

First-Time Attendee Conference Survival Guide

Welcome to the PASFAA 2026 conference! Attending your first conference can be both exciting and overwhelming. This guide is designed to help you navigate the event smoothly, maximize your learning, and build great connections.

1. Quick Navigation & Building Layout

Understanding the venue structure will keep you from getting lost and ensure you make it to your sessions on time. Here is the Map Reference: *The Penn Stater Map*

2. CVent Mobile & Desktop App Guide

The CVent app is your primary hub for managing your schedule, receiving real-time updates, and navigating the event.

- **Logging In**: Ensure you have access to your work email to receive your access code. If the code does not arrive promptly, please check your SPAM or Junk folder. You can also access the desktop version at https://cvent.me/dLrLYD.
- **Enable Notifications**: Turn on app notifications to stay informed about critical real-time schedule changes, room updates, and key announcements.

- **Find First-Timer Sessions**: Look for the ***"First-Timer Friendly"*** tag on sessions in CVent to quickly identify and track events recommended for first-time attendees.

3. Food & Refreshment Schedule

Staying energized throughout the day is key! Use this schedule to plan accordingly: PASFAA's Food Menu

4. Essential Packing & Daily Essentials Checklist

What to keep in your bag at all times:

- **Comfortable Shoes**: You will be walking and standing more than you expect!
- **Portable Phone Charger / Power Bank**: Outlets fill up fast in session rooms.
- **Notebook & Pens or Laptop/Tablet**: For taking notes.
- **Business Cards / Digital Contact Code**: To easily share contact info.
- **Light Layer / Jacket**: Conference rooms are notoriously chilly.
- **Cash for Charity Raffles**: Bring some cash if you'd like to participate in the conference charity raffles and fundraising activities!

5. Networking & Socializing Tips for First-Timers

- **The Elevator Pitch**: Prepare a 20-second summary of who you are and what you do.
- **Sit Next to Someone New**: At lunch or during general sessions, pick a table with people you don't know.
- **Ask Open-Ended Questions**: Try asking: *"What brought you to this conference?"* or *"Which session has been your favorite so far?"*
- **Connect Right Away**: Add new acquaintances on professional networks while the conversation is fresh.

6. Session Strategy: Making the Most of the Schedule

- **Plan Ahead**: Choose your must-attend sessions each morning, but leave room for flexibility.

- **Don't Be Afraid to Switch**: If a session isn't matching what you hoped, discreetly step out and pop into another track.
- **Take Actionable Notes**: Focus on 2-3 key takeaways per session rather than writing down every word.

7. Recommended Sessions & Events

Find First-Timer Sessions: Look for the ***"First-Timer Friendly"*** tag on sessions in CVent to quickly identify and track events recommended for first-time attendees.
When viewing the schedule in the app, select “More Filters” and you'll see the “First-Timer Friendly” tag under the “Tags” section.

8. Help Contact Info

Service	Contact Details
Conference Help Desk	Registration Area