AAMA may not use the AAMA name and/or logo unless it is in accordance with the specifications for affiliate use, which include the affiliate language (below) that must accompany the name and/or logo (hereafter designated as the affiliate AAMA name and/or logo).

State society and local chapter affiliates of the AAMA may use the affiliate AAMA name and/or logo on electronic and printed materials (but not on stationery, business cards, fundraising, and/or display items) provided that the AAMA name and/or logo is smaller and less prominent than the affiliate’s name and/or logo. The following is an example:

**Illinois Society of Medical Assistants**
Affiliate of the American Association of Medical Assistants

If no state or chapter logo appears in greater prominence on the page, then the affiliate AAMA logo may not be used. Affiliates must use the art (i.e., logo, font, and typeface) exactly as provided by the AAMA (i.e., no retyping, resizing, repositioning, or manipulating of the logo and name) and must not use the AAMA logo from any other source, including, but not limited to, the AAMA’s letterhead and website. Affiliates must contact the AAMA’s MarCom Department to request this logo and must have their usage approved. These measures must be taken to guard against legal improprieties and to ensure the integrity of the association’s image.

Affiliates are encouraged to use their state and/or chapter logos on all their printed projects.

All communications using the AAMA logo must be lawful, professionally appropriate, and consistent with AAMA policies. In addition, affiliates must avoid creating the impression that they speak for the AAMA as a whole, unless specifically authorized by the AAMA to do so.
Affiliate AAMA Logo Placement
Sample Newsletter Using Logo With Name at Side

State News

Natus estrena, que consulla diurnum, patusquam quam adem ta ina, se, ficervid det; Catus ad conia vocci publii facepsene que iae die mordii inati, nit der am in resicit, ses! Elius, nos ad res ero, norum nors vat percerma, uterum int. Gra orei factudentem re achu-

con sciocum consuam facervi licaris res porudem et C. O tum atili publiciam prit; Ca-

tium te rem, nentessi publina tandemq uitarebemum o et aperibus vericit anterni cupionf iricae clabem ocapero, virtium elus auctuus, die clerunihic fec oculiam auconveret viverum dit, quius in ducte consum tuus cus hae auciam niam que ident? Ma, qua morum aperive natquam mortiam termis con int, Ti. Si conloc tebenat us-cibus consunt? Nicit vigna, nonsum que ceremusquide no-
ties, desse pro nonte inti, Patis nihilinat, convenis vium in Itatus tere aucit, nihilin detisse nsulla orterat ilinatqui inum cum cerore te, contin ditus eor
essu llatien terbit, quam factem senimaxim intemque mihicul-
tili fir perfex senicaperi sendam ia? Vignatabus suliquod conum tus ad facrid in testili ssuntren-
dere caectum me publius sendetis; Cat fex nocate cortiurbis vividertem ero virmius, pre ductum post? La egeractame coenatum quem iacet anum ia L. Macemquid caur, quam silicus, C. Gratandachil consultumus? Nihilius nempl. Implicae interi fatum aves aurivis ad consiFu-giam re doluptatem et dolor-
rore maior sum, voluptatus as et volo dolumenit ut utatur as
Permission by the AAMA to use the CMA (AAMA) designation, initialism, and/or logo may be granted only to the following persons/entities, to use in the following ways:

### CMAs (AAMA)

Open permission is granted only to medical assistants who have been certified by the Certifying Board of the AAMA by sitting for and passing the CMA (AAMA) Certification/Recertification Examination to use the CMA (AAMA) designation and initialism and wear the CMA (AAMA) pin. All CMAs (AAMA) must have current status in order to use the CMA (AAMA) credential.

### State society and local chapter affiliates

The Certifying Board of the AAMA must remain ever watchful for the abuses of the CMA (AAMA) logo to ensure that an image of the highest professional standards is maintained. Therefore, state and chapter affiliates may not use the CMA (AAMA) logo for any purpose. State society and local chapter affiliates may not use the CMA (AAMA) designation, initialism, and/or logo on display and/or on fundraising items.

### Publishers

Publishers of reputable medical assisting textbooks (or other legitimate educational materials) may use the CMA (AAMA) designation, initialism, logo, and/or photo of the CMA (AAMA) pin if specifically granted written permission by the AAMA. The CMA (AAMA) designation, initialism, logo, and/or pin photo may be used only if it is printed for the purpose of, and in the context of, educating and informing the reader about the CMA (AAMA). The CMA (AAMA) designation, initialism, logo, and/or pin photo may not be used on the cover of the textbook, nor any place on or in the textbook, in a manner that could imply that the book is an AAMA publication, or that the AAMA is endorsing or approving the book or the materials for CMA (AAMA) certification.

The CMA (AAMA) designation, initialism, logo, and/or pin photo may be used as one allied health association designation, initialism, logo, and/or pin photos arranged as a montage on the cover of, or on a page of, a reputable medical assisting textbook (or other legitimate educational materials) in a manner that does not imply that the book is an AAMA publication or that the AAMA is endorsing or approving the book or the materials for CMA (AAMA) certification.

### Rights reserved

Because the AAMA holds the rights to the CMA (AAMA) designation, initialism, logo, and pin, the AAMA reserves the right to withdraw permission for the use of the CMA (AAMA) designation, initialism, logo, and pin at any time by written notice for any reason or for no reason at all.
Credential violations

Misuse of the credential abounds, including unauthorized use of the following:

- CMA (AAMA)®
- CMA
- Certified Medical Assistant®

Why should you care?
If you’ve worked hard to achieve your CMA (AAMA), you should care very much. When individuals, including medical assistants who are not CMA (AAMA) certified, represent themselves as holding a valid CMA (AAMA) credential, that puts your certification at risk. It offers a way for those who are not CMA (AAMA) to misrepresent themselves as CMAs (AAMA)—and, by extension, to damage public and workplace perception of the education and training achieved by true CMAs (AAMA).

What are the common misunderstandings?
A variety of individuals and organizations are often misinformed about offering or selling products representing the credential:

- Sellers of medical staff merchandise. Many professional merchandisers are aware that they cannot sell products with medical credentialing insignia. Those rights belong to the credentialing body. However, they can sell generic products, such as T-shirts with the term “medical assistant.”
- Employers. Employers of medical assistants sometimes believe that if their medical assistants have received a certificate—of any kind—they can use CMA as a credential or call such staff members Certified Medical Assistants. Not true! Such use is a misrepresentation and a matter of intellectual property law.
- Students. Some students who have graduated from a nonaccredited medical assisting program or any kind of medical assisting course from which they have earned some sort of certificate of completion believe they can use CMA as a credential or call themselves a Certified Medical Assistant. Not true! Only individuals who have graduated from a CAAHEP- or ABHES-accredited medical assisting program and have achieved the following are entitled to this privilege:
  1. Passed the CMA (AAMA) Certification Examination
  2. Holds a current CMA (AAMA) credential with a certification number issued by the AAMA
- State societies and local chapters. Most AAMA state and chapter leaders understand that they cannot use the credential on merchandise in any way other than what is permitted by the Certifying Board (CB) of the AAMA. But sometimes people misunderstand and may try to sell or give away such products. Doing so is an intellectual property violation. Affiliates do own their state and chapter logos and may use those as they wish, though they should only grant such permissions under the authorization of their governing body. They may also use the current AAMA Medical Assistants Recognition Week logo but only in connection with MARWeek. Use of past MARWeek logos is a violation and waters down the branding of the annual event.

- Individual CMAs (AAMA). Some CMAs (AAMA) erroneously believe that because they have achieved the credential, then they have a right to use it in any way. However, the CB of the AAMA authorizes current CMAs (AAMA) to use the credential in only two ways:
  1. Signatures: CMAs (AAMA) may use the credential for signatures and professional designations, such as on badges, résumés, letters, and email signatures.
  2. Pin: CMAs (AAMA) may wear the pin provided by the AAMA. They should never wear any other type of CMA pin from another source. Such pins are in violation and vary in appearance, which waters down the mark and weakens the brand.

How can you help?
You can help to protect the credential by letting us know when you see an instance of abuse. The CB offers a fillable PDF form for reporting. Go to Downloads on the AAMA website to find the Credential Violations Report Form under the Certification/Recertification by Exam section.

For more information
Any questions regarding the use of the CMA (AAMA) designation, initialism, logo, and/or pin may be directed to the Certification Department of the AAMA at Certification@aama-ntl.org.

IAS and NCCA Accreditation
The CMA (AAMA) Certification Program is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies, and the Certifying Board of the AAMA is the only medical assisting certification body that has been accredited under ISO 17024 International Standard through the International Accreditation Service (IAS).

Both agencies require appropriate use of professional credentials and logos. In fact, ISO 17024 specifically prohibits not only the use of the certification in such a manner as to bring the certification body into disrepute but any statement regarding the certification that the certification body considers misleading or unauthorized. Further, in terms of the credential and the logo, the Certifying Board must document the conditions for use and shall appropriately manage the rights for usage and representation.

Therefore, the Certifying Board established policies concerning the use of the CMA (AAMA) designation, initialism, and logo to ensure that your valuable certification is never compromised.