

# navigating the technology

Whether you are brand new to online learning or have multiple virtual events under your belt, we want to make participating in MTA's 2021 Virtual Conference & Expo as easy as possible! A step-by-step approach to logging in to the event appears on page 5. Below are some more tips on navigating the Virtual Conference, tips for using Zoom and answers to our top tech questions!

Prefer a visual help guide? Visit [www.mta.events](http://www.mta.events) for a brief “How-to” video on logging in. Need a bit more guidance? Check out our “Conference Q&A” video with in-depth explanation on how to get started, what to expect and how to troubleshoot common issues. Still have questions? Call MTA at (517) 321-6467 and our member assistance team will be happy to help! Wait times for help during and immediately before the event may be significant. Please spend time well BEFORE the event (at least one to two days prior) to ensure that you do not have any problems accessing the Conference event website or with your computer, settings, etc.

## Navigating the Platform

After you log in, use the menu on the left side of your screen to access different areas of the event (mobile app users will see a grid of icons). We encourage you to log in early and click around! Key areas include:

- **Conference Sessions:** Contains the agenda with links to all the live sessions, including the hallway chat, educational breakouts, legislative plenary, and opening, general and closing sessions. Live sessions are streamed using Zoom; see below for additional details.
- **Schedule At-A-Glance:** Click here for a quick look at what's happening when.
- **Handouts:** Visit these tabs to download and print presentations and other resources for any (or all!) of the educational sessions.
- **Virtual Expo:** Learn more about municipal product and service providers eager to connect with you and demonstrate how their organizations can help you serve your community. Join live chats and say hello to familiar faces and new ones alike. You may even win a prize!
- **MTA Bookstore:** Browse our cyber shelves and find dozens of helpful publications, written specifically for Michigan township officials.
- **Help Desk:** Have questions? We've got answers. See a list of FAQs or visit our Live Chat to message an MTA staff member. Live Chat is available starting one hour prior to the first live session each day of the event.

## Joining the Sessions

- All sessions and hallway/live chats during the Conference use Zoom. You must have Zoom downloaded onto your computer or device to participate (Zoom is not required to watch recordings of the sessions after the event). Download it before the event at <https://zoom.us/download>. Already use Zoom? Be sure that you have installed any software updates.

- To join a session, simply click the “Join Live Stream” button, which will appear just below the session title in the “Conference Sessions” section about five minutes prior to each session. You may need to refresh your browser if your buttons do not appear automatically (put your cursor in the browser address and hit “Enter”).
- You'll then be prompted to “Open Zoom” to join the session. **Be sure to “Enable Computer Audio” so you can hear the presentation.** If you are placed into the “Waiting Room,” it means the session has not started yet. You will automatically be redirected into the class when the session starts. For most sessions, attendees will be muted and will not be visible on camera by default.
- To ask questions during sessions, locate the “chat” and “Q&A” buttons found at the bottom of your screen. The chat feed is where you'll find helpful tips and technical assistance and, in some sessions, presenters may respond to content questions here as well. All presenters will host a live question-and-answer time at the end of their session, using questions placed in the Q&A feed.

For a quick video tutorial on using Zoom, visit <http://bit.ly/MTAJoinZoom>. For more in-depth help using Zoom, visit <http://bit.ly/MTAZoom>. Want to try it out for yourself? Join a test meeting by going to <https://zoom.us/test>.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What if I don't have an email address on file with MTA, or I need to change my email address?

Every attendee must have an individual email address on file with MTA (the email address where you receive our emails) to access the Virtual Conference. You will use this email address to log in to the Conference event website. To add or update your email address, email [elsa@michigan-townships.org](mailto:elsa@michigan-townships.org) with your name, office or title, township/county and email address you wish to use for log in.

### What if my computer doesn't have a webcam or microphone?

You do NOT need a webcam or microphone to take part in our Virtual Conference. You can simply click on the sessions to watch and listen. While webcams and microphones may be used during certain "live chat" portions, like our Expo, they are not required, and you can simply use the chat feed to ask questions. You DO need to enable to your computer's audio so that you can hear the sessions (when you join the live sessions via Zoom, you will be asked if you want to connect or enable computer audio. The answer is YES!).

### What if I want to watch or listen on my smartphone, iPad or tablet?

Either download the "Google Chrome" browser on your phone or iPad/tablet to watch via the virtual Conference web link, or download the event app (search for "Socio Event App" in your app store/Google Play), and log in using your email address on file with MTA. (After installing the app, if you are not redirected, click on "Upcoming Events" or use the search function and search for "MTA 2021 Virtual Conference & Expo." Click on the icon for that event, then log in.) You will also need to have the most recent version of the Zoom app downloaded to your device.

Due to compatibility issues, we recommend setting up your account on a computer first as some users may also require additional Zoom instructions. Contact MTA for assistance.

### What if I get logged out?

If you accidentally log out or close your Internet browser, simply sign in again and rejoin your session by clicking the "Join Live Stream" link for the session you wish to view.

### What if I keep getting an error message when logging in?

If you receive an error message that your email address is not registered, first double-check the spelling and that you are using the email address on file with MTA, then try again. Still having trouble? Email [elsa@michigantownships.org](mailto:elsa@michigantownships.org) with your name, township and the email address you wish to use, and we will update your account.

### I didn't get the confirmation email, but I know I'm registered. Can I still log in?

Yes! Simply use the link <http://bit.ly/21MTACONF> and follow the directions on page 4.

### NEED ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE?

We're here to help! Click on the "Attendee Help Desk" tab for resources throughout the event, and a live chat starting one hour prior to the start of each day. You can also email [education@michigantownships.org](mailto:education@michigantownships.org) or call (517) 321-6467 and press 4. Our phone lines are very busy before and during the event, so email is often the fastest way to get a response. Wait times for tech troubleshooting help will increase closer to the event start times. We appreciate your patience.

USDA Rural Development  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Together, America Prospers

USDA Rural Development - Rural America's Partner in Prosperity

We are the lead Federal agency helping rural communities grow and prosper. We increase economic development and improve the quality of life in rural places and small towns.

We provide loans, grants and technical assistance to build critical infrastructure like broadband, water systems and hospitals. Our programs expand access to e-connectivity, electric and transportation infrastructure, support business growth, as well as healthcare, education, housing and other community essentials.

We stand ready to be your partner in prosperity for rural America. Contact us today to learn more:

USDA RD State Office  
3001 Coolidge Rd, Suite 200  
East Lansing, MI 48823  
517-324-5190

**We have more than 40 programs to support rural America**

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- Water and Environmental Programs
- Business and Cooperative Programs
- Single Family Housing Programs
- Multi-Family Housing Programs

Pere Marquette Township  
Conservation Park Master Plan

Canton Township  
Kopper Park



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