



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **2020 AAHOA Convention Goes Virtual**

*Parts of Convention will be held in an exclusive online virtual event*

*New Florida Department of Health guidelines recommend against large gatherings*

ATLANTA, Ga., June 23 – AAHOA, the nation’s largest hotel owners association, announced that its 2020 Convention & Trade Show will not proceed in person due to new health and safety guidelines for combatting COVID-19 issued by the Florida Department of Health (DOH) on Saturday, June 20. The state is experiencing a significant spike in new COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations, and the DOH now recommends limiting recreational gatherings to fewer than fifty people. The AAHOA Convention & Trade Show is one of the largest gatherings of hotel owners, hospitality industry leaders, and vendors in the country. A recent survey of AAHOA members and vendor partners signaled that thousands were prepared to attend.

Parts of the convention will move to a virtual space as the association will present industry keynotes and panels, speeches by AAHOA leadership, and secure, online elections for AAHOA’s Board of Directors and Secretary. Details about registration and the virtual event will be made available through AAHOA.com in the coming days.

“We’ve remained optimistic that the 2020 AAHOA Convention & Trade Show could go on as planned in August. With over 400 vendors and thousands of members ready to attend and great support from the hospitality industry, this looked to be a bright spot after a challenging spring and summer for our industry. Unfortunately, the recent spike in new COVID-19 cases in Florida led the state’s public health officials to recommend more stringent measures to mitigate virus transmission, including new guidelines that limit the size of public gatherings. The safety and wellbeing of our members, employees, industry partners and vendors is our top priority. Given the change in circumstance, we must cancel our in-person convention and trade show,” said AAHOA President & CEO Cecil P. Staton.

“For over three decades, the AAHOA Convention & Trade Show has provided hoteliers from around the nation access to the best deals, education, and networking opportunities in our industry. While I will miss seeing our members and our industry and vendor partners, I am confident that AAHOA made the safest and most responsible decision for our association and for our members,” said AAHOA Chairman and 2020 Convention Chair Biran Patel. “Our members and vendor partners showed overwhelming enthusiasm for this year’s convention with thousands prepared to join us in Orlando. It is unfortunate that we cannot be together, but I am confident that AAHOA will deliver much of the value and excitement of our convention to our members through the virtual channels that we’ve all become more familiar with over the past few months.

It is my hope that we will be able to celebrate the return of our industry face to face at the 2021 AAHOA Convention & Trade Show in Dallas next spring” he added.

**About AAHOA:**

*AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the world. The over 19,500 AAHOA members own almost one in every two hotels in the United States. With billions of dollars in property assets and hundreds of thousands of employees, AAHOA members are core economic contributors in virtually every community. AAHOA is a proud defender of free enterprise and the foremost current-day example of realizing the American dream.*

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