



Health and Safety Protocols for the 2021 AAMA Annual Conference

After more than a year of waiting, the American Association of Medical Assistants® (AAMA) looks forward to hosting you in-person for the 2021 AAMA Annual Conference at the Westin Galleria Houston.

Like many of you, the AAMA is closely following the changing landscape of the COVID-19 pandemic and watching Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance. Please know AAMA leadership is taking every precaution to protect the health and safety of our attendees, speakers, exhibitors, and staff and will continue to update you with any changes. Below are the updates and precautions on various fronts.

CDC Updates for Events

The CDC updated its [guidance](#) for fully vaccinated people on July 27, 2021. In response to the highly contagious and fast-spreading delta variant of the coronavirus, the CDC now recommends that even fully vaccinated people wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission. As seen on the CDC's [interactive, county-based map](#), this includes most of the United States and specifically Houston. The CDC's data tracker and map are updated daily.

Moreover, the [CDC](#) states that people both unvaccinated and fully vaccinated, people who are immunocompromised or at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19, and people who live with someone who fits that description should wear a mask in public indoor settings even if local transmission levels are not substantial. **The CDC also recommends that fully vaccinated people—as well as unvaccinated people—who have a known exposure to someone with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 get tested three to five days after exposure even if they are asymptomatic and wear a mask in public indoor settings for two weeks or until they receive a negative COVID-19 test result.**

Fully vaccinated people still do not need to wear a mask or socially distance in most outdoor settings in the United States—unless required by federal, state, local, or tribal laws or by a business. Neither Texas nor Houston have made such requirements.

The CDC's website outlines precautions that you can take before, during, and after you've traveled—both as a vaccinated or unvaccinated individual, and these precautions are updated regularly. Visit the CDC website to see the latest guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html>.

Following suit, the AAMA Board of Trustees and the Annual Conference Committee would suggest that attendees, as medical professionals, err on the side of caution and consider wearing a mask in public spaces of the hotel when AAMA meeting functions are in session.

Precautions from the Westin Galleria Houston

The Westin Galleria Houston is part of the Marriott family of hotels, and the health and safety of their guests is paramount. While the Marriott family of hotels is not currently requiring that vaccinated guests wear masks in public areas, Marriott is requiring its associates to have proper personal protective equipment (PPE) as part of their uniforms. Marriott also asks that unvaccinated attendees wear face masks and follow social distancing in hotel public spaces.

The Westin Galleria Houston has implemented a multipronged approach under Marriott's international "Commitment to Clean" standards. Here are some of the key changes you can expect from your stay at the Westin Galleria Houston.

Public Spaces

- Contactless ID and credit card terminals are used during the check-in and check-out experiences.
- Installed glass partitions are at merchant checkout points to limit direct contact.
- Dedicated hand sanitizing stations are at high customer touch points and in all public spaces and outlets, including the AAMA meeting space area.
- Signage is displayed promoting social distancing.
- Electrostatic spraying, an enhanced technology with hospital-grade disinfectants, is used to support the hotel's rigorous cleanliness protocols in the meeting spaces.
- Increased frequency of cleaning and disinfection takes place between sessions and in public spaces, particularly high traffic areas, restrooms, and elevators.
- Mobile check-in and service requests are delivered right to your door via the Marriott Bonvoy mobile app.

Guest Rooms

- Hand sanitizing wipes are in all guest rooms.
- Reduced associate room entry (i.e., housekeeping) takes place during guests' stay.

Restaurant Outlets

- Signage is displayed throughout Marriott hotels to remind guests to maintain social distancing and provide occupancy limits and seating capacities reductions in the restaurants in compliance with local and state mandates.
- Marriott food and beverage outlets offer digital touchless menus. Guests may inquire at the front desk about food and beverage with lobby pickup from local restaurants.

Additional Resources

For more information, visit the Westin Galleria Houston's and Marriott's websites and read Texas Governor Greg Abbott's July 29, 2021, executive order:

- <https://whattoexpect.marriott.com/hougw>
- <https://clean.marriott.com/>
- https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/press/EO-GA-38_continued_response_to_the_COVID-19_disaster_IMAGE_07-29-2021.pdf

Additional Precautions from the AAMA

- Larger ballrooms and distanced seating in continuing education rooms and elimination of high-contact classroom-style seating
- Distanced House of Delegates and Publishers Showcase



The AAMA asks that you, as a AAMA Annual Conference attendee, evaluate your health each morning before committing to join the day's activities and take personal precautions, such as washing and disinfecting your hands often; avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth; and covering coughs and sneezes.

The AAMA is committed to holding the 2021 AAMA Annual Conference safely and in-person. The AAMA will keep you informed of any changes to attendee protocols.