

Housing Guidelines

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Endorsed by

International Association of Professional Congress Organisers **IAPCO**
International Exhibitors Association on Radiological Congresses **IEARC**
International Pharmaceutical Congress Advisory Association **IPCAA**

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Preamble

It is acknowledged by those involved in congress organisation that in many cases there is substantial lack of adequate hotel accommodation in many of the cities chosen to host medical meetings. It is also recognised that the development of an organised procedure to deal fairly with this issue is not straightforward. This document seeks to set out guidelines for the equitable resolution of the problem.

In addition there are a number of actions that can be taken to relieve some of the stress and anxiety associated with congress housing.

- The early appointment by the organising committee of a suitably qualified Professional Congress Organiser (PCO) before any agreements with hotels and sponsors are entered into.
- At the time of the preparation of the bid, the bidding organisation (via their PCO) should reserve at least 70-80% of their total estimated room requirements. These should be confirmed upon acceptance of the bid. The objective being to prevent third parties taking advantage of the rooming situation described here (leading to rapid price escalation) to the disadvantage of the congress and its sponsors.
- The Organising Committee and the PCO should state any by-laws which they have developed to deal with any demand for rooms which exceed the capacity of the host city.
- The PCO must be able to easily identify those invitees who receive multiple invitations and put in place a system to reduce the impact of this practice on accommodation to a minimum.

Deposits and Payments

Companies work with different methods with regard to settling accommodation costs, i.e, some companies pay all the accommodation globally and use their internal accounting system to cross-charge costs to affiliates; other companies avoid global payments and ask each guest to pay individually. Two alternative recommendations are therefore shown below:

A. Global settlement of all rooms by company

1st Deposit

The target would be that at the time of signing the contract (usually 12 months before the congress) a maximum of one night's room rate to guarantee booking.

2nd Deposit

The target would be that 3 months before the congress, the difference between the 1st deposit and 85% of eventual total costs.

Final payment

Usually 10 per cent of the total costs should be paid immediately after the close of the congress.

B. Individual payment by each guest

Deposit

At the time of signing the contract, but not more than 12 months before the congress, an interim deposit (e.i., 1 night's room rate) is paid by the company, via the PCO, to guarantee the booking.

Payment

Each guest pays for his full stay and extras directly to the hotel on the spot.

Return deposit

After the congress the deposit less costs of possible no-shows or non-settled bills is returned to the company.

Cancellations and no-shows

Sponsoring companies should commit well in advance to their block booking requirements.

PCOs should negotiate well in advance with hotels the best possible conditions regarding cancellation and re-funding policies.

The cancellation clauses should only reflect those imposed by the hotels.

No-Shows

Hotels are considered responsible for making every effort to pass cancelled rooms on to other clients. They should inform the original contract partner on the progress made.

If cancelled rooms are sold to other clients, the liability of the original partner is discharged without costs except for a handling fee.

Rooming lists

2 months prior to the congress: review and confirmation of number of rooms

1 month prior to congress: final rooming list

All reservations and changes are to be confirmed in writing.

If appropriate to the city when dealing with the housing bureau (PCO) ask to deal directly with hotels (with copy to the housing bureau/PCO) during the last 2 weeks before the congress; this cuts down errors and delays, and allows more flexibility with regard to extra dates, room types, and name changes.

Room rates

Any charge for a hotel room which is above the published rack rate is considered unacceptable.

The congress should make the published room rates at the congress transparent to sponsoring companies by issuing price bands for the different hotel categories.

Choice of rooms

Hotels should guarantee the contracted choice of rooms. In case of changes, only hotel rooms of the same quality are acceptable and not without written notification.

Sponsoring companies should not be required to commit to occupying hotel rooms for the full duration of the congress.

Publications



- IPCAA Information Pack
- IPCAA Code of Conduct
- IPCAA Medical Congress Guidelines
- IPCAA Newsletter



- How to apply for IAPCO membership
- List of IAPCO members
- IAPCO Code of Conduct
- Details of IAPCO training programme
- Why you need a PCO (brochure for clients)
- IAPCO - your professional association (brochure for potential members)
- Guidelines for Co-operation between the International Association, the National Organizing Committee and the PCO
- Guidelines for the International Scientific Programme Committee (incl. Guidelines on poster presentation)
- Planning a Conference Centre - the requirements of PCOs
- Prerequisites for a Conference Hotel
- Sponsorship Prospectus
- How to Chose the Right PCO?
- Meeting Industry Terminology



- Newsletter

Liaison Working Group
in the Healthcare Industry

- Joint publication:
Guidelines for Invitation to Industry Sponsorship Prospectus

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