



AMERICAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

AAS Coronavirus Conference Policy

The mission of the AAS is to enhance and share humanity's scientific understanding of the universe as a diverse and inclusive astronomical community. This mission, combined with our values, guides us to ensure the most inclusive, welcoming, and safe environments at our scientific conferences.

Full and up-to-date coronavirus vaccination (primary + booster) has been repeatedly shown to be safe and highly effective at preventing serious illness and death from the coronavirus, and it adds significantly more protection than natural immunity alone. Although infection and re-infection are possible even in those fully vaccinated or recovered from infection, serious illness and death are significantly reduced through full and up-to-date vaccination compared to both the unvaccinated and those recovered from infection.

Given the overwhelming impact of the coronavirus on the world population, with more than 1,000,000 people dying from the virus in the U.S. alone, the AAS Board of Trustees believes that full and up-to-date vaccination, combined with prudent safety measures sensible for the time and place of the event, are the best way to deliver the safe environment due to all our attendees, exhibitors, vendors, and staff.

Therefore, the AAS will:

- 1) Require proof of full primary vaccination for any conference attendee, exhibitor, or staff member with a vaccine approved for use by the World Health Organization (WHO) (<https://covid19.trackvaccines.org/agency/who/>), and
- 2) Require proof of booster vaccination for any conference attendee, exhibitor, or staff member if the individual is eligible to receive a booster prior to the conference or event as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or equivalent health authority where the individual resides; **OR** require documented proof of recovery from COVID-19 infection and subsequent receipt of a booster dose prior to the conference or event, if eligible and recommended by the CDC or equivalent health authority where the individual resides (note that 1, above, still applies to those recovered from natural infection if they were unvaccinated prior to infection, which may limit conference participation for some individuals based on the timing of their infection and time constraints required for delivery of vaccines), and

- 3) Require, within the constraints of local regulations and employment law, the full and up-to-date vaccination of any local support staff.
- 4) Require full masking of all conference attendees, exhibitors, and staff (including local staff subject to the constraints of local regulations and employment law) at the meeting venue when local transmission of coronavirus is above 50 cumulative new cases per 100,000 in the 28 days leading up to the event.
- 5) Encourage conference attendees, exhibitors, and staff members to utilize personal coronavirus testing to ensure they may travel safely without risk of infecting others and to take appropriate measures (e.g., isolating, seeking medical care, notifying AAS staff or conference organizers of their health status) if they test positive before, during, or after the conference.
- 6) Implement recommended safety policies and procedures regarding conference space and layout; food and beverage delivery; and other relevant policies.
- 7) Adjust this policy as needed considering new data, regulations, CDC guidance, or emergence of new variants of the coronavirus.