

Virginia Methodical Digest

Containing

“THE BOOK OF CONSTITUTIONS”

A DIGEST OF THE LAWS

including

CODIFIED GRAND MASTERS' DECISIONS

APPROVED BY THE GRAND LODGE

ANCIENT, FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS

of

THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

EDICTS

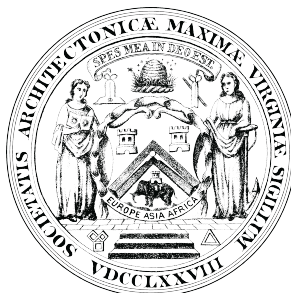
STANDING RESOLUTIONS

INDEX TO METHODICAL DIGEST

Originally Compiled by

JOHN DOVE, M.D.

Grand Secretary from 1835 to 1876



THIRTY-SIXTH EDITION

AMENDED AND CODIFIED

2025

PREFACE

This is the thirty-sixth Virginia Methodical Digest and Text Book that has been published, exclusive of reprints of one or more of the revisions that carried no change in the text, the year of publication being the only change.

The first was prepared by John K. Read, member of Richmond Randolph Lodge, No. 19, D. G. M. in 1790, adopted as "A Code of Laws for the Government of Grand Lodge and all the Lodges under its jurisdiction,"* Oct. 29, 1791, officially sanctioned by a circular letter April 1, 1792, by Thos. Matthews, the fifth Grand Master, by the title of "New Ahiman Rezon." This was the second attempt to print Laws for Grand Lodge. On April 29, 1790 a Committee was appointed to prepare a reprint of Ahiman Rezon as published by Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania; this Committee reported 30th October 1790 a copy of "work as printed by Thomas Nicolson," Treasurer of Richmond Lodge, No. 10, with "such innumerable typographical errors as to render the work unintelligible." Thomas Nicolson was paid thirty pounds "for the labor, provided the work be given up to the Grand Secretary to be burnt." No copy of this is known to exist.

The second publication was by James Henderson, P. M. Manchester, No. 14, adopted Dec. 11, 1817, with the title Methodical Digest, published in 1818.

The third was by Dr. John Dove, Grand Secretary (1835-1876), being a reprint of the Ahiman Rezon or Constitutions of Masonry, with additions to the Text Book section with title "Work of Lodges." None of these were given an Edition Number. Adopted Sept. 21, 1847.

The fourth, by John Dove, adopted Dec. 13, 1853 (printed 1854), was the first to carry an Edition Number-"Second Edition."

The fifth, by John Dove, in 1866 "Third Edition."

The sixth, by John Dove, adopted Nov. 16, 1876 (after Dr. Dove's death), "Fourth Edition."

Seventh, by Committee B. R. Wellford, Jr., P. G. M., Chairman, Feb., 1889, "Fifth Edition."

Eighth, by a Committee, S. McG. Fisher, Chairman, adopted Dec. 17, 1891, "Sixth Edition." (Printed 1892). Constitutions omitted.

Ninth, by William B. Isaacs, Grand Secretary, adopted Dec. 6, 1894, "Seventh Edition." (Printed 1895). Constitutions omitted.

Tenth, by Sol Cutchins, P. M. Joppa, No. 40 (Grand Master 1919), adopted Dec. 8, 1898; printed 1899 with Constitutions reestablished. "Eighth Edition."

Eleventh, by Sol Cutchings, adopted Feb. 14, 1907, "Ninth Edition."

Twelfth, by Dr. Joseph W. Eggleston, P. G. M., authorized Feb. 14, 1912. Mackey's twenty-five Landmarks substituted for Ahiman Rezon or Constitutions. "Tenth Edition."

Thirteenth, by Dr. Joseph W. Eggleston, P. G. M., Feb. 12, 1920 (an exact reprint was made in 1926).

Fourteenth, by Wm. Lee Davis, Deputy Grand Master (Grand Master 1928), adopted Feb. 9, 1927. Edition Number omitted, "Virginia Text Book, 1927."

*G.L. Proceedings, Vol, I, Page 79.

Fifteenth, 1930 issue. A reprint of the “1927 Edition,” with amendments to Laws added, and the position of the Text Book portion moved next to the Constitution with the Methodical Digest placed next to its index. “Thirteenth Edition.”

Sixteenth, by Thomas W. Hooper, Grand Master. A Manual of Work and Forms and Ceremonies is printed separately.

Seventeenth, by M. W. Thos. J. Traylor, in cooperation with M. W. William L. Davis, P. G. M. A reprint of Sixteenth edition, with amendments to February 15, 1940.

Eighteenth, M. W. William R. Weisiger, Grand Master, with amendments to February 10, 1943.

Nineteenth, M. W. John M. Stewart, Grand Master, with amendments to February 10, 1944. Annotated by R. W. Harold R. Stephenson, Grand Junior Warden.

Twentieth, M. W. Earl C. Laningham, Grand Master, with amendments to February 14, 1946.

Twenty-first, M. W. Harold Robert Stephenson, Grand Master, with amendments and annotation to February 13, 1947.

Twenty-second, M. W. Archer B. Gay, Grand Master, with amendments and annotations to February 14, 1957.

Twenty-third, M. W. Earl S. Wallace, Grand Master, with amendments and annotations to February 12, 1959.

Twenty-fourth, M. W. Charles M. Flintoff, Grand Master, with amendments and annotations to February 16, 1961.

Twenty-fifth, M. W. Edward H. Cann, Grand Master, with amendments and annotations to February 12, 1963.

Twenty-sixth, M. W. George E. Kidd, Grand Master, with amendments and annotations to February 16, 1967.

Twenty-seventh M. W. William T. Watkins, Grand Master, with annotations to February 11, 1970.

Twenty-eighth, M. W. Wilmer T. Trevillian, Grand Master, with amendments to February 10, 1972.

Twenty-ninth, M. W. Stewart Wilson Miner, Grand Master, with amendments to February 13, 1975.

Thirtieth, M. W. Spencer McMath Rogers, Grand Master with amendments to February 11, 1981 by M. W. Matthew L. Lacy, II, P. G. M.

Thirty-first, M. W. Oscar Wood Tate, Grand Master with amendments to February 12, 1986 by R. W. Richard V. Reedy and M. W. Matthew L. Lacy, II, P. G. M.

Thirty-second, M. W. Cabell Flournoy Cobbs, Grand Master with amendments and annotations to February 14, 1989 by M. W. Matthew L. Lacy, II, P. G. M.

Thirty-third, M. W. Werner Herman Morlock, Grand Master with amendments and annotations to February 10, 1993 by M. W. Matthew L. Lacy, II, P. G. M., M. W. William M. Johnson, P. G. M., M. W. Donald M. Robey, P. G. M. and R. W. Walter S. Downs, P. D. D. G. M.

Thirty-fourth, M. W. Alan Wayne Adkins, Grand Master with amendments and annotations to November 12, 1996 by M. W. Matthew L. Lacy, II, P. G. M. and R. W. Walter S. Downs, P. D. D. G. M.

Thirty-fifth, M. W. James Dean Cole, Grand Master with amendments and annotations to November 14, 2000 by M. W. Matthew L. Lacy, II, P. G. M. and R. W. M. Mickey Ander, P. D. D. G. M.

Thirty-sixth, M. W. William Earle Rorer, Jr., Grand Master with amendments and annotations to November 7, 2009 by R. W. Stephen A. Law, P. D. D. G. M. and R. W. Walter S. Downs, P. D. D. G. M.

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THE ORGANIZATION

OF THE

Grand Lodge of Virginia

At a Convention of Delegates from the Lodges below mentioned, met in the city of Williamsburg, on Tuesday, the 6th of May, 1777, in consequence of a petition of the Williamsburg Lodge, recommending that the Worshipful Masters and Wardens of the different Lodges, or their Deputies, should meet in Williamsburg, for the purpose of choosing a Grand Master for the State of Virginia:

Matthew Phripp, Esq., Deputy from the Norfolk Lodge; James Kemp, from the Kilwinning Port Royal Crosse Lodge; Duncan Rose, from the Blandford Lodge; William Waddill and John Rowsay, from the Williamsburg Lodge; and William Simmons and John Crawford, from the Cabin Point Royal Arch Lodge.

Matthew Phripp, Esq., being elected President, and James Kemp Clerk.

Brother Waddill laid the following letters before the Convention, which were directed to the Williamsburg Lodge: viz. A letter from the Fredericksburg Lodge, enclosing an order of that Lodge; a letter from the Botetourt Lodge; also a letter from Brother James Taylor, as Master of the Norfolk Lodge, which were severally read and referred to the Williamsburg Lodge for proper answers.

A motion being made, and it being the unanimous opinion of this Convention that a Grand Master ought to be chosen to preside over the Craft in this Commonwealth;

Resolved, That a Committee be appointed for drawing up reasons why a Grand Master should be chosen, consisting of Duncan Rose, William Waddill, James Kemp and John Crawford, and that their proceedings be laid before this Convention on Tuesday, the 13th May next, at 6 o'clock P.M.

Resolved, That this Convention be adjourned till Tuesday, the 13th May next.

Tuesday, 13th May, 1777.

The Convention met agreeably to adjournment.

Brother Phripp being absent upon business, Brother Rose was elected President.

Brother Waddill reported that the Committee, having met, had drawn up their reasons why they thought a Grand Master should be chosen, which he delivered to the Chair, and being read, it was agreed the same should be recorded, and are as follows:

To the Right Worshipful Master, Worshipful Wardens, and Worthy Brethren of the
Lodge:

In consequence of a proposition of the Williamsburg Lodge, inviting all the regular Lodges in Virginia to attend at their Lodge on the 5th* May, 1777, for the purpose of electing a Grand Master of Freemasons for the said Commonwealth of Virginia, five regular Lodges

appeared by deputation, on the 7th* instant: viz., Norfolk, Kilwinning Port Royal Crosse, Blandford, Williamsburg, and Cabin Point Royal Arch, and thence by adjournment to the 13th instant when taking the subject of the meeting into consideration, are unanimously of opinion that a Grand Master is requisite in this State, for the following reasons, founded on the principles of necessity, convenience and right: viz.,

First. We find that the Lodges in this State hold their Charters under five distinct and separate authorities: viz., the Grand Masters of England, Scotland, Ireland, Pennsylvania and America (the last at second hand); of course all have an equal right to appoint their Deputies, who can claim no authority over those not holding this principle. Therefore, any difference arising between Lodges holding differently cannot be settled for want of a common tribunal. For the same reason the Craft can never meet in Annual Communication, manifesting that brotherly love and affection, the distinguishing characteristic of Masonry from the beginning. Such divided and subdivided authority can never be productive to the real good of the Craft.

Secondly. We cannot discover, upon strict enquiry, that Masonry has ever derived any benefit from the foreign appointment of a Grand Master in this country, they being little known and as little acknowledged.

Thirdly. Being at this time without a Supreme, and so circumstanced as to render it impossible to have recourse to the Grand Lodge beyond the sea should any abuses creep into the Lodges or should any body of the brotherhood be desirous of forming a new Lodge, there is no settled authority to apply to. In this case we are of opinion that a Grand Lodge is a matter of necessity.

Fourthly and Lastly. We find upon record that the Grand Lodges of England, Scotland and Ireland founded their original right of election upon their sole authority, by mutual consent, distinct and separate from all foreign power whatever. We, therefore, conclude that we have, and ought to hold, the same rights and privileges that Masons in all times heretofore have confessedly enjoyed.

We, the Deputies aforesaid, for ourselves and our respective Lodges, humbly beseech and desire that you will be pleased to take the foregoing reasons into consideration, and that you will favor us with your attendance, by deputation, in this Lodge, for the purpose of electing a Grand Master for this State, on the 23d June next, at 10 o'clock A.M., for the first time, and determine — we having signified this our desire to all others, ever after at such time and place as the Grand Lodge shall our regular and loving Brethren, in like manner as we have done to you, hoping to see you on the day appointed; and we have caused these our proceedings to be signed by our loving Brother Duncan Rose, our President, and attested by our worthy Brother James Kemp, Secretary, this 13th May, A. L. 5777, A. D. 1777.

Resolved, That copies of the above be made out and sent to all the different Lodges in this State.

Resolved, That this Convention be adjourned till the 23d June next ensuing, at 10 o'clock A.M.

(Signed) Duncan Rose, *President*

Attest: James Kemp, *Secretary*

Truly recorded from the minutes.

W. Waddill, *G. Secretary*

*The first meeting is recorded as being held 6th of May — the dates “5th and 7th” appear to be in error in copying.

At a Convention of five Lodges, assembled at the Lodge Room in Williamsburg, on the 23d June, 1777, pursuant to an adjournment of Deputies of the 13th May last, and agreeably to the letter of invitation to the several regular Lodges of this State — present: Duncan Rose, Past Master, Blandford Lodge; James Kemp, Master's Degree, Kilwinning Port Royal Crosse Lodge; James Mercer, Master, and Benjamin Johnson, Secretary, Fredericksburg Lodge; William Finnie, Master, and William Waddill, P. M., Williamsburg Lodge; William Simmons, Master, and A. Campbell, Master's Degree, Cabin Point Royal Arch Lodge.

James Mercer being elected President, and James Kemp Secretary of this Convention, the several deputations being inspected, and letters of other Lodges, and also several Charters being read and considered.

This Convention is unanimously of opinion that a Grand Master for this State is essential to the prosperity and dignity of Masonry in general; but there not being a deputation from a majority of the Lodges therein, decline the choice of a Grand Master for the present — but, in order to prepare for the appointment of so essential an officer, in the amplest and most constituted mode by which scrupulous Masons may be reconciled to such a measure.

This Convention is unanimously of opinion that the most unexceptionable mode of procuring such an officer in this State agreeably to the Charters constituting the several Lodges therein, will be for the respective Lodges to solicit their respective Grand Masters for an appointment of some one worthy Mason, resident within this State, as Grand Master thereof, by which the several authorities of the different Grand Masters of England, Scotland, and Ireland, from which the several Lodges in this State hold their Charters, will be united in one and the same person; and, in order to continue such an officer in this State, this Convention is of opinion that such Charter of Appointment should contain authority to such Grand Master to resign the superiority of his Principal into the hands of the respective Lodges, in order that such Lodges, by their Deputies, may form a general Convention of the Craft, to elect a Grand Master and proper officers of a Grand Lodge in time to come.

And, in order to give dispatch to this business, this Convention begs leave to recommend to their constituents, and to the members of all other Lodges in this State, His Excellency General George Washington, as a proper person to fill the office of Grand Master for the same, and to whom the Charter of Appointment aforementioned be made.

But should the Lodges prefer any other person to this office, it is recommended that the respective Lodges do elect some other person, and notify the same to the Williamsburg Lodge, being most convenient, who are to examine such appointment, and declare thereupon, on whom the majority falls, to be nominal Grand Master of this State, for the purpose of accepting a Charter of Resignation as afore proposed, and notify the same to the respective Lodges in this State, in order to their solicitation afore recommended.

But in case such appointment is not made by the first day of June next, then this Convention are unanimously of opinion that the several Lodges of this State should proceed to elect such Grand Master, and to that end that the President of this Convention or, in case of his death, the Master of Williamsburg Lodge, for the time being, ought to invite a Convention of the Deputies of such Lodges to meet at such time and place as to him shall seem most convenient.

Ordered, That these proceedings be attested by James Kemp, Secretary, and copies transmitted to the several Lodges in this State who are requested to pay the earliest attention to the same.

Attest: James Kemp, *Secretary*

23d June, A. L. 5777, A. D. 1777.

At a Convention of the Craft, agreeably to an advertisement of the Right Worshipful James Mercer held on the 13th day of October, A. L. 5778 — present: Robert Andrews, Master; James M. Fontaine, S. W.; James Wilson, J. W.; Duncan Rose, T.; William Waddill, Secretary; D. Rose, Deputy, Blandford Lodge; Robert Andrews, W. Waddill, James M'Clurg and Jno. M. Galt, Williamsburg Lodge; James M. Fontaine and Christ'r: Pryor, Botetourt Lodge; James Willison, James Bolsches and John Crawford, Cabin Point R. A. Lodge.

On the question being put.

This Convention is unanimously of opinion that there is a sufficient number of Lodges present to proceed to business.

It is the opinion of this Convention that the power and authority of Cornelius Hartnett, Esq. as Deputy Grand Master of America does not now exist.

It is the opinion of this Convention that it is agreeable to the Constitutions of Masonry that all the regular chartered Lodges within this State should be subject to the Grand Master of said State.

The Right Worshipful Warner Lewis, Past Master of the Botetourt Lodge, being nominated to the office of Grand Master, declined the acceptance thereof — and then the Right Worshipful John Blair, Jr., Past Master of the Williamsburg Lodge, was nominated and unanimously elected — who was pleased to accept of the office.

(Signed) Robert Andrews, *M.*

Truly recorded from the minutes by

W. Waddill, *Secretary*

At a Convention of the Craft, agreeable to adjournment of the R. W. Robert Andrews, Master, held 13th October, A. D. 1778, A. L. 5778, now assembled for the purpose of installing the R. W. John Blair, Jr., Past Master of the Williamsburg Lodge, into the office of Grand Master of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Virginia, held in the Lodge room in Williamsburg, the 30th October, A. L. 5778 — present: Robert Andrews, Master; Dr. James Taylor, S. W.; John Crawford, J. W.; James Galt, Treasurer; Duncan Rose, Secretary, and forty-four members.

The Lodge being opened in due form, the Right Worshipful Master Robert Andrews, agreeably to the meeting, installed the Right Worshipful John Blair, Jr. in the office of Grand Master of this Commonwealth, when he was pleased to appoint the Right Worshipful and Rev. Robert Andrews, D. G. M.

At a Grand Lodge, held in the city of Richmond on the fourth day of October, A. D. 1784, A. L. 5784, the Most Worshipful G. M. John Blair having resigned the Chair, the R. W. James Mercer was elected Grand Master, who was pleased to appoint the R. W. Edmund Randolph, D. G. M.

At a Grand Lodge, held in the city of Richmond on the 27th October, A. D. 1786, A. L. 5786, the term of service of the present Grand Master expiring, Edmund Randolph, Esq., was unanimously elected Grand Master, installed and congratulated according to the ancient usage, who was pleased to appoint John Marshall, Esq., D. G. M.

At a half yearly Grand Communication, holden in the Mason's Hall, Richmond, 28th October, A. D. 1789, A. L. 5789, R. W. Alexander Montgomery, Esq., was elected Grand Master, who was pleased to appoint the Hon. Thomas Mathews, Esq., D. G. M.

At a half yearly Grand Communication, holden in the Mason's Hall in the city of Richmond, 28th October, A. L. 5790, the Most Worshipful A. Montgomery having resigned the Chair, the Hon. Thomas Matthews, Esq., was unanimously elected and installed Grand Master, who, resigning his right of nominating his Deputy, consigned the choice to the Lodge, who unanimously elected John K. Read, Deputy Grand Master. And on 28th October, A. L. 5791, in Grand Communication, the Hon. Thomas Matthews was reelected Grand Master; J. K. Read, Esq., Deputy Grand Master; Robert Brooke and William Bentley, Esqs., Grand Wardens.

GRAND MASTERS AND DEPUTY GRAND MASTERS FROM THE ORGANIZATION OF THE GRAND LODGE

<i>Grand Masters</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Deputy Grand Masters</i>
*John Blair	Oct. 13, 1778.....	*Rev. Robert Andrews
*James Mercer.....	Nov. 4, 1784	*Edmund Randolph
*Edmund Randolph.....	Oct. 27, 1786	*John Marshall
*Alex Montgomery	Oct. 28, 1789	*Thomas Mathews
*Thomas Mathews	Oct. 28, 1790	*John K. Read
*John Marshall	Oct. 28, 1793	*Robert Brooke
*Robert Brooke.....	Nov. 23, 1795.....	*William Bentley
*Benjamin Day	Nov. 27, 1797.....	*Nathaniel W. Price
*William Austin.....	Dec. 8, 1800.....	*Alexander McRae
*Alexander McRae	Dec. 14, 1801	*James Byrne
*James Byrne	Dec. 13, 1803	*William W. Hening
*William W. Hening	Dec. 10, 1805	*David Robertson
*David Robertson.....	Dec. 15, 1807	*John H. Foushee
*John H. Foushee.....	Dec. 12, 1809.....	*Robert Brough
*Solomon Jacobs	Dec. 11, 1810	*Robert Brough
*Robert Brough.....	Dec. 14, 1813	*Charles H. Graves
*Charles H. Graves.....	Dec. 12, 1815	*Archibald Magill
*Archibald Magill.....	Dec. 9, 1817.....	*John H. Purdie
*John H. Purdie	Dec. 14, 1819	*Samuel Jones
*Samuel Jones	Dec. 11, 1821	*Charles Yancey
*Charles Yancey	Dec. 10, 1822	*Mordecai Cooke
*Mordecai Cooke	Dec. 14, 1824.....	*D. W. Patteson
*D. W. Patteson.....	Dec. 12, 1826.....	*Robert G. Scott
*Robert G. Scott	Dec. 9, 1828.....	*George C. Dromgoole
*George C. Dromgoole	Dec. 14, 1830.....	*Wm. H. Fitzwhylsonn
*Wm. H. Fitzwhylsonn	Dec. 11, 1832.....	*William Mitchell, Jr.
*William Mitchell, Jr.....	Dec. 9, 1834.....	*Levi L. Stevenson
*Levi L. Stevenson	Dec. 13, 1836.....	*William A. Patteson
*William A. Patteson.....	Jan. 15, 1839	*Oscar Minor Crutchfield
*Oscar Minor Crutchfield	Dec. 15, 1840	*J. W. Smith
*J. W. Smith.....	Dec. 13, 1842	*John R. Purdie
*John R. Purdie	Dec. 10, 1844.....	*Sidney Smith Baxter
*Sidney Smith Baxter	Dec. 15, 1846.....	*Josiah Bigelow
*James Points	Dec. 12, 1848	*James Evans
*James Evans	Dec. 10, 1850.....	*Edmund P. Hunter
*Edmund P. Hunter	Dec. 14, 1852.....	*James A. Leitch

*Deceased.

<i>Grand Masters</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Deputy Grand Masters</i>
*James A. Leitch.....	Dec. 12, 1854.....	*John S. Caldwell
*John S. Caldwell.....	Dec. 9, 1856.....	*Powhatan B. Starke
*Powhatan B. Starke.....	Dec. 14, 1858.....	*John Robin McDaniel
*John Robin McDaniel.....	Dec. 13, 1859.....	*Lewis B. Williams
*Lewis B. Williams.....	Dec. 10, 1861.....	*William H. Harman
*William H. Harman.....	Dec. 15, 1863.....	*Edward H. Lane
*Edward H. Lane.....	Dec. 12, 1865.....	*William Terry
*William Terry.....	Dec. 10, 1867.....	Thomas Flint Owens
*Thomas Flint Owens.....	Dec. 14, 1869.....	*Wm. L. Maule
*Robert E. Withers.....	Dec. 12, 1871.....	*William H. Lambert
*William H. Lambert.....	Dec. 9, 1873.....	*Wm. B. Taliaferro
*Wm. B. Taliaferro.....	Dec. 15, 1874.....	*Richard Parker
*Richard Parker.....	Dec. 12, 1876.....	*B. R. Wellford, Jr.
*B. R. Wellford, Jr.....	Dec. 11, 1877.....	*Peyton S. Coles
*Peyton S. Coles.....	Dec. 9, 1879.....	*Reuben M. Page
*Reuben M. Page.....	Dec. 13, 1881.....	*Henry W. Murray
*Henry W. Murray.....	Dec. 11, 1883.....	*Francis H. Hill
*Francis H. Hill.....	Dec. 9, 1884.....	*Wm. F. Drinkard
*Wm. F. Drinkard.....	Dec. 14, 1886.....	*Ro. T. Craighill
*Ro. T. Craighill.....	Dec. 12, 1888.....	*George H. Jordan
*J. Howard Wayt.....	Dec. 10, 1890.....	*W. H. Pleasants
*W. H. Pleasants.....	Dec. 16, 1891.....	*Mann Page
*Mann Page.....	Dec. 6, 1893.....	*J. P. Fitzgerald
*J. P. Fitzgerald.....	Dec. 5, 1894.....	*Alfred R. Courtney
*Alfred R. Courtney.....	Dec. 2, 1896.....	*R. T. W. Duke, Jr.
*R. T. W. Duke, Jr.....	Dec. 8, 1897.....	*George W. Wright
*George W. Wright.....	Dec. 15, 1899.....	*H. O. Kerns
*H. O. Kerns.....	Dec. 5, 1900.....	*Ed. N. Eubank
*Ed. N. Eubank.....	Dec. 3, 1902.....	*Thos. N. Davis
*Thos. N. Davis.....	Dec. 2, 1903.....	*K. Kemper
*K. Kemper.....	Feb. 14, 1906.....	*S. J. Quinn
*S. J. Quinn.....	Feb. 13, 1907.....	*Jos. W. Eggleston
*Jos. W. Eggleston.....	Feb. 12, 1908.....	*J. W. Kellam
*Wm. B. McChesney.....	Feb. 9, 1910.....	*W. L. Andrews
*W. Luther Andrews.....	Feb. 15, 1912.....	*P. K. Bauman
*P. K. Bauman.....	Feb. 12, 1914.....	*J. B. Wood
*J. B. Wood.....	Feb. 11, 1915.....	*J. Alston Cabell
*J. Alston Cabell.....	Feb. 10, 1916.....	*H. K. Field
*H. K. Field.....	Feb. 15, 1917.....	*E. L. Cunningham
*E. L. Cunningham.....	Feb. 14, 1918.....	*Sol Cutchins
*Sol Cutchins.....	Feb. 13, 1919.....	*Wm. W. Galt

*Deceased.

<i>Grand Masters</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Deputy Grand Masters</i>
*Wm. W. Galt	Feb. 12, 1920	*John S. Bottimore
*John S. Bottimore	Feb. 17, 1921	*James H. Price
*James H. Price	Feb. 16, 1922	*Charles H. Callahan
*Charles H. Callahan	Feb. 14, 1924	*B. W. Beach
*B. W. Beach	Feb. 11, 1926	*James Bowman
*James Bowman	Feb. 10, 1927	*Wm. Lee Davis
*Wm. Lee Davis	Feb. 16, 1928	*Jno. T. Cochran
*Jno. T. Cochran	Feb. 13, 1929	*Frank T. McFaden
*Frank T. McFaden	Feb. 13, 1930	*A. M. Showalter
*A. M. Showalter	Feb. 12, 1931	*Harry K. Green
*Harry K. Green	Feb. 11, 1932	*James C. Padgett
*James C. Padgett	Feb. 16, 1933	*William Moseley Brown
*William Moseley Brown	Feb. 15, 1934	*Thomas W. Hooper
*Thomas W. Hooper	Feb. 14, 1935	*L. P. Harrell
*L. P. Harrell	Feb. 13, 1936	*C. Vernon Eddy
*C. Vernon Eddy	Feb. 11, 1937	*James N. Hillman
*James N. Hillman	Feb. 10, 1938	*Needham S. Turnbull, Jr.
*Needham S. Turnbull, Jr.	Feb. 16, 1939	*Thos. J. Traylor
*Thos. J. Traylor	Feb. 15, 1940	*C. D. Freeman
*C. D. Freeman	Feb. 13, 1941	*Robert S. Barrett
*Robert S. Barrett	Feb. 12, 1942	*Wm. Robert Weisiger
*Wm. Robert Weisiger	Feb. 11, 1943	*John M. Stewart
*John M. Stewart	Feb. 10, 1944	*Earl C. Laningham
*Earl C. Laningham	Feb. 13, 1945	*T. Penn Coleman
*T. Penn Coleman	Feb. 14, 1946	*Harold R. Stephenson
*Harold R. Stephenson	Feb. 13, 1947	*Charles E. Webber
*Charles E. Webber	Feb. 12, 1948	*A. Douglas Smith, Jr.
*A. Douglas Smith, Jr.	Feb. 10, 1949	*Enoch D. Flowers
*Enoch D. Flowers	Feb. 16, 1950	*Rudolph R. Cooke
*Rudolph R. Cooke	Feb. 15, 1951	*Charles M. Lankford, Jr.
*Charles M. Lankford, Jr.	Feb. 14, 1952	*Orvin M. Miles
*Orvin M. Miles	Feb. 12, 1953	*Hugh M. Reid
*Hugh M. Reid	Feb. 11, 1954	*William J. McMahon
*William J. McMahon	Feb. 10, 1955	*Willis V. Fentress
*Willis V. Fentress	Feb. 16, 1956	*Archer B. Gay
*Archer B. Gay	Feb. 14, 1957	*Earl S. Wallace
*Earl S. Wallace	Feb. 14, 1958	*Dexter S. Forbes
*Dexter S. Forbes	Feb. 12, 1959	*Charles M. Flintoff
*Charles M. Flintoff	Feb. 12, 1960	*Edmund C. Glover
*Edmund C. Glover	Feb. 16, 1961	*Edward H. Cann
*Edward H. Cann	Feb. 15, 1962	*John P. Stokes

*Deceased.

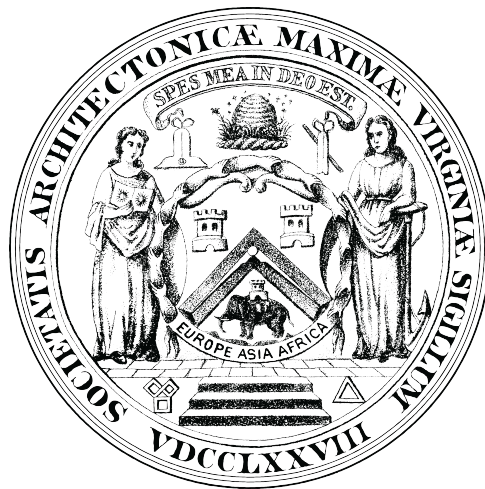
<i>Grand Masters</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Deputy Grand Masters</i>
*John P. Stokes.....	Feb. 12, 1963	*Millard H. Robbins
*Millard H. Robbins.....	Feb. 11, 1964	*Walter A. Porter
*Walter A. Porter.....	Feb. 9, 1965.....	*George E. Kidd
*George E. Kidd	Feb. 10, 1966	*H. Bruce Green
*H. Bruce Green	Feb. 16, 1967	*Jesse A. White
*Jesse A. White	Feb. 15, 1968	*Julian C. Roden
*Julian Cooke Roden	Feb. 13, 1969	*William Thomas Watkins
*William Thomas Watkins	Feb. 12, 1970	*Charles Franklin Shuler
*Charles Franklin Shuler	Feb. 10, 1971	*Wilmer Thomas Trevillian
*Wilmer Thomas Trevillian.....	Feb. 9, 1972.....	*William Conway Vaughan
*William Conway Vaughan	Feb. 12, 1973	*Stewart Wilson Miner
*Stewart Wilson Miner.....	Feb. 13, 1974	*Seymour Jonas Levy
*Seymour Jonas Levy	Feb. 12, 1975	*Lewis Douglas Delano
*Lewis Douglas Delano.....	Feb. 10, 1976	*John Wynn Laningham
*John Wynn Laningham	Feb. 15, 1977	*Robert Rhandle Kennedy, Jr.
*Robert Rhandle Kennedy, Jr.....	Feb. 15, 1978	*Matthew Lyle Lacy, II
*Matthew Lyle Lacy, II.....	Feb. 13, 1979	*Charles Edward Wallace
*Charles Edward Wallace	Feb. 12, 1980	*Spencer McMath Rogers
*Spencer McMath Rogers	Feb. 10, 1981	*Lloyd Ulrich Jefferson
*Lloyd Ulrich Jefferson.....	Feb. 9, 1982.....	*William Munford Johnson
*William Munford Johnson	Feb. 15, 1983	*Ralph Julian Wimmer
*Ralph Julian Wimmer	Feb. 14, 1984	*John Boyd Obenchain
*John Boyd Obenchain	Feb. 12, 1985	*Oscar Wood Tate
*Oscar Wood Tate	Feb. 11, 1986	*Donald Maynard Robey
*Donald Maynard Robey.....	Feb. 10, 1987	*Glover Hunter Jones, Jr.
*Glover Hunter Jones, Jr.	Feb. 9, 1988.....	*Cabell Flournoy Cobbs
*Cabell Flournoy Cobbs	Feb. 14, 1989	*George William Farley
*George William Farley	Feb. 13, 1990	William Franklin Perdue
William Franklin Perdue.....	Feb. 12, 1991	*John Robert Dean
*John Robert Dean.....	Feb. 11, 1992	*Werner Herman Morlock
*Werner Herman Morlock	Feb. 9, 1993.....	*Thomas Frederick May
*Thomas Frederick May	Mar. 5, 1994	
*Thomas Frederick May	Nov. 15, 1994.....	*James Bernard Wilkinson
*James Bernard Wilkinson	Nov. 14, 1995.....	Alan Wayne Adkins
Alan Wayne Adkins	Nov. 12, 1996.....	*Albert Hugh Tignor, Jr.
*Albert Hugh Tignor, Jr.	Nov. 11, 1997.....	George Harry Chapin
George Harry Chapin	Nov. 10, 1998.....	*William Lee Holliday
*William Lee Holliday	Nov. 9, 1999	James Dean Cole
James Dean Cole	Nov. 14, 2000.....	Clifford Alan Parker

*Deceased.

<i>Grand Masters</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Deputy Grand Masters</i>
Clifford Alan Parker.....	Nov. 10, 2001.....	Frederick Garrison Martin, III
Frederick Garrison Martin, III.....	Nov. 9, 2002	*James Milton Searce, Jr.
*James Milton Searce, Jr.....	Nov. 8, 2003	John Randall Quinley
John Randall Quinley.....	Nov. 6, 2004	Glover Hunter Jones, III
Glover Hunter Jones, III.....	Nov. 8, 2005	*James Stanley Johnson
George Bernard Dungan, Jr.....	Nov. 11, 2006.....	*Edmund Cohen
*Edmund Cohen	Nov. 10, 2007.....	Jeffery Eugene Hodges
Jeffery Eugene Hodges.....	Nov. 8, 2008	William Earle Rorer, Jr.
William Earle Rorer, Jr.....	Nov. 7, 2009	John Mason Chambliss, Jr.
John Mason Chambliss, Jr.....	Nov. 6, 2010	*William Talbott Ellison, Jr.
*William Talbott Ellison, Jr.	Nov. 12, 2011.....	Louis Kerford Campbell
Louis Kerford Campbell	Nov. 7, 2012	Wayne Sawyer Flora
Wayne Sawyer Flora	Nov. 9, 2013	Reese Edward Carroll, Jr.
Reese Edward Carroll, Jr.....	Nov. 8, 2014	James Edward Litten
James Edward Litten	Nov. 7, 2015	Vernon Stuart Cook
Vernon Stuart Cook.....	Nov. 12, 2016.....	Gary Wallace Taylor
Gary Wallace Taylor	Nov. 11, 2017.....	*William Edward Hershey, Jr.
*William Edward Hershey, Jr.....	Nov. 10, 2018.....	Douglas Vernon Jones
Douglas Vernon Jones.....	Nov. 9, 2019	James Winfield Golladay, Jr.
James Winfield Golladay, Jr.	Nov. 6, 2021	Donald Ellis Strehle
Donald Ellis Strehle	Nov. 12, 2022.....	Jack Kayle Lewis
Jack Kayle Lewis.....	Nov. 11, 2023.....	Gary Dwight Huffman
Gary Dwight Huffman.....	Nov. 9, 2024.....	Matthew Todd Szramoski
Matthew Todd Szramoski.....	Nov. 8, 2025.....	Gino Warren Williams

*Deceased.

The
Constitution of Masonry
COMMONLY CALLED
The Book of Constitutions



As Adopted by
THE GRAND LODGE,
ANCIENT, FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS,
of
THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
IN THE YEAR
1791

The Constitution of Masonry

COMMONLY CALLED

“THE BOOK OF CONSTITUTIONS”

AS ADOPTED BY

THE GRAND LODGE OF VIRGINIA IN 1791

CHAPTER I.

THE CONSTITUTION OF MASONRY, OR AHIMAN REZON.*

When during the reign of Athelstane, his brother Prince Edwin, of glorious memory, obtained from the King a Free Patent or Charter to Masons, imparting a “Power to regulate themselves, to amend what might happen amiss, and to hold a yearly communication in General Assembly,” he accordingly summoned all the Free and Accepted Masons in the realm to meet him in congregation at York who came and formed the Grand Lodge under him as their first Grand Master, Anno Domini 926. At this congregation Edwin required them to produce as far as practicable all old writings and records of the Craft containing the ancient Gothic Constitutions, and we have authentic record for the fact that they brought many old writings, some in Greek, some in Latin, some in French, and other languages, and from the contents thereof they framed the Constitutions of the English Lodges, and made a law for themselves to *preserve* and *observe* the same for all time to come.

This Constitution, we have good reason to believe, continued as the supreme law among the Fraternity, wheresoever dispersed, down to the year 1721, September 29, at which time, as the records show, his Grace John Montague, Duke of Montague, being Grand Master, and with the Grand Lodge, finding fault with all the copies of the old Gothic Constitutions, ordered Brother James Anderson, A. M., Grand Senior Warden, to digest the same in a new and better form and method; and at a session of the Grand Lodge on 27th December, 1721, said Grand Master Montague presiding, at the desire of the Grand Lodge, appointed fourteen learned Brothers to examine Brother Anderson's manuscript of the Constitution Book, and to make report. And this communication was made very interesting by the lectures of some *old* Masons.

In Grand Lodge at the Fountain Tavern in the Strand, in Ample Form, 25th March, 1722, his Grace the Duke of Montague presiding, Right Worshipful John Beal, M. D., Deputy Grand Master, Josiah Villeneau, Grand Senior Warden, and John Morrice as Grand Junior Warden, and the representative of twenty-four Lodges.

*This is the Masonic title for the Book of Constitutions. It is derived from three Hebrew words *ahim*, brothers, *manah*, to prepare, and *ratzon*, the will of law; and signifies therefore literally “the law of prepared brothers.” It contains the rules and regulations of the Order, an exposition of the duties of officers, the rights of members, the detail of ceremonies to be used on various occasions, such as consecrations, installations, funerals, etc.; and, in fine, a summary of all the fundamental principles of Masonry. To this book, reference is to be made in all cases, where the by-laws of the Grand Lodge are silent or not sufficiently explicit.—*Mackey's Lexicon of Freemasonry*.

The said committee of fourteen reported that they had perused Brother Anderson's manuscript of the history, charges, regulations, and Master's songs, and after some amendments, had approved of the same; upon which the Grand Lodge desired of the Most Worshipful Grand Master to order the following to be printed, which was accordingly done, and has, with very slight modifications, continued to this day as the Constitution and Regulations of Ancient Free and Accepted Masonry and under which the Grand Lodge of Virginia was instituted.

Worshipful Brother Albert G. Mackey, in his truly valuable Lexicon, gives the following impressive meaning to the Book of Constitutions:

“The book containing the system of laws and customs of the Fraternity; it is the same as the Ahiman Rezon. It is among the charges to a newly installed Master of a Lodge that he is to search the Book of Constitutions at all times, and cause it to be read in his Lodge, that none may pretend ignorance of the excellent precepts it contains. This book, guarded by the Tiler's sword, constitutes the emblem in the Master's degree intended to admonish the Mason that he should be guarded in all his words and actions, preserving unsullied the Masonic virtues of silence and circumspection which are inculcated in that book.”

And he might have added, with advantage to Masters of Lodges, that it is emblematic of the great HOUSEHOLD of Masonry in which the Initiates of the four quarters of the globe have an abiding and immediate interest by the selection of its members, and, therefore, have entrusted every Master of a Lodge with an officer called a Tiler, and armed him with a drawn sword to prevent the ingress of any unworthy member into the Institution of Masonry.

OF THE TEMPER AND QUALITIES REQUISITE IN THOSE WHO WOULD BE FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

Before we enter upon the duties of a Free Mason, in the various offices and stations to which he may be called in the Lodge, it is proper to give some account of the temper and qualities which are absolutely requisite, in all who aspire to partake of the sublime honors and advantages belonging to those who are initiated into the mysteries, and instructed in the art of Ancient Masonry.

SECTION I.

CONCERNING GOD AND RELIGION

Whosoever from love of knowledge, interest or curiosity, desires to be a Mason, is to know, that as his foundation and great cornerstone, he is to believe firmly in the Eternal God, and to pay that worship which is due to Him as the great Architect and Governor of the Universe. A Mason is also obliged by his tenure to observe the moral law, as a true *Noachida*;^{*}

^{*}Sons of Noah, the first name for Free Masons.

and if he rightly understands the Royal Art, he cannot tread in the irreligious paths of the unhappy libertine, or stupid atheist; nor, in any case, act against the great inward light of his own conscience.

He will likewise shun the gross errors of bigotry and superstition; making a due use of his own reason, according to that liberty wherewith a Mason is made free. For although in ancient times the Christian Masons were charged to comply with the usages of the countries where they sojourned or worked (being found in all nations, and of diverse religions and persuasions), yet it is now thought only expedient that the Brethren in general should only be charged to adhere to the essentials of religion, in which all men agree, leaving each Brother to his own private judgment as to particular modes and forms. Whence it follows that all Masons are to be good men and true—men of honor and honesty, by whatever religious names or persuasions distinguished; always following that golden precept, of “doing unto all men as (upon a change of conditions) they would that all men should do unto them.”

Thus, since Masons, by their tenure, must agree in the three great articles of *Noah*,** Masonry becomes the centre of union among the Brethren, and the happy means of conciliating and cementing into one body those who might otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance; thereby strengthening the divine obligations of religion and love.

SECTION II.

CONCERNING GOVERNMENT AND THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE

Whoever will be a true Mason, is further to know that by the rules of this art, his obligations as a subject and citizen will not be relaxed, but enforced. He is to be a lover of quiet, peaceable and obedient to the civil powers, which yield him protection, and are set over him where he resides or works, so far as they infringe not the limited bounds of reason and of religion. Nor can a real Craftsman ever be concerned in plots against the State, or be disrespectful to the magistracy; because the welfare of his country is his peculiar care.

But if any Brother by forgetting for a time the rules of his Craft, and listening to evil counsels, should unhappily fall into a contrary conduct, he is not to be countenanced in his crimes of rebellion against the State; but he forfeits all benefits of the Lodge, and his fellows would refuse to associate or converse with him in private while he continues in his crimes; that neither offence nor umbrage may be given to lawful government. But such a person is still considered as a Mason, his character as such being indefeasible; and hopes are to be entertained, that the rules of the Craft may again prevail with him, over every evil counsel and device that may have led him astray.

From this quiet and meek temper of true Masons, and their constant desire to adorn the countries where they reside with all useful arts, crafts, and improvements, they have been from the earliest ages, encouraged and protected by the wisest rulers of states and commonwealths; who have likewise thought it an honor to have their names enrolled among the Fraternity. And thus Masonry having always flourished most in the most flourishing and peaceable times of

**Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth.

every country, and having often suffered in a particular manner through the calamitous effects of war, bloodshed, and devastation, the Craftsmen are, therefore, the more strongly engaged to act agreeably to the rules of their art, in practicing peace and love, as far as possible, with all men.

SECTION III.

CONCERNING PRIVATE QUALITIES AND DUTIES

In regard to himself, whoever would be a Mason should know how to practice all the private virtues. He should avoid all manner of intemperance or excess, which might obstruct his performance of the laudable duties of his Craft, or lead him into crimes which would reflect dishonor on the Ancient Fraternity. He is to be industrious in his profession, and true to the Lord and Master he serves. He is to labor justly and not to eat any man's bread for nought, but to pay truly for his meat and drink. What leisure his labor allows, he is to employ in studying the arts and sciences with a diligent mind, that he may the better perform all his duties (as aforesaid) to his Creator, his country, his neighbor, and himself. For, in a few words, "to walk humbly in the sight of God, to do justice, and love mercy," are the truly indispensable characteristics of a real Free and Accepted Mason.

For the better attainment of these shining qualities he is to seek to acquire, as far as possible, the virtues of patience, meekness, self-denial, forbearance, and the like, which give him the command over himself, and enable him to govern his own family with affection, dignity, and prudence; at the same time checking every disposition injurious to the world, and promoting that love and service which Brethren of the same Lodge or household owe to each other. Therefore to afford succor to the distressed, to divide our bread with the industrious poor, and to put the misguided traveler into the way, are qualities inherent in the Craft, and suitable to its dignity. But though a Mason is never to shut his ear unkindly to the complaints of any of the human species, yet when a Brother is oppressed or suffers, he is in a more peculiar manner called to open his whole soul in love and compassion to him, and to relieve without prejudice, according to his capacity.

It is further necessary, that all who would be true Masons, should learn to abstain from malice and slander, evil-speaking, backbiting, unmannerly, scornful, provoking, reproachful and ungodly language; and that he should know how to obey those that are set over him, on account of their superior qualifications as Masons however they may be in worldly rank or station. For although Masonry divests no man of his temporal honors or titles, but on the contrary, highly respects them, yet in the Lodge, preeminence of virtue and knowledge in the Royal Art, is considered as the true fountain of all nobility, rule and government.

The last quality and virtue which I shall mention as absolutely requisite in all those who would be Masons, is that of **SECRECY**, which, indeed from its importance, ought to have held the first place in this chapter, if it had not been intended to treat of it more fully, as a conclusion of the whole.

So great stress is laid upon this particular virtue, that it is enforced among Masons under the strongest penalties and obligations, nor, in their esteem, is any man to be counted wise who is void of intellectual strength and ability to cover and conceal such honest secrets as

are committed to him, as well as his own more serious affairs. Both sacred and profane history teach us, that numerous virtuous attempts have failed of their intended scope and end through defect of secret concealment.

The ancient philosophers and wise men (the princes of whom were Masons) were so fully persuaded of the great virtue of secrecy, that it was the first lesson which they taught their pupils and followers. Thus in the school of Pythagoras we find it was a rule that every novitiate was to be silent for a time, and refrain from speaking, unless when a question was asked, to the end that the valuable secrets which he had to communicate might be the better preserved and valued. Lycurgus made a perpetual law, obliging every man to keep secret whatever was committed to him, unless it were to the injury of the State. And Cato, the Roman Censor, told his friends, that of three things (if ever he happened to be guilty) he always repented — viz: 1st. If he divulged a secret; 2nd. If he went on water when he might stay on dry land; and 3rd. If he suffered a day to pass without doing (or endeavoring to do) some good. We also read that the Persian law punished the betrayal of a secret more grievously than any other common crime.

Nor is the virtue of secrecy recommended only by the wisest heathen philosophers and law-givers, but likewise by the fathers of the church and by inspired writers.

St. Ambrose places the patient gift of silence among the principal foundations of virtue, and the wise King Solomon deems the man unworthy to reign, or have any rule over others, who cannot command himself and keep his own secrets. A discoverer of secrets, he deems infamous and a traitor; but him that conceals them, he accounts a faithful Brother. “A tale-bearer,” says he, “revealeth secrets; but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth them. Discover not a secret to another, lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away. He that keepeth his tongue, keepeth his own soul.” To the same purpose in the Book of Ecclesiasticus (Apocrypha, chapter xxvii, 16-21), we meet with the following beautiful passages, worthy to be forever recorded in the hearts of all Masons:

“Whosoever discovereth secrets, loseth his credit, and shall never find a friend to his mind. Love thy friend, and be faithful unto him; but if thou betrayest his secrets, follow no more after him: for as a man hath destroyed his enemy, so hath thou lost the love of thy neighbor. As one that letteth a bird go out of his hand, so hath thou let thy neighbor go, and shall not get him again. Follow after him no more, for he is too far off; he is as a roe escaped out of the snare. As for a wound, it may be bound up; and after reviling, there may be reconciliation; but he that betrayeth secrets is without hope.”

Thus far hath been spoken of the internal qualities and virtues required in all who aspire to the sublime honor and advantage of becoming Free and Accepted Masons. We speak next of the external qualities, and the steps to be pursued, in order to obtain initiation and admission into a duly warranted Lodge of Ancient York Masons.

Be it known to you, then, in the first place, that no person is capable of becoming a member of such Lodge, unless, in addition to the qualities and virtues mentioned above, or at least a disposition and capacity to seek and acquire them, he is also “free born, of mature and discreet age; of good report; of sufficient natural endowments, and the senses of a man; with an

estate, office, trade, occupation, or some visible way of acquiring an honest livelihood, and of working in his Craft, as become the members of this most ancient and honorable Fraternity, who ought not only to earn what is sufficient for themselves and families, but likewise something to spare for works of charity and for supporting the ancient grandeur and dignity of the Royal Craft. Every person desiring admission, must also be upright in body, not deformed or dismembered at the time of making, but of hale and entire limbs, as a man ought to be.”

Thus, you see, a strict, though private and impartial inquiry, will be made into your character and ability before you can be admitted into any Lodge; and by the rules of Masonry, no friend who may wish to propose you can show you any favor in this respect. But if you have a friend who is a Mason, and is every way satisfied in these points, his duty is described as follows, viz:

SECTION IV.

CONCERNING THE PROPOSING OF NEW MEMBERS IN A LODGE

Every person desirous of being made a Free Mason in any Lodge, shall be proposed by a member thereof, who shall give an account of the candidate's name, age, quality, title, trade, place of residence, description of his person, and other requisites as mentioned in the foregoing sections. And it is generally required that such proposal be also seconded by some one or more members, who likewise know something of the candidate. Such proposal shall also be made in Lodge hours,* at least one Lodge night before initiation, in order that the Brethren may have sufficient time and opportunity to make a strict inquiry into the morals, character, circumstances and connections of the candidate, for which purpose a special committee is sometimes appointed.

The Brother who proposes a candidate, shall at the same time deposit such a sum of money for him as the rules or by-laws of the Lodge may require, which is forfeited to the Lodge, if the candidate should not attend according to his proposal; but is to be returned to him, if he should not be approved or elected. In case he is elected, he is to pay (in addition to his deposit) such further sum as the laws of the Lodge may require, and clothe the Lodge, or make some other present, if his circumstances will admit, and the Brethren agree to accept the same for the benefit of the Craft, and of distressed members.

Having shown that a strict enquiry will be made into your character, justice requires that you should also be advised to be alike circumspect on your side, and to make enquiry into the character of the Lodge into which you desire admission: for there is no excellence without its opposite, and no true coin without counterfeits.

In the first place, then, you have a right before admission, to desire your friend to show you the warrant or dispensation by which the Lodge is held; which, if genuine, you will find to be an instrument printed or written upon parchment, and signed by some noble Grand Master, his Deputy and Grand Wardens, and Grand Secretary, sealed with the Grand Lodge Seal, constituting particular persons (therein named) as Master and Wardens, with full power to congregate and hold a Lodge at such place, and therein “make and admit Free Masons,

*That is, from March 25th to September 25th, between the hours of seven and ten; and from September 25th to March 25th, between the hours of six and nine.

according to the most ancient and honorable custom of the Royal Craft, in all ages and nations, throughout the known world; with full power and authority to nominate and choose their successors,” etc.

You may request the perusal of the by-laws, which being short, you may read in the presence of your friend or he will read to you, and show you also a list of the members of the Lodge, by all which, you will be the better able to judge whether you would choose to associate with them, and submit to conform to their rules. Being thus free to judge for yourself, you will not be liable to the dangers of deception, nor of having your pockets picked by impostors, and of perhaps being afterwards laughed at in the bargain; but, on the contrary, you will be admitted into a Society, where you will converse with men of honor and honesty, be exercised in all the offices of brotherly love, and be made acquainted with mysteries of which it is not lawful to speak further, or to reveal out of the Lodge.

CHAPTER II.

Having in the foregoing chapter treated as briefly as possible “of the temper and qualities required in those who wish to become Free and Accepted Masons,” I now proceed (according to our proposed method) to collect and digest, under proper heads, those general regulations (old as well as new), which more immediately concern operative Masons, avoiding prolixity, and the insertion of such old regulations as are explained or supplied by subsequent ones, universally received and now in force in all the Lodges.

SECTION I.

CONCERNING A LODGE AND ITS GOVERNMENT

1. A Lodge is a place in which Masons meet to work. The assembly or organized body of Masons is also called a Lodge (just as the word church is expressive both of the congregation of people and of the place in which they meet to worship), and is officered by a Master, Senior and Junior Warden, Secretary, Treasurer, Senior and Junior Deacon, Steward and Tiler.

2. The qualities of those who are to be admitted as members of a Lodge have been fully mentioned in the foregoing chapter, and it is only necessary to repeat here in general, that they are to be “men of good report, free born, of mature age,* hale and sound, not deformed or dismembered at the time of their making, and no women or eunuch.”

3. A Lodge ought to assemble for work at least once in each calendar month, and must consist of one Master, two Wardens—Senior and Junior—one Secretary, one Treasurer, and as many members as the Master and majority of the Lodge shall, from time to time, think proper, although more than forty or fifty (when they can attend regularly, as the wholesome rules of the Craft require), are generally found inconvenient for working to advantage; and, therefore, when a Lodge comes to be thus numerous, some of the ablest master workmen, and others under their direction, will obtain leave to separate and apply to the Grand Lodge for a warrant

*In this country they are not supposed to be mature before they are twenty-one years of age.

to work by themselves in order to further the advancement of the Craft, as the laws hereafter to be delivered will more particularly show. But such warrant cannot be granted to any number of Masons, nor can a new Lodge be formed unless there be among them three Master Masons, to be nominated and installed officers for governing and instructing the Brethren of such Lodge, and promoting them in due time according to their merit.

4. When men of eminent quality, learning, rank of wealth apply to be made and admitted into the Lodge, they are to be accepted with proper respect after due examination, for among such are often found those who afterwards prove good Lords or Founders of work, excellent officers and the ablest designers, to the great honor and strength of the Lodge. From among them also the Fraternity can generally have some honorable or learned Grand Master and other Grand Officers. But still these Brethren are equally subject to all the charges and regulations, except in what more immediately concerns operative Masons and their preferment, as well as the preferment of all other Masons and must be governed by the general rule; that is to say, founded upon real worth and personal merit, and not upon mere seniority, or any other particular rank or quality.

5. In order that due decorum may be observed while the Lodge is engaged in what is serious and solemn, and for the better preservation of secrecy and good harmony, a Brother well skilled in the Master's part, shall be appointed and paid for tiling the Lodge door during the time of communication.

6. Every Lodge shall keep a book containing their by-laws, the names of their members with a list of all the Lodges under the same Grand Lodge, and united in general communication, with the usual times and places of meeting in such Lodges, and such other necessary parts of their transactions as are proper to be written.

7. No Lodge shall make more than five new Brethren at one time, unless by dispensation from the Grand Master, or Deputy in his absence; nor shall any person be made or admitted a member of the Lodge without being proposed one month before (unless in particular cases), that due notice may be given to all the members to make the necessary enquiries into the candidate's character and connections, and that there may be such unanimity in the elections, and admission of members as the by-laws require, because unanimity is essential to the being of every Lodge; and, therefore, no member can be imposed on any Lodge, by any power whatever, without their consent; nor would it be proper to admit any Brother to work among them who has openly violated the sacred principles of Masonry, until undoubted proof of his reformation has been given, lest the harmony of the Lodge might be thereby disturbed, and not then, till a certificate is produced of his having paid all arrearages to that Lodge of which he was last a member; for should any Lodge admit a Brother, who is in arrears to any other Lodge, the Lodge where he is admitted make the debt their own.

8. As every Lodge has a right to keep itself an entire body, they ought never to interfere in the business of another Lodge. Therefore it would be highly improper in any Lodge to confer a degree on a Brother who is not of their household; for every Lodge ought to be competent to their own business, and are indubitably the best judges of the qualifications of their own members; and it does not follow as of course, that a Brother admitted among the household as an Apprentice, to learn the Royal Art, is capable of taking charge of that household, however skilled he may be in his apprenticeship; for there are many very necessary qualifications essential in those who are promoted to the higher orders.

9. As the officers of every Lodge are the proper representatives of their own Lodge in Grand Lodge, still for the sake of equal representation, the officers are allowed deputies, when unable to attend themselves, which deputies must be appointed by the majority of every particular Lodge when duly congregated, and their appointment shall be attested by the Secretary, with the Seal of their Lodge. And every Lodge has the privilege of instructing their Master and Wardens, or their deputies, for their conduct in the Grand Lodge and quarterly communication.

10. Every Brother ought to be a member of some Lodge, nor is it proper that any number of Brethren should withdraw or separate themselves from the Lodge in which they were made, or were afterwards admitted members, without a sufficient cause, although the right is an inherent one, and can never be restrained by any power whatever; still, such separation would be improper, unless the Lodge becomes too numerous for working; in which case a sufficient number may withdraw with the approbation of their Lodge, in order to form a new one. But before application can be made to the Grand Lodge, they shall pay all dues to their Lodge, and give them notice in writing that they intend to apply to the Grand Lodge for a warrant to form a new one. The Lodge then shall certify to the Grand Lodge the cause of the application, and at the same time shall recommend the most fitted Brethren as Master and Wardens, before they can obtain the warrant. And no set of Masons, without such warrant, shall ever take upon themselves to work together or form a new Lodge.

SECTION II.

OF THE ANCIENT MANNER OF CONSTITUTING A LODGE

A new Lodge, for avoiding many irregularities, should be solemnly constituted by the Grand Master, with his Deputy and Wardens; or in the Grand Master's absence, the Deputy acts for his Worship, the Senior Grand Warden as Deputy, the Junior Grand Warden as the Senior, and the present Master of a Lodge as the Junior, or if the Deputy is also absent, the Grand Master may depute either of his Grand Wardens, who can appoint others to act as Grand Wardens *pro tempore*.*

The Lodge being opened, and the candidates or new Master and Wardens being yet among the Fellowcrafts, the Grand Master shall ask his Deputy if he has examined them, and whether he finds the Master well skilled in the noble science and the Royal Art, and duly instructed in our mysteries. The Deputy answering in the affirmative, shall (by the Grand Master's order) take the candidate from amongst his fellows, and present him to the Grand Master, saying: "Most Worshipful Grand Master, the Brethren here desire to be formed into a regular Lodge, and I present my worthy Brother A. B. to be installed their Master, whom I

*When institutions are required, where the distance is so great as to render it impossible for the Grand Officers to attend, the Grand Master, or his Deputy, issues a written instrument, under his hand and private seal, to some worthy Brother, who has been properly installed Master of a Lodge, with full power to congregate, install, and constitute the petitioners.

If the Grand Master and Deputy is absent, or (through sickness) rendered incapable of acting, the Grand Wardens and Grand Secretary, jointly, may issue a like power under their hands and Seal of the Grand Lodge, provided the Grand Master has first signed a Warrant for holding such new Lodge: but the Grand Wardens must never issue any Masonical writings under their private seal or seals.

know to be of good morals and great skill, true and trusty, and a lover of the whole Fraternity, wheresoever dispersed over the face of the earth.”

Then the Grand Master, placing the candidate on his left hand and having asked and obtained the unanimous consent of the Brethren, shall say (after some other ceremonies and expressions, that cannot be written), “I constitute and form these good Brethren into a new regular Lodge, and appoint you, Brother A. B., the Master of it, not doubting of your capacity and care to preserve the cement of the Lodge.”

Upon this the Deputy, or some other Brother for him, shall rehearse the charge of a Master, and the Grand Master shall ask the candidate, saying: “Do you submit to these charges as Masters have done in all ages?” and the new Master signifying his cordial submission thereto, the Grand Master shall by certain significant ceremonies and ancient usage, install him and present him with this warrant, the Book of Constitutions, the Lodge book, and the instruments of his office, one after another, and after each of them, the Grand Master, his Deputy, or some Brother for him, shall rehearse the short and pithy charge, that is suitable to the thing presented.

Next, the members of this new Lodge, bowing altogether to the Grand Master, shall return to His Worship their thanks (according to the customs of Masters), and shall immediately do homage to their Master, and (as faithful Craftsmen) signify their promise of subjection and obedience to him, by usual congratulations.

The Deputy and Grand Wardens, and any other Brethren that are not members of this new Lodge, shall next congratulate the new Master; and he shall return his becoming acknowledgments, first to the Grand Master and Grand Officers, and to the rest in their order.

Then the Grand Master orders the new Master to enter immediately upon the exercise of his office, and calling forth his Senior Warden, a Fellowcraft* (Master Mason), presents him to the Grand Master for his Worship's approbation, and to the new Lodge for their consent; upon which the Senior or Junior Grand Warden, or some Brother for him, shall rehearse the charge of a Warden of a private Lodge, and he signifying his cordial submission thereto, the new Master shall present him singly, with the several instruments of his office, and in ancient manners and due form install him in his proper place.**

In like manner the new Master shall call forth his Junior Warden, who shall be a Master Mason, and present him (as above) to the Junior Grand Warden, or some other Brother in his stead; and he shall in the above manner be installed in his proper place; and the Brethren of his new Lodge shall signify their obedience to their new Wardens, by the usual congratulations due to Wardens.

The Grand Master then gives all the Brethren joy of the Master and Wardens and recommends harmony hoping their only contention will be a laudable emulation in cultivating the Royal Art, and the social virtues.

Then the Grand Secretary or some Brother for him (by the Grand Master's order), in the name of the Grand Lodge, declares and proclaims this new Lodge duly constituted No. _____. Upon which all the new Lodge together (after the custom of Masters), return their hearty and sincere thanks for the Honor of his constitution.

*They were called Fellowcrafts, because the Masons of old times never gave any man the title of Master Mason, until he had first passed the chair.

**The Grand Wardens generally install the Wardens at new Constitutions, as being best qualified for transacting such business.

The Grand Master also orders the Grand Secretary to register this new Lodge in the Grand Lodge book, and to notify the same to the other particular Lodges; and after some other ancient customs and demonstrations of joy and satisfaction, he orders the Senior Grand Warden to close the Lodge.

SECTION III.

CONCERNING THE BEHAVIOR OF MASONS AS MEMBERS OF A LODGE

1. Of Attendance.

Every Brother ought to belong to some regular Lodge, and should always appear therein properly clothed, and in clean and decent apparel, truly subjecting himself to all its by-laws and general regulations. He must attend all meetings, whether stated or emergent, when duly summoned unless he can offer to the Master and Wardens such plea of necessity for his absence as the said laws and regulations admit.

By the ancient rules and usages of Masonry (which are generally adopted among the by-laws of every Lodge), no plea was judged sufficient to excuse any absentee, unless he could satisfy the Lodge that he was sick, lame, in confinement, upwards of three miles from the places of meeting, or detained by some extraordinary and unforeseen necessity.

2. Of Working.

All Masons should work hard and honestly on working days, that they may live reputably, and appear in a decent and becoming manner on holidays. All the working hours appointed by law, or confirmed by custom, are to be strictly observed under the penalties and fines hereafter to be laid down. The hours of work are “from seven o'clock in the evening till ten, between the 25th of March and the 25th day of September, and from six till nine between the 25th of September and the 25th of March.”

The Master and Masons shall faithfully finish the Lord's work, whether task or journey; nor shall they take the work at task, which have been accustomed to journey.

None shall envy a Brother's prosperity, nor supplant or put him out of his work, if capable to finish it.

All Masons shall meekly receive their wages without murmuring or mutiny, nor desert the matter till the Lord's work is finished. They must avoid all unbecoming modes of expression, calling each other Brother and Fellow, both within and without the Lodge, with much courtesy as beseemeth. They shall instruct the younger Brothers to become bright and expert workmen, that the Lord's materials be not spoiled. But as Free and Accepted Masons, they must not allow cowans to work with them, nor even be themselves employed by cowans, without an urgent necessity. And when such necessity happens, they shall have a separate communication, and not suffer cowans to learn from them nor any laborer to be employed in the proper work of Free Masons.

3. Of Behavior in the Lodge while open.

While the Lodge is open for work, Masons must hold no private conversation or committees, without leave from the Master; nor talk of anything foreign or impertinent to the work in hand; nor interrupt the Master or Wardens, or any other Brother addressing himself to the chair; nor act ludicrously while the Lodge is engaged in what is serious and solemn; but every Brother shall pay due reverence to the Master, the Wardens, and all his Fellows, and put them to worship.

Every Brother found guilty of a fault, shall stand to the award of the Lodge, unless he appeals to the Grand Lodge; but if the Lord's work be hindered in the meanwhile, a particular reference may be made.

No private piques, or quarrels about nations, families, religions or politics, must be brought within the doors of the Lodge, as being directly contrary to the rules already laid down—Masons being declared of the oldest Catholic religion, universally acknowledged as such and of all nations, bound to live upon the square, level and plumb with each other, following the steps of their predecessors in cultivating the peace and harmony of the Lodge, without distinction of sect or political party.

4. Of Behavior after the Lodge is closed and before the Brethren depart home.

When the Lodge is closed, and the labors of the day, finished, the Brethren, before they depart home to their rest, may enjoy themselves with innocent mirth, enlivened and exalted with their own peculiar songs; and sublime pieces of music, treating one another according to ability, but avoiding all excess and compulsion, both in eating and drinking; considering each other in the hours both of labor and festivity as always free. And therefore, no Brother is to be hindered from going home when he pleases; for although after Lodge hours, Masons are as other men, yet if they should fall into excess, the blame, though unjustly, may be cast upon the Fraternity by the ignorant or envious world.

SECTION IV.

CONCERNING THE BEHAVIOR OF MASONS IN THEIR PRIVATE CHARACTER

1. When a number of Brethren happen to meet, without any Strangers among them, and not in a formal Lodge.

In such a case you are to salute each other in a courteous manner, as you are or may be instructed in the Lodge, calling each other Brother, and freely communicating hints of knowledge, but without disclosing secrets unless to those who have given long proof of their taciturnity and honor; and taking care in all your actions and conversations, that you are neither overseen or overheard of strangers. In this friendly intercourse, no Brother shall derogate from the respect due to another, were he not a Mason. For though all Masons, as Brothers, are upon

the level, yet Masonry (as was said in a former section) divests no man of the honors due to him before, or that may become due after he was made a Mason. On the contrary, it increases his respect, teaching us to add to all his other honors those which, as Masons, we cheerfully pay to an eminent Brother, distinguishing him above all of his rank and station, and serving him readily according to our ability.

2. When in presence of Strangers who are not Masons.

Before those who are not Masons, you must be cautious in your words, carriage, and motions; so that the most penetrating stranger shall not be able to discover what is not proper to be intimated. The impertinent and ensnaring questions or ignorant and idle discourse of those who seek to pry into the secrets and mysteries committed to you, must be prudently answered and managed, or the discourse wisely diverted to another subject, as your discretion and duty shall direct.

3. When at Home and in your Neighborhood.

Masons ought to be moral men, and fully qualified as is required in the foregoing sections and charges. Consequently they should be good husbands, good parents, good sons, and good neighbors, not staying too long from home, avoiding all excess injurious to themselves or families, and wise as to all affairs, both of their own household and of the Lodge, for certain reasons known to themselves.

4. Of behavior towards a Foreign Brother, or Stranger.

You are cautiously to examine a stranger or foreign Brother, as prudence and the rules of the Craft direct, that you may not be imposed upon by a pretender; and if you discover any one to be such, you are to reject him with scorn and shame, taking care to give him no hints; but such as are found to be true and faithful you are to respect as Brothers, according to what is directed above; relieving them, if in want, to your utmost power; or directing them how to find relief, and employing them, if you can, or else recommending them to employment.

5. Of Behavior behind a Brother's back as well as before his face.

Free and Accepted Masons have ever been charged to avoid all manner of slandering and backbiting of true and faithful Brethren, with all malice and unjust resentment, or talking disrespectfully of a Brother's person or performance. Nor must they suffer any others to spread unjust reproaches or calumnies against a Brother behind his back, nor to injure him in his fortune, occupation or character; but they shall defend such a Brother, and give him notice of any danger or injury wherewith he may be threatened, to enable him to escape the same, as far as is consistent with honor, prudence, and the safety of religion, morality, and the state, but no further.

*6. Concerning Differences and Law Suits, if any should
unhappily arise among Brethren.*

If a Brother do you an injury, or if you have any difference with him about any worldly or temporal business or interest, apply first to your own or his Lodge to have the matter in dispute adjusted by the Brethren. And if either party be not satisfied with the determination of the Lodge, an appeal may be carried to the Grand Lodge and you are never to enter into a law suit, till the matter can not be decided as above. And if it be a matter that wholly concerns Masonry, lawsuits are to be entirely avoided, and the good advice of prudent Brethren is to be followed, as they are the best referees of such differences.

But where referees are either impracticable or unsuccessful, and courts of law or equity must at last decide, you must still follow the general rules of Masonry already laid down, avoiding all wrath, malice, rancor and personal ill-will in carrying on a suit with a Brother, neither saying or doing anything to hinder the continuance or renewal of that brotherly love and friendship which are the glory and cement of this Ancient Fraternity.

Thus shall we show to all the world the benign influence of Masonry, as wise, true, and faithful Brethren before us have done from the beginning of time; and as all who shall follow us and would be thought worthy of that name will do, till architecture shall be dissolved, with the great fabric of the world, in the last general conflagration.

These charges, and such others as shall be given to you, in a way that cannot be written, you are strictly and conscientiously to observe; and that they may be the better observed, they should be read or made known to new Brethren at their making, and at other times, as the Master shall direct. Amen—So mote it be!

SECTION V.

OF THE MASTER OF A LODGE, HIS ELECTION, OFFICE, AND DUTY

No Brother can be Master of a Lodge till he has first served in the Office of Warden somewhere, unless in extraordinary cases, of when a new Lodge is to be formed, and no past or former Warden is to be found among the members. In such cases, three Master Masons, although they have served in no former offices (if they be well learned), may be constituted Master and Wardens of such new Lodge, or any Lodge in the like emergency.

The Master of every Lodge shall be chosen by ballot on the stated Lodge night each St. John's day; and the present Wardens (where they regularly are) shall be put up among the number of candidates for the chair, but shall then withdraw, while every free member (viz: all who have paid up their fines and dues, or have been excused payment according to law) gives his vote in favor of him whom he deems most worthy. Each free member hath one vote, and the Master two votes, where the number of votes happens to be equal, otherwise he has but one vote.

When the ballot is closed, and before it be examined, the former Master shall order the candidates to be brought back before him, and to take their seats again as Wardens. He shall then carefully examine the poll, and audibly declare him that hath the majority of votes, duly elected.

The Master-elect shall then nominate one for the Senior Warden's chair, and the present

Master and Brethren shall nominate one in opposition; both of whom shall withdraw till the ballot is closed as aforesaid, after which they shall be called before the Master, and the poll shall be examined and declared by him as above directed; in like manner shall the Lodge proceed in the choice of all the inferior officers, great care being taken that none be put in nomination for favor or affection, birth or fortune, exclusive of the consideration of real merit and ability, to fill his office for the honor and advancement of Masonry. No Mason chosen into any office can refuse to serve without incurring the penalties laid down in the chapter of fines, unless he has served in the same office before. The Master of every regular Lodge, thus duly elected and installed, has it in his special charge (as appurtenant to his office, duty and dignity) to see that the by-laws of his Lodge, as well as the general regulations from the Grand Lodge, be duly observed; that his Wardens discharge their office faithfully, and be examples of diligence and sobriety to the Craft; and true and exact minutes and entries of all proceedings be made and kept by the Secretary; that the Treasurer keep and render exact and just accounts at the stated times, according to the by-laws and orders of the Lodge; and in general, that all the goods and moneys belonging to the body be truly managed and dispensed, as if they were those of his own private household, according to the vote and direction of the majority, whether in charity or in working; and that no more wages than are just be given to any Fellow or Apprentice.

The Master shall further take care that no Apprentice or Fellow be taken into his house or Lodge, unless he has sufficient employment for him, and finds him to be the son of honest parents, a perfect youth, without maim or defect in body, of full age,* and otherwise duly qualified (according to the rules before laid down) for learning and understanding the sublime mysteries of the Art. Thus shall the Lords or Founders be well served, and the Craft not despised. Thus also shall such Apprentices when expert in the business of their apprenticeship, be admitted, upon further improvement, as Fellowcrafts; and in due time, be raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason, capable themselves to undertake the Lord's work; animated with the prospect of passing in future through all the higher honors of Masonry, viz: those of Wardens and Masters of their Lodges, and perhaps, at length, of Grand Wardens and Grand Masters of all the Lodges, according to their merit.

The Master of a particular Lodge has the right and authority of calling his Lodge, or congregating the members into a Chapter at pleasure, upon the application of any of the Brethren, and upon any emergency and occurrence, which in his judgment may require their meeting; and he is to fill the chair when present. It is likewise his duty, together with his Wardens, to attend the Grand Lodge at the quarterly communications, and also the Steward's Lodge, and such occasional or special Grand Communications as the good of the Craft may require, when duly summoned by the Grand Secretary, and within such reasonable distance of the place of holding the Grand Lodge as the laws of the same may have ascertained on that head. When in the Grand or Steward's Lodge, and at general as well as special communications, the Master and Wardens, or either of them, have full power and authority to represent their Lodge, and to transact all matters relative thereto, as well and as truly as if the whole body were there present.

The Master has the right of appointing some Brother (who is most commonly the

*See note, page 9.

Secretary of the Lodge) to keep the book of by-laws and other laws given to the Lodge by the proper authority; and in this book shall also be kept the names of all the members of the Lodge, and a list of all the Lodges within the said Grand Communication, with the usual times and places of their meeting.

The Master has also the particular right of preventing the removal of his Lodge from one house to another; and whereas several disputes have arisen on this head, and it hath been made a question in whom the power of removing a Lodge to any new place is invested, when the old place of meeting appears to be inconvenient, the following rule for this purpose hath been finally agreed upon and settled by lawful authority, viz:

“That no Lodge be removed without the Master's knowledge, nor any motion made for that purpose in the Lodge when he is absent. But if the Master be present, and a motion be made for moving the Lodge to some other more convenient place (within the district assigned in the warrant of such Lodge), and if the said motion be seconded and thirdded, the Master shall order summonses to every individual member of the Lodge, specifying the business and appointing a day for hearing and determining the affair, at least ten days before, and the determination shall be made by the majority. But if the Master is not of the majority, the Lodge shall not be removed, unless full two-thirds of the members present have voted for such removal.”

“But if the Master refuse to direct such summons to be issued (upon a motion duly made as aforesaid), then either of the Wardens may direct the same; and if the Master neglects to attend on the same day fixed, the Warden may preside in determining the affair in the manner above prescribed. But the Lodge shall not, in the Master's absence (on such special call), enter upon any other cause or business but what is particularly mentioned in the said summons.”

“If the Lodge is thus regularly ordered to be removed the Master or Warden shall send notice to the Grand Secretary that such removal may be notified and duly entered in the Grand Lodge books at the next Grand Lodge.”

“N. B. It is also a good method to have a certificate from the Grand Lodge that such removal hath been allowed, confirmed and duly registered in their books; which will be a business of course, unless an appeal be lodged against such removal by the minority, and then a hearing will be given to both parties in the Grand Lodge, before such removal be confirmed or registered in their books.”

The Master's duty in making and admitting new Brethren, and some other particular duties of his office, being such as cannot be written, save on the tablet of his heart, are, therefore, not to be looked for in this place, and, moreover, such duties as more particularly belong to the Master and other officers of Lodges, when they sit as members of the Grand Lodge, are to be learned from the chapter which treats of the Grand Lodge.

SECTION VI.

OF THE WARDENS OF A LODGE

1. None but Master Masons can be Wardens of a Lodge. The manner of their election, and several of their duties, being connected with the election and duties of the Master, have been mentioned in the former section.

2. The Senior Warden succeeds to all the duties of the Master, and fills the chair when he

is absent. Or if the Master goes abroad on business, resigns, demits or is deposed, the Senior Warden shall forthwith fill his place till the next stated time of election. And although it was formerly held, that in such cases the Master's authority ought to revert to the last Past Master who is present, yet it is now the settled rule that the authority devolves upon the Senior Warden, and in his absence upon the Junior Warden, even although a former Master be present. But the Wardens will generally waive this privilege in honor of any Past Master that may be present, and will call on him to take the chair, upon the presumption of his experience and skill in conducting the business of the Lodge. Nevertheless, such Past Master still derives his authority under the Senior Warden, and cannot act till he congregates the Lodge. If none of the officers be present, nor any former Master, to take the chair, the members according to seniority and merit, shall fill the places of the absent officers.

The business of the Wardens in the Lodge, is generally, to assist the Master in conducting the business thereof, and managing the Craft, in due order and form, when the Master is present, and in doing his duties (as above set forth) when he is necessarily absent; all which is to be learned from the foregoing section. Particular Lodges do likewise by their by-laws assign particular duties to their Wardens for their own better government; which such Lodges have a right to do—provided they transgress not the old landmarks, nor in any degree violate the true genius and spirit of Masonry.

SECTION VII.

OF THE SECRETARY OF A LODGE

The Secretary shall keep a regular register or record of all transactions and proceedings of the Lodge that are fit to be committed to writing, which shall be faithfully entered in the Lodge books, from the minutes taken in open Lodge, after being duly read, amended (if necessary) and approved of before the close of every meeting, in order that the said transaction, or authentic copies thereof, may be ready to be laid before the Grand Lodge once in every quarter if required.

In particular, the Secretary shall keep exact lists of all the members of the Lodge, with the times of admission of new members; and upon or near every St. John's day, shall prepare and send to the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge the list of members for the time being, which shall be signed not only by the newly installed officers of each Lodge, but also by the last past officers; to the intent that the Grand Secretary, and consequently the members of the Grand Lodge, may be at all times enabled to know the names and number of members in each Lodge under their jurisdiction, with the handwriting of the different officers, and to pay all due respect to the Brethren recommended or certified by them from time to time.

SECTION VIII.

OF THE TREASURER OF A LODGE

The Treasurer is to receive and keep exact accounts of all moneys raised or paid in, according to the rule of the advancement of the Lodge and benefit of the Brethren, and to pay all orders duly drawn upon him by the authority of the Lodge. He is to keep regular entries, both of

his receipts and disbursements, and to have his books and vouchers always ready for examination at such stated times as the by-laws require, or when specially called upon by order of the Master and Brethren.

The Treasurer is likewise to have the charge and custody of the chest, jewels and furniture of the Lodge, unless when the Master and majority may judge it more convenient to appoint some other responsible Brother for that particular duty, or when the officers of the Lodge may take the charge immediately upon themselves. The warrant in particular is in the charge and custody of the Master.

SECTION IX.

OF THE DEACONS OF A LODGE

To the Senior and Junior Deacons, with such assistance as may be necessary, is entrusted the examination of visitors. It is their province also to attend on the Master and Wardens and to act as their proxies in the active duties of the Lodge, such as the reception of candidates into the different degrees of Masonry, and in the immediate practice of our rites.

SECTION X.

OF THE TILER OF A LODGE

The Tiler shall be a Master Mason, of knowledge and experience, and generally a Brother is to be preferred to whom the fees of the office may be necessary and serviceable, on account of his particular circumstances. His duty is fixed by custom, and known to every Brother; and his chief charge is, not to admit any person (not even a member, while the Lodge is sitting) without the knowledge and consent of the presiding officer; neither shall he admit any visitor (that is not a member of a warranted Lodge) a second time, sojourners producing certificates excepted.

CHAPTER III.

SECTION I.

OF A GRAND LODGE

1. A Grand Lodge consists of the Masters and Wardens of all the regular Lodges in its jurisdiction, who, when duly assembled, have the inherent power to elect the Grand Officers, which are a Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Senior Warden, Grand Junior Warden, Grand Secretary, Grand Treasurer, Grand Senior Deacon, Grand Junior Deacon, Grand Pursuivant and Grand Tiler.

2. The Present Grand Officers, and all Past Grand Masters, and Past Grand Wardens and Past Masters of regular Lodges under the same Grand Jurisdiction, are members of the Grand Lodge; and to constitute a quorum for business it is necessary there should be the representatives

of five regular Lodges.

3. The Grand Lodge thus organized should meet at least once a year, and this meeting to be considered and denominated the Grand Annual Communication, or Convention of Deputies from each Lodge within its jurisdiction. The Grand Communication thus convened shall have a right at all times, and possess an inherent power and authority to make local ordinances and new regulations, as well as to amend old ones, for their own particular benefit, and the good of Masonry in general: provided always, that the ancient landmarks be carefully preserved, and that such regulations be first duly proposed in writing, for the consideration of all the members, and be finally regularly enacted by the consent of the majority. This has never been disputed, for the members of every Grand Lodge are the representatives of all the Fraternity in Communications, and are an absolute and independent body, with legislative authority: provided, as before observed, that the Grand Masonic Constitution be preserved inviolate; nor any of the landmarks removed. And at this Grand Lodge the different Lodges by their officers or deputies, shall attend with or without notice.

4. No Brother whatever can be admitted into the Grand Lodge, unless he is a member of some regular Lodge; nor does the appointment of a Brother to an office in the Grand Lodge prevent his holding an office in the private Lodge whereof he is a member.

5. A Brother of the rank of Master, having business, or whose attendance may be necessary in point of evidence or intelligence, or a Brother of eminence, upon motion, or leave asked and obtained, may be admitted into the Grand Lodge; but such Brother, being admitted shall not be allowed to vote, nor have a right to speak to any question or matter in debate, without leave, or unless desired to give his opinion, and then he is to confine himself to matters that concern Masonry only.

6. No Master or Warden of private Lodges, or other members of the Grand Lodge, shall ever attend the same, without the jewels which he ought to wear in his own private Lodge, except for some good and sufficient reason to be allowed in the Grand Lodge. And when any officer of a private Lodge, from such urgent business as may necessarily plead his excuse cannot personally attend the Grand Lodge, his own Lodge may nominate and appoint any one of their members (being a Master Mason), with his jewels and clothing, to supply his place, and support the honor of his Lodge in the Grand Lodge: provided such deputy has a certificate of his appointment, with the Seal of the Lodge, and attested by the Secretary.

SECTION II.

IN CASE OF THE ABSENCE OF ANY OF THE GRAND OFFICERS

1. If the Grand Master is absent at any meeting of the Grand Lodge, either stated or occasional, the Deputy Grand Master is to supply his place; if the Deputy Grand Master be likewise absent, the Grand Senior Warden takes the chair; and in his absence, the Grand Junior Warden: and although by old regulations, the Master or Past Master of any private Lodge, who has been longest a Mason, had the preference of the chair in the absence of the Grand Officers, yet now the rule is, that the Master of the senior private Lodge who may be present, is to take the chair. Nevertheless, any of them may waive the privilege, to do honor to a Past Grand Officer, or any eminent Brother and Past Master. In all cases, the Brother filling the chair may

nominate his deputy, and call on any eminent Brethren to fill the vacancies of the Grand Lodge *pro tem*.

2. The Grand Master at all times, when he finds he must necessarily be absent from any Lodge, still has the privilege of giving a special commission, under his hand and Seal of office, to any eminent Brother, being a member of the Grand Lodge, to supply his place, if the Deputy Grand Master should not attend, or be necessarily absent.

3. In case of the death of a Grand Master, or any other Grand Officer, the same order of succession and precedence shall take place, as is above set forth, till the next election; when they shall be regularly chosen, and duly installed.

SECTION III.

OF THE PARTICULAR BUSINESS

1. The business of the Grand Lodge at their stated Grand Annual Communications is seriously to discourse of, and sedately to consider, transact and settle all matters that concern the prosperity of the Craft, and the Fraternity in general, or private Lodges, and single Brothers in particular. Here, therefore, are all differences to be seriously considered and decided, that cannot be made up and accommodated privately nor by particular Lodges. And if any Brother thinks himself aggrieved by the decision of any private Lodge, he may, by lodging an appeal in writing with the Grand Secretary (who shall summon the parties and their witnesses to appear at the next ensuing Grand Annual Communication), have the matter reheard, and finally determined upon; and the Grand Lodge may adjourn from day to day, until the business is finished. And the Grand Master, or presiding officer, when the Lodge is regularly opened, shall communicate to the Lodge the nature of whatever business is to come before them; and for the sake of admitting witnesses, it is esteemed most proper to try all matters of controversy in a committee of the Lodge; and in order thereto, the presiding officer shall direct a committee of the whole Lodge to meet in the Lodge room on the succeeding day for the aforesaid purposes; who shall examine and determine upon all and every kind of business that may be referred to them, and make a report of their proceedings to the Grand Lodge on the same evening, for their ratification.

2. In hearing all complaints and punishing delinquents, according to the laws of the Craft, they are instructed to adhere most religiously to the old Hebrew regulation, viz: "If a complaint be made against a Brother by another Brother, and he be found guilty, he shall stand to the determination of the Lodge; but if the accuser or complainant cannot support his charge, and it should appear to the Lodge to be groundless, being the result of hatred, malice, or some unwarrantable passion, he shall incur such penalty as the accused would have done, had he been duly convicted."

3. All matters of controversy before the Grand Lodge shall be determined by a majority of votes; that is to say, the Grand Master or presiding officer having one vote (unless in case of an equal division, and then two), the Deputy Grand Master one vote; the other Grand Officers for the time being, collectively, one vote; the Past Grand Officers for the time being, collectively, one vote; and the officers, or their deputies, of each particular Lodge, collectively, one vote.

4. The Grand Master, or presiding officer, shall for the sake of conveniency in voting,

direct every collective body to sit together, that when a question is before the Lodge, they may consult among themselves how the vote shall be given, and when the question is put, either by holding up of hands, or otherwise, one of those collective bodies shall vote for the whole, and that duty should fall on the senior Mason.

SECTION IV.

OF PARTICULAR REGULATIONS

1. The election of the officers of the Grand Lodge shall be annual, the Grand Master shall be elected by a majority of ballots, who shall have the privilege of appointing his Deputy. The other Grand Officers shall also be elected by a majority of ballots agreeably to the manner of voting laid down in the succeeding section; all of which elections shall be for one year, and until a new election shall take place.

2. Whenever application is made to the Grand Lodge, by a sufficient number of Brethren, for a Charter to form a new Lodge, the Grand Lodge shall not grant the Charter, unless the skill of the petitioners as Masons, and their good conduct as men, will justify it. Great regard should always be had to the morals of such Brethren as are entrusted with the important charge; therefore it is highly essential, when the petitioners are not sufficiently known to the members of the Grand Lodge, that a certificate of their Masonic and moral character, from two or more eminent Brethren, showing them to be Master Masons regularly made, should accompany the petition; this being done, the Grand Lodge shall then issue a Charter authorizing the petitioners, with such other Brethren as they may call to their assistance, to enter Apprentices, pass Fellowcrafts, and raise Master Masons, agreeably to the ancient customs.

3. When a Lodge becomes too numerous for working together, and application is made by some of the members for leave to separate, and form a new Lodge, the cause of their separation should be certified by their Lodge, to the annual stated Grand Communication, at the same time recommending the most proper and fitting Brethren as officers of the new Lodge, before a Charter shall issue.

4. The Grand Master, or in his absence out of the state, his Deputy, or either of the intermediate Grand Officers, may grant a dispensation for forming a new Lodge, to continue in force until the next stated Grand Communication, provided the petitioners comply with the requisition in the preceding article; which dispensation shall have the Seal of the Grand Lodge, attested by the Grand Secretary, and entered by him in the book of proceedings—the fee for which shall be _____ to the Grand Secretary. Still it shall rest with the Grand Lodge at their next Grand Communication, whether a Charter shall issue.

5. Whenever a Charter shall issue from the Grand Lodge, which can be done at no other time than in Grand Communication, they shall direct a dispensation to issue, signed by the presiding officer, with the Seal of the Grand Lodge, and attested by the Grand Secretary, directed to some Past Master, with powers to appoint his Wardens, to install the officers of the new usages; but the Master of his new Lodge shall receive his degree in the presence of three Past Masters at least—all of which must be done before that Lodge can be entitled to a representation in the Grand Lodge.

6. Every Charter issued from the Grand Lodge, shall be signed by the Grand Master for

the time being, or in case of his death or absence out of the state, by the Deputy Grand Master and Wardens, sealed with the Seal of the Grand Lodge, and attested by the Grand Secretary, directed to three reputable Brethren, authorizing them to call in other Brethren to their assistance, and to enter Apprentices, pass Fellowcrafts, and raise Master Masons, agreeably to ancient customs and usages; the fee for which shall be _____, for the purpose of Grand Charity and other contingencies; and _____ to the Grand Secretary for providing parchment and affixing the Seal, to be paid previous to the delivery of the Charter.

7. The members of the Grand Lodge, and of all warranted Lodges within their jurisdiction, so far as they have abilities and numbers, have an undoubted right to exercise all degrees of the Ancient Craft, and consequently the Royal Arch; but no Masons of any denomination can hold any Lodge, without warrant for the place where held. Nevertheless, Royal Arch Masons must not at processions, nor in any other place, except in the Royal Arch Lodge, be distinguished by any garment or badge, different from what belongs to them as officers or members of the Grand, or their own private Lodges.

8. That each person admitted to any degree of Masonry in the Grand Lodge, shall pay a fee of _____ for the purpose of the Grand Charity.

9. Each Lodge on record, shall annually on the stated Grand Communication, pay to the Grand Treasurer for the time being, as a support to the Grand Lodge, the sum of _____; or a sum of money equal to _____, for each and every member belonging to such Lodge.

10. The several Lodges on record shall transmit to the Grand Lodge annually, a list of all the officers and members composing each Lodge, distinguishing their rank and degree; together with such matters relating to the Craft in general, as may be deemed proper to communicate; and that the said list be recorded by the Grand Secretary in a book to be set apart for that purpose; to the end that the Grand Lodge may at all times know the number of laborers engaged in this great work.

11. Every Brother requiring a Grand Lodge certificate or diploma, which is impressed on parchment, and signed by the proper officers, and signed also opposite the Seal by the member himself, shall pay to the Treasurer the sum of _____, towards the Grand Charity Fund. Nor is any Brother to be entitled to such certificate without a previous certificate from the Lodge, of which he is a member, setting forth his regular behavior, and that he has discharged regularly all Lodge dues.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE ELECTION, OFFICE, AND DUTY OF THE GRAND OFFICERS

The election of Grand Officers shall be at the stated communication annually, and shall be the first business that comes properly before the Grand Lodge, after receiving the reports of the subordinate Lodges represented. And the Grand Lodge being opened in ample form, the Most Worshipful Grand Master shall direct the Grand Lodge to proceed to the choice of Grand Officers for the ensuing year.

SECTION I.

OF THE ELECTION OF THE GRAND MASTER

The Most Worshipful Grand Master in the chair, shall call on the Grand Lodge to nominate some eminent and skillful Brother or Brethren for the Office of Grand Master. Should there be but one in the nomination, it shall be the indispensable duty of the Most Worshipful to nominate one other in the opposition; but if the present Grand Master is again eligible, and is then in the chair, and willing to serve another year, he shall direct his Deputy to nominate the one in opposition. The Grand Master shall, if eligible, be at all times in the nomination. The members shall then be directed to prepare their ballots for one of the Brethren in the nomination, and when done, shall be collected by one of the Grand Deacons. The Worshipful Grand Master shall then call on two of the members to examine the ballots, and deliver to him in writing, the number of votes each candidate shall have; when the Worshipful Grand Master shall cause the Brother having the greatest number of votes, to be thrice proclaimed aloud by the Grand Secretary, Grand Master of Masons! The Most Worshipful shall then cause the Grand Master-elect to be conducted to the chair, and after introducing him to the members as a Brother skilled in the Royal Art, and a lover of the Craft, he shall be clothed with the badges of the office, and installed in due form.

All the members shall then salute him according to the ancient and laudable customs of Masonry.

SECTION II.

OF THE ELECTION OR APPOINTMENT OF THE DEPUTY GRAND MASTER

The Grand Master-elect shall then nominate and appoint the Deputy Grand Master as being his inherent right; because as the Grand Master is generally a Brother of the first eminence and abilities and long experience, and cannot be supposed to give his attendance on every emergency, it hath always been adjudged needful, not only to allow him a Deputy, but that such Deputy should be a person in whom he can perfectly confide, and with whom he can have full harmony—for which reason it is proper that the Grand Master should have the nomination of his Deputy. Although cases may arise when the Grand Lodge may exercise the right of rejecting the Grand Master's nomination, and of choosing for themselves, of which case (although they seldom happen) the majority of the Lodge can only be judges.

The Deputy Grand Master, being thus chosen, or appointed as above, he shall be introduced, installed, congratulated, and saluted in due form as before.

SECTION III.

OF THE ELECTION OF THE GRAND SENIOR WARDEN

The Grand Master-elect, shall then nominate some skillful Brother as Grand Senior

Warden, and the Grand Lodge have the inalienable right of nominating one or more in opposition; (for an opposition is essentially necessary in the choice of all the officers), and the person having the greatest majority of votes, or ballots (still preserving due harmony), is declared, as before, duly elected.

The Grand Senior Warden, being thus elected, he shall be introduced, installed, and saluted in due form as before.

SECTION IV.

OF THE ELECTION OF THE GRAND JUNIOR WARDEN

The election of the Grand Junior Warden is precisely in the same manner as the Grand Senior Warden; but sometimes, for the sake of dispatch, both the Grand Wardens are elected together in balloting, by writing Senior opposite the name of one of the candidates, and Junior opposite the name of another.

SECTION V.

OF THE APPOINTMENT AND OFFICE OF THE GRAND SECRETARY

The Office of Grand Secretary hath always been of very great importance in the Grand Lodge, from the multiplicity of matters committed to his care, and from the abilities and learning requisite in the management of them. All the transactions of the Grand Lodge are to be drawn into form, and duly recorded by him. All petitions, applications and appeals, are to pass through his hands. No warrant, certificate or instrument of writing from the Grand Lodge, is authentic, without his attestation or signature, and his affixing the Grand Seal as the laws require. The general correspondence with Lodges and Brethren over the whole world is to be managed by him agreeably to the voice of the Grand Lodge, and directions of the Grand Master or his Deputy; and he must, therefore, be ready to attend with his Assistant or Clerk, and the books of his Grand Lodge, in order to give all necessary information concerning the general state of matters, and what is proper to be done upon an emergency.

For this reason, at every annual election of Grand Officers, the nomination or appointment of the Grand Secretary is considered as the inherent right of the Grand Master, being properly his amanuensis, and an officer as necessary to him as his Deputy. It is, therefore, held under the old regulations, which yet stand unrepealed, that if the Grand Lodge should disapprove either of the Deputy Grand Master or Grand Secretary, they cannot disannul their appointments, without choosing a new Grand Master, by which all his appointments are rendered void. But this is a case which hath but very seldom happened, and which all true Masons hope there never will be any occasion to make a provision against.

The Grand Secretary, by virtue of his office, is a member of the Grand Lodge, and hath a right to vote in common with the Grand Wardens in everything, except in choosing Grand Officers; he also hath the right of appointing his own Deputy, or Assistant Grand Secretary or Clerk — but such Deputy or Clerk must be a Master Mason, yet shall not by virtue of that appointment be a member of the Grand Lodge, nor speak without being allowed or asked, unless

he hath otherwise a right, by being either a Past Grand Officer, or Past Master, or Deputy of some regular private Lodge within the jurisdiction.

SECTION VI.

OF THE ELECTION AND OFFICE OF THE GRAND TREASURER

The Grand Treasurer is elected by the body of the Grand Lodge in the same manner as the Grand Wardens, he being considered as an officer peculiarly responsible to all the members in due form assembled, as having the charge of their common stock and property. For to him is committed the care of all money raised for the general charity and other uses of the Grand Lodge; an account of which, he is regularly to enter into a book, with the respective ends and uses for which the several sums are intended. He is likewise to pay out or disburse the same upon such orders, signed, as the rules of the Grand Lodge in this respect shall allow valid.

The Grand Treasurer, by virtue of his office, is a member of the Grand Lodge, and hath power to move the same in any matter that concerns his office, and may vote in common with the Grand Wardens; he hath a right to appoint an Assistant or Clerk, who must be a Master Mason, but shall have no vote, nor be a member of the Grand Lodge, nor allowed to speak without permission, unless otherwise entitled to a seat, as having been a Past Officer of the Grand Lodge, or Past Master or Deputy of some regular private Lodge within the jurisdiction.

The Grand Treasurer, or his Assistant, shall always be present in the Grand Lodge, and ready to attend the Grand Master and other Grand Officers with his books for inspection when required; and likewise any Grand Committee that may be appointed for examining and adjusting the accounts.

SECTION VII.

OF THE GRAND DEACONS

The Grand Deacons, whose duty is well known in the Grand Lodge, as particular Assistants to the Grand Master and Wardens, in conducting the business of the Grand Lodge, are always members of the same, so long as they continue in their office, and are most commonly elected by the Grand Lodge as other Grand Officers, though the appointment of right belongs to the Grand Master and Grand Senior Warden, and may be appointed annually, or on every Grand Lodge night.

SECTION VIII.

OF THE GRAND TILER AND GRAND PURSUIVANT

These Officers must be Master Masons, but none of them are members of the Grand Lodge, nor allowed to speak to any matter before the Grand Lodge, without permission.

The Grand Tiler's duty is to look after the door on the outward side, to see that none but members enter in; and not even them, if the Grand Lodge is opened, without first informing the

Grand Master (through the channel of the Grand Pursuivant) of their being at the door, and wishing to enter. The Grand Tiler is also to summon the members on any special occasion or emergency, by order of the Grand Master or his Deputy, signified to him under the hand of the Grand Secretary or his Clerk.

The business of the Grand Pursuivant is to stand at the inward door of the Grand Lodge, and to report the names and titles of all that want admission, as reported to him by the Grand Tiler. He is also to go upon messages while the Grand Lodge is open, and perform sundry other services known only in the Grand Lodge.

SECTION IX.

RULES TO BE OBSERVED DURING THE TIME OF PUBLIC BUSINESS

1. At the third stroke of the Master's gavel, there shall be a general silence, and he who breaks silence without leave from the chair, shall be publicly reprimanded.

2. Under the same penalty, every Brother shall keep his seat and be perfectly silent whenever the Most Worshipful, his Deputy, or Warden shall think proper to call to order.

3. In the Grand Lodge every member shall take his seat according to the number of his Lodge, and not move about from place to place during the Communication, except the Grand Wardens, as having more immediately the care of the Grand Lodge, and such other officers whose immediate business may call them to different parts of the Lodge room.

4. No Brother is to speak more than twice on the same subject, unless to explain himself, or when called upon by the Chair to speak.

5. Every one who speaks shall rise and keep standing, addressing himself in a proper manner to the Chair; nor shall any one presume to interrupt him under the aforesaid penalty, unless he is wandering from the point, and the Grand Master shall think proper to reduce him to order, and then the said speaker shall sit down. But after he has been set right, he may again proceed if he pleases.

6. If any members be twice called to order at any one Grand Lodge, for transgressing these rules, and is guilty of a third offense of the same nature, the Chair shall peremptorily order him to quit the Grand Lodge room for that night.

7. Whoever shall be so rude as to hiss or laugh at any Brother or what he may advance, shall be forthwith solemnly excluded from the Communication, and declared incapable of ever being a member of the Grand Lodge in future, until another time he publicly owns his fault, and grace be granted.

8. No motion for a new regulation, or for the alteration of an old one, shall be made until it be first handed up in writing to the Chair; and after it has been perused by the Grand Master, the thing may be moved publicly; and then audibly read by the Grand Secretary; and, if it is then seconded and thirded, it must immediately be submitted to the consideration of the whole Assembly, that the sense of the Lodge may be fully heard upon it; after which the question shall be put, *pro* or *con*.

9. In order to preserve harmony, it was thought necessary to use counters and a balloting-box when occasion requires; at other times by holding up of hands, or by putting the question aye or no.

CHAPTER V.

REGULATIONS FOR CHARITY TO BE OBSERVED IN THE GRAND LODGE

1. The Committee on Charity, commonly called the Grand Charity Committee, consists of five Past Masters appointed by the Grand Master at each Annual Communication, and such other members as the Grand Lodge may on the day of annual election appoint; and three of whom, for the sake of expedition, shall be a quorum, whose business shall be to meet at least four stated times in the year, viz: April 1st, July 1st, October 1st, and January 1st (except those days happen on a Sunday, in which case the next day), and as often at other times as may be deemed necessary to hear all petitions, etc., and to order such relief to distressed Brethren, as their case may require, and prudence may direct.

2. None but registered Masons who have themselves contributed to the Grand Charity Fund, and were members of a warranted Lodge during that time, can be considered and relieved. Sojourners and traveling Masons, if duly certified and recommended, are to be relieved by private contributions, made for them on the occasion or out of the general fund, as the majority shall think proper.

3. It is the inherent right of this committee to dispose of the Grand Charity under the aforesaid restrictions, and to such as appear really necessitous and deserving, either by monthly support or otherwise, as to them shall seem meet; provided always, that no Brother made in a clandestine manner, nor any Brother who has ever assisted in any clandestine making, can ever be qualified to receive any assistance out of the said fund.

4. All the transactions of this Committee on Charity are to be regularly entered of record, and audibly read by the Chairman before all the members of the Grand Lodge, at their Annual Grand Communication.

CHAPTER VI.

OF GRAND VISITATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

All the different Lodges in the same general communication should as much as possible, observe the same rules and usages. "Solomon, my son, forget not my law, but let thine heart keep my commandments, and remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set."

And to this end it shall be the duty of the Grand Master, or in his absence the presiding officer, on the Grand Lodge of annual election, to appoint some of the Grand Officers, or other skillful Past Grand Officers or Past Masters, to visit all the Lodges within the Communication, and see that the ancient customs and usages are strictly observed. And as this laudable duty has become impracticable, from the extent of their jurisdiction and large number of Lodges, for the Brethren before mentioned, to perform the whole of this duty collectively, the Grand Master shall cause the Lodges to be laid off in convenient districts, and allow one or more visitors to each district, with such other assistants as may be thought proper, who shall make faithful report of their proceedings to the Grand Communication annually, according to the instructions given them.

The Brethren so appointed, shall have a dispensation signed by the Grand Master or his Deputy, and attested by the Grand Secretary, with the Seal of the Grand Lodge, explaining the nature of their business, whose duty then shall be to visit every Lodge of his district at one of their stated meetings—previously notifying to the Lodge the intended time of visiting them.

[The foregoing is the Constitution of Masonry, as compiled and sanctioned by the Grand Lodge of Virginia in 1791.]

The
Methodical Digest

A DIGEST OF LAWS

AND CODIFIED

GRAND MASTERS' DECISIONS

FOR THE GOVERNMENT

OF THE

GRAND LODGE

AND ITS

SUBORDINATE LODGES

OF

ANCIENT, FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS

IN

THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

THIRTY-SIXTH EDITION

2010

Section 1.00

The Grand Lodge

Methodical Digest

With Annotations of Grand Masters' Decisions.

I. THE GRAND LODGE

Sec. 1.01. Jurisdiction of Grand Lodge. — The jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Virginia is exclusive over all the territory in the State of Virginia; and, subject only to the paramount obligation of preserving the ancient landmarks of Freemasonry, the Grand Lodge of Virginia possesses sovereign authority over all Masons and Lodges within the state of Virginia.

The limitations of her jurisdiction, set out in subsequent sections, are conceded in a spirit of comity and fraternity to her sister Grand Lodges, but with a reservation of right at any time hereafter to recall any concession so granted.

The Grand Lodge of Virginia claims and exercises exclusive jurisdiction over every individual from the time he becomes a resident of Virginia until he relinquishes that residence and moves from Virginia soil, regardless of how long a time he remains a resident of Virginia. 1944 G. L. Pro., p. 64.

DECISIONS

1909 D-3, §-1.01

1916 D-16, §-1.01

Virginia does not recognize the Eastern Star in the same manner that a Grand Lodge is recognized. We are glad to have the ladies have an organization of this kind which interests them in Freemasonry. (J. W. Eggleston and J. B. Wood)

1961 D-9, §1.01

1968 D-3, §1.01

1962 D-4, §1.01

1968 D-25, §1.01

The Grand Lodge of Va. has never extended recognition to any organization requiring membership in a regular Lodge under its jurisdictions as a prerequisite for membership. To grant permission for the formation of a club would be contrary to our long precedent to regulate Masons rather than organizations, except our own Lodges. (C. M. Flintoff, E. C. Glover, Jr., and H. B. Green)

Sec. 1.02. Concessions to Other Grand Jurisdictions. — Any Lodge in an adjoining state, working under a Charter from a Grand Lodge in correspondence with the Grand Lodge of Virginia, may entertain the applications of citizens of this state residing nearer by an airline to such Lodge than to any Lodge in this state, may confer the degrees upon such applicants, and may admit them to membership as if such Lodge was duly chartered by the Grand Lodge of Virginia; Provided, that its own Grand Lodge concedes the same privileges under like circumstances to Lodges in Virginia. (1975)

DECISIONS

1920 D-12, §-1.02

Non-Mason who petitions Lodge in another state under the provisions of this Section and is rejected cannot thereafter petition a Virginia Lodge until his disability is removed. (S. Cutchins)

1941 D-4, §-1.02, §-2.103

If non-Mason lives closer to North Carolina Lodge than to a Virginia Lodge he may apply to the North Carolina Lodge under the provisions of Section 1.02. However, if the Virginia Lodge has been petitioned, he must be elected and then ask for a waiver. (T. J. Traylor)

1947 D-12, §-1.02

Non-Mason residing in Virginia but living nearer to a West Virginia Lodge may petition West Virginia Lodge in accordance with our law. (T. P. Coleman)

Sec. 1.03. Concurrent Jurisdiction of Virginia and Tennessee Lodges in the City of Bristol. — Lodges situated in the city of Bristol, subordinate to the Grand Lodge of Tennessee, shall have concurrent jurisdiction, as to entertaining petitions for degrees and applications for membership from petitioners residing in the city, with Virginia Lodges situated in the said city, so long as the Grand Lodge of Tennessee shall accord like privileges to such Virginia Lodges. (1975)

DECISIONS

1940 D-1, §-1.03, §-2.109

Non-Mason living on Virginia side of Bristol who is rejected by the Tennessee Lodge in Bristol cannot petition Shelby Lodge in Bristol, Va. These Lodges have concurrent jurisdiction in the city. (N. S. Turnbull)

Sec. 1.03(a). Concurrent Jurisdiction of Virginia and District of Columbia Lodges. — Lodges situated in the District of Columbia, subordinate to the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia, shall have concurrent jurisdiction, as to entertaining petitions for degrees and applications for membership from petitioners residing in Arlington and Fairfax Counties and in the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church, with Virginia Lodges situated in said counties and cities, so long as the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia shall accord like privileges to such Virginia Lodges. (1975)

Sec. 1.04. Presence of Holy Bible, Square and Compasses Indispensable. — Without the presence of the Holy Bible, Square and Compasses no communication of any Lodge, Supreme or subordinate, can be held, and every communication shall be opened and closed with prayer.

DECISIONS

1905 D-14, §-1.04, §-2.07

In conferring the degrees the Holy Bible must stand open at the respective references designated for each degree. (T. N. Davis)

1968 D-19, §-1.04

A Brother and his wife presenting Altar Bible to Lodges as a memorial to their fathers, who were Masons, have the right to prescribe the inscription to be placed on the fly leaf and to sign it. (H. B. Green)

Sec. 1.05. Time and Place of Annual and Other Communications. — The Grand Lodge shall meet in Annual Communication on the Friday preceding the second Monday in November. The meeting shall be held at such place as may be designated by a vote of Grand Lodge and when no arrangement is made to meet elsewhere the Annual Communication shall be held in Richmond. All arrangements to hold the Annual Communication shall be made at least three years in advance of the year in which it is to be held. All locations chosen shall have ample housing facilities to accommodate the Grand Lodge, including members, delegates and guests. There shall also be a meeting place of such size as to accommodate the members and delegates assembled for the transaction of business.

The Grand Master, under the general powers of his office, shall have the right to fix the duration of any Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge.

Emergent and special communications shall be held at such time and in such places as may be designated by the Grand Master and, except for ceremonial and funeral communications, the purpose and business for any special communication shall be clearly stated in the call therefor, given to the Lodges not less than ten days in advance of the date of convening the communication. (1999)

Sec. 1.06. Composition of the Grand Lodge. — The Grand Lodge of Virginia is composed of:

- 1st. The Grand Master of Masons in Virginia;
- 2nd. The Deputy Grand Master, the Grand Wardens, the Grand Treasurer, the Grand Secretary, and the Grand Deacons;
- 3rd. The Past Grand Masters, the Past Deputy Grand Masters, and the Past Grand Wardens;
- 4th. Representatives of her subordinate Lodges;
- 5th. The District Deputy Grand Masters;
- 6th. The Past Masters of subordinate Lodges, not included in above classifications.

Sec. 1.06(a). Titles Accorded to Office Holders. — A Brother elected or appointed to certain Masonic offices shall be accorded the title appropriate to the office he serves as designated by this Section.

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| Worshipful | — A Brother serving as Master of a subordinate Lodge. |
| Right Worshipful | — A Brother serving as District Deputy Grand Master. |
| | — An elected Grand Lodge Officer other than the Grand Master or Past Grand Master. |
| Most Worshipful | — The Grand Master of Masons in Virginia. |

These respective titles shall continue to the individual Brother after serving the office, provided he completed the full term for which elected or appointed, or died (other than suicide) while serving in office. (1997)

Sec. 1.07. How Subordinate Lodges Represented. — Stationed officers of the subordinate Lodges are ex-officio entitled to represent their Lodges. If one or more of them be absent, his place may be filled by some Brother furnished with a resolution of the Lodge appointing him, certified by its Secretary under the Seal of the Lodge. If the Lodge fails to elect proxies, or if none of them can attend, then the Master may, under his hand, appoint some Brother as his proxy; Provided, that the Brother acting as proxy shall be a member of the Lodge or of some Lodge in the same Masonic district; and, Provided, further, that no Brother shall represent more than three Lodges.

Sec. 1.08. Membership Requisite to Membership in Grand Lodge. — No Brother can be a member of the Grand Lodge who is not a member in good standing of some subordinate Lodge bearing allegiance to this Grand Lodge.

Sec. 1.09. Quorum of the Grand Lodge. — Representatives from at least thirty subordinate Lodges must be present to constitute a quorum of the Grand Lodge for the dispatch of business.

Sec. 1.10. Who May Act in Absence of Grand Master from a Session of the Grand Lodge. — If the Grand Master be absent from any session of the Grand Lodge, the Deputy Grand Master shall preside; if the Deputy Grand Master be absent likewise, the Grand Senior Warden shall preside, and in his absence, the Grand Junior Warden; and if none of them be present, the Master of the oldest subordinate Lodge represented shall act as Grand Master, pro tem.

Sec. 1.11. Grand Master's Address. — At every Annual Communication, immediately after the opening of the Grand Lodge, the Grand Master will make report of all matters of interest to the Fraternity which have arisen during the recess, and his official action upon any questions of Masonic law or jurisprudence submitted to him for determination. Immediately upon the conclusion of the reading of the said report, it shall be referred for consideration to the Past Grand Masters present.

The Committee of Past Grand Masters shall meet in executive session to review the Grand Master's Address. This Committee shall report to the Grand Lodge their opinion and recommendations concerning the matters reported by the Grand Master in his Address. The Past Grand Masters shall select the member of their Committee who shall be the chairman of said Committee and who shall deliver their report to the Grand Lodge. This report shall be given and voted upon prior to voting on the propositions and resolutions properly presented and due to be acted upon at the Annual Communication then in session. (1996)

Sec. 1.12. Commissions Appointed by Grand Master. — The Grand Master may, at any time, appoint a commission of three or more members of the Grand Lodge for the purpose of visiting any subordinate Lodge or Lodges and investigating matters imperiling the harmony or interests of Freemasonry, and order the payment by the Grand Treasurer of the expenses of the commission. He will report the action of the commission, at the next Annual

Communication, and the Grand Lodge may require the Lodge or Lodges to refund the expenses of the commission to the Grand Treasurer; and in the event of failure to make such payment and amount shall stand as dues against the Lodge and render it subject to the penalty prescribed for non-payment of dues.

DECISIONS

1976 D-3, §-1.12

Worshipful Master rules and governs his Lodge in a prudent manner and Section 1.12 will not be invoked if all facts considered support Worshipful Master's actions in best interest of the Lodge. (S. J. Levy)

Sec. 1.13. Determination of Questions. — All questions before the Grand Lodge shall be determined by a majority of votes cast.

Sec. 1.14. How Vote Shall Be Taken. — In all elections in the Grand Lodge in which there are two or more nominations the vote shall be taken by written ballot. In all other cases the vote shall be taken viva voce or by a show of hands, as the Grand Master may order, and the suffrage shall be regulated as set forth in Sec. 1.15. A written ballot may be called for by ten or more Lodges, or ordered by the Grand Master. (1973)

Sec. 1.15. Regulation of Suffrage. — In every election and every scaled vote the suffrage shall be regulated in the following manner:

- 1st. The Grand Master or acting Grand Master shall have one vote, and if there be a tie, he may have an additional vote.
- 2nd. The representatives of each subordinate Lodge shall collectively have one vote, the majority of its representatives casting the vote; **Provided**, that no Lodge delinquent in payment of dues or in its return shall be allowed to vote.
- 3rd. The Deputy Grand Master shall have one vote.
- 4th. The Grand Wardens, Grand Treasurer, Grand Secretary, and Grand Deacons shall have collectively one vote.
- 5th. The Past Grand Masters shall have each one vote.
- 6th. The Past Deputy Grand Masters and Past Grand Wardens shall have collectively one vote.
- 7th. The District Deputy Grand Masters, who are not representatives of any subordinate Lodge or officers of the Grand Lodge, shall have collectively one vote.
- 8th. The Past Masters, who are not representatives of any subordinate Lodge or officers of the Grand Lodge, shall have collectively one vote.

Sec. 1.16. Time for Entertaining Propositions, Resolutions and Motions in Grand Lodge. — No proposition or resolution for the amendment or repeal of an existing law or the enactment of any new law shall be entertained unless it shall have been submitted to the Grand Secretary in writing, with a brief explanation stating the reason(s) the resolution is necessary. Propositions or resolutions must be received by the Grand Secretary no later than the first day

of of April next preceding the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge. Any proposition or resolution received which does not conform to the requirements of Section 1.17 shall be immediately returned to the submitter advising him the reason it is not acceptable. Propositions or resolutions may be submitted by any member of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, in good standing, as defined in Section 1.06. (2025)

It shall thereafter be referred, to the Code Commission, unless the Grand Master shall direct otherwise. The proposed legislation shall be reviewed by the commission or committee to which it was referred, whose duty it shall be to check the language thereof and its possible conflicts with other sections of the Methodical Digest. The commission or committee shall thereafter certify it as to language and form and other necessary legislation in connection with it, to the Grand Secretary not later than July first next preceding the Annual Communication at which it will be considered. The Grand Secretary shall forward four copies of each such certified proposition or resolution showing the proposed change or changes in the form specified in Sec. 1.17 of the Methodical Digest, including the reason(s) it should be enacted, to every subordinate Lodge holden under the Grand Lodge by first class mail before the first day of September next preceding the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge. Each such resolution shall include the name and Lodge number of the persons submitting it.

Except with the unanimous consent of the Grand Lodge no alteration of or amendment to an existing law or the enactment of a new law shall be considered at the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge at which it was introduced.

All other propositions, resolutions or motions, including amendments and substitutes, except motions to adopt reports of committees or motions made during the election of officers shall be submitted in writing. The sponsor of all such propositions, resolutions, or motions shall arise, state his name, office and Lodge and audibly read or have it audibly read, leaving a signed copy thereof with the Grand Secretary. (1991)

DECISIONS

1955 D-7, §-1.16, §-1.42

Section 1.42 concerning right of the Grand Master to conduct and control the business of Grand Lodge is merely declaratory of the inherent powers of the Grand Master. The amendments to Section 1.16 do not deprive the Grand Master of his power to entertain or refusing to entertain any motion, resolution or proposal presented to Grand Lodge. (H. Reid)

Sec. 1.17. Amendment of the Digest. — No amendment of the Methodical Digest shall be made by mere reference to any paragraph or section, but the entire section proposed to be amended shall be repeated, with any part to be omitted stricken out, and any new language underlined or shown in bold type.

All items enacted into law, regardless of method of enactment, shall be incorporated in the Methodical Digest. The text of the Grand Master's decisions, to the extent still applicable, shall be incorporated into the Methodical Digest at the end of the section to which it refers but only at such times as the Methodical Digest is revised. (1984)

DECISIONS

1927 D-13, §-1.17

Subordinate Lodge cannot enact a resolution amending the laws of the Grand Lodge. (B. W. Beach)

Sec. 1.18. When Proposition to Reconsider May be Presented. — No proposition to reconsider any action of the Grand Lodge shall be presented during the same communication without the previous permission of the Grand Master.

Sec. 1.19. Previous Question Cannot be Entertained, etc. — A call for the “previous question” is un-Masonic and cannot be entertained in this Grand Lodge, or in any subordinate Lodge in this jurisdiction; nor can a motion to lay on the table. The subject matter must be disposed of; or if postponed, it must be to some definite, stated time.

CHARTERS

Sec. 1.20. Application for a Charter Entertained Only from a Lodge Working Under Dispensation. — No application for a Charter for the formation of a new Lodge will be entertained by the Grand Lodge except from a Lodge working under a dispensation. All applications for Charters shall be accompanied by the endorsement of the District Deputy Grand Master to the Committee on Charters, setting forth the facts that the proposed Lodge has provided a suitable place in which to hold its communications, and that the officers named in the application are proficient in the work.

Sec. 1.21. Definition of a Charter. — The Charter of a Lodge is an instrument written or printed upon parchment, signed by the Grand Master, sealed with the Seal of the Grand Lodge, and attested by the Grand Secretary, setting out the names of the Worshipful Master and Wardens, and authorizing them to call in other Brethren to their assistance, to enter Apprentices, pass Fellowcrafts, and raise Master Masons, and to perform other work agreeably to the ancient customs and usages of Freemasons.

DECISIONS

1899 D-3, §-1.21

A Lodge cannot change its name without consent of the Grand Lodge. (R. T. W. Duke)

1909 D-5, §-1.21, §-2.23

A proposed Lodge may choose a name for itself subject to the approval of the D.D.G.M. and the Grand Master. (J. W. Eggleston)

1998 D-5, §-1.21

Allowed Glebe Lodge No. 181 to change its name to Arlington Centennial-Glebe Lodge No. 81. (A. H. Tignor, Jr.)

2002 D-5, §-1.21

At the request of the Lodge, it was my decision to permit the name of Evington Lodge No. 333 to be amended to Evington-Newman Lodge No. 333. (C. A. Parker)

Sec. 1.22. Charter for a New Lodge Must be Authorized by Grand Lodge in Annual Communication. — No Charter for a new Lodge shall be authorized except by the Grand Lodge in an Annual Communication.

Sec. 1.23. Fees for Charters, Duplicate Charters, Dispensations, Diplomas, etc. — There shall be paid to the Grand Treasurer a reasonable fee for the Charter of a new Lodge, for a duplicate Charter, for a dispensation to form a new Lodge, for postage and handling for any Grand Lodge diploma, and for affixing the Seal of the Grand Lodge to a certificate issued by a subordinate Lodge. In each case, the reasonable fee to recoup incurred cost shall accompany the application. (2020)

Sec. 1.24. How Charters, Dispensations and Diplomas Shall be Issued. — All Charters, dispensations and diplomas shall be issued by the Grand Secretary and only after written certification by the Grand Treasurer that the fees for the same have been paid to him.

Sec. 1.25. Issuance of Duplicate Charter. — If the Charter of an existing Lodge be lost or mutilated, the Grand Master may authorize the Grand Secretary to furnish a duplicate, upon the face of which the Grand Secretary shall certify that it was reissued by order of the Grand Master with the date of the reissuance.

DECISIONS

1902 D-9, §-1.25

Duplicate Charter cannot be furnished for an extinct Lodge notwithstanding destruction of Charter by fire. (H. O. Kerns)

Sec. 1.26. Dispensation For A New Lodge. — Every petition for dispensation to form a new Lodge shall be in the form specified by the Grand Lodge and must be in compliance with all laws pertaining to such petitions.

Sec. 1.27. How Long Such Dispensation Shall Continue in Force; Return to be Made by a Lodge Under Dispensation. — Such dispensation shall continue in force unless recalled by the Grand Master until the next Annual Communication, and if a Charter be then granted, until the Lodge shall be constituted under the Charter; **Provided**, that it shall be so constituted within three months thereafter. The Master and Wardens of a Lodge working under dispensation shall make due return thereof and a copy of all proceedings held thereunder to the Grand Lodge at the Annual Communication next succeeding the issuance of such dispensation.

Sec. 1.28. Proceedings of Grand Lodge; When to be Published; What to Contain, etc. — As soon as practicable after the close of each Annual Communication, the proceedings of that Communication, and of all special communications during the Masonic year shall be published. Such publication shall contain, in addition to all proceedings of the Grand Lodge which are proper to be written, the annual address of the Grand Master; the reports of all committees; a statement of the receipts and expenditures of the Grand Treasurer, a list of the

delinquent Lodges; the name and mailing address of the Worshipful Master and Secretary of each subordinate Lodge; complete statistical data on all subordinate Lodges, and such historical sketches of subordinate Lodges, not exceeding twenty-five pages, as may be ordered by the Grand Lodge or the Grand Master. (1996)

DECISIONS

1975 D-1, §-1.28, §-1.42

The approval action of Grand Lodge on both the decisions and recommendations of the Grand Master should be recorded in the Proceedings. (S. W. Miner)

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE IN GRAND LODGE

Sec. 1.29. Eligibility for Office in Grand Lodge. — Any Past Master of a Lodge shall be eligible for the Office of Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Senior Warden, Grand Junior Warden, Grand Treasurer, Grand Secretary, Grand Senior Deacon or Grand Junior Deacon.

DECISIONS

1909 D-18, §-1.29, §-2.31

To the question; “How should a member be dealt with who comes out and electioneers to have himself elected to office?” I replied, “Every member, as a matter of conscience should vote against him.” (J. W. Eggleston)

Sec. 1.30. Who May Be Appointed Grand Chaplain, etc. — Any member of a subordinate Lodge in good standing may be appointed Grand Chaplain, Grand Stewards, Grand Marshal, Grand Tiler, Grand Pursuivant, Grand Purveyor, Grand Lecturer, Grand Provost or Deputy to the Grand Treasurer or the Grand Secretary, but none of them shall be a member of the Grand Lodge by virtue of his appointment.

Sec. 1.31. What Grand Lodge Officers May Hold Office in Subordinate Lodge. — Any officer of the Grand Lodge may be an officer in a subordinate Lodge, except the Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master may not hold the Office of Worshipful Master, Senior Warden or Junior Warden in a subordinate Lodge.

DECISIONS

1969 D-2, §-1.31

The provisions of Section 1.31 forbidding the Grand Master or Deputy Grand Master to hold office as the Master or a Warden in a subordinate Lodge do not apply to a Research Lodge which has no vote in Grand Lodge and pays no per capita dues to the Grand Lodge. (J. A. White)

Sec. 1.32. Election of Grand Officers; When Held. — The election of Grand Lodge Officers shall be held not later than the third day of every Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge and the Lodges shall be notified prior to the convening of the Grand Lodge of the day and hour of such elections. (1973)

Sec. 1.33. Grand Master in Nomination for Reelection, and Deputy Grand Master Always to be in Nomination for Grand Master. — Unless the Grand Master decline, he shall always be in nomination for reelection, and the Deputy Grand Master shall always be in nomination for election as Grand Master; any member may make an additional nomination.

Sec. 1.34. Grand Master-Elect to Nominate Candidates for Office. — Unless the Grand Master-elect waives his prerogative, he shall make a nomination for every elective office, and any member of Grand Lodge may make another nomination. If there be only one nominee for any office, the vote shall be viva voce. If there be more than one nominee for any elective office, the vote shall be by written ballot. (1997)

Sec. 1.35. Nominees to Retire, Etc. — The nominees shall retire before any discussion or balloting. When the ballot is collected they may return to the Lodge room and shall then be permitted to vote.

Sec. 1.36. Order in Which Officers Elected. — The elections shall be held in the following order:

1. The Grand Master.
2. The Deputy Grand Master.
3. The Grand Senior Warden.
4. The Grand Junior Warden.
5. The Grand Treasurer.
6. The Grand Secretary.
7. The Grand Senior Deacon.
8. The Grand Junior Deacon.

Sec. 1.37. Election of Grand Master to be Proclaimed. — After announcing the result of the ballot the acting Grand Master shall cause the Grand Master-elect to be thrice proclaimed aloud by the Grand Secretary as duly elected for the ensuing year **GRAND MASTER OF MASONS IN VIRGINIA.**

Sec. 1.38. Grand Master to be Installed or Reinvested, etc. — The acting Grand Master shall then cause him to be conducted to the East and proceed to invest him with the badge of his office and install, or, if he has been reelected, reinstall him in due form, after which he shall be presented to the Brethren as their Grand Master and saluted by all present according to the ancient customs of Masons.

Sec. 1.39. Proclamation and Installation of Deputy Grand Master and Grand Wardens. — The Deputy Grand Master and each of the Grand Wardens shall in like manner be thrice proclaimed duly elected, conducted to the East, invested, installed and saluted; or, in case of reelection, reinvested and saluted.

Sec. 1.40. Grand Treasurer, Grand Secretary and Grand Deacons to be Installed or Reinvested. — The Grand Treasurer, the Grand Secretary and the Grand Deacons, shall be conducted to the East and invested and installed, or, in case of re-election, reinvested.

Sec. 1.41. Officers Appointed by Grand Master. — After the close of the elections, the Grand Chaplain, Grand Marshal, Grand Senior and Junior Stewards, Grand Tiler, Grand Pursuivant, Grand Purveyor, Grand Lecturer and Grand Provost shall be appointed by the Grand Master. (1990)

GRAND LODGE OFFICERS

Sec. 1.42. The Grand Master. — The Grand Master, during any session of the Grand Lodge, shall preside in the East and shall control the conduct of all business coming before the Grand Lodge. There shall be no appeal from his action to the Grand Lodge while in session.

In vacation the Grand Master shall have the power to suspend any law or resolution of the Grand Lodge; to issue dispensations for the formation of new Lodges, to empower subordinate Lodges to set aside the requirement of their by-laws, and for other purposes; appoint commissions; make decisions and to perform all other acts which are imposed upon his office by law, custom and usage.

As required by Sec. 1.11, the Grand Master shall report his actions in vacation to the Grand Lodge at its Annual Communication and these shall be reviewed as hereinbefore required. When approved by the Grand Lodge, any decision affecting the laws shall have the full force and effect of a new law. The Grand Lodge cannot set aside a decision of the Grand Master as it covers the particular case in which it was made and the review required by Sec. 1.11 is not an appeal from the acts and decisions of the Grand Master.

Any act performed, decision made or appointment conferred and not reported to the Grand Lodge by the Grand Master shall expire with the term of the incumbent making such appointment or decision or performing such act. (2007)

DECISIONS

1905 D-31, §-1.42

District Deputy Grand Masters are not empowered to issue dispensations. (They can issue limited dispensations, see Section 1.95.) (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-11, §-1.42

Unless ordered by the Grand Lodge, it is not the province of the Grand Master to order or even advise subordinate Lodges to assist in forming Chapters of the Order of Eastern Star. (T. N. Davis)

1909 D-23, §-1.42

It is not proper to endorse a plan to insure each member's life in a Masonic Mutual Insurance Company for the benefit of the Masonic Home. The plan is outside our system and the word Masonic should not be used in a business venture. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-32, §-1.42

Grand Master cannot be made intermediary for complaints against the Board of Governors of the Masonic Home. Such complaints should be made directly to the Board. (J. W. Eggleston)

1921 D-21, §-1.42

Lodge of another Grand Jurisdiction cannot visit Virginia Lodge and confer degree, using the ritual of that Grand Lodge without a dispensation from the Grand Master of Virginia. (W. W. Galt)

1936 D-7, §-1.42

Lodge insurance premium is not a debt of the Grand Lodge and the Grand Master is not a collection agency for an insurance company to which the Lodge owes such premium. (T. W. Hooper)

1955 D-7, §-1.16, §-1.42

Section 1.42 concerning right of the Grand Master to conduct and control the business of Grand Lodge is merely declaratory of the inherent powers of the Grand Master. The amendments to Section 1.16 do not deprive the Grand Master of his power to entertain or refusing to entertain any motion, resolution or proposal presented to Grand Lodge. (H. Reid)

1983 D-4, §-1.42

I recognized a Temple Corporation as duly constituted and recorded and fully in compliance with the law as set forth by the State Corporation Commission of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Amendatory action placed control of the Temple Corporation in the hands of the Lodge and whatsoever irregularity, real or imagined, which unknowingly eliminated this provision in the Articles of Incorporation recorded in 1974 was thereby healed. (L. U. Jefferson)

1990 D-1, §-1.42, §-2.10

By-laws and rules of any Temple Corporation must comply with Masonic law. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-25, §-1.42, §-2.95, §-2.109

Provisions of the law were set aside to rebalot on the petition of an otherwise qualified candidate rejected on the grounds of his race (2.59 and 2.109). Where the ballot was again not clear the result was recorded and then set aside and directed the petitioner to be received in the Lodge and to receive the degrees of Masonry (1.42). Race is not a proper ground for the rejection of a candidate. (C. F. Cobbs)

2007 D-2, §-1.42

The Grand Master has the authority to suspend or expel a member while Grand Lodge is in recess. (G. B. Dungan, Jr.)

THE DEPUTY GRAND MASTER

Sec. 1.43. Deputy Grand Master's Duties. — In the absence of the Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master shall preside over the Grand Lodge, and in the event during the recess of the Grand Lodge of the death, removal of residence from the state, or disability by disease, of the Grand Master, shall succeed to his Office.

THE GRAND WARDENS

Sec. 1.44. Grand Wardens' Duties. — The Grand Wardens shall discharge the duties of their stations in accordance with the Constitution of Masonry; and in the event of the death or disability of the Grand Master, and Deputy Grand Master, the Grand Senior Warden, and in

case of his death or disability also, the Grand Junior Warden shall succeed to the Office of Grand Master.

THE GRAND TREASURER

Sec. 1.45. Grand Treasurer Shall Receive Dues, Make Disbursements, etc. — The Grand Treasurer shall receive the dues from the subordinate Lodges and all balances due by the Grand Secretary, and make such disbursements as may be ordered by the Grand Lodge, the Grand Master, or the Committee on Finance. He shall pay the expenses incurred by the officers, and Past Grand Masters of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, attending Annual Communications of Grand Lodge. (1993)

Sec. 1.46. Shall Keep Books Showing Receipts, Disbursements, etc. — He shall keep books setting out in detail his receipts and disbursements, and preserve vouchers for all disbursements.

Sec. 1.47. A Lodge Failing to Make Annual Return Shall be Charged the Amount of Dues the Preceding Year. — If any Lodge shall fail to make its annual return, it shall be charged on the books of the Grand Treasurer with the amount of its dues for the last preceding year for which it made returns.

Sec. 1.48. Shall Keep an Account with Grand Secretary. — He shall keep an account upon his books with the Grand Secretary, charging him with all monies for which he may be responsible.

Sec. 1.49. May Appoint Deputy, etc. — He may appoint any member of a subordinate Lodge, in good standing, as his Deputy; Provided, that such appointment shall be reported to the Grand Lodge and made a matter of record; or, if the appointment be made during the recess of the Grand Lodge, it shall be reported to and approved by the Grand Master.

Sec. 1.50. He or His Deputy Always to be Present in Grand Lodge. — He or his Deputy shall always be present in the Grand Lodge, prepared if called upon, to exhibit his books and to answer any inquiry pertaining to the duties of his office.

Sec. 1.51. How Money Deposited and How Checked Out. — He shall deposit all monies received by him in such banks as shall be designated by the Committee on Finance, and all checks upon the bank shall be drawn by the Grand Treasurer or the Deputy Grand Treasurer and countersigned by the Chairman of the Committee on Finance or the Grand Secretary. (1960)

Sec. 1.52. How His Books Examined; List of Delinquent Lodges to be Furnished Committee on Finance. — He shall submit his books, together with all vouchers and bank statements, to a certified public accountant, named by the Finance Committee, within fifteen

days after the close of the Grand Lodge's fiscal year, and at such other times as requested by the Finance Committee. Such certified public accountant shall make to the Finance Committee a report of the condition of the Grand Treasurer's books within fifteen days after such examination. The Grand Treasurer shall furnish to the Finance Committee a list of delinquent Lodges and their arrearage.

THE GRAND SECRETARY

Sec. 1.53. Custodian of Seal and Records of Grand Lodge. — The Grand Secretary shall be the custodian of the Seal and of all the archives and records of the Grand Lodge.

Sec. 1.54. Proceedings of Grand Lodge, etc., to be Preserved by Him. — He shall preserve in books of permanent record all the proceedings of the Grand Lodge and such proceedings of the Grand Master and other Grand Officers or committees during the recess as the Grand Master may direct.

Sec. 1.55. Shall Preserve Petitions, Applications and Appeals to Grand Master or Grand Lodge. — He shall receive and preserve all petitions, applications, and appeals addressed to the Grand Master or to the Grand Lodge.

Sec. 1.56. Shall Attest, and Affix Seal to Charter, etc. — He shall attest all Charters, dispensations for new Lodges, commissions, etc., issued by the Grand Master, and affix thereto the Seal of the Grand Lodge.

Sec. 1.57. Shall Conduct General Correspondence of Grand Lodge. — Subject to the instructions of the Grand Master, he shall conduct the general correspondence of the Grand Lodge with all sister Grand Lodges, the subordinate Lodges and Brethren throughout the world.

Sec. 1.58. Shall Preserve in Bound Volumes, etc., Proceedings of Grand Lodge, and of Corresponding Grand Lodges. — He shall preserve in the Grand Lodge library, in bound volumes of uniform and convenient size, all the proceedings of the Grand Lodge and of corresponding Grand Lodges.

Sec. 1.59. Shall Prepare Proceedings of Grand Lodge; Superintend Printing of Same, and Distribute Copies to Certain Persons. — After each Annual Communication he shall prepare the proceedings of the Grand Lodge for publication, and superintend the printing thereof. He shall transmit one copy of such publication to each subordinate Lodge, each corresponding Grand Lodge, the Grand Master, each Past Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, each Grand Warden, the Grand Treasurer, each Grand Deacon, each District Deputy Grand Master, and to such Masonic periodicals and distinguished Masons as he may think proper. (1996)

Sec. 1.60. Shall Furnish Forms, and Forward Information to Lodges. — The Grand Secretary shall furnish to each Lodge granted a dispensation and to every newly chartered Lodge two copies of the Methodical Digest. (2020)

He shall have prepared diplomas of proficiency and other certificates as may be ordered by the Grand Lodge and furnish them to the Lodges at such reasonable rates as may be fixed by the Committee on Finance and approved by the Grand Master. (2020)

He shall send to each Lodge by first class mail on or before September first, all resolutions to amend the Methodical Digest or the enactment of new laws, and a copy of the proposed budget for the coming year, as prepared by the Committee on Finance, which shall contain a section setting forth the salary and allowance of each Grand Lodge Officer presently paid and proposed to be paid. (1991)

Sec. 1.61. Shall Have Custody of Textbooks and Publications, and Sell Same. — He shall have custody of the textbooks and of all publications of the Grand Lodge; and may sell copies thereof at prices established by the Committee on Finance.

Sec. 1.62. Shall Report and Pay to Grand Treasurer, Annually all Money Received on Account of Grand Lodge. — He shall annually report to the Grand Treasurer and pay over to him all monies received by him on account of the Grand Lodge.

Sec. 1.63. May Appoint Deputy Grand Secretary; Who Eligible. — He may appoint any member of a subordinate Lodge in good standing as his Deputy; Provided, that such appointment shall be reported to the Grand Lodge and recorded upon its minutes; or, if the appointment be made during the recess of the Grand Lodge, it shall be reported to and approved by the Grand Master.

Sec. 1.64. Annual Returns of Lodges, How Preserved. — He shall preserve in bound volumes or by microfilm the annual returns of the subordinate Lodges.

Sec. 1.65. Salaries and Allowances of Grand Officers. — The salary, compensation and allowances of all officers of the Grand Lodge shall be determined by the Grand Lodge upon recommendation of the Grand Lodge Committee on Finance and included in each annual budget. Salaries of the Grand Secretary's office force shall be determined by and included in the budget of the Grand Lodge Committee on Finance, upon recommendation of the Grand Secretary. The salaries of the operational personnel of the Grand Lodge Office Building shall be determined by and included in the budget of the Grand Lodge Committee on Finance upon recommendation of the Grand Lodge Property Committee.

In the event of an interim vacancy in any of the Grand Lodge offices above named, the Grand Lodge Committee on Finance, with the approval of the Grand Master, shall determine the salary of any successor until the next Grand Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge.

THE GRAND DEACONS

Sec. 1.66. Duties of Grand Deacons. — The Grand Deacons shall perform their respective duties in accordance with the Constitution of Masonry.

THE GRAND CHAPLAIN

Sec. 1.67. Duties of Grand Chaplain. — It shall be the duty of the Grand Chaplain, when the Grand Lodge is at prayer, to lead their devotions; and when it is at refreshment, to ask the blessing of Almighty God at the tables.

THE GRAND TILER AND GRAND PURSUIVANT

Sec. 1.68. Duties of Grand Tiler. — It shall be the duty of the Grand Tiler to tile the Grand Lodge, and to perform such other duties as may be assigned him by the Grand Master.

Sec. 1.69. Duties of Grand Pursuivant. — It shall be the duty of the Grand Pursuivant to attend in the Lodge room, at the door; to answer the alarm of the Grand Tiler and report the occasion thereof; and to see that no one enters or leaves without the permission of the Grand Master.

Sec. 1.70. Compensation of Grand Tiler and Grand Pursuivant. — The Grand Tiler and the Grand Pursuivant shall be paid at the close of each Communication such sums as the Committee on Finance may direct; Provided, that it shall not exceed ten dollars apiece for each day of the session of the Grand Lodge.

THE GRAND MARSHAL AND GRAND STEWARDS

Sec. 1.71. Duties of Grand Marshal and Grand Stewards. — The Grand Marshal and the Grand Stewards shall perform such duties as the Grand Lodge or Grand Master may order.

THE GRAND PURVEYOR

Sec. 1.72. Duty of Grand Purveyor; How He Is to Be Paid. — The Grand Purveyor shall, at each Annual Communication, provide and prepare such refreshments for the Grand Lodge as he may be directed. He shall be paid for his services at the close of each Annual Communication such as the Committee on Finance may direct.

COMMITTEES OF GRAND LODGE

Sec. 1.73. Standing Committees to be Appointed by the Grand Master:

1. On Appeals, consisting of seven (7) members.
2. On By-Laws and Charters, consisting of five (5) members. (2000)
3. On Code Commission, consisting of three (3) members. (1970)
4. On Communications, consisting of ten members. (2025)
5. On Credentials, consisting of six (6) members.
6. On Finance, consisting of seven (7) members.
7. On Foreign Correspondence, consisting of three (3) members.
8. On History, consisting of five (5) members. (2021)
9. On Jurisprudence, consisting of nine (9) members.
10. On Legacy Membership in Perpetuity consisting of nine (9) members. (2023)
11. On Strategic Planning and Implementation consisting of the Grand Master, the elected Grand Lodge Officers, and the Chairmen of such Grand Lodge Committees or other Brethren as the Grand Master shall appoint. (2009)
12. On Masonic Community Blood Program consisting of fourteen (14) members. (1990)
13. On Masonic Education, consisting of the Grand and Division Provosts and members as herein specified. (2007)
14. On Masonic Herald Publications Board consisting of seven (7) members. (2005)
15. On Masonic Home Ambassadors, consisting of thirteen (13) members. (2004)
16. On Masonic Relief, consisting of five (5) members.
17. On Memorials, consisting of the Past Grand Masters.
18. On Property, consisting of five (5) members.
19. On Work, consisting of the Grand and Division Lecturers and members as herein specified.
20. On Youth, consisting of nine (9) or more members. (1981)
21. On Membership, consisting of the Chairman and a member from each of the twelve geographic divisions specified in Section 1.102. (2009)
22. On Lodge Services, consisting of the Chairman and a member from each of the twelve geographic divisions specified in Section 1.102. (2009)
23. On Information Technology consisting of seven (7) members. (2008)
24. On Masonic Trials, consisting of twelve (12) members, all of whom shall be Past Masters, Past District Deputy Grand Masters or Past Grand Masters. (2022)
25. On Security, consisting of eighteen (18) members. (2022)

Sec. 1.74. When Standing Committees Appointed. — All committees shall be appointed by the Grand Master immediately after his installation, and the duties of the committee shall continue for the ensuing Masonic year.

Sec. 1.75. Duties of Grand Lodge Committees Defined. — Each of the foregoing committees shall perform the duties as set forth in the following sub-sections, to wit:

Sec. 1.75(a). Committee on Appeals. — To the Committee on Appeals shall be referred all appeals made to the Grand Lodge, or to the Grand Master and referred by him to the Committee, from a subordinate Lodge or individual Mason.

Appeals from the decision of Trial Commissions shall be reviewed and approved or remanded for a new trial to the division in which the charges originated. (1986)

Sec. 1.75(b). Committee on Lodge By-Laws and Charters. — The Committee on Lodge By-Laws and Charters shall consider and approve or disapprove of all by-laws submitted to it for approval, forwarding them to the Grand Master for his signature, which shall constitute final approval. It shall also receive and review all applications for Charters, hold hearings as appropriate, and make recommendations for approval or disapproval at the Grand Annual Communication. (2000)

Sec. 1.75(c). Code Commission. — The Code Commission shall receive all proposed new laws or amendments to existing laws of the Grand Lodge submitted in accordance with Sec. 1.16 hereof. It shall be the duty of this Commission to bring all such legislative proposals into proper form; to determine whether there be any conflict with existing laws and offer such amendments to other laws as may be made necessary if the proposed new law or amendment is adopted.

It shall be the further duty of this Commission to review the laws of this Grand Lodge for the purpose of eliminating conflicts, ambiguous language and improper phraseology therefrom through systematic amendments to accomplish these purposes.

All of the work of this Commission shall be automatically referred to the Grand Lodge Committee on Jurisprudence. (1970)

Sec. 1.75(d). Committee on Credentials. — The Committee on Credentials shall keep a correct list of all delegates from subordinate Lodges, District Deputy Grand Masters, Past Masters, Grand Representatives and others proper to be listed, in attendance upon each session of the Grand Lodge; issue tickets of admission to the floor of Grand Lodge, and make proper report to the Grand Secretary.

Sec. 1.75(e). Committee on Finance. — To the Committee on Finance shall be referred all accounts, all applications for the remission of Grand Lodge dues, assessments and fees due Grand Lodge, and all motions or resolutions for the appropriation of funds.

It shall be the duty of the Committee to name a certified public accountant to examine and audit the books of the Grand Secretary, the Grand Treasurer, and other foundations, committees and bodies over which the Grand Lodge has jurisdiction. The Chairman and two members appointed by him shall constitute an investment committee which shall manage the investments in accordance with the policies laid down by the Grand Lodge. The said committee shall make suitable investment of all funds of the Grand Lodge and report its actions at each Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge.

The Committee shall prepare and cause to be distributed to the subordinate Lodges a budget of estimated receipts and expenditures for the coming year, as required for the distribution of amendments to the Methodical Digest by Sec. 1.16 hereof. This budget shall embrace such funds as may be necessary for the Masonic Home, from the general fund of the Grand Lodge and for all committees disbursing funds of the Grand Lodge.

The Committee shall also prepare and cause to be distributed to the subordinate Lodges a detailed account of the expenditures of the last Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge.

In preparing the budget, the Committee shall take into consideration all revenues, from whatever source derived, of the several organizations and committees.

The Finance Committee shall recommend and set forth in its budget compensation for and allowance of expenses of the Grand Secretary, Grand Treasurer, Grand Lecturer and other officers of the Grand Lodge for the ensuing year.

Nothing herein shall be interpreted as infringing upon the prerogative of the Grand Master to control the funds of the Grand Lodge, and the Committee may, during recess of the Grand Lodge, with the approval of the Grand Master, authorize the Grand Treasurer to increase or reduce the appropriations in the budget or make other such expenditures as may be necessary. (1992)

Sec. 1.75(f). Committee on Foreign Correspondence. — It shall be the duty of the Committee during the recess of Grand Lodge, to pursue, and if necessary, to answer all communications from corresponding Grand Lodges; and, at each Annual Communication it shall report any such correspondence, and a review of the proceedings of sister Grand Lodges. The Committee shall be paid at the close of the Communication the sum of five hundred dollars.

Sec. 1.75(g). Committee on History. — To the Committee on History shall be referred such historical sketches as may be presented by subordinate Lodges; and it shall be the duty of the Committee to examine them and report to each Annual Communication such of them as in their judgement should be published.

Sec. 1.75(h). Committee on Jurisprudence. — To the Committee on Jurisprudence shall be referred all motions or resolutions for the amendment of existing laws or the enactment of new laws, as well as all questions relating to Masonic law and usage.

Sec. 1.75(i). Committee on Legacy Membership in Perpetuity. — It shall be the duty of the Committee to evaluate procedures and implement changes in procedures as may be necessary for the efficient operation of the program. The Grand Master shall annually appoint one member as Chairman. The Grand Master may replace any Committee member, with the term of appointment being the balance of the term of the member being replaced. The Committee shall annually meet prior to the time of Grand Lodge and shall report to the Grand Lodge each year. (2023)

Sec. 1.75(j). Committee on Strategic Planning and Implementation. — The duties of the Committee on Strategic Planning and Implementation shall be to prepare and periodically update a five-year strategic plan and to monitor its implementation. (2009)

Sec. 1.75(k). Committee on Masonic Community Blood Program. — The Committee on the Masonic Community Blood Program shall be composed of a Chairman and the number of members specified in Sec. 1.73. One of the committee members shall serve as Secretary for the purpose of consolidating committee records, keeping minutes, and generally acting as a focal point for correspondence dealing with the Masonic Community Blood Program. Masonic districts within the Commonwealth of Virginia may be grouped by regions as determined from time to time at the discretion of the Committee, to facilitate administration

of the Program. Each region shall be represented by a committee member who shall serve as a coordinator of Masonic participation in Masonic Community Blood Program activities of the region. (1990)

Sec. 1.75(l). Committee on Masonic Education. — The members of this Committee shall be appointed from each of the general geographical divisions of the state who shall be Division Provosts and, in addition, the Chairman shall be the Grand Provost, who shall not represent any division. Such other members may be appointed to meet the special needs of the Masonic Education program. The Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Wardens, Grand Treasurer, Grand Secretary and the Grand Deacons shall be ex-officio, members of the Committee with voice and vote.

This Committee shall conduct such conferences, seminars and forums of Masonic education as it may deem appropriate or as the Grand Master may order. It shall review and approve all publications of the Grand Lodge concerning Masonic education with the exception of the Virginia Masonic Herald. (2007)

Sec. 1.75(m). Masonic Herald Publications Board. — The function of this Board, composed of six members and an Editor appointed by the Grand Master, is to prepare and publish the Virginia Masonic Herald in printed format and, as feasible, electronically. The purpose of the Herald is to periodically inform Virginia Masons of educational matters and events occurring in Virginia and other Grand Jurisdictions as well as matters of general Masonic interest. The frequency of the Herald will be as directed by the Grand Master. The Grand Master and Grand Secretary serve as ex-officio members of the Board. (2005)

Sec. 1.75(n). Committee on Masonic Home Ambassadors. — This committee shall be composed of a Chairman and twelve (12) Regional Committeemen assigned to the respective geographical divisions as defined in Section 1.102 of the Methodical Digest. They shall represent the Masonic Home of Virginia, providing a viable link of communication between the Grand Lodge, Masonic Home, and the Brethren. They shall conduct conferences and seminars promoting the Masonic Home. They shall offer assistance to those Brethren, wives, and widows who may need the services of the Masonic Home. The Chairman shall call meetings as necessary to ensure the continuity of effort and support. (2004)

Sec. 1.75(o). Committee on Masonic Relief. — It shall be the duty of the Committee on Masonic Relief to control, manage and dispense the Grand Charity Fund, by making such appropriations as to it may seem proper to the several subordinate Lodges in this Grand Jurisdiction to aid them in caring for such indigent Master Masons and widows and orphans of deceased Master Masons, as such subordinate Lodges may be called upon to assist; provided such Lodge is financially unable to render the necessary assistance.

The said Committee shall submit a statement of receipts and disbursements to the Committee on Finance for auditing. At the same time the Committee shall also make its request for funds for operation during the ensuing Masonic year.

Sec. 1.75(p). Committee on Memorials. — It shall be the duty of the Committee on Memorials to prepare and present to the Grand Lodge appropriate memoirs of deceased Masons, who, in their judgement, are entitled to such recognition.

Sec. 1.75(q). Committee on Property. — This Committee shall manage and care for the properties of the Grand Lodge; keep such property properly insured, and from time to time make such repairs and perform such maintenance operations as may be necessary and covered in the Grand Lodge budget or authorized by the Grand Master. (1973)

Sec. 1.75(r). Committee on Work. — This Committee shall be composed of the Grand Lecturer, who by virtue of his office shall be its Chairman, and the several Lecturers appointed in the manner herein set forth (and the Assistant Grand Lecturer, if he be appointed.) It shall be endowed with the functions of Custodians of the Work. The Committee shall meet on the Wednesday preceding the opening of each Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, in the same city in which the Communication will be held, for the purpose of exemplifying the work and the consideration of all matters concerning the ritual and ceremonies which may be referred to it. The members of the Committee who attend the said meeting shall be paid their expenses by the Grand Treasurer.

The Grand Lecturer and his duly authorized representatives shall be charged with the duty of examining those seeking to qualify for any certificate of proficiency in the work, as taught by the Committee, which is required by Grand Lodge law. Authorization by the Grand Lecturer to conduct such examinations shall include the right to issue certificates. (1999)

DECISIONS

1908 D-8, §-1.75(r)

No Mason has right to attend class receiving instruction from a Lecturer on any of the three degrees unless he shall be in good standing. (S. J. Quinn)

1924 D-4, §-1.75(r)

An independent club of Masons does not have the right to conduct classes of instruction or confer degrees. The Grand Lodge has, through its agencies, provided means of instruction. The Grand Lodge recognizes Lodges but not clubs. (J. H. Price)

1950 D-8, §-1.75(r)

The Grand Lodge Committee on Work are the custodians of our ritual and the ritual as propagated by the Grand Lecturer and his Committee on Work is the official ritual of this Grand Lodge. (A. D. Smith, Jr.)

1994 D-13, §-1.75(r), §-1.93

Reprimanded Worshipful Master for authorizing, publishing, and using a Memorial Service and Funeral Service which had not been approved by the Grand Lodge, Grand Lecturer or Committee on Work. (T. F. May)

Sec. 1.75(s). Committee on Youth. — This Committee shall be composed of at least one member from each of the Masonic divisions specified in Section 1.102 and a Chairman not representing any specific division but directly responsible to the Grand Master. It shall be the duty of the Committee on Youth to promote and foster youth activities consistent with the principles of the Grand Lodge and the directives of the Grand Master, and to encourage the promotion and fostering of such youth activities by the subordinate Lodges. (1981)

Sec. 1.75(t). Committee on Membership. — The Committee on Membership shall develop and assist with the implementation of a Grand Lodge Membership Program to promote the attraction of new members and the retention of existing members. (2009)

Sec. 1.75(u). Committee on Lodge Services. — The Committee on Lodge Services shall proactively serve as a conduit to the resources necessary to build healthy and vibrant Lodges, such resources may include: Counsel, wisdom, and guidance from the Grand Master and the Grand Lodge Officers; Direct assistance from Grand Lodge Committees; Information and technical assistance from the Grand Lodge staff; Programs and Publications; and, a pathway to link and connect with members around the Commonwealth, who possess critical skill sets. (2020)

Sec. 1.75(v). Committee on Communications. — The Committee on Communications shall develop a program to increase both fraternal and public understanding of Virginia Freemasonry, manage Grand Lodge social media and website postings, create a more favorable opinion of the organization through press releases, print and electronic articles, and interviews, provide plans to the Grand Master for Masonic participation in historic anniversaries and other significant public events, and assist Lodges to promote their activities in their local communities. This Committee will maintain and enhance the Grand Lodge of Virginia's websites and maintain guidelines to facilitate the Lodges in establishing their presence on the internet. (2025)

Sec. 1.75(w). Committee on Information Technology. — The Committee on Information Technology shall be referred all matters pertaining to the use of computers and other electronic equipment including software as well as new technologies of potential interest to the Grand Lodge. This committee will support the Grand Master and Grand Lodge Officers on matters involving membership databases, workplace technologies, and as may be directed by the Grand Master. (2025)

Sec. 1.75(x). Committee on Masonic Trials. — To the Committee on Masonic Trials shall be referred all cases deemed by the Grand Master to warrant the conduct of a Masonic trial. The members of that committee shall choose from among the Committee's membership a capable and experienced Chairman for each trial commission to serve until the duties of said trial commission are concluded. (2022)

Sec. 1.75(y). Committee on Security. — To the Committee on Security shall be referred all accusations of Masonic offenses for investigation and report of the results thereof, including formulation of appropriately worded charges and specification if applicable. The Committee shall perform such other duties as the Grand Master may assign to it. (2022)

COMMITTEE ON WORK AND LECTURERS

Sec. 1.76. Appointments to the Committee on Work. — At each Annual Communication, or as soon thereafter as is practical, the Grand Master shall appoint a Grand Lecturer. He shall also appoint an appropriate number of Lecturers for each general

geographical division of the state. The Grand Master may also appoint an Assistant Grand Lecturer. (1975)

Sec. 1.77. Differences Among Members of Committee as to Work. — If any irreconcilable differences in the work shall be discovered among the members of the Committee on Work, they shall report the same to the Grand Lodge in such a manner as may enable it to act intelligently upon the said difference.

Sec. 1.78. Assignment of Lecturers to Masonic Districts. — The Lecturers appointed in accordance with Section 1.76 shall be assigned the Lodges in Masonic districts, and all of the Lodges in a Masonic district shall be assigned to the same Lecturer. The Lecturers shall perform such duties in the districts assigned as the Grand Lecturer may direct including, but not limited to, the conducting of ritualistic schools of instruction, the examination of those seeking Certificates of Proficiency in the ritual required by Grand Lodge law, and generally assisting in the propagation of the Masonic ritual in a pure and unimpaired form. (1975)

Sec. 1.79. Grand Lecturer to Make Appointments for Instruction, Notice to be Given. — The Grand Lecturer may make appointments for imparting instruction in the work at convenient places within the assigned area of any Lecturer or Lecturers. Timely notice of such appointments shall be given to the District Deputy Grand Masters, the District Instructors of Work and by them to the officers of the several Lodges. (1973)

Sec. 1.80. Appointment of Substitute for Grand Lecturer. — If the Grand Lecturer shall, for any reason, be unable to fulfill such appointment, or when requested by a Lodge to visit and instruct it, shall be unable to do so, he may designate the Lecturer assigned to the district in which the Lodge is situated, or some other member of the Committee on Work as his substitute. (1973)

Sec. 1.81. District Instructors. — In any Masonic district in which the Grand Lecturer may deem it necessary and expedient, and on his recommendation, the Grand Master may appoint some Brother, well skilled in the ritual, to serve as District Instructor of Work for the Masonic district in which he shall reside.

Each Brother recommended for appointment as District Instructor shall present himself to the Grand Lecturer or any designated member of the Committee on Work for examination on his proficiency in the ritual requirements for the Instructor's Certificate. Upon satisfactory completion of such examination, he shall be issued a certificate of appointment. (2019)

It shall be the duty of the District Instructor of Work to assist the Grand Lecturer and the Lecturer assigned to his district in the performance of their duties. He shall not be a member of the Committee on Work by virtue of his appointment. The Grand Lecturer may authorize a District Instructor to examine Wardens and others on their proficiency and recommend to the Committee on Work member assigned to his district to issue the certificate required by Sec. 2.34 of the Methodical Digest, but any certificate issued without such authorization shall be null and void. (2019)

DECISIONS

1980 D-9, §-1.81

Section 1.81 of the Virginia Methodical Digest set aside to fill the immediate need of a District Instructor of Work. Brother appointed upon recommendation of the Grand Lecturer and the assurance that the Brother appointed to serve would, as soon as possible, become proficient in the ritual. Brother appointed was experienced District Educational Officer and respected by the membership in district to be served. (M. L. Lacy, II)

Sec. 1.82. Grand Lecturer to Report Annually. — The Grand Lecturer shall, at each Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, submit a report of his work and that of his substitutes for the preceding year.

THE TRUSTEES OF THE GRAND LODGE

Sec. 1.83. Trustees of the Grand Lodge. — There shall be five (5) Trustees of the Grand Lodge who shall be appointed by the Grand Master at the Annual Communication or as soon thereafter as is practical. After their appointment these Trustees shall be certified to the proper court of record and when confirmed by such court shall hold legal title to the property of the Grand Lodge in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. (1972)

DECISIONS

1953 D-13, §-1.83

Neither the Methodical Digest nor the statute laws of Virginia require authority from a court of competent jurisdiction in order that the Trustees of Grand Lodge may transfer securities registered in their names. (C. M. Lankford, Jr.)

Sec. 1.84. Trustees Shall Make Annual Report, etc. — At each Grand Annual Communication the Trustees shall make a report in regard to the property held by them, and give information of the death or removal of any of their number in order that application may be made to the proper authorities for the appointment of a successor.

MASONIC DISTRICTS AND DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTERS

Sec. 1.85. Masonic Districts and District Deputy Grand Masters. — The subordinate Lodges shall be distributed in Masonic districts. The Lodges composing any Masonic district shall be as designated by the Grand Lodge from time to time and any changes therein shall be published in the Proceedings after each Annual Communication.

For each Masonic district established by the Grand Lodge a District Deputy Grand Master shall be appointed at each Annual Communication by the Grand Master, after consultation with the Deputy Grand Master, the Grand Wardens, and Grand Lecturer or members of the Committee on Work, if he deems such consultation desirable.

DECISIONS

1964 D-19, §-1.85

Lodge moving from one district to another becomes a part of the Masonic district into which it moves. Masonic districts are administrative units and are not sectional political entities which cannot be changed if the best interests of Masonry are served by such changes. (J. P. Stokes)

Sec. 1.86. Subordinate Lodges Shall Make Recommendation For District Deputy Grand Master. — Recommendations for the office of District Deputy Grand Master may be made by one of the following methods:

- a) Recommendations in Districts using an alternating system of Lodges in that District; or
- b) Recommendations by each subordinate Lodge not in a District using an alternating system.

Each recommendation for the office of District Deputy Grand Master shall be of a Brother and an alternate, possessing the qualifications set forth in Sec. 1.87 and reported to the Grand Lodge (Secretary) on or before March 1 of each year.

In Districts employing the alternating system, recommendations by the recommending Lodge shall be made to the other Lodges in that District by January 31 of each year. Each Lodge in those Districts shall act on and communicate their action to the recommending Lodge by February 28. Any Lodge not responding by the designated date shall be deemed to have consented to the recommendation.

The District Deputy Grand Master is the personal representative of the Grand Master and the recommendation required under this Section does not bind the Grand Master to appoint any Brother so recommended nor does it give any Lodge the right to demand an appointment which is not agreeable to the Grand Master. (2024)

DECISIONS

1905 D-51, §-1.86

The District Deputy Grand Master is the personal representative of the Grand Master, who seeks the advice of constituent Lodges as to proper appointments. Such information is merely for his own use and carries no right of any Lodge to claim or demand the appointment of any particular party, or to rotate the appointment. (T. N. Davis)

1953 D-9, §-1.86

The law requiring Lodges to make recommendations for District Deputy Grand Master is mandatory. (C. M. Lankford, Jr.)

Sec. 1.87. Qualifications of District Deputy Grand Master. — Every District Deputy Grand Master must be a Master or Past Master of a Lodge, and should be well skilled in the laws of the Grand Lodge of Virginia and in the work of all degrees as taught by the Grand Lodge.

Sec. 1.88. Appointment of District Deputy Grand Master May Be Revoked at Any Time, and Successor Appointed. — The Grand Master may, at any time, revoke the appointment of the District Deputy Grand Master; and, in the event of a vacancy from this or any other cause, he may appoint a successor.

Sec. 1.89. Warrant to be Furnished Each District Deputy Grand Master. — Each District Deputy Grand Master shall be furnished with a warrant of his appointment, signed by the Grand Master and attested by the Grand Secretary, with the Seal of the Grand Lodge affixed, which warrant he shall promptly return to the Grand Secretary if he shall decline the office.

Sec. 1.90. Name of District Deputy Grand Master to be Communicated to Each Lodge in His District. — The Grand Secretary shall communicate to each Lodge the name of any Brother appointed as its District Deputy Grand Master.

Sec. 1.91. Official Visits of District Deputy Grand Master. — Each District Deputy Grand Master shall as soon after his appointment as practicable pay at least one official visit to every Lodge in his district. He may invite any other District Deputy Grand Master to pay such official visit for him.

Sec. 1.92. Notice of Annual Visit to be Given Master or Secretary; Secretary to Give Notice to Brethren; May Pay Official Visit Without Notice. — The Master or Secretary of the Lodge shall be informed of the regular annual official visit required by the preceding section of the District Deputy Grand Master, at least ten days in advance of such visit, and notice of that visit shall be given to the Brethren by the Secretary. But nothing herein contained shall be construed to limit or interfere with the right of a District Deputy Grand Master to visit officially any Lodge in his district upon shorter notice than ten days; or without any notice, when it may be proper in his opinion, to do so, in order to discharge the duties of his office.

Sec. 1.93. Duties of District Deputy Grand Master on Official Visit. — At every such visit the District Deputy Grand Master shall preside in the Lodge at all or such portion of the communication as he shall see fit, after the Lodge has been opened and he has been introduced. He shall examine the records of the Lodge to ascertain if they are regularly kept; shall inform himself as to the number of members, and whether they are generally punctual in their attendance; shall enquire whether the Lodge be in a flourishing or declining state; shall point out any errors he may observe in their conduct or manner of working and shall use every effort to enforce a conformity to the work and compliance with the laws of the Grand Lodge. He shall report all irregularities in either work or conduct to the Grand Master. He shall instruct the Brethren in every particular wherein he may conceive them to require information; shall recommend attention to the moral and benevolent principles of our Institution; caution them in regard to the admission of candidates, and urge a proper representation of their Lodge at every meeting of the Grand Lodge.

A District Deputy Grand Master is the personal representative of the Grand Master in his own Masonic district and therein is entitled to precedence and vested with superior authority, except during the Communications of the Grand Lodge or the presence of the Grand Master in his district. He shall assist any commission or committee appointed by the Grand Master to investigate any condition or subject within his Masonic district.

DECISIONS

1994 D-13, §-1.75(u), §-1.93

Reprimanded the District Deputy Grand Master of the district in which the Master's Lodge was located and ordered him to show cause why his appointment should not be revoked for his dereliction in having full knowledge of the use of an unauthorized Memorial Service and Funeral Service. (T. F. May)

Sec. 1.94. Procedure of District Deputy Grand Master When Masonic Error or Evil is Discovered and When Meeting Place of Lodge is Not a Proper One. — When any District Deputy Grand Master shall discover in his district any Masonic error or evil, whether it appertain to an individual or to a Lodge, he shall immediately endeavor, by Masonic means, to arrest its progress; and if he shall judge it expedient, he shall forthwith forward to the Grand Master full information of the whole subject. When he shall find that a Lodge holds its meetings where there is danger of its work being seen or heard by those without, it is his imperative duty, if it does not at once remedy the evil, immediately to inform the Grand Master of the fact.

DECISIONS

1955 D-5, §-1.94

There is no objection to a Lodge meeting on the first floor of a building provided all safeguards as to security are taken. (H. Reid)

1957 D-4, §-1.94

1968 D-23, §-1.94

Properly constructed Lodge rooms on first floor are satisfactory if designed to safeguard the transaction of business and the conferring of degrees. (W. V. Fentress and H. B. Green)

1960 D-20, §-1.94

Grand Master ruled that fire escape to Lodge room should be suspended rather than anchored to ground. Committee of Past Grand Masters commented that the protection of the ritual should be primary consideration but that fire escapes must conform to local and state fire laws. (S. D. Forbes)

Sec. 1.95. Questions of Masonic Law or Usage Shall be Submitted to the Grand Master Only Through the District Deputy Grand Master. — Except in matters of emergent necessity, no Lodge, or member of a Lodge, shall submit any question of Masonic law or usage to the Grand Master, except through the District Deputy Grand Master, and he may answer the question with his decision thereon, or at his option, forward the same with his opinion and views thereon to the Grand Master for his decision.

The District Deputy Grand Master is not empowered to issue dispensations for any purpose. However, he may grant limited dispensations to approve changes of meeting days, dates, and times caused by adverse weather or other local conditions as specified in Edict 1-1996. He may also grant limited dispensations to approve changes in meeting days, dates, and times caused by schedule conflicts between subordinate Lodges for, but not limited to, visits of the Grand Master, Area Leadership Conferences, and Ritual Schools conducted by the Grand Lecturer or his representative. (1999)

DECISIONS

1947 D-5, §-1.95, §-1.96

Grand Master authorized special election on direct request from Lodge and found that his authorization conflicted with a decision of his D.D.G.M. However, since peace and harmony prevailed in the matter covered, the Master and Secretary were admonished to submit all questions through the D.D.G.M. and abide by his decision until reversed. (T. P. Coleman)

1953 D-11, §-1.95

A request for dispensation should bear the Seal of the requesting Lodge and be forwarded to the D.D.G.M. who should then forward it to the Grand Master with his recommendation. (C. M. Lankford, Jr.)

1991 D-7, §-1.95

The District Deputy Grand Master is not empowered to set aside the law, only the Grand Master has such authority. (G. W. Farley)

Sec. 1.96. Decisions of District Deputy Grand Master Must Be Obeyed Until Reversed by Appeal. — Every decision of the District Deputy Grand Master must be obeyed until reversed; but from every such decision an appeal through him may be taken to the Grand Master.

DECISIONS

1905 D-22, §-1.96

Avouchment for a petitioner is a personal privilege and question of recommending a worthy petitioner should not be ruled on by a Grand Master since it would be an assumption of paternalism inconsistent with the spirit of Masonry. (T. N. Davis)

1947 D-5, §-1.95, §-1.96

Grand Master authorized special election on direct request from Lodge and found that his authorization conflicted with a decision of his D.D.G.M. However, since peace and harmony prevailed in the matter covered, the Master and Secretary were admonished to submit all questions through the D.D.G.M. and abide by his decision until reversed. (T. P. Coleman)

1948 D-1, §-1.96

District Deputy Grand Master and the Grand Master are not required to rule on moot questions of Masonic law and usage. Only questions arising from actual operation of law or usage should be submitted for interpretation and decision, and then through regular channels as provided by law. (H. R. Stephenson)

Sec. 1.97. Duty of District Deputy Grand Master With Regard to By-Laws. — The District Deputy Grand Master, upon entering upon the duties of his office for the first time in any district, shall examine the by-laws of every Lodge in his jurisdiction. All new by-laws and amendments to existing by-laws shall be certified by the Secretary of the Lodge and submitted, on the form issued by the Grand Lodge, to the District Deputy Grand Master for his approval. After examining such by-laws or amendments for obvious defects he shall submit them to the Grand Master. The by-laws or amendments shall be effective from the date of the Grand Master's approval, unless other effective date is specified therein, and when approved cannot be suspended by the Lodge but shall remain in full force and effect until amended and approved as herein provided. (1996)

DECISIONS

1988 D-16, §-1.97, §-2.85

2000 D-2, §-1.97, §-2.85

Salaries of the Secretary and Treasurer of the Lodge were revised by resolution adopted by a Lodge. This resolution ordered expunged from the record and the proper method of revising the by-laws used in accomplishing the salary changes. (D. M. Robey and W. L. Holliday)

1991 D-6, §-1.97

Removal of meeting site of two Lodges in District 15-A to a site in another District was not approved. (G. W. Farley)

Sec. 1.98. Expenses of District Deputy Grand Master When Visiting Lodges. — The necessary expenses of the District Deputy Grand Master in visiting the Lodges must be paid by the several Lodges.

DECISIONS

1994 D-2, §-1.98

The necessary expenses of the District Deputy Grand Master in visiting the Lodges, within his district, must be paid by the several Lodges. Such expenses may include mileage, overnight accommodations, and the cost of meals. (W. H. Morlock)

Sec. 1.99. District Deputy Grand Master Shall Take Possession of Property of Any Extinct Lodge; How He Shall Dispose of it, etc. — The District Deputy Grand Master shall take possession of all the property of any extinct Lodge in his district and shall forward to the Grand Secretary its Charter, Seal, jewels and records, and make sale of its furniture and other marketable effects. He shall require from the officers of such Lodge a report of all arrearages of dues from members, and other debts, if any be due to the Lodge, and shall collect the same as far as may be practicable. All monies received by him after payment of the debts of the Lodge, shall be paid to the Grand Treasurer with a specific statement of the sources from which they have been received.

Sec. 1.100. Annual Report of District Deputy Grand Master. — At least ten days before the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge each District Deputy Grand Master shall forward to the Grand Secretary his annual report to the Grand Lodge, embracing a succinct statement of his official actions during the year.

In addition to the annual report required by this Section, the District Deputy Grand Master shall promptly report each official visit to the Lodges in his district to the Grand Master on forms furnished for that purpose.

Sec. 1.101. District Deputy Grand Master Who Fails to Visit or Report Ineligible for Reappointment, with Exceptions. — A District Deputy Grand Master who shall fail to visit the Lodges in his district and make a report of such visit to the Grand Master on forms provided for that purpose, shall not be reappointed during the succeeding year unless the Grand Master, for good and sufficient reasons, shall excuse his delinquency. (1973)

Sec. 1.102. Regional Assignment of Districts. — The general geographical divisions of the state are as follows:

- I — Southwest Region, Districts 47 – 50 (2018)
- II — Western Region, Districts 40, 42 – 45
- III — Blue Ridge Region, Districts 22, 24, 39, and 41 (2025)
- IV — Southside Region, Districts 25, 27, 37, and 38 (2018)
- V — Piedmont and Valley Region, Districts 6, 10, 17, and 19 – 21 (2018)
- VI — Northern Region, Districts 2 – 5, and 7
- VII — Northeastern Region, Districts 1A and 1B (2018)
- VIII — Central Coast Region, Districts 8, 9, and 11
- IX — Richmond Metro and Central Region, Districts 15A, 15B, 16, and 29 (2018)
- X — Hampton Roads Region, Districts 14, and 31, 33, and 57 (2018)
- XI — Tidewater Region, Districts 35, 36, and 56 (2018)
- XII — Eastern Shore Region, District 12 (2011)
- R — Research (2019)

Sec. 1.103. District Educational Officers. — The Grand Provost may recommend to the Grand Master a Brother who is particularly skilled in Masonic education to serve as the District Educational Officer. The Grand Master may appoint any Brother as the District Educational Officer of each Masonic district. Each District Educational Officer so appointed will be issued a certificate of appointment so attesting.

It shall be the duty of the District Educational Officer to hold District Seminars on Masonic education and generally assist the Grand Provost and the Committee on Masonic Education and Publications with the advancement of Masonic education. Each District Educational Officer must conduct a minimum of one training class for Lodge officers prior to September 1 of each Masonic year. The training will be conducted in accordance with the material developed by the Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Education and approved by the Grand Master. The date(s), times, and locations of such classes shall be communicated by the District Educational Officers to the Lodges in his respective Masonic district.

The District Educational Officer will visit each Lodge in the district in which he is appointed and report to the Grand Provost the findings of his visit. (2014)

Section 2.00

The Subordinate Lodge

Sec. 2.01. Definition of a Lodge. — A Lodge is an organized body of Masons authorized by a Charter from the Grand Lodge or a dispensation from the Grand Master, to make and admit Freemasons. Any Lodge declared extinct can be revived only by action of the Grand Lodge.

Sec. 2.02. Where Charter or Dispensation Must Be During Its Session. — The Charter or dispensation must always be in the Lodge room or ante-room during the session of the Lodge. If any such meeting is held without the presence of the Charter or dispensation, the minutes thereof cannot be considered as the record of a Masonic Lodge and must be expunged from the records of the Lodge.

Sec. 2.03. Sessions of a Lodge to be Held in the Master Mason's Degree Except for Work, etc., in First and Second Degrees. — Every Lodge is required to hold its session in the Master Mason's Degree, except for the purpose of work or instruction in the First and Second Degrees. [Refer: E-4-1989]

Sec. 2.04. Stationed Officers of a Lodge, in Absence of Master, etc., Who May Preside; When a Past Master May Preside. — The Worshipful Master and the Wardens are the stationed officers of the Lodge. If the Master be absent, his station shall be occupied by the Senior Warden, if present; or if he be absent, by the Junior Warden; or if either Warden be present, a Past Master may preside at his request. If any other officer be absent his place may be temporarily filled by any Master Mason designated by the acting Master.

Sec. 2.05. Lodge Cannot be Opened or Stand Open Without Presence of a Stationed Officer with Exceptions. — A Lodge cannot be opened or stand open without the presence of one of its stationed officers except during the election of a Master. For the purpose of burying a deceased Brother, a Lodge, in the unavoidable absence of its Master and Wardens, may be opened by a Past Master or Past Warden of the Lodge, or in their absence by any Past Master or Past Warden affiliated in any Lodge under this Grand Jurisdiction.

DECISIONS

1890 D-3, §-2.05, §-2.53

That the Wardens of a Lodge, in their regular order of succession, have all of the powers of the Worshipful Master in his absence from the Lodge. (R. T. Craighill)

1905 D-36, §-2.05

Lodge stands legally open during the temporary absence of all stationed officers when the Master is nominated to succeed himself and both Wardens are also in nomination. The ante-room to which they retire is a part of every well conducted Lodge room. (T. N. Davis)

1974 D-5, §-2.05

1995 D-20, §-2.05

1997 D-10, §-2.05

Set aside a portion of Section 2.05 and permitted a Lodge to hold a stated communication without the presence of one of the stationed officers of the Lodge, provided that the District Deputy or a capable Past Master of the Lodge presided. (W. C. Vaughan, W. H. Morlock and A. W. Adkins)

Sec. 2.05(a). Worshipful Master May Open Lodge of Sorrow. — The Worshipful Master of any Virginia Lodge may, if he elects to do so, open a Lodge of Sorrow, using the ceremony prescribed in the Manual of Ceremonies for opening and closing a Lodge of Sorrow. He must do this at a stated or called communication, either at the beginning of, or during, his term of office. He shall close the Lodge of Sorrow, using the same ceremony in the Manual of Ceremonies, at the last stated communication during his tenure, unless previously closed at his discretion. During the time the Lodge of Sorrow shall remain open, all traditional funeral or memorial services may be conducted without separate opening and closing ceremonies. Minutes of each funeral or memorial service conducted in such Lodge of Sorrow shall be prepared as though the Lodge had been opened and closed, the reading thereof being done at the following stated communication of the Lodge and shall then be signed by the Master and Secretary after they are approved. (2012)

Sec. 2.06. Lodge Must Always Be Tiled by a Master Mason. — During every communication the Lodge must be tiled by a Master Mason.

Sec. 2.07. Lodge to Practice Ancient York Ritual. — Every Lodge shall practice the Ancient York Ritual as taught by the Grand Lodge Committee on Work, who are its custodians. The said Ancient York Ritual consists of the Degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason. The ritual of these degrees includes both the floor work and the explanatory lectures as indispensable parts thereof. It is not in the power of the Worshipful Master or any other officer of the Lodge or any of its Brethren to omit any part of such ritual in conferring the degrees.

The ceremonies of opening, calling from labor to refreshment and from refreshment to labor, dispensing with the Master Masons' Lodge for the purpose of opening a Lodge of inferior degree for work or instruction, resuming labor in the Master Masons' Lodge and closing including the prayers and the charge printed in the Virginia Text Book are all a part of the Ancient York Ritual. No Lodge shall be opened or closed in any other manner than as required by the Ancient York Ritual prescribed by this section. [Refer: E-4-1989]

DECISIONS

1905 D-7, §-2.07

The Ancient York Ritual concedes no degree called the third. Its proper name is the Degree of Master Mason. (T. N. Davis)

1905 D-14, §-1.04, §-2.07

In conferring the degrees the Holy Bible must stand open at the respective references designated for each degree. (T. N. Davis)

1905 D-16, §-2.07

Master must use “due form” opening of a Lodge on First and Second Degrees. Such Lodges cannot simply be declared open. (T. N. Davis)

1905 D-27, §-2.07

The explanatory lectures in the degrees are part thereof, and cannot be omitted and should not be postponed for a more convenient season. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-29, §-2.07

The statement that the charge required by the Grand Lodge to be read in each degree is without prejudice to any Brother who delivers it accurately from memory. (T. N. Davis)

1909 D-15, §-2.07

Lodge cannot be called off to some future date. (J. W. Eggleston)

1910 D-12, §-2.07

The use of any particular ritual by a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction is regulated by its own laws but does not render its members unrecognizable in Virginia. (J. W. Eggleston)

1927 D-10, §-2.07

The prayers printed in the Text Book should be used at the opening and closing of Lodges. (B. W. Beach)

1961 D-19, §-2.07

A Masonic club is not a Lodge and the exemplification of a degree by it is classed as entertainment and requires no dispensation. Committee Comment: The protection of the ritual should be the primary concern of every Mason and the actual conferring of a degree using another Grand Lodge ritual is not permitted without dispensation. This decision as rendered is approved. (C. M. Flintoff)

1961 D-20, §-2.07

Request for dispensation was refused and ruling issued that a Virginia Lodge could not hold a joint communication with a Lodge in another state, opening with one ritual and closing with the other ritual. (C. M. Flintoff)

Sec. 2.08. Prescribing the Books and Records of a Lodge. — Every Lodge shall keep books containing its by-laws, the names of its members and minutes of the transactions of each communication or as much thereof as may be properly reduced to writing without divulging any of the secrets of Freemasonry.

Sec. 2.09. Stated Communication Should Be Held Each Month. — Every Lodge shall, if practicable, hold at least one stated communication in each month. The date, hour and place of such stated meeting shall be stated in the by-laws of the Lodge and it shall be improper for the Worshipful Master to open his Lodge at an earlier hour than that specified without a limited dispensation from the District Deputy Grand Master. By-laws of Lodges which state that stated communications shall be held on the festivals of St. John the Baptist or St. John the Evangelist may when June 24 or December 27 fall on a Sunday, hold these communications on the Saturday preceding or the Monday immediately following these dates. The words “if practicable,” shall be construed to mean that the said communication can be held with due effort. The Lodge cannot be called off because of weather conditions which are generally normal. No Lodge shall hold a communication, stated or special, except for funerals, while the Grand Lodge is assembled in Annual Communication. (1996)

DECISIONS

1908 D-29, §-2.09

Held Lodge stated communication to be illegal when only Senior Warden, Secretary and one member were present, Secretary resigned, accepted and demitted; Senior Warden resigned, accepted and demitted. The minutes of the communication were ordered expunged. (S. J. Quinn)

1910 D-8, §-2.09

Lodge cannot be called off for the heated term. The phrase if practical in the law means if it can be done by due effort. At least one stated communication must be held each month. (J. W. Eggleston)

1913 D-1, §-2.09

It is improper for Master to open Lodge before the hour specified in its by-laws but such early opening does not affect the Masonic status of candidates initiated, passed or raised at such communication if no objection was made at the time. (W. L. Andrews)

1933 D-26, §-2.09

Lodge cannot make attendance at a meeting contingent upon payment of charge, tax or fee for lunches, transportation or any other purpose; such practice being foreign to Masonic custom and tradition. (H. K. Green)

1936 D-3, §-2.09, §-2.35

If the communication on St. John's Night is a stated communication of the Lodge and any business proper to be transacted may be done at that meeting. (T. W. Hooper)

1960 D-8, §-2.09

(a) It is improper to have a meeting of a Master Masons' Association or any other organization in conjunction with a stated communication of a Lodge.

(b) Lodge may hold subscription dinner to help raise funds to pay for Temple provided the sale of tickets is conducted with propriety. (S. D. Forbes)

1967 D-3, §-2.09, §-2.48

Any business normally transacted at a stated communication, including the conferral of degrees, may be done by the Master without previous notice. Master should give "timely notice" on petitions for initiation, but the "previous notice" referred to in the charge to the Master is fully complied with when the petition of a non-Mason is read at one stated communication and laid over until the next. (G. E. Kidd)

1978 D-4, §-2.09

Recommended compliance with Section 2.09 of the Virginia Methodical Digest despite unavoidable circumstances cancelling stated communications of subordinate Lodge. Irregularity in Lodge's minutes healed by letter read before the Lodge and spread upon its minutes. (J. W. Laningham)

1978 D-7, §-2.09

Lodge reprimanded for holding stated communication during Grand Annual Communication of this Grand Lodge. (J. W. Laningham)

1988 D-1, §-2.09

Due to occupational necessity of the membership permission to dispense with stated communications of the Lodge during July and August was granted rather than have the Lodge give up its Charter. (D. M. Robey)

1994 D-25, §-2.09, §-2.46

Kerns Lodge No. 143 had only eleven stated communications due to March 1993 meeting cancelled because of snow. Master reprimanded but action healed. (W. H. Morlock)

Sec. 2.09(a). Joint Communication Authorized to receive Official Visit of the Grand Master. — Authorization is granted to each Lodge to meet in joint communication with the approval of the respective District Deputy Grand Master for the purpose of receiving the Grand Master.

The District Deputy Grand Master shall convey to each Lodge in his district the place and date of the meeting to be held for the purpose of receiving the Grand Master. The District Deputy is given authority to allow the Lodges to meet in a place other than the usual meeting place of the host Lodge if expedient to accommodate the attendance expected. He is also charged to see that the minutes of the meeting are properly documented; that copies are sent to each Lodge, the Grand Master, and the Grand Secretary. It is recommended that one Secretary be designated to take the minutes for the joint meeting. (2008) [Refer: E-4-2008]

Sec. 2.10. A Lodge Cannot Be Incorporated; Shall be Suspended for Accepting a Charter from the State. — It is inexpedient and improper for any Masonic Lodge to be incorporated, and any Lodge hereafter asking or accepting a Charter from the state shall be suspended by the Grand Master.

DECISIONS

1956 D-1, §-2.10

Grand Master ruled that establishment of Temple Corporation violated Section 2.10. Past Grand Masters report adopted by Grand Lodge stated that the legality as well as the wisdom and propriety of the use of a corporation as an instrument of ownership and management should be determined by the facts in the case and that such corporations should not be formed without the consent and approval of the Grand Master. (W. J. McMahon)

1990 D-1, §-1.42, §-2.10

By-laws and rules of any Temple Corporation must comply with Masonic law. (C. F. Cobbs)

Sec. 2.11. Application to Masonic Bodies for Assistance to Any Masonic Enterprise or Charity. — All Lodges are forbidden to make application to Masonic bodies in this or any other Grand Jurisdiction for assistance to any enterprise, Masonic or otherwise, or any charity within this Grand Jurisdiction without permission of the Grand Master.

DECISIONS

1899 D-8, §-2.11

It is illegal and un-Masonic for any Lodge to endorse the begging circular of a church. No Lodge has the right to endorse any undertaking, no matter how meritorious. Its Seal should never be used upon any other than strictly Masonic papers and documents. (R. T. W. Duke)

1907 D-1, §-2.11

Permission refused Lodge to solicit contributions outside Virginia for the erection of Washington Memorial Masonic Temple in Fredericksburg as being contrary to the traditions of the Grand Lodge of Virginia and setting a bad precedent. (K. Kemper)

1908 D-10, §-2.11

Lodge should not send out post cards soliciting aid for needy member or other person having claim on Lodge. Masonry is a family and soliciting aid for a member is a matter to be kept in the privacy of the Lodge room. (S. J. Quinn)

1914 D-2, §-2.11

Permission denied to solicit funds by circular letter to the Craft for a building debt and Lodges should not build Lodge room beyond their ability to pay. (W. L. Andrews)

1933 D-16, §-2.11

It is a violation of Masonic law and the rules and customs of Masonry for a Lodge to solicit support by circular letter for legislation at the coming session of Grand Lodge. (H. K. Green)

1950 D-11, §-2.11, §-2.30

Lodge can issue mortgage bonds and sell them to Masons who are members of Lodges other than the issuing Lodge so long as such sale is not an obvious attempt to circumvent the provisions of Masonic law concerning solicitation of funds. (A. D. Smith, Jr.)

1953 D-3, §-2.11

A non-Mason may contribute to a Masonic Temple Building Fund. (C. M. Lankford, Jr.)

1957 D-9, §-2.11

It is improper for a Lodge to send printed copy of its history to another Lodge offering it for sale, but offering to pay return postage if solicited Lodge did not wish to purchase book. This is contrary to Section 2.11 (W. V. Fentress)

1958 D-2, §-2.11, §-2.12

Lodge may have subscription dinner, sell tickets, and use proceeds for Temple furnishings, provided it does not solicit attendance by advertising or the sale of tickets in an offensive manner and provided further that no door prizes or other gifts are distributed in a manner that would violate Section 2.11. (A. B. Gay)

1964 D-5, §-2.11

Pledges for building fund may be solicited only from members of the Lodge erecting the building. No solicitation shall be made of sojourning Masons residing in the vicinity or of non-Masons who may be interested. Unsolicited gifts may be accepted from anyone. (J. P. Stokes)

1966 D-6, §-2.11

Proceeds of a dinner dance may be used to retire indebtedness of a Lodge. (W. A. Porter)

1968 D-12, §-2.11

Instructed Virginia Lodges to disregard appeal for funds from a square club of the Philippines to establish reading room in Vung Tau, Vietnam. (H. B. Green)

1968 D-18, §-2.11

The right of a Lodge to control use of its property rested with its own members and the use of a Lodge building as a school does not violate the edict issued by Mt. Wor. W. A. Porter concerning Federal funds. (H. B. Green)

1988 D-17, §-2.11

Decision that it was proper for a Masonic Lodge to solicit funds from merchants in a community to be used for underprivileged children as a Community Service Project; provided 100% of the funds go for underprivileged children in the area specified by the request. (D. M. Robey)

1989 D-19, §-2.11

Allowed the establishment of a Food Bank program by a Masonic district requesting donors at the district blood drives and members at the individual Lodges to bring canned food to be distributed to the needy. (G. H. Jones, Jr.)

2003 D-10, §-2.11

Healed the action of a Lodge selling anniversary minted coins on various Virginia Masonic List Serves without permission of the Grand Master and allowed the Lodge to send a request to the Lodges within its district only (F. G. Martin, III)

Sec. 2.12. Lodges Shall Not Permit Such Lotteries, Gift Concerts, Raffles, etc. to be Held by Outside Entities in Building Under Their Control, etc. — No Lodge shall knowingly permit by an outside entity any such lottery, gift concert, gift enterprise or raffle in any building under its control, or accept the benefit of money, or other thing of value, acquired by means of any such lottery, gift concert, gift enterprise or raffle.

Appendant bodies in this Grand Jurisdiction may hold such enterprises provided they are solely to benefit charitable causes and comply fully with state and local laws. [Refer: E-1-1994]

The Masonic Home of Virginia, the Masonic Relief Fund, the Grand Lodge Scholarship Fund, the VACHIP (Child ID) and the Grand Lodge Library Museum, and the subordinate Lodges may hold raffles provided they comply with state and local laws and are solely to benefit recognized charitable causes. (2016)

The raffles must operate under the tax identification number (EIN), for example, the EIN of a Lodge. The raffles conducted under each EIN cannot exceed \$25,000 in gross receipts on an annual basis. Separate records must be kept to demonstrate that raffle proceeds are used exclusively for charitable purposes. Appropriate tax documentation will be issued to anyone winning more than \$600 in value, in accordance with IRS regulations. (2008) [Refer: E-1-2008]

DECISIONS

1894 D-3, §-2.12

That Section 2.12 does not prohibit the holding of a fair or bazaar by a Lodge which does not have lotteries, raffles, gift concerts, etc., (as a part of such activity.) (M. Page)

1912 D-1, §-2.12

The employment of an elocutionist for the purpose of having a public entertainment does not violate Masonic law. (W. B. McChesney)

1958 D-2, §-2.11, §-2.12

Lodge may have subscription dinner, sell tickets, and use proceeds for Temple furnishings, provided it does not solicit attendance by advertising or the sale of tickets in an offensive manner and provided further that no door prizes or other gifts are distributed in a manner that would violate Section 2.11. (A. B. Gay)

2016 D-1, §-2.12

When Section 2.12 was originally amended in 2008 to include approved Masonic charities for which a raffle, etc. may be held, the corporate entity for VACHIP (Child ID) was not in existence. As a result of its qualification as a 501(c)(3) entity under the Internal Revenue Service Code, VACHIP (Child ID) was added as an approved Masonic charity. (J. E. Litten)

Sec. 2.13. Masonic Occasions. — Funerals of deceased Brethren, the laying of cornerstones, the constitution of a new Lodge, the dedication of a Masonic building or Lodge room, and the public installation of officers shall be deemed Masonic occasions. (1997)

DECISIONS

1906 D-2, §-2.13

The Masonic Fraternity cannot exclude other orders from the procession accompanying the remains of a deceased Brother to place of interment. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-3, §-2.13

The selection of pall and flower bearers is the right of the family of the deceased. If they desire, or it is requested by a non-Masonic organization that pall and flower bearers be equally distributed, there can be no objection. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-4, §-2.13

The Masonic Fraternity by reason of its antiquity and tradition is entitled to the first place in funeral processions. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-5, §-2.13

Arriving at the grave the procession is next to the hearse, or if pall and flower bearers immediately precede the hearse, the Masonic body immediately precedes the aforesaid attendants. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-6, §-2.13

1906 D-7, §-2.13

(a) Any religious service at the grave should precede the Masonic ceremony unless otherwise agreed.

1909 D-27, §-2.13

(b) The Lodge should conduct its funeral service either first or last, at the option of the Master, but it must be one or the other. (T. N. Davis and J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-29, §-2.13

The Lodge should be guided by local custom and proper courtesy to the family and friends, in leaving the graveside of a deceased Brother, whose rites have been performed. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-30, §-2.13

It is not the province of Masons to dictate the place of any other organization in funeral processions. On account of its dignity and antiquity, the Lodge must have the post of honor and have charge of the remains. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-31, §-2.13

It is not for Masons to dictate a Marshal for the whole funeral procession. They may, by agreement, settle the arrangements with others. The Lodge must have a Marshal for such occasions. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-36, §-2.13

A Lodge cannot be called to act as an escort for an Eastern Star Chapter. Masonic Lodges never act as escorts. (J. W. Eggleston)

1918 D-2, §-2.13

Mason holding diploma from United Grand Lodge of England is entitled to Masonic funeral rites if the Lodge knows the deceased to have been in good standing. (E. L. Cunningham)

1932 D-22, §-2.13

Lodge was correct in conducting the funeral for Brother when requested by family even if documentary proof was not available, but when evidence indicated him to be in good standing. (A. M. Showalter)

1958 D-14, §-2.13

Only Master Masons are entitled to a Masonic burial service. (A. B. Gay)

1977 D-8, §-2.13

Masonic burial denied Master Mason who shot and killed wife and himself. Act of deceased voided his right to Masonic burial. (L. D. Delano)

Sec. 2.13(a). Who Qualifies for Masonic Rites. – A Master Mason in good standing at the time of his death unless in the commission of a criminal act, is entitled to the full rites and benefits of such membership, including the right to a Masonic funeral service. Should an objection be entered as to the propriety of such rites or benefits, The Grand Master may determine to set aside the law and deny such rite or benefit for good cause shown. (2025)

Sec. 2.14. Masonic Appearances in Public. — A Lodge must not appear in public wearing Masonic regalia, nor permit its members or other Masons within its jurisdiction to make a public appearance wearing regalia, except for the following purposes:

1. The laying of cornerstones for Masonic buildings, churches or public buildings.
2. The constitution of a new Lodge.
3. The public dedication of a Masonic building or Lodge room.
4. The Masonic funeral service of a deceased Brother Master Mason.
[Refer: E-1-1994]
5. The public installation of officers.
6. Participating in public parades. (2009)

DECISIONS

1905 D-11, §-2.14

It is illegal and un-Masonic for a Lodge organized and clothed to appear in public as an escort for any other organization such as the Knights Templar, etc. (T. N. Davis)

1905 D-37, §-2.14

1961 D-16, §-2.14

It is out of order to lay the cornerstone of a completed building as the ceremony does not conform to the conditions. (T. N. Davis and C. M. Flintoff)

1958 D-4, §-2.14

Fredericksburg Lodge granted permission to display model of its building consisting of the outside of the structure with no inscription other than those on the Temple itself, beyond the square and compasses with the letter G superimposed, and provided further that no figures in regalia were used. (A. B. Gay)

1976 D-1, §-2.14

Use of regalia for theatrical purposes forbidden. (S. J. Levy)

1986 D-5, §-2.14

At the request of State Officials, a Lodge was granted permission to participate in the celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone at the Virginia State Capitol, the cornerstone laid in 1785 by the officers and Brethren of the Lodge involved. The law was set aside to permit the public wearing of regalia for this historic celebration. (J. B. Obenchain)

1988 D-8, §-2.14

Allowed a Lodge to lay the cornerstone for a new church which had proceeded beyond the construction stage to allow the stone to be lowered into place. (D. M. Robey)

1994 D-6, §-2.14

Allowed Alexandria-Washington Lodge No. 22 to appear in public on the grounds of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial for the purpose of planting and dedicating a tree. (W. H. Morlock)

2001 D-7, §-2.14, §-2.16

Declared the apron used in the Masonic funeral service, both graveside and evening memorial, should be a “white leather or candidate apron,” not a cloth apron. (J. D. Cole)

Sec. 2.15. Public Ceremonies which Require Permission of the Grand Master.

— The Lodge shall request and receive a dispensation from the Grand Master to hold public ceremonies listed in Section 2.14, except for Masonic funeral services and public installation of Officers. (1997)

DECISIONS

1906 D-18, §-2.15

A Lodge room or Temple cannot be dedicated unless it is free from mortgaged or bonded debt. (T. N. Davis)

Sec. 2.16. Public Ceremonies Must Conform to the Forms Prescribed by the Grand Lodge; What Reports Shall be Made. — The ceremonies upon every occasion in which a Lodge appears in public, shall conform substantially to the forms prescribed by the Grand Lodge, and a prompt report of all such proceedings, except upon funeral occasions, and installations of officers shall be forwarded to the Grand Secretary. No public ceremonies, except the Masonic funeral service, shall be held on Sunday. (1997)

DECISIONS

1895 D-5, §-2.16

That an electric powerhouse erected by a corporation does not, nor does a county prison, belong to that class of public buildings, the cornerstones which Masonic Lodges have been accustomed to lay. (J. P. Fitzgerald)

1990 D-15, §-2.16

It is not proper that a Masonic graveside or memorial service include either a eulogy of the deceased or any sermonizing. The appropriate service is to be given as provided in our Manual of Ceremonies. (C. F. Cobbs)

2001 D-7, §-2.14, §-2.16

Declared the apron used in the Masonic funeral service, both graveside and evening memorial, should be a “white leather or candidate apron,” not a cloth apron. (J. D. Cole)

Sec. 2.17. Returns to Grand Lodge; How Made; Contents. — Immediately following the last stated communication in each month every Lodge holden under the Grand Lodge shall submit an electronic Activity Report to the Grand Lodge Office, the names of those affiliated and restored; the names of all Brethren lost by withdrawal, suspension and the date of membership termination for each. As soon as practical, the Lodge shall report the names and dates of degree conferrals, death, and change of address or contact information. (2020)

Immediately following the election at the December stated communication of the Lodge, and not later than January 2, the Secretary shall submit a report showing the name of each of the

officers elected and appointed, in order to enable the Grand Lodge to send to the Lodge a statement of dues, fees and assessments for the year and prepare the Grand Lodge Directory. (2020)

Upon receipt of this statement compiled by the Grand Lodge, the Lodge shall remit its payment for the year, and all such funds shall be in the hands of the Grand Lodge not later than March 1, preceding the next Annual Communication. If payment of dues, fees and assessments is not made by March 1, the Lodge representative shall not be entitled to vote at the next Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge. (1999)

DECISIONS

1976 D-9, §-2.17	1980 D-10, §-2.17
1977 D-7, §-2.17	1983 D-7, §-2.17
1978 D-9, §-2.17	1984 D-4, §-2.17
1979 D-10, §-2.17	1985 D-6, §-2.17

Voting privileges at Grand Annual Communications not denied Lodges unable to comply with Section 2.17 due to computer complications in billing. Remittance of annual dues required within 30 days of receipt of bill. (S. J. Levy, L. D. Delano, J. W. Laningham, R. R. Kennedy, Jr., M. L. Lacy, II, L. U. Jefferson, W. M. Johnson and R. J. Wimmer)

Sec. 2.18. Penalty for Failure to Make Annual Returns or Payment of Dues for Two Successive Years. — If any Lodge shall fail for two successive years to make its annual returns or payments of its dues, it shall ipso facto, be suspended. Upon making such returns and payment of all arrearages to the Grand Lodge the Grand Master may, in the recess, reinstate it; but if not reinstated by the Grand Master in recess, or by the Grand Lodge at its next Annual Communication, it shall become extinct.

DECISIONS

1909 D-42, §-2.18

Members of a Lodge, suspended by the Grand Lodge for failure to make annual returns and pay dues for two years, do not become suspended Masons. The organization, not the membership, is suspended. (J. W. Eggleston)

Sec. 2.19. Dues of Subordinate Lodges. — Every chartered Lodge with its annual returns shall make payment to the Grand Lodge of the sum of \$52.50 effective January 1, 2027, for each member of such Lodge as of the date of the last stated communication in December of each year, provided, however that no Grand Lodge dues shall be paid on any member of a regular Lodge who shall have fifty years aggregate membership in a regular Lodge chartered by this Grand Lodge or by a Grand Lodge recognized by the Grand Lodge of Virginia and whose membership for the five years last past shall have been in a Virginia Lodge and whose name shall be certified annually by the Grand Secretary as having such membership. In addition to these dues every Lodge, chartered or under dispensation, shall pay to the Grand Lodge a fee of \$100.00 for each petitioner elected for the degrees and raised by the Lodge or raised at the request of the Lodge. The name of each Brother so raised shall be forwarded to the Grand Secretary following the communication at which the Brother was raised and the fee for such Brother shall be paid by the Lodge as soon thereafter as practicable. (2025)

In addition to these dues, effective January 1, 2027, every chartered Lodge with its annual returns shall make payment to the Grand Lodge of Virginia an assessment in the amount of \$1.00 to support the maintenance and operational expense of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial for each member for which the Lodge is liable for Grand Lodge dues. The proceeds of this assessment shall be paid to the George Washington Masonic National Memorial by the Grand Lodge Treasurer as soon as practical after receipt.

In addition to these dues, every chartered Lodge with its annual returns shall make payment to the Grand Lodge of Virginia an assessment in the amount of \$10.00 for the Masonic Home of Virginia for each member for which the Lodge is liable for Grand Lodge dues, effective January 1, 2015. The proceeds of this assessment shall be paid to the Masonic Home of Virginia's Board of Governors by the Grand Lodge Treasurer as soon as practical after receipt.

In addition to these dues, effective January 1, 2027, every chartered Lodge shall make with its annual returns a payment of \$6.50 for each member for which the Lodge is liable for dues, to be disbursed as follows: \$0.90 per member to the Scholarship Fund, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia, \$5.00 per member to the Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia Library, Museum and Historical Foundation, \$0.20 per member to the Virginia Rainbow for Girls Foundation, Inc., \$0.20 per member to the Virginia Job's Daughters Foundation, Inc., and \$0.20 per member to the Virginia DeMolay Foundation, Inc. These funds shall be disbursed to the respective groups by the Grand Treasurer each year as soon as practical.

In addition to these dues every chartered Lodge with its annual returns shall make an insurance payment to the Grand Lodge, to pay the premium for one million dollars commercial liability insurance coverage for said Lodge. This insurance premium payment shall be paid for each member for whom the Lodge is liable for the dues based upon the lowest proposal received from a reliable insurance carrier. The liability coverage shall be administered by the Grand Lodge and the pro-rata share per member shall be determined by the premium amount and included in the Lodge's annual billing.

The proceeds of these dues and fees, together with all other revenues of the Grand Lodge, shall be disbursed by the Grand Treasurer in accordance with the annual budget prepared by the Committee on Finance. This budget shall be read at the first session of the Grand Lodge, and with such changes as may be deemed necessary, approved by the Grand Lodge. (2025) [Refer: E-2-1995]

DECISIONS

1936 D-1, §-2.19

Candidate who received E.A. Degree applied for advancement five years later. When the Grand Lodge enacted the Section requiring a fee of \$25 for the M.M. Degree in 1933, the Grand Master held that business on the books at the time would not be subject to the new law. Grand Lodge took for granted that such business would be concluded promptly and the \$25 fee applies in this case, the law having been enacted five years before. (T. W. Hooper)

1945 D-3, §-2.19

Lodge receiving candidate from another Lodge on waiver of jurisdiction and thereafter conferring on him a degree or degrees, including that of Master Mason, is liable for the fee due Grand Lodge. The fact that the candidate was not originally elected in the Lodge which raised him has no bearing. (J. M. Stewart)

1962 D-9, §-2.19

Per capita tax on fifty year Masons whose names are not presented to the Grand Secretary for certification prior to the last date for the payment of such per capita, must be paid by the Lodge. (E. C. Glover, Jr.)

Sec. 2.20. Failure to Make Returns. — If any Lodge shall fail to file its monthly returns and make the final report for the year, it shall be charged on the books of the Grand Lodge with the amount of dues for the last preceding year. (1973)

Sec. 2.21. Fees for Charters, Duplicate Charters, Dispensations, Diplomas, etc. — There shall be paid to the Grand Treasurer a reasonable fee for the Charter of a new Lodge; for a duplicate Charter; for a dispensation to form a new Lodge; for postage and handling for the Grand Lodge diploma, and for affixing the Seal of the Grand Lodge to any certificate issued by a subordinate Lodge. In each case the reasonable fee to recoup incurred costs shall accompany the application. (2020)

Sec. 2.22. Jurisdiction of a Lodge. — All chartered Lodges and Lodges under dispensation shall have statewide concurrent territorial (geographical jurisdiction). A Lodge acquires personal jurisdiction over a petitioner for the degrees at the time his petition is presented at a stated communication and receipt thereof is recorded in its minutes. (1977)

DECISIONS

1977 D-12, §-2.22

District Deputy Grand Master reported two petitioners for degrees rejected in the late 1960's subsequently petitioned another Lodge in district and were elected. Work was halted by District Deputy Grand Master and Grand Master ruled requests for waivers of jurisdiction must be submitted to original Lodge where rejections occurred. (L. D. Delano)

Sec. 2.23. Petition for Dispensation for New Lodge. — Every petition for dispensation to form a new Lodge shall be in the form therefor specified by the Grand Lodge. It shall be signed by at least twenty Master Masons. Each signer shall be a Master Mason in good standing in some subordinate Lodge holden under this or another Grand Lodge recognized by this Grand Lodge, or a nonaffiliate who is not otherwise disqualified for membership in a Virginia Lodge. Each signer shall state his present or his last Lodge affiliation. (1972)

DECISIONS

1909 D-5, §-2.23

A proposed Lodge may choose a name for itself subject to the approval of the D.D.G.M. and the Grand Master. (J. W. Eggleston)

Sec. 2.24. How Petition for New Lodge Handled. — Every petition for dispensation to form a new Lodge shall be presented to the District Deputy Grand Master of the district in which the proposed Lodge is to be located. It shall be his duty to present a copy of every such petition to each Lodge in his district. Any Lodge receiving the petition may advise the District Deputy of knowledge it has concerning the character of any signer of the petition, and may file a statement with him approving or disapproving the formation and chartering of such new Lodge and its reason therefor. If the dispensation is issued by the Grand Master, all such statements shall be delivered by him to the Committee on Charters. (1975)

DECISIONS

1909 D-47, §-2.24

Members may not vote on any question before Lodge by proxy. What is done at any communication must be done by those who are present only. (J. W. Eggleston)

Sec. 2.25. Certificate Required For Master; Wardens Must Have Past Masters Degree. — The Brother recommended for appointment as the Worshipful Master of the proposed Lodge shall have the certificate required by Section 2.34, which shall be current on the date of the dispensation.

The Master and Wardens shall not occupy their respective offices until they have received the Degree of Past Master, as required by Section 2.34.

Sec. 2.26. Procedure of the District Deputy Grand Master. — It shall be the duty of the District Deputy Grand Master to inform himself as to the character of the petitioners, the qualifications of the officers proposed, the suitability of the meeting place provided and the effect of the establishment of the new Lodge upon the harmony and prosperity of existing Lodges. He shall refer the petition, with his report on all these matters and with any statements he has received from other Lodges in his district, to the Grand Master for his decision. (1975)

Sec. 2.27. Dispensation for a New Lodge. — A dispensation for a new Lodge shall be signed by the Grand Master and attested by the Grand Secretary under the Seal of the Grand Lodge.

Sec. 2.28. How Long Such Dispensation Shall Continue in Force; Return to be Made by a Lodge Under Dispensation. — Such dispensation shall continue in force unless recalled by the Grand Master, until the next Annual Communication, and if a Charter be then granted, until the Lodge shall be constituted under the Charter; Provided, that it shall be so constituted within three months thereafter. The Master and Wardens of a Lodge working under dispensation shall make due return thereof and a copy of all proceedings held thereunder to the Grand Lodge at the Annual Communication next succeeding the issuance of such dispensation.

Sec. 2.29. Status of the Petitioner While Under Dispensation and After Lodge is Chartered. — All the petitioners for the dispensation shall be regarded as members of the Lodge while working under dispensation, and if a Charter be granted, of the chartered Lodge.

DECISIONS

1936 D-2, §-2.29

A Brother who is a member of a Lodge when its Charter issues is a charter member thereof. (T. W. Hooper)

Sec. 2.30. Rights and Privileges of a Lodge Under Dispensation. — A Lodge acting under a warrant of dispensation has the rights and privileges conferred by that warrant, to wit; the inherent right to raise money to pay its expenses by a levy on its members; to govern its members and punish those who are found guilty of un-Masonic conduct; to receive and ballot upon petitions for affiliation, provided that all petitions for either affiliation or for the degrees shall be filed at a stated communication and the procedure thereafter on all such petitions shall conform to the laws governing a chartered Lodge as these affect such petitions; to erect a Hall; and to request another Lodge, through the Grand Secretary, to confer the degrees on its candidates.

A Lodge under dispensation cannot have by-laws, a Seal, issue demits, lay cornerstones or elect any stationed officer, such officers being appointed by the Grand Master in the warrant of dispensation.

The charter members of a Lodge under dispensation are those on its rolls on the day the Charter for it is authorized by the Grand Lodge.

DECISIONS

1891 D-4, §-2.30

A Lodge under dispensation had not the right, while working under dispensation, to confer the F.C. and M.M. Degrees on an E.A. of an extinct Lodge, although the applicant has resided in the jurisdiction of the said (U.D.) Lodge twelve months. (J. H. Wayt)

1905 D-17, §-2.30

A Lodge may appoint a member of another Lodge as member of a committee to erect a building for Lodge purposes. (T. N. Davis)

1911 D-5, §-2.30

There is no law prohibiting a Lodge from being joint owner with another order in a building. (W. B. McChesney)

1924 D-3, §-2.30, §-2.74

Lodge may unite with other bodies in the ownership and use of a building. (J. H. Price)

1950 D-9, §-2.30

A Lodge can adopt resolutions of commitment to finance construction of a Masonic Temple. The Grand Lodge does not exercise or attempt to exercise control of the building of Temples by its Lodges. Every Lodge determines how it will expend its own funds, in keeping with the laws of the Grand Lodge. (A. D. Smith, Jr.)

1950 D-11, §-2.11, §-2.30

Lodge can issue mortgage bonds and sell them to Masons who are members of Lodges other than the issuing Lodge so long as such sale is not an obvious attempt to circumvent the provisions of Masonic law concerning solicitation of funds. (A. D. Smith, Jr.)

1960 D-11, §-2.30

A Lodge may allow its building to be used for classrooms for private schools, giving its approval of such use by a majority vote of those present. (S. D. Forbes)

Sec. 2.31. Officers Continue in Office Until Successors are Installed. — All officers of a Lodge shall continue in office until their successors are elected or appointed and duly installed. With the consent of his Lodge, any officer thereof, except the Worshipful Master, may resign his office. When the officer occupying an elective office resigns or is permanently removed for cause, the office shall be filled by special election as provided in Sec. 2.36.

The Worshipful Master of a Lodge may request to be relieved of the duties of his office, and if such relief is granted, the Senior Warden shall succeed to those duties. His so succeeding does not create a vacancy in the office of either Worshipful Master or Senior Warden and the office of the latter shall be filled pro tempore at each communication of the Lodge while the Senior Warden discharges the duties of the Master's office. (1973)

DECISIONS

1909 D-18, §-1.29, §-2.31

To the question: "How should a member be dealt with who comes out and electioneers to have himself elected to office?" I replied, "Every member, as a matter of conscience should vote against him." (J. W. Eggleston)

1917 D-3, §-2.31, §-2.35, §-2.36

When the Master-elect is not installed the Master in office holds over until his successor is duly installed. The time for the annual election is prescribed in the Digest and provision is made for filling vacancies in any office except that of Master. (J. A. Cabell)

1919 D-7, §-2.31, §-2.45

Worshipful Master-elect cannot be installed by proxy and if absent when other officers are installed, the presiding Master holds over until his successor is elected and installed. His absence does not preclude the election and installation of a Senior Warden at the regular time. (E. L. Cunningham)

1988 D-3, §-2.31, §-2.32, §-2.53

Worshipful Master resigned and demit was issued. Demit ruled void and ordered recalled and recorded in minutes of next stated communication of the Lodge. The Master ordered disqualified from office and the Senior Warden to be acting Worshipful Master for the remainder of the Masonic year. (D. M. Robey)

1989 D-3, §-2.31, §-2.32

I ordered the removal from office of four Worshipful Masters. Their performance as Worshipful Master was not in accord with the laws and regulations of the Grand Lodge of Virginia. P.G.M. Recommendation: Each case be explicitly and individually stated. (G. H. Jones, Jr.)

1997 D-13, §-2.31, §-2.32, §-2.53

1998 D-12, §-2.31, §-2.32, §-2.52, §-2.53

2000 D-3, §-2.31, §-2.32, §-2.53

Worshipful Master removed from office who had not conducted himself in a proper Masonic manner. (A. W. Adkins, A. H. Tignor, Jr. and W. L. Holliday)

Sec. 2.32. Any Officer-Elect May Decline Installation. — Any officer-elect may decline installation.

When the Master-elect does not accept the office and is not installed, the Master in office continues until his successor has been elected and installed. A Lodge can never be without a Worshipful Master. (1973)

DECISIONS

1901 D-4, §-2.32

Brother may not decline nomination for office but may ask that his name be withdrawn. If elected and he does not wish to serve, he may decline to be installed. (H. O. Kerns)

1954 D-3, §-2.32

One nominee for office of Secretary allowed his name to be dropped in the voting for that office. Held that his name could only be withdrawn by the Brother who nominated him for office. (1901, D-4) (O. M. Miles)

1988 D-3, §-2.31, §-2.32, §-2.53

Worshipful Master resigned and demit was issued. Demit ruled void and ordered recalled and recorded in minutes of next stated communication of the Lodge. The Master ordered disqualified from office and the Senior Warden to be acting Worshipful Master for the remainder of the Masonic year. (D. M. Robey)

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1998 D-12, §-2.31, §-2.32, §-2.52, §-2.53

2000 D-3, §-2.31, §-2.32, §-2.53

Worshipful Master removed from office who had not conducted himself in a proper Masonic manner. (A. W. Adkins, A. H. Tignor, Jr. and W. L. Holliday)

Sec. 2.33. Master Must Have Served as Warden, Unless in Extraordinary Cases. — No Brother can be Master of a Lodge until he has regularly served in the office of Warden, unless in extraordinary cases, or when a new Lodge is about to be formed, and no Past Warden is to be found among the members.

DECISIONS

1899 D-4, §-2.33

Only Past Wardens are eligible to take the Master's chair: and a Past Warden is one who has served a full term in that office. (R. T. W. Duke)

1901 D-9, §-2.33

Brother appointed Master of a Lodge under dispensation is eligible to the office of Master at the next election after his appointment even though he is not a Past Master or a Past Warden and there are others of that rank in the Lodge. A Brother is legally qualified to be elected to office of which he is the legal incumbent. (H. O. Kerns)

1905 D-19, §-2.33

A Brother who has served a total of twelve months as Junior and Senior Warden is eligible for election as Master. (T. N. Davis)

1907 D-5, §-2.33

Election of a Brother who had not served one year as Warden, to the office of Worshipful Master held null and void. (K. Kemper)

1916 D-21, §-2.33

1968 D-24, §-2.33

The Senior Deacon of a Lodge cannot be elected Worshipful Master unless he has served as a Warden for a period of one year. (J. B. Wood and H. B. Green)

1991 D-2, §-2.33, §-2.42

Junior Warden served as Junior Warden the entire year, but not installed until June 1990, eligible to be elected and installed as Worshipful Master. (G. W. Farley)

Sec. 2.34. Qualifications Required for Election and Installation of Master or Warden: Requirement of Qualification as District Instructor. — No Brother shall be elected as Master or serve in such office in a Lodge under dispensation unless he has acquired one of the certificates herein specified. Every Master and Warden shall, before election in a chartered Lodge or appointment in a Lodge under dispensation, receive the Degree of Past Master or have served as Master of a regular Lodge in another jurisdiction and awarded the title of Past Master.

No Brother who is blind or whose hearing is impaired to such an extent that he cannot, with artificial mechanical assistance, conduct the business of the Lodge, shall be eligible for election, with or without such certificate, but physical disability alone shall not be sufficient reason for refusing to issue such certificate.

The two certificates specified herein shall be issued on the approval of the Grand Lecturer. Examination for either of the certificates shall be conducted by the Grand Lecturer or his duly authorized representative. The said certificate shall be issued in recognition of the proficiency of the applicant but shall not authorize the holder thereof to conduct a general school of instruction or to serve as a District Instructor without specific authority to do so. Certificates issued hereunder shall be valid for a period of five years from the date of their issue, unless sooner revoked or surrendered. Expired or surrendered certificates may be renewed for five years by reexamination before the Grand Lecturer or his duly authorized representative. (2025)

Instructor's Certificate: This certificate shall be issued to any Brother who shall have passed an examination on the requirements for a Warden's Certificate, except must be proficient in all parts and floor work; plus, as well as the catechisms of the three degrees. Proficiency in the three major lectures and three charges is not required. (2020)

Warden's Certificate: This certificate shall be issued to any Brother who shall have been examined and proved himself proficient to preside in the East to: open and close the Lodge in each degree, dispense with and resume labor, call from labor to refreshment and refreshment to labor, spread a ballot, confer each of the degrees including the second section of the Degree of Master Mason, call for a voice vote on Masonic proficiency. (2022)

No Brother shall be eligible for appointment as a District Instructor of Work or Lodge Instructor of Work unless he shall hold an Instructor's Certificate. (2019) [Refer: E-3-1989]

DECISIONS

1907 D-6, §-2.34

Any member of a Lodge in good standing may be elected Senior Warden of his Lodge regardless of whether he had ever served as Junior Warden. He must have received the Degree of Past Master before installation. (K. Kemper)

1923 D-6, §-2.34

Brother with one arm can be elected Junior Warden of his Lodge. To hold otherwise would be to penalize his misfortune. (J. H. Price)

1950 D-5, §-2.34

Past Master of a Lodge who is not succeeding himself as Master must qualify for and receive the certificate required by this Section. (A. D. Smith, Jr.)

1953 D-1, §-2.34, §-2.47

Brethren of the Scottish Rite cannot legally be admitted to a Provisional Lodge of Past Master unless they have received the Degree of Past Master in such a Lodge or in a Royal Arch Chapter. (Decision as modified by P.G.Ms.) (C. M. Lankford, Jr.)

1962 D-5, §-2.34, §-2.47

The Degree of Past Master belongs to the Grand Lodge and, in the time of John Dove, it had refused to cede it to the Grand Chapter. The ritual for this degree is properly in charge of the Committee on Work of the Grand Lodge but the inclusion of a reference to the Grand Chapter R.A.M. is proper since the degree is a part of the Capitular System in Virginia. (E. C. Glover, Jr.)

1962 D-6, §-2.34

Research Lodge is exempt from the provisions of Section 2.34 requiring a certificate for the Worshipful Master prior to his election. This Lodge is forbidden by its Charter to perform any ritualistic work. (E. C. Glover, Jr.) (Modified by Section 2.159 in 1992)

1963 D-1, §-2.34, §-2.48, §-2.92

Blind Brother held not physically eligible to occupy the office of Worshipful Master of his Lodge as he could not conduct its business without delegating certain of his duties to others. (E. H. Cann)

1975 D-9, §-2.34

Gold and Silver Card Ritualistic Awards, instituted in 1974, are issued by the Grand Lecturer and are valid for a three year period from date of issuance, unless sooner revoked. It is not necessary for holders of valid Gold or Silver Cards to once more exhibit ability to comply with ritualistic requirements set forth in Section 2.34 previous to obtaining a Certificate of Qualification, provided a member of the Committee on Work or an examiner approved by the Grand Lecturer is otherwise satisfied with card holders' ritualistic proficiency. (S. W. Miner)

1987 D-1, §-2.34

A Brother did not receive the Past Master's Degree before becoming Junior Warden. I set aside the law thereby healing the irregularity in the Brother's record and permitted him to go forward in service to his Lodge after he received the Past Master's Degree. (O. W. Tate)

1990 D-22, §-2.34

That it was the intent of my Edict regarding the Past Master's Degree that all eligible candidates for the office of Junior Warden be eligible to receive the degree prior to election. (C. F. Cobbs)

Sec. 2.35. Election of Officers; When to be Held. — The election of officers shall be annually held in each subordinate Lodge on the anniversary of St. John the Evangelist, or at its last stated communication in the month of December; if the 27th day of December falls on Sunday, such election may be held on the Saturday before, or the Monday after that date.

DECISIONS

1913 D-3, §-2.35

Late member cannot ask for the annulment of the election of a Past Master (or any other qualified Brother) after the acting Master conducting the election has declared him elected, had him proclaimed and received as Master-elect. Objections must be made prior to or during the course of the election but before the ballot is taken. (W. L. Andrews)

1917 D-3, §-2.31, §-2.35, §-2.36

When the Master-elect is not installed the Master in office holds over until his successor is duly installed. The time for the annual election is prescribed in the Digest and provision is made for filling vacancies in any office except that of Master. (J. A. Cabell)

1936 D-3, §-2.09, §-2.35

If the communication on St. John's Night is a stated communication of the Lodge and any business proper to be transacted may be done at that meeting. (T. W. Hooper)

Sec. 2.36. Course to be Pursued When Officers Not Elected at Prescribed Time; How Vacancies to be Filled. — If no election be then held, within ten days thereafter, the Master shall order the members to be notified to attend at the next stated communication for the purpose of electing officers. Permission for any further delay must be obtained by dispensation from the Grand Master.

Whenever a vacancy shall occur in any elective office, except that of Master, the members shall be notified to attend at the next stated communication for the purpose of filling the vacancy, except when such vacancy shall occur within sixty days prior to the annual election of officers, as prescribed by Sec. 2.35, in which case the Worshipful Master may fill the office pro tempore at each communication of the Lodge until the annual election. (1994)

DECISIONS

1905 D-47, §-2.36

The indefinite absence of Master creates no vacancy to be filled by special election. The Senior Warden must take charge as acting Master. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-9, §-2.36

It is not necessary for the Junior Warden to resign his office in order to be eligible to succeed to the office of Senior Warden which has become vacant; nor is it necessary to give the usual thirty days' notice to fill other vacancies caused by his promotion. (T. N. Davis)

1917 D-3, §-2.31, §-2.35, §-2.36

When the Master-elect is not installed the Master in office holds over until his successor is duly installed. The time for the annual election is prescribed in the Digest and provision is made for filling vacancies in any office except that of Master. (J. A. Cabell)

1920 D-13, §-2.36, §-2.137

An officer of a Lodge who applies for and receives a demit forfeits his office and his subsequent election to membership in the Lodge does not restore him to office vacated. (S. Cutchins)

1933 D-4, §-2.36

Master-elect died before installation. A special election was ordered to fill the vacancy, the Master in office holding over until his successor was elected and installed. (H. K. Green)

1998 D-8, §-2.36

2000 D-7, §-2.36

Permitted a Lodge to fill the office of Secretary pro tempore until annual elections in December. (A. H. Tignor, Jr. and W. L. Holliday)

Sec. 2.37. When Election to be by Ballot: A Majority Necessary for Choice. — In every election in which there shall be more than one nominee, the vote shall be taken by ballot, and a majority of the votes cast, shall be necessary for a choice and if there be a tie, the Master may have an additional vote.

In any election in which there shall be more than two candidates and after the ballot shall have been tallied and reported and no candidate shall have received a majority of the ballots cast, that candidate who received the least number of votes shall be dropped from the list of nominees. An additional ballot shall then be taken with the remaining nominees as candidates. At this next ballot, if there shall remain more than two candidates and no majority ensues, this method of reduction of candidates shall be continued until one candidate shall have received a majority of the ballots cast or there remain but two candidates. (1985)

DECISIONS

1929 D-10, §-2.37, §-2.39

Secretary cannot be authorized by Lodge resolution to cast unanimous ballot of the Lodge for the election of any officer. Such election where the ballot was cast declared void by the Grand Master. (W. L. Davis)

1935 D-2, §-2.37

In case of a tie vote during the election of officers Master may cast a second vote and break tie. (W. M. Brown)

1938 D-4, §-2.37

Senior Warden presiding in absence of Master, has an additional vote to break tie at the election of officers. (C. V. Eddy)

Sec. 2.38. When Wardens to be Nominees for Master. — Each Warden may be a nominee for election as Master, provided he has the certificate required by Section 2.34: any member of the Lodge may make an additional nomination. (1985)

Sec. 2.39. Master-Elect to Make Nomination for Each Other Elective Office. — The Master-elect shall make a nomination for each other elective office, and members of the Lodge may make other nominations. All nominees must be willing and bona fide candidates. If there be only one nominee for any elective office, the vote shall be viva voce. If there be more than one nominee for any elective office, the vote shall be by written ballot. (1990)

DECISIONS

1898 D-1, §-2.39

The Worshipful Master of a Lodge was reelected and circumstances compelled him to leave the Lodge room before any Brother was nominated for Senior Warden. It was held that the Senior Warden was the proper party to make nominations thereafter. (R. T. W. Duke)

1929 D-10, §-2.37, §-2.39

Secretary cannot be authorized by Lodge resolution to cast unanimous ballot of the Lodge for the election of any officer. Such election where the ballot was cast declared void by the Grand Master. (W. L. Davis)

Sec. 2.40. Nominees Must Retire But May Return and Be Permitted to Vote. — The nominees shall retire before any discussion or ballot. When the ballot is collected, they may return to the Lodge room and shall then be permitted to vote.

Sec. 2.41. Which Officers Elected; Which Appointed by the Master. — The Master, Wardens, Treasurer, Secretary and Deacons shall be elected by the Lodge, and all other officers shall be appointed by the Master. The Master may appoint the Chaplain, Stewards, Marshal, Musician or Organist and the Tiler from Brethren in good standing who are not members of his Lodge; but, when so appointed, they shall be shown in the Lodge's returns to Grand Lodge as not being members. (1981)

INSTALLATION

Sec. 2.42. Every Elective Officer Must Be Installed. — Every elective officer of a Lodge shall be duly installed into office before he can enter upon the discharge of the duties or be entitled to the privileges of his office.

DECISIONS

1961 D-25, §-2.42, §-2.45

If the Master-elect of a Lodge suffers a physical mishap prior to his installation he may be installed when his physical condition permits. The installed Master holds over until his successor is installed. (C. M. Flintoff)

1991 D-2, §-2.33, §-2.42

Junior Warden served as Junior Warden the entire year, but not installed until June 1990, eligible to be elected and installed as Worshipful Master. (G. W. Farley)

Sec. 2.43. If He is Reelected Reinvestiture Alone Necessary. — If an officer has been reelected to the office into which he has been previously installed, it shall be necessary only to reinvest him with the jewel of his office.

Sec. 2.44. Who Shall Perform Ceremony. — The Master shall perform the ceremony of installation or reinvestiture or he may designate some other Master or Past Master to act for him.

DECISIONS

1960 D-17, §-2.44

Report of the Past Grand Masters stated that it is the prerogative of the retiring Master to install his successor but that he may delegate this privilege to anyone who is a Master Mason in good standing. Approved by Grand Lodge. (S. D. Forbes)

Sec. 2.45. Installation in Person or by Proxy. — The officers-elect should be installed at the same communication at which they have been elected, or at the next stated communication. If an officer elect, other than the Master, be absent, and his consent to accept the office be known, he may be installed by proxy. If he has not designated any Brother present as his proxy, the Master may appoint one for him. If his acceptance of the office be not known, the ceremony of installation may be postponed until a subsequent communication, either stated or special.

DECISIONS

1916 D-15, §-2.45

Officers elected at regular time may be installed at anytime thereafter at a regular or called communication of the Lodge. (J. B. Wood)

1919 D-7, §-2.31, §-2.45

Worshipful Master-elect cannot be installed by proxy and if absent when other officers are installed, the presiding Master holds over until his successor is elected and installed. His absence does not preclude the election and installation of a Senior Warden at the regular time. (E. L. Cunningham)

1958 D-13, §-2.45, §-2.46

Master-elect must be installed not later than the first stated communication of his Lodge in January following his election in December, if he wishes to have the rights and privileges of a Past Master at the expiration of his term of one year as Master. (A. B. Gay)

1961 D-25, §-2.42, §-2.45

If the Master-elect of a Lodge suffers a physical mishap prior to his installation he may be installed when his physical condition permits. The installed Master holds over until his successor is installed. (C. M. Flintoff)

PAST MASTERS

Sec. 2.46. Title “Past Master” Defined; Who is Entitled to it. — The title of Past Master shall always be understood to mean one who has been elected Master of a Lodge, has received the Degree of Past Master in a Provisional Lodge of Past Masters, or in a Chapter of Royal Arch Masons, and has been installed and has served as Master of his Lodge for at least one Masonic year; Provided, that any Master serving as such in a Lodge under dispensation, and under charter for a period of twelve months successively, shall be deemed to be a Past Master under Masonic law.

DECISIONS

1890 D-1, §-2.46

Section 2.46 must be construed to mean that no term of service, however long, can constitute the Worshipful Master of a Lodge under dispensation a Past Master. (R. T. Craighill)

1938 D-9, §-2.46

Master placed resignation in the hands of Secretary four days before the annual meeting requesting that it be effective immediately. Despite submission of resignation he remained Master until successor was elected and installed as resignation could not be accepted until Lodge held a communication. The Brother is a Past Master, having served a Masonic year. (C. V. Eddy)

1958 D-13, §-2.45, §-2.46

Master-elect must be installed not later than the first stated communication of his Lodge in January following his election in December, if he wishes to have the rights and privileges of a Past Master at the expiration of his term of one year as Master. (A. B. Gay)

1978 D-8, §-2.46

Provided death is not self-inflicted, it shall not be a determinant in erasing the title duly conferred on a Brother serving as Worshipful Master of the subordinate Lodge and following his death the records of the subordinate Lodge as well as the Grand Lodge shall carry his title as "Past Master." (J. W. Laningham)

1980 D-3, §-2.46

Acute illness of Worshipful Master prevented his installation as Worshipful Master until a called communication in February. To establish his status as a Past Master. Section 2.46 set aside and Brother deemed a Past Master. (M. L. Lacy, II)

1985 D-1, §-2.46

Business assignment outside United States prevented installation of Worshipful Master until February 10, 1984. To establish his status as Past Master Section 2.46 requirements were set aside. (R. J. Wimmer)

1994 D-18, §-2.46

Set aside provisions of Section 2.46 to allow a Worshipful Master, District Deputy Grand Master, or Grand Master to be recorded as Past. . . , if he dies in office (not suicide) before completing year in office. (W. H. Morlock)

1994 D-25, §-2.09, §-2.46

Kerns Lodge No. 143 had only eleven stated communications due to March 1993 meeting cancelled because of snow. Master reprimanded but action healed. (W. H. Morlock)

Sec. 2.47. Provisional Lodge of Past Masters; May be Held at Any Time; of How Many to Consist, etc. — A Provisional Lodge of Past Masters for the purpose of conferring the Degree upon any candidate for Master or Warden may be held at any time in any Lodge room by three or more Past Masters, and the fact that the Degree was conferred shall be certified by the Past Master presiding in such Provisional Lodge to the Lodge of the recipient of the degree, which certificate shall be spread upon the record of such Lodge. (1990)

DECISIONS

1953 D-1, §-2.34, §-2.47

Brethren of the Scottish Rite cannot legally be admitted to a Provisional Lodge of Past Masters unless they have received the Degree of Past Master in such a Lodge or in a Royal Arch Chapter. (Decision as modified by P.G.Ms.) (C. M. Lankford, Jr.)

1962 D-5, §-2.34, §-2.47

The Degree of Past Master belongs to the Grand Lodge and, in the time of John Dove, it had refused to cede it to the Grand Chapter. The ritual for this Degree is properly in charge of the Committee on Work of the Grand Lodge but the inclusion of a reference to the Grand Chapter R.A.M. is proper since the Degree is a part of the Capitular System in Virginia. (E. C. Glover, Jr.)

THE WORSHIPFUL MASTER

Sec. 2.48. The Duties of a Master of a Lodge. — The Master of a Lodge shall direct and control the order of business and work in his Lodge except when the Grand Master or the District Deputy Grand Master is present and presiding. In case of a tie vote on any matter, the Master shall have a second vote. His direction and control of the order of business and work shall extend to all times including those of refreshment, and when the Lodge is in session he shall require and enforce the observance by his officers, members and visitors of all the laws of the Grand Lodge and the by-laws of his Lodge.

He shall have the right, without dispensation, to call his Lodge into special communication for work provided the members of the Lodge are duly notified of the degrees in which work will be conferred and provided further that the communication is held in the place specified in the by-laws. At such special communication he has the right to call for a voice vote on the Masonic proficiency of any candidate presenting himself for the degree which the Lodge was called to confer. (2022)

The Worshipful Master should preside at all times when he is present. When he shall leave his station, except as may be required by the ritual in conferring the degrees, he shall provide a proper substitute. He may permit any Brother he deems properly qualified to occupy the East in his Lodge during the conferring of any of the degrees.

The Worshipful Master controls the funds of the Lodge in the hands of the Treasurer and may order them expended for Masonic purposes. He does not have the right to invest the funds of the Lodge, or to change the investments, or encumber or rent the property of the Lodge of his own volition.

After the Lodge is opened every Brother who desires to enter must have the permission of the Worshipful Master. It is improper and un-Masonic for other officers or members to admit members or visitors without his permission.

In exercising his control over the business of the Lodge the Worshipful Master may remove from the Lodge room any insolent or disrespectful Brother, using his Deacons for that purpose if necessary.

The Worshipful Master cannot change the Trustees of his Lodge nor interfere with them in the performance of their duties. He cannot excuse any member of his Lodge from balloting on the petition of a candidate for initiation or advancement. (1987)

DECISIONS

1903 D-3, §-2.48

When candidates for initiation and advancement present themselves at the same time it is for the Master to say which shall take precedence. The Master rules and governs his Lodge. (E. N. Eubank)

1905 D-3, §-2.48

Lodge may expend funds for appeals of legitimate character, without the Grand Master's permission, if the Master consents and Lodge's solvency is not imperiled. (T. N. Davis)

1905 D-18, §-2.48, §-2.52

A Lodge cannot in any particular prescribe the duties of its Master or Wardens. (T. N. Davis)

1905 D-20, §-2.48, §-2.69

Lodge has right to rent its Lodge rooms to other organizations of known and reputed respectability. (T. N. Davis)

1905 D-21, §-2.48

Under Section 2.48 Master has right to call special meeting of his Lodge but in interest of fairness the call should state the particular business to be transacted. (T. N. Davis)

1905 D-29, §-2.48, §-2.59

Notices of special communications for work, instruction and balloting should be of the character as the Brethren of the Lodge have been accustomed to receive. No notice of a stated communication is absolutely necessary other than the day and hour stated in the by-laws. (T. N. Davis)

1905 D-40, §-2.48

The Worshipful Master, if he deems it best, can omit the reading of the burial service over the grave of a deceased Brother. (T. N. Davis)

1908 D-19, §-2.48

The Worshipful Master may postpone any item of business until a later stated communication if he deems it to the best interest of the Lodge to do so and to notify the members of such proposals or business if no previous notice has been given. The Master controls the order of business in his Lodge. (S. J. Quinn)

1908 D-26, §-2.48

No Lodge holden under the Grand Lodge can confer a degree on Sunday. (S. J. Quinn)

1909 D-6, §-2.48

A question or motion made in a Lodge does not require a second. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-7, §-2.48

The Master can properly refuse to entertain any motion he deems obscure or not conducive to the interests of Masonry. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-8, §-2.48

The Master of a Lodge may call a Past Master to the East for any purpose, but his status (as Master) remains unchanged. While the Master is present he is in absolute control of the Lodge. The Past Master is merely exercising his authority during the will and pleasure of the Master. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-9, §-2.48

There cannot be a time when the Master is not in control of his Lodge during its sessions when he is present, except when the Grand Master or the District Deputy are in control of it. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-11, §-2.48

Contrary to the will of the Master a Lodge cannot by resolution designate members to be named on any committee. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-12, §-2.48

It is improper and un-Masonic for a Lodge to have a banquet or other function contrary to the will of the Master. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-16, §-2.48

It is improper for the Senior Warden to admit anyone to Lodge while Master's attention is elsewhere engaged. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-37, §-2.48

The Master wears an immovable jewel and his station should never be vacated without a substitute, except as required by the ritual in conferring the degrees. The examination of a candidate by the Master is not a part of such ritual. (J. W. Eggleston)

1910 D-1, §-2.48

After petitioner is elected at stated communication, the Lodge may initiate, pass and raise him at any communication, stated or special, provided the requirements as to examination and ballot are met. (J. W. Eggleston)

1914 D-1, §-2.48

A Lodge's funds are its own to be disposed of as it or the Worshipful Master may direct, however, it is not wise that money be collected as dues for the purpose of paying necessary expenses and Masonic charities and then be turned over to an organization without a Masonic connection to be disposed of as it sees fit. (W. L. Andrews)

1916 D-1, §-2.48

The Master has the right to refuse to entertain motion as he controls the business of the Lodge. The case in point involved funds for the relief of the widow of a deceased Brother and the Grand Master indicated that the Lodge should be allowed to vote upon it. (J. B. Wood)

1916 D-19, §-2.48

It is the privilege of the Master to preside and conduct the ceremonies at the laying of a cornerstone if the Grand Master or his representative is absent, or, if present do not care to preside. (J. B. Wood)

1916 D-23, §-2.48

The Master has no right to revoke a resolution of the Lodge and thereby change the minutes of a stated communication after it is closed. The Lodge itself may revoke the resolution or order at a subsequent stated communication. (J. B. Wood)

1919 D-1, §-2.48

Master of a Lodge has power to expend its funds for Masonic purposes. The Treasurer must honor orders for such expenditures which come to him from the Master. Lodge funds are collected for Lodge purposes, one being the relief of distress and the Master may order the Treasurer to disburse the funds for this purpose in an emergency. He may also consult his Wardens and Past Masters if he so desires. (E. L. Cunningham)

1919 D-8, §-2.48

Master has right to call his Lodge at any time to confer the degrees provided membership is notified of work to be done. No dispensation is required for this purpose. (E. L. Cunningham)

1919 D-12, §-2.48, §-2.85

Refused to approve by-law forbidding smoking in Lodge room during communication. This should be regulated by the Master under his general powers. (E. L. Cunningham)

1920 D-2, §-2.48

Lodge should not meet on Sunday for either business or work. (S. Cutchins)

1921 D-8, §-2.48

Resolution to apply fifty percent of dues of Lodge to a sinking fund disapproved by Grand Master. (W. W. Galt)

1922 D-7, §-2.48

Master may invite Brother from another Grand Jurisdiction to preside in the East during the conferring of a degree. The propriety of so doing is a matter in the discretion of the Master in ruling and governing his Lodge. (J. S. Bottimore)

1924 D-9, §-2.48, §-2.135

The Master directs and controls the affairs of his Lodge and the exclusion of visitors is a proper exercise of his prerogatives, when he deems it in the best interest of his Lodge. (J. H. Price)

1927 D-3, §-2.48

In accordance with Masonic usage and customs a Lodge may dispose of its funds as it deems best. (B. W. Beach)

1927 D-14, §-2.48

It is not permissible for a uniformed degree team of Scottish Rite Masons to confer the Degree of Master Mason in a York Rite Lodge. (B. W. Beach)

1929 D-12, §-2.48

Master can refuse request of member of his Lodge for detailed report of expenditures for relief of widow of member. Member has right to ask for information concerning Lodge business and to have access to books of Lodge without removing them from custody of proper officer. (W. L. Davis)

1929 D-13, §-2.48

Master's expulsion of member who failed to respond to notice to be present to show cause why he should not be suspended "for not having certain summons given you before" is irregular, and declared null and void. Brother's membership in Lodge is unimpaired. (W. L. Davis)

1934 D-2, §-2.48

Master was within his rights to order revision of minutes, provided changes are in accord with the facts and are made before the minutes are approved by the Lodge. (J. C. Padgett)

1937 D-3, §-2.48

Any Brother designated by the Master may occupy the chair and confer degree or open and close his Lodge, may properly do so since he derives his authority from the Master or presiding Warden, if the Master be absent. (L. P. Harrell)

1942 D-8, §-2.48

(1) Decision disapproved by Grand Lodge, but Committee cautioned Lodges to use care and circumspection in choosing objects which they sponsor.

(2) The Lodge has a right to pay for a banquet tendered a local high school baseball club to which fathers of the members, members of the school board and members of the town council are invited. (C. D. Freeman)

1947 D-3, §-2.48

Notices of special communications for work, instruction and balloting should be of the character the Brethren are accustomed to receive, whether in writing and mailed, newspaper publication, personal service by the Tiler, otherwise, no notice of stated communication is absolutely necessary except the day and hour contained in the bylaws. (T. P. Coleman)

1947 D-4, §-2.48

Informal entrance to and retiring from Lodge by the "back door" should be regulated in the sound discretion of the Worshipful Master rather than by hard and fast rule which might not be flexible enough to meet all contingencies. (T. P. Coleman)

1955 D-2, §-2.48

Master has no power to convene his Lodge without dispensation (or in emergency) in a place other than that specified in the by-laws. Candidate who was raised in a Masonic School held outside the Lodge's meeting place was healed by Grand Master. (H. Reid)

1956 D-2, §-2.48

The Worshipful Master does not have the right to sell, rent or encumber Lodge property but he has every right to cause debris to be removed from the building and such action does not violate Section 2.48. (W. J. McMahon)

1958 D-6, §-2.48

In the matter of expending Lodge funds, it was held that Lodge may expend its funds in accordance with Masonic usage and customs. Legacies received by a Lodge and not otherwise encumbered by the terms of the donor's will may be expended in accordance with the will of the Lodge. (A. B. Gay)

1963 D-1, §-2.34, §-2.48, §-2.92

Blind Brother held not physically eligible to occupy the office of Worshipful Master of his Lodge as he could not conduct its business without delegating certain of his duties to others. (E. H. Cann)

1964 D-16, §-2.48

The Worshipful Master should not reconvene his Lodge after the minutes had been read and the Lodge closed. Action in so doing and remitting dues of a Brother so as to grant him a demit was ordered expunged from the minutes. The Master has the right to exercise his prerogative and order the dues of the Brother appropriated and his demit granted in recess of Lodge. (J. P. Stokes)

1967 D-3, §-2.09, §-2.48

Any business normally transacted at a stated communication, including the conferral of degrees, may be done by the Master without previous notice. Master should give "timely notice" on petitions for initiation, but the "previous notice" referred to in the charge to the Master is fully complied with when the petition of a non-Mason is read at one stated communication and laid over until the next. (G. E. Kidd)

1968 D-6, §-2.48

Lodge donations from its Charity Fund to Red Cross, March of Dimes, Cancer Fund held not for Masonic purposes. P.G.M. Committee Comment: Expenditure of Lodge funds should be left to the discretion of the individual Lodge if such expenditures do not disrupt peace and harmony of the Lodge. (H. B. Green)

1970 D-1, §-2.48

Worshipful Master called Lodge for work in Degree of Master Mason, at which an E.A. of the Lodge, who was at college two hundred miles from the Lodge, appeared and asked for advancement. He was examined, declared proficient and elected to receive the Degree of F.C. One member objected because work in the Degree of F.C. had not been shown on the call. The Grand Master ruled that the Master had acted within his prerogative and has the right to use his discretion, under unusual circumstances, in governing his Lodge. (J. C. Roden)

1975 D-2, §-2.48

Lodge may offer or give a scholarship to worthy and qualified young person in its name, and the name of the Lodge may be printed along with other scholarship donors in school graduation programs. (S. W. Miner)

1979 D-7, §-2.48

Lodge rescinded invitation to group within our Masonic family to meet in its Temple. Complaints filed with District Deputy Grand Master by members of Lodge noted absence of discussion following motion presented as well as failure of membership to realize vote would remove aforesaid group from use of Temple. No influence to alter legitimate action of Worshipful Master who rules and governs his Lodge initiated by Grand Master. (R. R. Kennedy, Jr.)

1985 D-3, §-2.48

Prerogative as Grand Master exercised in removing a Worshipful Master from office for un-Masonic conduct and ordering a Masonic trial. Prerogative also exercised to discontinue membership inducements in a Lodge bulletin. (R. J. Wimmer)

1988 D-12, §-2.48, §-2.85

Resolutions adopted by a Lodge ordered illegally adopted and expunged from the minutes of the Lodge because they were in direct conflict with the Methodical Digest. Two provisions limited the authority of the Worshipful Master in controlling Lodge funds; the other concerning the salary of the Secretary, which should be addressed by revising the by-laws. (D. M. Robey)

1990 D-2, §-2.48, §-2.69

The Master of a Lodge has authority to order Trustees of the Lodge to transfer funds to the Treasurer for Lodge use. The Trustees have no right to withhold funds for Lodge use as directed by the Master or Lodge vote (2.48). The Trustees are vested with authority to invest Lodge funds and certain other duties by law, and the Master has no right to interfere with the discharge of these duties (2.69). (C. F. Cobbs)

1994 D-10, §-2.48

A Worshipful Master, in the governance of his Lodge, may remit a Brother's dues during the recess of the Lodge, when he deems such to be in the best interests of the Lodge. (T. F. May)

1999 D-5, E-1-1983, E-1-1989

Allowed the moderate or temperate use of alcohol in Lodge fellowship halls when rented for wedding receptions or similar events, with proper supervision. (G. H. Chapin)

Sec. 2.49. An Appeal Cannot Be Taken from the Decision of the Master of His Lodge; But May be Taken Through the District Deputy Grand Master to the Grand Master. — No appeal from the decision of the Master can ever be taken to his Lodge, but such appeal may be taken through the District Deputy Grand Master to the Grand Master; but if the Master whose decision is a matter of complaint be the District Deputy Grand Master, the appeal may be taken directly to the Grand Master.

DECISIONS

1988 D-13, §-2.49, §-2.59

Master of Lodge erred in not having the minutes corrected to reflect an argument that took place on an issue before the Lodge. Lodge members have the right to question omissions and if the Worshipful Master still refuses to include the information the member may appeal the decision as stated in Section 2.49 of the Methodical Digest. (D. M. Robey)

1992 D-4, §-2.49

Regards the upholding of the decision and authority of the Master of a Lodge to grant an extension of time to an Entered Apprentice contrary to the appeal of one member. (W. F. Perdue)

Sec. 2.50. Previous Question Cannot Be Entertained, etc. — A call for the “previous question” is un-Masonic and cannot be entertained in any subordinate Lodge in this jurisdiction; nor can a motion to lay on the table. The subject must be disposed of; or if postponed, it must be to some definite, stated time.

Sec. 2.51. He Shall Report to His Lodge His Attendance on the Grand Lodge, etc.; Appoint a Committee to Examine Its Proceedings, etc. — After every Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge he shall report to his Lodge his attendance thereon, or if he be absent his reasons for such absence, and appoint a committee to examine the proceedings of the Grand Lodge and report all new laws enacted, and any other matter of special interest to the Lodge.

THE WARDENS

Sec. 2.52. Duties of the Senior and Junior Wardens. — It shall be the duty of the Wardens to qualify themselves to discharge all the duties of the Worshipful Master, and, in his absence, or at his request, they shall always be ready to assume the functions of his office. The Lodge cannot in any manner prescribe the duties of its Wardens. (2022)

Sec. 2.53. Powers and Duties of the Wardens in the Absence of the Master; When They Respectively Succeed to the Duties of the Master; When Either of Them May Call on Any Past Master to Take the Chair, etc.; In the Event There is Neither Master Nor Warden; How Vacancies to be Filled. — The Senior Warden will succeed to all the duties of the Master when the Master is absent, and in the event of the Master's death or disqualification from any cause, take his place during his term of office, or until the disqualification is removed; but his so succeeding does not create a vacancy in the office of Senior Warden, but said office must be filled by pro tempore appointment at each communication of the Lodge while he continues to discharge the duties of Master. In the like event as to both the Master and Senior Warden, the Junior Warden will succeed in like manner. And if the presiding Warden shall call on any Past Master who may be in the Lodge to take the chair, on the presumption of his superior skill in conducting the business of the Lodge, nevertheless such Past Master still derives his authority from the Warden, and cannot act until that officer congregates the Lodge. If there be no Master or Warden, the Secretary shall immediately inform the District Deputy Grand Master, who shall summon the Lodge, at a stated or special communication, to fill the vacancies,

and in the meantime the Past Master who has last served as Master of the Lodge shall be the acting Master. (1977)

DECISIONS

1890 D-3, §-2.05, §-2.53

That the Wardens of a Lodge, in their regular order of succession, have all of the powers of the Worshipful Master in his absence from the Lodge. (R. T. Craighill)

1989 D-3, §-2.31, §-2.32, §-2.53

I ordered the removal from office of four Worshipful Masters. Their performance as Worshipful Master was not in accord with the laws and regulations of the Grand Lodge of Virginia. P.G.M. Recommendation: Each case be explicitly and individually stated. (G. H. Jones, Jr.)

1997 D-13, §-2.31, §-2.32, §-2.53

1998 D-12, §-2.31, §-2.32, §-2.52, §-2.53

2000 D-3, §-2.31, §-2.32, §-2.53

2003 D-8, §-2.31, §-2.32, §-2.53

Worshipful Master removed from office who had not conducted himself in a proper Masonic manner. (A. W. Adkins, A. H. Tignor, Jr., W. L. Holliday and F. G. Martin, III)

THE TREASURER

Sec. 2.54. Duties of the Treasurer as to Receipts and Disbursements. — The Treasurer shall receive from the hands of the Secretary and receipt to him therefor, all monies due the Lodge; keep a fair and just account of the same, and pay them out as he may be ordered by the Worshipful Master, or by a vote of the Lodge. He is the custodial and disbursing officer of the funds of the Lodge.

Sec. 2.55. He Shall Keep Books of Accounts, Preserve Vouchers, etc. — He shall keep books setting out in detail his accounts, and preserve all vouchers for disbursements, and be prepared at any time to exhibit the same when required by the Lodge or the Master, and to answer any inquiry pertaining to the duties of his office.

Sec. 2.56. Custodian of the Jewels and Furniture of the Lodge. — Unless the Master or the Lodge provide otherwise, the Treasurer shall have the charge and custody of the jewels and furniture of the Lodge.

Sec. 2.57. Books of Treasurer and Secretary to be Examined Before Each Annual Election. — The Master shall appoint an auditing committee at the last stated communication in November of each year, who shall examine the books, accounts, and vouchers of the Treasurer and Secretary for the Masonic year, and report to the Lodge at the December communication. If the election of officers is held at that communication, the report shall be made before the election. The Master may have additional examinations made if he deems it necessary.

DECISIONS

1962 D-10, §-2.57

A Lodge has complied with the intent of Section 2.57 when it receives a tentative report from the Auditing Committee and grants further time for the examination of books and records. (E. C. Glover, Jr.)

Sec. 2.58. He Shall Attend Each Stated Communication, etc. — The Treasurer shall attend each stated communication with his books.

THE SECRETARY

Sec. 2.59. Shall Keep Minutes, Records, Etc. — The Secretary shall keep minutes of all proceedings of the Lodge proper to be written. All minutes shall be read and approved at the communication to which they refer. The Worshipful Master may dispense with the reading for approval of the minutes of a called communication at the conclusion of the communication. The minutes of the stated communication and those of a called communication subsequent thereto shall be faithfully entered upon the books of permanent record by the Secretary prior to the next ensuing stated communication and upon entry, such minutes shall be signed by the Worshipful Master and the Secretary.

The Worshipful Master may, in his discretion, have the minutes of previous communications summarized, read in full, or dispensed with entirely at the next ensuing stated communication.

The Secretary shall keep a list of all members of his Lodge and an account as to the dues between the Lodge and each member. He shall collect said dues and make his current collections a part of his minutes. He shall collect the deposit fee when he enters a petition upon his minutes, and the fee for each of the degrees when he enters the initiation, passing or raising of a candidate. When such fees are thus recorded, this fact shall be the presumption that he has collected thereof, and he shall be responsible for and chargeable with the funds so recorded and pay them over to the Treasurer, taking his receipt for the same.

The Secretary shall notify the members of his Lodge by such means as the Lodge or the Worshipful Master may specify, the said means to be subject to change as ordered by the Worshipful Master or by vote of the Lodge.

The Secretary shall not furnish a mailing list of his members to anyone for other than Masonic purposes, and no one shall use a mailing list of such members for other than Masonic purposes. (1990) [Refer: E-7-1989]

DECISIONS

1905 D-29, §-2.48, §-2.59

Notices of special communications for work, instruction and balloting should be of the character as the Brethren of the Lodge have been accustomed to receive. No notice of a stated communication is absolutely necessary other than the day and hour stated in the by-laws. (T. N. Davis)

1911 D-11, §-2.59

After minutes of a Lodge have been read and approved and the Lodge closed no one may add or subtract anything therefrom. (W. B. McChesney)

1920 D-9, §-2.59

Secretary of a Lodge has no obligation to reply to inquiry from Eastern Star or other non-Masonic organization as to standing of member. Information given is by courtesy, not duty. (S. Cutchins)

1957 D-4, §-2.59

The same Brother may not occupy the offices of Secretary and Treasurer of a Lodge at the same time. (W. V. Fentress)

1964 D-11, §-2.59

Use of an official summons to members to attend a stated communication of Lodge at which a special program will be presented held improper. (J. P. Stokes)

1965 D-3, §-2.59

Master of Lodge may give oral notice of a called communication and the work to be done at it. Section 2.59 requires the Secretary to use such means to notify the membership as may be specified by the Master and subject to such changes as may be ordered by the Master or by vote of the Lodge.

Committee Comment: Notice should be given in the manner usually employed by the Lodge in such cases and should reach all members in the immediate vicinity of the Lodge. (M. H. Robbins)

1968 D-7, §-2.59, §-4.14

The records of a Trial Commission and the minutes of a Lodge are confidential and copies cannot be furnished for use in a civil trial. (H. B. Green)

1975 D-8, §-2.59

Accuracy of recorded and approved Lodge minutes is established and authenticated when signed by the Worshipful Master and the Secretary, and such minutes are not normally subject to dispute. (S. W. Miner)

1990 D-4, §-2.59

The Grand and Lodge Secretaries were advised that furnishing a mailing list of Lodge members to an appendant body for recruiting or other purposes was not a Masonic purpose and therefore prohibited. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-12, §-2.59, §-2.61, §-2.62

Lodge minutes do not need to include a list of all attending members and officers, however the Master of the Lodge has the prerogative to direct that such be included though not required by law. (C. F. Cobbs)

Sec. 2.60. He Shall Be Custodian of the Records, Archives and Seal. — The Secretary shall be the custodian of the records, archives and Seal of the Lodge. The Lodge speaks through its Seal and it should not be used for other than strictly Masonic papers and documents. As custodian, the Seal of the Lodge is the entire responsibility of the Secretary and should be retained in his possession to prevent its misuse by anyone.

DECISIONS

1938 D-3, §-2.60

Secretary is custodian of Lodge Seal and should not allow it to be out of his possession or available for misuse by anyone. (C. V. Eddy)

Sec. 2.61. He Shall Keep an Accurate List of Members, With Dates of Initiation and Advancement, and Report all Affiliations from Other Lodges. — Using the Grand lodge electronic system provided for this purpose, he shall keep an accurate list of all members of the Lodge, with the dates of initiation, advancement and admission to membership. When a Brother is admitted to membership in a Lodge, the Secretary thereof shall immediately report said affiliation to all other Lodges of which he is a member via that system. (2020)

DECISIONS

1990 D-12, §-2.59, §-2.61, §-2.62

Lodge minutes do not need to include a list of all attending members and officers, however the Master of the Lodge has the prerogative to direct that such be included though not required by law. (C. F. Cobbs)

Sec. 2.62. Shall Forward Reports of Lodge. — The Secretary shall forward using the electronic system furnished for that purpose by the Grand Secretary, all Lodge required membership updates per Sec. 2.17. (2020)

DECISIONS

1990 D-12, §-2.59, §-2.61, §-2.62

Lodge minutes do not need to include a list of all attending members and officers, however the Master of the Lodge has the prerogative to direct that such be included though not required by law. (C. F. Cobbs)

Sec. 2.63. Any Change in the Office of Master or Secretary to be Promptly Reported to the Grand Secretary and District Deputy Grand Master. — He shall give prompt information to the Grand Secretary, and to the District Deputy Grand Master, of any change that may occur in the office of Master or Secretary.

THE CHAPLAIN

Sec. 2.64. Duties of the Chaplain. — When the Lodge is at prayer, the Chaplain shall lead their devotions, and when the Lodge is at refreshment, he shall ask the blessing of God at the tables.

THE DEACONS

Sec. 2.65. Duties of the Deacons. — The Deacons shall attend to the reception of candidates, the introduction and accommodation of visitors, and discharge such other duties in the Lodge as may be assigned them by the Master and Wardens.

DECISIONS

1910 D-17, §-2.65

Deacon must invest Brother with word when ordered to do so by the Master, even though he believes him to be unworthy. (J. W. Eggleston)

THE TILER

Sec. 2.66. The Tiler Must be a Master Mason, etc. — The Tiler must be a Master Mason of knowledge and experience, and should receive compensation from the Lodge for his services.

DECISIONS

1933 D-25, §-2.66, §-2.68

The offices of Steward and Tiler cannot be held by one and the same person. The Tiler cannot leave his station to act as Steward while the Lodge is in session. (H. K. Green)

Sec. 2.67. If a Member of the Lodge He Shall Be Entitled to Vote. — He need not be a member of the Lodge for which he is Tiler, but if a member, he shall be entitled to vote upon any question before the Lodge; and in all elections, or whenever he shall express the desire, or the Master shall deem it proper, he shall be called into the Lodge room for the purpose of casting his vote. He shall stand excused from voting on applications for degrees unless he desires to do so, when the privilege must be accorded him.

DECISIONS

1903 D-13, §-2.67

Tiler, who is a member of the Lodge, cannot be prevented from voting on all questions, should he desire and notify the Master. (E. N. Eubank)

1973 D-2, §-2.67

Master may direct Junior Deacon to secure door while Tiler admitted to Lodge room to ballot on petition when no visitor is present to relieve Tiler. (W. T. Trevillian)

THE STEWARDS

Sec. 2.68. Duties of Stewards. — The Stewards, under the direction of the Master, or the Stewards' Committee of the Lodge, shall provide for and attend to the accommodation of the Brethren at refreshment. The Stewards shall perform such other duties in the Lodge as may be delegated to them by the Worshipful Master or the Wardens.

DECISIONS

1933 D-2, §-2.41, §-2.68

The Stewards are regular officers of a Lodge and should be appointed, the same as the Tiler and Chaplain. (H. K. Green)

1933 D-25, §-2.66, §-2.68

The offices of Steward and Tiler cannot be held by one and the same person. The Tiler cannot leave his station to act as Steward while the Lodge is in session. (H. K. Green)

THE TRUSTEES

Sec. 2.69. Trustees of a Lodge, How Chosen, How Appointed, Their Duties. — The Trustees shall be elected by the Lodge. The Lodge shall then apply to the courts of the state, certify that the members named were elected by the Lodge on (date) and request their appointment by the court. Their function is to hold legal title to the property of the Lodge. They shall invest such funds which the Lodge may make available to them either by direction of the Lodge, or in the absence of such direction, to the best of their ability. (1998)

DECISIONS

1905 D-20, §-2.48, §-2.69

Lodge has right to rent its Lodge rooms to other organizations of known and reputed respectability. (T. N. Davis)

1921 D-4, §-2.69

Trustees of a Masonic Lodge may issue bonds secured by deed of trust to finance building construction. This is a legal matter and Lodge should consult an attorney. (W. W. Galt)

1923 D-30, §-2.69

Trustees of Lodge are appointed by court to hold legal title to property and have no right to interfere with Master or dictate to the Lodge as to the management of its affairs. (J. H. Price)

1925 D-4, §-2.69

Trustees of a Lodge have no right to interfere with the prerogatives of the Master, but when they are vested with certain duties by vote of the Lodge, the Master should not arbitrarily change or interfere with those duties. (C. H. Callahan)

1961 D-24, §-2.69

The Grand Lodge of Virginia does not interfere with a Lodge's right to acquire real property by gift even though the deed thereto may carry a restrictive clause. (C. M. Flintoff)

1990 D-2, §-2.48, §-2.69

The Master of a Lodge has authority to order Trustees of the Lodge to transfer funds to the Treasurer for Lodge use. The Trustees have no right to withhold funds for Lodge use as directed by the Master or Lodge vote (2.48). The Trustees are vested with authority to invest Lodge funds and certain other duties by law, and the Master has no right to interfere with the discharge of these duties (2.69). (C. F. Cobbs)

Sec. 2.70. Trustees to Make Annual Report. — At the December stated communication of the Lodge the Trustees shall make an annual report of all property and investments in their hands. Their accounts shall be audited annually by the committee appointed by the Master for that purpose.

DECISIONS

1902 D-4, §-2.70

Trustees of a Lodge have right to invoke the aid of the court to enforce their legal rights, but Lodge should avoid legal complications if possible. (H. O. Kerns)

1940 D-11, §-2.70

Lodge has right to dispose of its real property without consulting the Grand Lodge. It must act properly through its Trustees appointed by the court and authorized by such court to sell the real estate. (N. S. Turnbull)

CONSTITUTION OF A NEW LODGE

Sec. 2.71. The Charter of a New Lodge Must be Accompanied by a Warrant Directed to Some Past Master, with Authority to Open Provisional Lodge, etc.; Such Past Master to Report His Proceedings Thereunder. — Whenever a Charter is issued by this Grand Lodge to form a new Lodge; it shall be accompanied by a warrant, signed by the Grand Master and attested by the Grand Secretary, with the Seal of the Grand Lodge affixed, and directed to some Past Master, with authority to appoint his Wardens, and open a Provisional Lodge for the purpose of installing the officers of the new Lodge, and setting them to work agreeably to the ancient customs and usages of Freemasonry. The said Past Master shall perform that duty within three months from the date of the said Charter, and in accordance with the form prescribed for that purpose, and he shall report his proceedings to the Grand Secretary.

Sec. 2.72. Providing for Consolidation of Lodges. — When two or more contiguous Lodges deem it to their interest and to the interest of Masonry to consolidate and become one Lodge, they may do so by proceeding as follows:

The resolution proposing consolidation shall be offered at a stated communication of each Lodge concerned and lie over for at least four weeks.

If a majority of the members present at the next stated communication vote in favor of the resolution, the members of each Lodge shall be notified that final action will be taken at the next succeeding stated communication, following that at which the majority vote was cast in favor of consolidation.

If then three-fourths of the members present in each Lodge vote in favor of consolidation, the Secretary of each Lodge shall so notify the Most Worshipful Grand Master, and if he approves, the consolidation shall become effective from the date of such approval.

The Charter or Charters, records, etc., of the retiring Lodge or Lodges shall be retained in the archives of the Lodge remaining in existence, and that Lodge shall acquire all funds and title to all property, and assume responsibility for Grand Lodge dues and assessments, and all other debts of the retiring Lodge or Lodges.

The term of all officers of the retiring Lodge or Lodges shall terminate as of the date the consolidation is effective; the Master and Wardens of such Lodge or Lodges shall be considered as having served the full term in their respective offices.

The officers of the Lodge remaining in existence shall retain their respective offices in the consolidated Lodge. Sec. 2.46 not to apply to Masters and Wardens in cases of consolidation.

All members of the retiring Lodge shall become members of the Lodge remaining in existence. Honorary members of the retiring Lodge shall become honorary members of the remaining Lodge.

Upon consolidation, the remaining Lodge shall assume sponsorship of all relief cases of the retiring Lodge, provided that the consolidated Lodge may thereafter take action on such cases in the usual manner.

REMOVAL OF LODGES

Sec. 2.73. When Place of Meeting Temporarily Moved. — If the building in which the Lodge holds its communications shall be destroyed or become unfit for meetings of the Lodge, such meetings shall be held temporarily in such place within its territorial jurisdiction as may be ordered by the Master.

If the Lodge room is too small to accommodate the Brethren attending a prospective meeting, or if the rental therefor is raised to a point at which it becomes unreasonable, the Master may hold a communication or communications at other buildings than that designated in the by-laws without special dispensation, provided, however, that the members of the Lodge shall receive due notice of such change of meeting place.

DECISIONS

1958 D-7, §-2.73

The Master of a Lodge may not convene his Lodge in a place other than that specified in the by-laws without dispensation, except in emergencies set forth in Section 2.73. A joint communication with a sister Lodge to confer degrees is not such an emergency. (A. B. Gay)

Sec. 2.74. Proposition for Permanent Removal. — Any proposition for the permanent removal of a place of meeting of a Lodge must be made at a stated communication. The motion shall be recorded upon the minutes, and the Secretary shall notify the members of the Lodge to attend at the next stated communication for its consideration.

DECISIONS

1924 D-3, §-2.30, §-2.74

Lodge may unite with other bodies in the ownership and use of a building. (J. H. Price)

Sec. 2.75. Vote Necessary for Permanent Removal. — If the Master approves the proposition, a majority shall be sufficient to adopt it; but, if he does not approve, a vote of two-thirds shall be necessary.

DECISIONS

1922 D-18, §-2.75

No member of a Lodge can vote on question of permanent removal of its meeting place unless he be present when the matter is considered. Masonic law does not provide for voting by mail or proxy. (J. S. Bottimore)

Sec. 2.76. Cannot Remove Without Permission of Grand Master. — A Lodge cannot make a permanent change of its place of meeting without consent of the Grand Master. (1975)

Sec. 2.77. Grand Secretary to be Promptly Informed of Permanent Removal. — The Secretary shall promptly inform the Grand Secretary of any such permanent removal.

SURRENDERING CHARTERS

Sec. 2.78. Proposition to Surrender Charter; When Entertained. — No proposition for the surrender of the Charter of a Lodge shall be entertained, except at a stated communication and then only by the assent of a majority of members present.

Sec. 2.79. Upon Such Assent, Lodge to be Summoned to Consider the Matter. — Upon such assent, the Master shall order the Lodge to be summoned to consider the matter at the next stated communication.

Sec. 2.80. When Considered; Two-thirds Present Must Assent to Surrender. — At that communication the proposition may be considered; but unless two-thirds of the members present assent, the proposition shall be rejected.

Sec. 2.81. Reasons for Surrender Must be Set Out on the Record, and a Schedule of Books, Papers, Jewels, Furniture, etc., Prepared. — The reasons for the surrender of the Charter shall be set out upon the record, and a schedule shall be made out and entered on record of all books, papers, jewels, furniture and other property of the Lodge with a list of its creditors and debtors, and the amounts due to or by them.

Sec. 2.82. Copy of Record to be at Once Transmitted to Grand Master. — A full copy of the record shall be at once transmitted to the Grand Master through the District Deputy Grand Master. The Grand Master may accept the surrender of the Charter, or refer the matter to the Grand Lodge at its next Annual Communication.

Sec. 2.83. District Deputy Grand Master to Take Possession of Books, Papers, Jewels, Furniture, Property, etc., of Extinct Lodges. — As soon as the surrender of a Charter is accepted by the Grand Master or the Grand Lodge, or when for any reason the Lodge becomes extinct, its books, papers, furniture and all of its property, real and personal, shall become the property of the Grand Lodge, and shall be taken possession of by the District Deputy Grand Master, and the books, papers, furniture and personal property shall be transmitted to the Grand Secretary; Provided, that in the event that any subordinate Lodge that has deposited in the Temple of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association any historical relics becomes extinct, any such historical relics shall be permitted to remain in the Memorial Temple, at Alexandria, in the custody of the said Association as long as it is in existence.

DECISIONS

1903 D-16, §-2.83

In cases of Lodges becoming extinct, D.D.G.M. should return Charter, jewels, Seal and records to the Grand Secretary. He should sell the furniture and other marketable assets, which, with the arrearages collected from the members, should be applied to the Lodge debt. (E. N. Eubank)

1905 D-46, §-2.83

That the property of a Lodge U.D., which becomes defunct, can be sold to pay its debts. (T. N. Davis)

1910 D-3, §-2.83

The deposit fee of a rejected petitioner of a Lodge which becomes extinct must be returned to him out of the funds of the Lodge by the District Deputy. Twelve months must also elapse after his rejection before he can petition another Lodge. (J. W. Eggleston)

Sec. 2.84. The Lodge May Continue to Work, etc., Until Surrender of Its Charter is Accepted. — The Lodge may continue to work, and shall be entitled to dues from its members, and liable for its own dues to the Grand Lodge until the surrender of its Charter is accepted.

DECISIONS

1910 D-2, §-2.84

Elected candidates of an extinct Lodge become the material of the Lodges nearest their place of residence. (J. W. Eggleston)

Sec. 2.85. Every Lodge Shall Have By-Laws. — Every chartered Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction shall enact by-laws which shall set forth the date, time and place of meeting; the amount of its dues and fees and how these shall be payable; the number of Trustees; the method of amending them and such other matters as may be deemed advisable. No section of the laws of the Grand Lodge shall be a part of the by-laws of a Lodge.

After the Lodge has approved its by-laws they shall be submitted to the District Deputy Grand Master under the Seal of the Lodge and a certificate from the Secretary which shall state the date submitted, the notification of the members of proposed ballot thereon, the date of their approval. The District Deputy Grand Master shall approve the by-laws conforming to this section and forward them to the Grand Master for his approval. They shall be effective on the date approved by the Grand Master unless the by-laws themselves specify the effective date thereof.

DECISIONS

1905 D-8, §-2.85

General regulations or laws of the Grand Lodge cannot be quoted or published in Lodge by-laws. (T. N. Davis)

1905 D-9, §-2.85

Duties of officers are a part of the law and cannot be included in Lodge by-laws. All other matters covered by this decision are now part of Section 2.85. (T. N. Davis)

1908 D-30, §-2.85

Lodge cannot adopt by-law calling for standing committee to investigate injurious rumors or charges concerning misconduct of a member and a report of its investigation. It is the duty of every member to report to the Master such information concerning violation of Masonic laws or morals, or to bring charges against violators himself. (S. J. Quinn)

1912 D-7, §-2.85

If Lodge changes fees candidates in process of receiving degrees must pay whatever Lodge decides. Candidates have no rights but Lodge may regard fees in force at time of petition as a valid agreement if it so desires. (W. B. McChesney)

1917 D-18, §-2.85

- (a) Lodge cannot, in its by-laws, exempt any individual or class of members from dues.
- (b) No Lodge by-law can limit the authority of the Master. The only limitations are those imposed by Masonic law, the Ancient Landmarks and his sacred obligations.
- (c) By-laws cannot bar the election to office of any Brother holding office in another Lodge. This violates the rights of plural membership which grant member same rights in every Lodge to which he belongs.
- (d) By-laws cannot require six months residence in the county in which a Lodge is located. Length of residence in the jurisdiction of the Lodge is fixed by law and the area may cover more than that particular county.
- (e) Lodge cannot adopt by-law requiring compulsory attendance at least once a year or the invoking of the sentence of suspension (or otherwise).
- (f) Lodge by-laws cannot require examination in catechism of the M.M. Degree in open Lodge within six months after receiving the degree, or invoking the penalty of suspension through failure to do so. (J. A. Cabell)

1919 D-4, §-2.85

Lodge by-laws cannot specify the appointment of Tiler. This is provided by Grand Lodge law. (E. L. Cunningham)

1919 D-11, §-2.85

Refused to approve Lodge by-law limiting the amount which can be expended by Master and Wardens attending Grand Lodge. (E. L. Cunningham)

1919 D-12, §-2.48, §-2.85

Refused to approve by-law forbidding smoking in Lodge room during communication. This should be regulated by the Master under his general powers. (E. L. Cunningham)

1921 D-7, §-2.85

All by-laws of Lodges must be approved by Grand Master to be operative. (W. W. Galt)

1922 D-2, §-2.85

A Lodge has no right, either by resolution or by-law, to require its members as individuals to serve, or pay for dinners at its communications. (J. S. Bottimore)

1923 D-25, §-2.85

Amendment to Lodge by-laws making the ability to confer two degrees a condition precedent to election as Master is improper. Remedy lies in the ballot. (J. H. Price)

1933 D-24, §-2.85

A Lodge cannot change its by-laws at a stated communication without first notifying membership of the proposed amendment. (H. K. Green)

1942 D-9, §-2.85

The time for the stated communication of a Lodge may be at different hours in summer and in winter, but both must be specified in the by-laws. (C. D. Freeman)

1964 D-22, §-2.85

Lodge may not allow Secretary a fixed sum each month as expenses in addition to the compensation fixed in the Lodge's by-laws. This ruling does not preclude the payment of normal expenses of travel, lodging and meals to officers attending Grand Lodge, Area Conferences, etc. (J. P. Stokes)

1975 D-4, §-2.85

By-laws may not be changed on a motion in lieu of a resolution. After resolution to change Lodge by-laws has been defeated, another resolution may be introduced and received, but it may not be voted on until after due notice is given to the membership. See 1933, Decision 24. (S. W. Miner)

1988 D-12, §-2.48, §-2.85

Resolutions adopted by a Lodge ordered illegally adopted and expunged from the minutes of the Lodge because they were in direct conflict with the Methodical Digest. Two provisions limited the authority of the Worshipful Master in controlling Lodge funds; the other concerning the salary of the Secretary, which should be addressed by revising the by-laws. (D. M. Robey)

1988 D-15, §-2.85

Refused to approve by-laws which did not set forth the "number of Trustees" for the Lodge. (D. M. Robey)

1988 D-16, §-1.97, §-2.85

2000 D-2, §-1.97, §-2.85

Salaries of the Secretary and Treasurer of the Lodge were revised by resolution adopted by a Lodge. This resolution ordered expunged from the record and the proper method of revising the by-laws used in accomplishing the salary changes. (D. M. Robey and W. L. Holliday)

FEES AND MONTHLY DUES

Sec. 2.86. Dues and Fees to be Prescribed by By-Laws; Part of Fee to be Deposited with Petition for The Degrees. — Every Lodge shall, in its by-laws, prescribe monthly or annual dues from its members; provided, however, that every member on whom the Lodge does not pay the Grand Lodge dues because of his longevity of membership, as certified by the Grand Secretary under the provisions of Section 2.19 of the Methodical Digest, shall be exempt from the payment of monthly or annual dues to such Lodge.

The by-laws shall also prescribe a fee for each degree conferred and the fee for the Degree of Entered Apprentice, or part thereof, including a fee for a background check, the amount of which shall be determined by the office of the Grand Secretary, shall be deposited with the petition for the degrees.

The by-laws may provide for an optional Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to be determined annually by the Gross Domestic Product Deflator Inflation Calculator, which can be found at <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>. This annual adjustment will be added to the base dues amount, rounded to the nearest dollar. The Lodge must report to the Grand Secretary each year the adjusted base amount for inclusion in the Lodge Master File Record and for the calculation of a purchased Life Membership in Perpetuity. (2014)

DECISIONS

1929 D-5, §-2.86

By-law requiring members to pay dues in advance is illegal and cannot be enforced. (W. L. Davis)

1933 D-15, §-2.86, §-2.101

Lodge does not have right to refund degree fees even though the recipient is minister of the gospel. (H. K. Green)

1936 D-6, §-2.86

Brother who pays year's dues in one Lodge, in advance, and demits to join another Lodge is entitled to refund of that portion of his dues, but the Lodge with which he affiliates must pay the Grand Lodge dues on him. (T. W. Hooper)

1936 D-10, §-2.86

Lodge dues are a moral rather than a legal debt and proceedings in bankruptcy do not affect such dues. (T. W. Hooper)

1938 D-1, §-2.86

Lodge cannot suspend member for failing to pay assessment for building fund unless by-laws specify assessment is collectible as dues. (C. V. Eddy)

1955 D-1, §-2.86

The provision for monthly or annual dues to be established in the Lodge by-laws are mutually exclusive and Lodge must provide for either monthly or annual dues. (H. Reid)

2008 D-2, §-2.86

The by-laws may provide for an optional Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). (E. Cohen)

Sec. 2.87. Minimum Fees for Degrees and Minimum Dues. — The minimum fee for the degrees shall be seventy-five dollars, divided and collected as the Lodge may specify in its by-laws and provided further that at least five dollars of the fee for the Degree of Entered Apprentice shall be deposited with the petition.

The minimum dues charged in any Lodge shall be ten dollars in excess of Grand Lodge dues, per annum, but any Lodge may make a monthly charge prorating the dues, if charged on a monthly basis. (2002)

DECISIONS

1997 D-11, §-2.87

Set aside the maximum and minimum fees and dues for Research Lodges, permitting the Lodge to set minimum dues to an amount it deems sufficient to operate the Lodge. (A. W. Adkins)

Sec. 2.88. Membership by Affiliation. — No fee shall be charged for membership by affiliation of a Brother from a Virginia Lodge.

A fee of forty dollars shall be paid to the Grand Lodge of Virginia for each member from another Grand Jurisdiction affiliating with a Virginia Lodge, which fee shall be forwarded to the Grand Treasurer immediately after the stated communication at which the Brother is elected to membership. (2016)

DECISIONS

2025 D-2, §-2.88, §-2.121, §-2.152, §-2.158, §-2.159, 1926 D-3, and 1980 D-6

A completed Application for Membership, containing a recommendation by at least one voucher, submitted on the form provided by the Grand Lodge of Virginia, is required to affiliate with any Virginia Lodge. All out-of-state applicants must submit to a criminal background check through a third-party vendor approved by the Grand Lodge of Virginia. Before balloting on an out-of-state affiliation, the Grand Lodge of Virginia shall receive, and approve the results of, his completed criminal background check, and the Lodge shall verify through the Office of the Grand Secretary that the member is in good standing in his home grand jurisdiction. The fee for each out-of-state affiliation must be collected by the Lodge prior to balloting on the Application. Such fee shall be forwarded to the Office of the Grand Secretary immediately after the stated communication at which the Brother is elected to membership. (G. D. Huffman)

Sec. 2.89. Who May Be Exempt From Dues. — A Lodge may, in its by-laws, exempt from dues the Treasurer, Secretary, Tiler and one Chaplain. Others specifically exempt by Grand Lodge law may not be enumerated in the by-laws of any Lodge. (1968)

DECISIONS

1902 D-7, §-2.89

Lodges cannot exempt members from dues because of age or length of membership. (All allowable exemptions are set forth in Section 2.89. Others exempt by Grand Lodge law are certified fifty year members and honorary members.) (H. O. Kerns)

1947 D-2, §-2.89

Lodge cannot remit or pay dues of members as a group but can do so as individuals. (Decision clarified by report of Past Grand Masters. 1947) (T. P. Coleman)

Sec. 2.90. Receipt for Dues. — The Grand Secretary shall provide and furnish to the subordinate Lodge at cost, supplies of suitable receipts for dues and membership cards. On the reverse side these shall show that the Lodge is in good and regular standing under the Grand Jurisdiction of Virginia and shall bear the facsimile Seal of the Grand Lodge of Virginia and the facsimile signature of the Grand Secretary. No subordinate Lodge shall issue or use any membership or dues card, other than that herein provided.

PETITIONS FOR DEGREES, ETC.

Sec. 2.91. When Petition for The Degrees May be Received and Balloted on; to What Time Action May be Postponed After Opposition Has Developed. — Petitions for the degrees must be received and balloted on at stated communications of the Lodge, and after a petition for a degree has come up regularly for action, and opposition has developed in discussion, the ballot cannot be postponed to any other than the next stated communication.

DECISIONS

1903 D-2, §-2.91, §-2.95

Should the ballot be found “not clear” the Master cannot cancel same and postpone final consideration until the next stated communication. (The ballot must be declared after being respread one time.) (E. N. Eubank)

1995 D-1, §-2.91

Allowed rebaloting on a petitioner at the next stated communication due to an error on the part of the District Deputy in not allowing the petition to be postponed by the Worshipful Master who had no report from the investigating committee. (T. F. May)

Sec. 2.92. From Whom Petition for the Degrees May Be Entertained, etc. — A petition for the degrees may be entertained from any person who is a freeborn man of the age of eighteen years or over, of sound mind, good repute and in such physical condition that he may substantially conform to the ritual, and who believes and trusts in God as the Supreme Architect and Governor of the Universe.

Corporeal deformity in a petitioner for the degrees shall require a dispensation prior to ballot thereon. A Lodge requesting such dispensation shall forward a complete description of the physical disability, general physical condition, family status and financial condition of the proposed petitioner under the Seal of the Lodge. Thereafter the Grand Master may, in his judgment issue such dispensation to the requesting Lodge to ballot upon the petition of the maimed or deformed person named therein. (1995) [Refer: E-1-1995]

DECISIONS

1909 D-55, §-2.92

Alien, not yet naturalized, who is not otherwise disqualified, is eligible. Residence for the twelve months last past and not citizenship, governs the case. (J. W. Eggleston)

1923 D-20, §-2.92

1936 D-11, §-2.92

Candidate must have reached his majority when he petitions a Lodge. It is not enough that he is of age when his petition is acted upon. (J. H. Price and T. W. Hooper)

1963 D-1, §-2.34, §-2.48, §-2.92

Blind Brother held not physically eligible to occupy the office of Worshipful Master of his Lodge as he could not conduct its business without delegating certain of his duties to others. (E. H. Cann)

1977 D-11, §-2.92

Request for dispensation to entertain petition of a totally deaf non-Mason was denied: no method to confer meaningful and important unwritten work, thereby disqualifying petitioner. (L. D. Delano)

1984 D-2, §-2.92

While not considered “corporeal deformity” as that definition is used in Section 2.92 of the Virginia Methodical Digest, I denied a request for dispensation to ballot on a candidate suffering from claustrophobia which would have prevented his completion of the degrees. (W. M. Johnson)

1991 D-11, §-2.92

A petitioner who is otherwise qualified shall not be rejected because he is required by his religious beliefs to wear a headdress at all times outside the confines of his home. This does not authorize the wearing of a headdress in a tiled Masonic Lodge for those who simply wish to wear same and are not required by their religious beliefs or physical condition. (G. W. Farley)

1994 D-4, §-2.92

Due to physical size and condition of a candidate for the Fellowcraft Degree, authorized use of a proxy for the two remaining degrees, provided the candidate learns and recites his catechism. (W. H. Morlock)

1994 D-30, §-2.92, §-2.101, §-2.110, §-2.112, §-2.114

Set law aside and ordered Entered Apprentice, dying from cancer, to be made a Master Mason. Fellowcraft and Master Mason's Degrees conferred on individual at his residence by Committee on Work. (W. H. Morlock)

Sec. 2.93. Must Have Resided in the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Virginia for the Twelve Months Last Past-Residence of Members of Regular Defense Forces Defined. — The petitioner must have resided in the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Virginia for the twelve months last past.

A petitioner who is a member of the regular or permanent defense forces of the United States may be deemed, if he so chooses, to reside on the post or station to which he is assigned for duty whether or not he or the members of his immediate family are quartered or living thereon.

A petitioner, who is on active duty status with the Armed Forces of the United States and stationed in the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, with orders for deployment, can request exemption from the twelve months residency requirement. Such request shall be made in writing to the Worshipful Master and submitted with the petition. A Lodge accepting a petition under the condition of this exemption must obtain a dispensation from the Grand Master, through the District Deputy Grand Master, prior to the first reading of the petition. The dispensation request shall include a justification for the exemption. (2024)

DECISIONS

1899 D-7, §-2.93

A Lodge is not prohibited from receiving the petition of a non-Mason who has been rejected in another Grand Lodge jurisdiction, provided he shall have established Masonic residence as required by law. The Lodge has an obligation to communicate with and procure information from the rejecting Lodge. Virginia declines to hold to the doctrine of perpetual jurisdiction. (R. T. W. Duke)

1909 D-44, §-2.93

Lodge does not acquire personal jurisdiction over a non-Mason who petitions and then has his petition withdrawn. Such non-Mason has right to petition any Lodge in whose jurisdiction he has established Masonic residence. (J. W. Eggleston)

1917 D-14, §-2.93

Young man who attended college four years and worked away from his home but returned on weekends and claimed it as his legal residence is entitled to petition Lodge in his hometown. His absences are merely sojourns and do not deprive him of his legal residence at his home. (J. A. Cabell)

1918 D-6, §-2.93

Election of non-Mason to receive the Degree of E.A. declared null and void because of the loss of residence by the petitioner who moved away before filing his petition. (E. L. Cunningham)

1928 D-2, §-2.93

Non-Mason who has resided in South Boston all his life was sent to China by his employer. He moved from place to place there. His family continued to reside at South Boston and he should petition Lodge there, this being his home. (J. Bowman)

1929 D-4, §-2.93

A non-Mason who has not been naturalized but is not otherwise disqualified may petition Lodge. (W. L. Davis)

1932 D-9, §-2.93

Petitioner who was transferred after his petition was filed but before he was elected may be balloted upon and initiated by the Lodge petitioned. (A. M. Showalter)

1964 D-9, §-2.93

Member of Armed Forces may petition Lodge in whose jurisdiction the post on which he is stationed is located; or the place where he and his family actually reside. (J. P. Stokes)

1965 D-6, §-2.93

Residence of a member of the Armed Forces is where his family resides, if he chooses to declare it as such. (M. H. Robbins)

Sec. 2.94. How Petition to Be Signed and What It Must State: How Recommended. —

The petition must be filled out and signed by the petitioner himself, stating his name in full, place and date of birth, name of father and mother's maiden name, residence, occupation, employer and place of employment (all of which details, including the names of those recommending him, shall be preserved as part of the Lodge's minutes), telephone numbers, address, and length of residence and employment for the ten years last past, marital status, names and degree of kinship of all dependents, physical defects or deformities, whether or not ever charged in a court of law with a criminal offense, and whether he has made previous application to any Lodge, setting out the facts as to such application; and it must be accompanied with the recommendation of at least two members of the Lodge or other well known Master Masons, who shall certify thereon that the petitioner has resided for the one year last past, or has Masonic residence in the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, and that they have read the answers contained in the petition and believe them to be true, and that they believe the petitioner is morally and physically qualified, of good character and reputation and under the tongue of good repute. The petition shall be made on the form of petition approved by the Grand Lodge. No petition shall be accepted, vouched for, advanced or acted on in any manner by any Mason who believes the petition has been filled out by anyone other than the petitioner. If corporeal deformity exists to the extent that the petitioner cannot fill out the petition himself, then such circumstance(s) shall be made well known and dispensation shall be granted prior to any ballot thereon as prescribed in Section 2.92. The petitioner will be required to submit to and pay for a background check performed by an outside source; therefore, social security numbers are no longer needed for Lodge Masonic records. Each subordinate Lodge shall keep a permanent file of all petitions received. (2024)

DECISIONS

1901 D-11, §-2.94, §-2.98

A non-Mason whose petition for initiation was withdrawn should state that fact when he petitions that or another Lodge when he answers the question as to whether he has ever petitioned a Masonic Lodge. (H. O. Kerns)

1918 D-7, §-2.94

Man who received degrees in a clandestine Lodge may petition Virginia Lodge provided his petition is accompanied by a statement of facts, a renunciation of the Lodge and Grand Lodge under which it is holden. He must be elected and receive the degrees in the same manner as any other petitioner. (E. L. Cunningham)

2025 D-1, §-2.94, §-2.95, and §-2.121

Nothing contained within section 2.94, 2.95, and/or 2.121 shall preclude the Grand Secretary from changing procedures for the submission of Petition or Application information, or background check requests, or any other procedural changes necessary in an effort to keep up with current technology or available resources. Any such changes will be immediately communicated to each Lodge Secretary. (G. D. Huffman)

Sec. 2.95. Procedure with the Petition; Recommenders, Investigating Committee and Balloting on Petition. — The petition received by Secretary must be presented at the next stated communication of the Lodge, following submission to the Lodge or Secretary, and it must lie over at least four weeks before it can be considered. The Worshipful Master shall refer the petition to an Investigating Committee of not less than three members, no one of whom shall have been a signer of the petition, who shall make investigation and report to the Master, or to the Lodge, on the moral and physical qualifications of the petitioner no later than the first stated communication after the expiration of eight weeks from the date the petition was presented. A Lodge may request another Virginia Lodge to conduct a supplementary investigation and the requested Lodge may comply as a matter of courtesy.

The Secretary, immediately after the communication at which the petition has been first read, shall mail, fax, or e-mail a copy of the signed Authorization for Release of Information to the Grand Secretary, so a criminal background check can be completed. The Grand Secretary

shall have a criminal background check completed, and the results will be provided to the Lodge Secretary. No action can be taken on a petition until the results of the criminal background check is received by the Lodge Secretary.

The Lodge Secretary must share the criminal background check information with the Worshipful Master; who, in turn, will provide the Investigating Committee with the results. The Investigating Committee would then issue a favorable or unfavorable report and the matter would proceed normally.

Except as provided above, the information from the criminal background check is not to be shared with anyone else. The Grand Secretary will not retain copies of any records obtained.

When the petition is to be considered by the Lodge, it shall be read for the information of all present, followed by the two Recommenders' reasons for signing the petition, the report of the Investigating Committee, and any discussion by members or visiting Brethren on the moral and physical qualifications of the petitioner before the ballot may be spread. Any Recommender not able to be present shall submit, in writing, his reasons for signing the petition. (Should a Recommender be a member of a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction, his Good Standing must be verified with that Grand Lodge through the Grand Secretary of Virginia before the Lodge may act on the petition.) Only members of the Lodge petitioned shall be eligible to ballot. When more than one petition is to be balloted upon, the Worshipful Master may, if he so desires, have the ballot spread collectively on all petitioners. If the collective ballot is not clear, it must then be spread separately on each of the petitioners included in the collective ballot. The ballot must be clear to elect the petitioner(s).

Upon ordering the ballot presented in the East, the Worshipful Master may, if he sees the ballot is not clear, immediately order it respread, provided he does not declare the result of the ballot and no one has left the Lodge room. If he should not notice that the ballot is not clear and sends the ballot to the South and West where it is announced as not clear, he may still respread it, if he so desires, provided he does not declare the result and no one has left the Lodge room. After the second balloting and the ballot is presented in the East, the Worshipful Master must have it presented in the South, West and East, and then declare the result. No ballot declared from the East shall be respread or reconsidered. (2017)

DECISIONS

1893 D-1, §-2.95

The power specifically granted to a Lodge by dispensation of a Grand Master is not transferable. This particular decision deals with conferring degrees before the lapse of time required by law. (W. H. Pleasants)

1898 D-5, §-2.95

A Lodge has no right to have a blackboard in its Lodge room on which is written the names of petitioners for initiation and membership. (R. T. W. Duke)

1899 D-9, §-2.95, §-2.106

Any Mason, whether a member of the Lodge or not, has the right, with the permission of the Master, to state his reasons in open Lodge why a petition for initiation ought not to be favorably acted upon. (R. T. W. Duke)

1903 D-2, §-2.91, §-2.95

Should the ballot be found "not clear" the Master cannot cancel same and postpone final consideration until the next stated communication. (The ballot must be declared after being respread one time.) (E. N. Eubank)

1906 D-20, §-2.95

Rejected petitions for initiation form a part of the Lodge records and should never be returned to the petitioner. (T. N. Davis)

1910 D-7, §-2.95

When a petition is rejected, it is not a subject for further discussion then or thereafter (unless the person rejected repetitions). (J. W. Eggleston)

1917 D-6, §-2.95

The ballot can be spread only once on moral qualifications and respread only if the Master fears a mistake has been made. (J. A. Cabell)

1917 D-7, §-2.95

When the ballot has been spread for initiation, advancement or membership no one should be permitted to leave the Lodge, nor should the Master suspend proceedings until the ballot has been declared from the East. (J. A. Cabell)

1917 D-8, §-2.95

1964 D-2, §-2.95

1976 D-4, §-2.95

1930 D-6, §-2.95

1972 D-1, §-2.95

1984 D-1, §-2.95

Ballot cannot be respread on a petition presumably rejected in error. Must await a lapse of twelve months before applying again. (J. A. Cabell, J. T. Cochran, J. P. Stokes, C. F. Shuler, S. J. Levy and W. M. Johnson)

1921 D-23, §-2.95

Ballot declared null and void and ordered respread when Brother declared he had cast rejecting ballot by mistake. (W. W. Galt)

1923 D-7, §-2.95

Petition presented to Lodge must lie over for four weeks. If a Lodge secures dispensation to meet earlier because of holiday, petitions which do not comply with law must be carried over. (J. H. Price)

1924 D-2, §-2.95

No Brother present may be excused from balloting on the moral fitness of a candidate, by resolution (or by the Master). (J. H. Price)

1924 D-8, §-2.95

Every member of the Lodge is charged with the duty and responsibility of passing on the moral qualifications of those seeking admission to Freemasonry and cannot be excused from balloting. (J. H. Price)

1925 D-10, §-2.95

Ballot having been declared from the East cannot be respread. (C. H. Callahan)

1927 D-8, §-2.95

Master who destroyed ballot on candidate's moral fitness without announcing it and postponed consideration until next stated communication erred. Candidate stands rejected and may only apply for advancement at the end of six months. (B. W. Beach)

1929 D-8, §-2.95, §-2.110

2002 D-4, §-2.95

Defective ballot box which prevented Master and Wardens seeing a black ball and, who declared the ballot clear but were afterwards informed of the negative ballot caused the Grand Master to declare the ballot void. The status of the candidate was the same as before the ballot was spread. (W. L. Davis and C. A. Parker)

1961 D-14, §-2.95

Permission granted to respread the ballot on the candidate due to improper preparation of the ballot box and inexperience of the Master. Committee Comment: Care should be exercised in voiding any such action least we infringe upon the right of every Brother to cast the ballot of his choice for those seeking admission to his Lodge. (C. M. Flintoff)

1962 D-3, §-2.95

Request by an individual to respread the ballot on a non-Mason was not entertained. It is held that all such requests should come from the Lodge itself, over its Seal, and not from an individual. No claim of irregularity was made. (E. C. Glover, Jr.)

1990 D-13, §-2.95, §-2.109

Provisions of the law were set aside to allow rebalotting on a petitioner rejected for reasons of his national origin. Balloting is on moral fitness, regardless of national origin. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-24, §-2.95, §-2.109

Provisions of the law were set aside to rebalot on a petition rejected in a Lodge in which all petitions were being blackballed; the last five having been rejected and seven years elapsed without a petition being approved. A vote for rejection on other than moral fitness grounds is un-Masonic. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-25, §-1.42, §-2.95, §-2.109

Provisions of the law were set aside to rebalot on the petition of an otherwise qualified candidate rejected on the grounds of his race (2.95 and 2.109). Where the ballot was again not clear the result was recorded and then set aside and directed the petitioner to be received in the Lodge and to receive the degrees of Masonry (1.42). Race is not a proper ground for the rejection of a candidate. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-29, §-2.95

Opined that discussions, particularly of business and balloting, held within a tiled Lodge are confidential and not to be discussed outside the Lodge, except when directed by proper Masonic authority. (C. F. Cobbs)

1992 D-8, §-2.95, §-2.121

Ruled that a vote on only one type of petition/application could be taken at a time. (W. F. Perdue)

1998 D-9, §-2.95, §-2.121

2003 D-5, §-2.95, §-2.121

Permitted a Lodge to vote on petitions which fell short of the prescribed waiting period by three days due to adverse weather conditions. (A. H. Tignor, Jr. and F. G. Martin, III)

2025 D-1, §-2.94, §-2.95, §-2.121

Nothing contained within section 2.94, 2.95, and/or 2.121 shall preclude the Grand Secretary from changing procedures for the submission of Petition or Application information, or background check requests, or any other procedural changes necessary in an effort to keep up with current technology or available resources. Any such changes will be immediately communicated to each Lodge Secretary. (G. D. Huffman)

Sec. 2.96. Fee, or Part Thereof, to Accompany Petition. — The petition must be accompanied by the fee for the degree, or such part thereof as the by-laws of the Lodge may require. This shall be returned to the petitioner if he is rejected. An additional fee to cover the cost of the criminal background check must accompany the petition. (2014)

Sec. 2.97. Concurrent Jurisdiction: Procedure for Processing Petitions. — The Secretary of a Lodge receiving a petition for the degrees or affiliation from the petitioner whose Masonic residence is closer by airline miles to another Virginia Lodge or Lodges may, at his discretion, immediately notify it or them of receipt of the petition, giving the petitioner's full name, residence and occupation. Lodges receiving such notices may have them audibly read at the next stated communication after their receipt. Any replies by recipient Lodges to such notices should be made immediately after the stated communication of their reading. (1994)

DECISIONS

1933 D-19, §-2.97, §-2.108

The names of applicants for the degrees should not be sent to members of a Lodge in bulletins or otherwise. (H. K. Green)

Sec. 2.98. Petition for The Degrees Cannot be Withdrawn Without Unanimous Consent of Lodge. — No petition to a Lodge for the degrees can be withdrawn without the unanimous consent of the Lodge. (1987)

DECISIONS

1901 D-11, §-2.94, §-2.98

A non-Mason whose petition for initiation was withdrawn should state that fact when he petitions that or another Lodge when he answers the question as to whether he has ever petitioned a Masonic Lodge. (H. O. Kerns)

Sec. 2.99. When Candidate Must Present Himself for Initiation If He Be Accepted.

— If the petition be accepted, the candidate must present himself for initiation at the same communication, or within six months thereafter, unless before the expiration of six months the Lodge having personal jurisdiction over him shall grant him further time. (1975)

DECISIONS

1910 D-14, §-2.99

When more than twelve months have elapsed since a petitioner's election he must be balloted on again, notwithstanding fact that it was through no fault of his that the degrees were not conferred. (J. W. Eggleston)

1956 D-3, §-2.99

Lodge cannot confer degrees on a candidate by proxy or at sight. He must appear and receive the degrees in person. (W. J. McMahon)

Sec. 2.100. If He Fails to Present Himself Deposit Shall be Forfeited. — If he does not so present himself his deposit shall be forfeited to the Lodge, and if thereafter he desires to be made a Mason he must proceed as if he had never presented any petition. (1963)

DECISIONS

1919 D-9, §-2.100

Resident of Norfolk who was elected to receive the degrees but moved before he could do so has lost his rights under election (after six months) and can now petition Lodge in whose jurisdiction he resides. (E. L. Cunningham)

Sec. 2.101. The Fee for a Degree Must be Paid Before the Degree Can be Conferred.

— No Lodge shall confer any degree upon the candidate until the fee therefor is paid to the Secretary, and such collection shall be entered upon the minutes for the communication at which the degree is conferred. (1977)

DECISIONS

1933 D-15, §-2.86, §-2.101

Lodge does not have right to refund degree fees even though the recipient is minister of the gospel. (H. K. Green)

1994 D-30, §-2.92, §-2.101, §-2.110, §-2.112, §-2.114

Set law aside and ordered Entered Apprentice, dying of cancer, to be made a Master Mason. (W. H. Morlock)

Sec. 2.102. A Lodge May Confer a Degree Upon a Candidate Not its Own Only Upon the Following Conditions. — Without a dispensation from the Grand Master no Lodge shall confer a degree upon, give Masonic instruction to, or examine and ballot upon the Masonic

proficiency of a candidate not its own except upon the request of the Lodge whose candidate he is. A Virginia Lodge may comply with such a request when received directly from another Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction; but, when such a request originates in a Lodge outside this Grand Jurisdiction, it may be complied with only when received through the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Virginia. A Lodge may decline to comply with such a request from a domestic Lodge, the only obligation to render such service being one of courtesy. Any fees for degrees conferred as a courtesy shall be in the amounts specified in the by-laws of the requesting Lodge and shall belong to it.

The Lodge which examines the Masonic proficiency of a candidate not its own should ballot thereon as provided in Section 2.110. The Master of a Lodge may refuse to confer any degree on a courtesy candidate as provided in Sections 2.105 and 2.106, but should inform the requesting Lodge, either domestic or foreign, of the reason for such action. (1987)

DECISIONS

1891 D-5, §-2.102

When a non-Mason receives the first degree in Masonry, the Lodge which elected him to receive the same acquires jurisdiction and he becomes one of their household. (J. H. Wayt)

1920 D-10, §-2.102

Lodge may decline to coach and examine a candidate for another Lodge, the only obligation being one of courtesy. (S. Cutchins)

1920 D-11, §-2.102

A Lodge may refuse to confer a degree on a candidate from another Grand Lodge jurisdiction on objection of a member but the requesting Lodge should be advised of the reason for such action. (S. Cutchins)

1949 D-2, §-2.102

Virginia Lodge cannot advance candidate who received preceding degrees in Lodge holden under a Grand Lodge with which we are not in fraternal relations. (C. E. Webber)

1961 D-3, §-2.102

A Virginia Lodge may, by unanimous affirmative vote direct a request to a Lodge in another Grand Lodge jurisdiction, through the office of the Grand Secretary, to confer a degree upon a candidate who has moved there. If six months have elapsed since his last degree the Lodge must first grant him the right to receive further instruction as required by Section 2.112. (C. M. Flintoff)

1988 D-2, §-2.102

Entered Apprentice who had been balloted upon, on his petition, prior to new procedures adopted in 1987, never completed his work. Ruled that he was subject to a ballot on moral fitness before being advanced, as required by law in effect when his petition was originally presented. (D. M. Robey)

Sec. 2.103. When a Lodge May Request Another to Confer a Degree - When a Lodge May Waive Personal Jurisdiction. — A Lodge may, after an unanimous affirmative vote thereon request another Lodge to confer on one of its candidates a degree or degrees and/or give him Masonic instruction and/or examine him on his Masonic proficiency and vote thereon as a courtesy to the requesting Lodge. Such a request may be transmitted directly from one Virginia Lodge to another; but, if the request is to a Lodge outside this Grand Jurisdiction, it

must be transmitted through the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Virginia. After contact has been established between the requesting and requested Lodges through the offices of the Grand Secretaries, subsequent correspondence may be conducted directly between the two Lodges.

Upon his request, therefor, in writing and over his own signature, a petitioner for the degrees, an Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft may be granted a waiver of personal jurisdiction by a unanimous affirmative ballot at a stated communication of the Lodge whose candidate he is or, if it be suspended or extinct, by a Lodge in the same Masonic district; subject to the following requirements:

(a) Jurisdiction may not be waived over a petitioner for the degrees until his petition has been balloted on and he has been declared elected or rejected. If he is elected, a waiver may be granted at that or a future stated communication. If he is rejected, a waiver may not be granted until twelve months have elapsed since his rejection.

(b) Within six months after the date on which he received his last degree a waiver may be granted to an Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft, either before or after approval of his Masonic proficiency.

A Lodge waiving jurisdiction over a candidate has no further control over him and his Masonic progress thereafter is dependent upon the action of the Lodge accepting the waiver.

Any fees for degrees not conferred when jurisdiction is waived shall belong to the Lodge accepting the waiver, and it shall be liable to the Grand Lodge for the fee required to be paid by Section 2.19. A Lodge receiving a waiver of jurisdiction over a candidate shall indicate its acceptance of such waiver in writing to the granting Lodge within 90 days after receipt, and refusal or failure to accept such waiver within this time limit shall be cause for the granting Lodge to recover the ineffective waiver over a petitioner, an Entered Apprentice, or a Fellowcraft.

The Lodge accepting a waiver over a petitioner for initiation who has been elected to receive the Degree of Entered Apprentice shall require him to present to it a new petition for initiation and shall follow the procedure required by Section 2.95 just as though he had not previously petitioned a Lodge.

The Lodge receiving a waiver of jurisdiction cannot transfer the power delegated by such a waiver to a third Lodge. (1987)

DECISIONS

1892 D-8, §-2.103

That the petition for advancement of an E.A. of a Tennessee Lodge, the jurisdiction over whom has been relinquished to a Virginia Lodge, should lie over one month. (W. H. Pleasants)

1902 D-5, §-2.103

When jurisdiction is waived by a Lodge it has no further control over the petitioner, E.A. or F.C. (The handling of petitions for advancement where such waivers are granted E.As. or F.Cs. are set out in Section 2.103.) (H. O. Kerns)

1909 D-24, §-2.103

Lodges in Virginia may not accept from a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction that which they cannot accept from a Virginia Lodge, viz. a waiver of jurisdiction over a non-Mason not eligible to receive the Degree of E.A. Our claim of jurisdiction is territorial, not personal. A non-Mason must petition where he has acquired Masonic residence. (J. W. Eggleston)

1919 D-5, §-2.103

Brother who desires waiver of jurisdiction in accordance with Section 2.103 should file his request therefor in writing over his signature. (E. L. Cunningham)

1923 D-16, §-2.103

1954 D-10, §-2.103

Virginia has no law to permit waiver of jurisdiction over a non-Mason. Lodge must first acquire jurisdiction by a petition and the election of the petitioner to receive the first degree before such waiver can be considered. (J. H. Price and O. M. Miles)

1932 D-3, §-2.103

Resident of West Virginia, though originally living in Virginia must petition West Virginia Lodge and does not need a waiver. A Virginia Lodge cannot waive that which it does not have. (A. M. Showalter)

1932 D-6, §-2.103

A Virginia Lodge may waive jurisdiction in favor of another Lodge but such waiver can only be granted after non-Mason has petitioned and been elected to receive the E.A. Degree. (A. M. Showalter)

1941 D-3, §-2.103

Brother F.C. should make request for a waiver of jurisdiction for the Degree of Master Mason and present a petition to second Lodge to be laid over one month and acted on in the usual manner. The Lodge accepting the waiver is then responsible for the G.L. fee. (T. J. Traylor)

1941 D-4, §-1.02, §-2.103

If non-Mason lives closer to North Carolina Lodge than to a Virginia Lodge he may apply to the North Carolina Lodge under the provisions of Section 1.02. However, if the Virginia Lodge has been petitioned, he must be elected and then ask for a waiver. (T. J. Traylor)

1953 D-6, §-2.103

Grand Master cannot waive jurisdiction over Virginia non-Mason for the benefit of a Pennsylvania Lodge. This can be done by a subordinate Lodge after the non-Mason has petitioned for and been elected to receive the Degree of E.A. (C. M. Lankford, Jr.)

1967 D-1, §-2.103

A member of the Armed Forces not having a residence in Virginia other than his duty station must petition the Lodge in whose jurisdiction he is stationed. If he wishes to join another Lodge he must seek a waiver of jurisdiction from the Lodge where he is stationed after he has been elected to receive the first degree. (G. E. Kidd)

1980 D-4, §-2.103

Lodge received and acted on petition prior to receiving waiver of personal jurisdiction on a petitioner from rejecting Virginia Lodge. Ballot on illegal petition healed, allowing Lodge to proceed with initiation of candidate at discretion of Worshipful Master. Decision rendered for good of Lodges and harmony within the district. (M. L. Lacy, II)

1993 D-3, §-2.103

The law was set aside to grant a waiver of jurisdiction so a non-Mason could petition his father's Lodge in the District of Columbia. His current address was in Christiansburg due to furthering his education, and after graduation, he would be moving back to Arlington, Virginia. (J. R. Dean)

1993 D-7, §-2.103

Another Lodge was requested to and did confer the Master Mason's Degree on a candidate without the unanimous affirmative vote of the candidate's Lodge. After discussing this with the Master, and the Lodge approving the conferral of the degree, it was recorded in the minutes of the Lodge, after which the irregularity was healed. (J. R. Dean)

1999 D-6, §-2.103

Allowed waiver of jurisdiction although more than twelve months had elapsed. (G. H. Chapin)

2003 D-6, §-2.103

Due to the fact the Lodge did not follow proper procedure in balloting on a request for waiver of jurisdiction without having laid over the required four weeks, and it should not have been a voice vote, finding no willful violation, I healed the irregularity and ordered the ballot to be respread at the next stated communication. (F. G. Martin, III)

Sec. 2.104. More Than Five Entered Apprentices Cannot be Made at One Communication, Without a Dispensation. — No Lodge shall, without a dispensation from the Grand Master, make more than five (5) Entered Apprentices, or Fellowcrafts, or Master Masons at one communication.

DECISIONS

1955 D-3, §-2.104

Grand Master held that it was the intent of the law that no more than five degrees may be conferred at any one communication of a Lodge. (H. Reid)

Sec. 2.104(a). Degrees Cannot Be Conferred on More than Three Candidates Simultaneously. — The Worshipful Master of a Lodge holden under this Grand Lodge may, at his option, confer the Degree of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and the first section of the Master Mason Degree on no more than three candidates simultaneously. A conductor is required for each candidate. Worshipful Masters exercising this option are required to follow the procedures established and promulgated by the Grand Lecturer and the Committee on Work. The second section of the Master Mason Degree must be conferred individually. In order to complete the degree(s), the lecture must be given concurrent with the conferral of the degree; it cannot be deferred. (2008)

Sec. 2.105. When Master May Refuse to Confer a Degree Upon Applicant for Initiation or Advancement; Vote of Lodge as to Masonic Proficiency Conclusive. — The Master may refuse to confer any degree upon an applicant for initiation or advancement if he believes him to be morally unworthy; but the vote of the Lodge upon his proficiency in the preceding degree must be accepted as conclusive.

DECISIONS

1905 D-28, §-2.105

Master cannot annul election and have ballot respread on moral fitness of a petitioner because of reception of subsequent information that his election was not in the best interest of the Lodge. The Master must take the initiative and stop his progress. (T. N. Davis)

1917 D-1, §-2.105

The Master of a Lodge can refuse to confer a degree upon a candidate even after he is prepared and the alarm has been given. (J. A. Cabell)

Sec. 2.106. Any Member May Object to the Conferring of a Degree on Any Candidate; In Such Event the Master May Decline to Confer It. — Before any degree is conferred, any member of the Lodge may state to the Master his objection, and the Master may, upon such objection, and in his discretion, decline to confer the degree. If the Master declines to confer the degree, the candidate shall stand rejected and his fee be returned.

DECISIONS

1899 D-9, §-2.95, §-2.106

Any Mason, whether a member of the Lodge or not, has the right, with the permission of the Master, to state his reasons in open Lodge why a petition for initiation ought not to be favorably acted upon. (R. T. W. Duke)

1917 D-2, §-2.106

Master can refuse to advance an Entered Apprentice on objection secretly communicated, in which case the E.A. stands rejected. (J. A. Cabell)

1923 D-12, §-2.106

1932 D-2, §-2.106

If Master declines to confer degree upon objection of member, candidate stands rejected. Such objections are not permanent and candidate may apply again at proper time. (J. H. Price and A. M. Showalter)

1926 D-1, §-2.106

The word “may” in this section is not mandatory and the Master may sustain or overrule objection to conferring degree. (C. H. Callahan)

Sec. 2.107. A Mason, Voting for a Rejected Candidate, Cannot Disclose His Ballot. — The ballot is secret and sacred. No Mason, who has voted in favor of a rejected candidate for membership or for any of the degrees shall disclose his ballot; nor shall any inquiry be made as to how any Brother has balloted or his reason therefor. (1982)

DECISIONS

1903 D-1, §-2.107

Master may send the ballot to the West and South for announcement or he may order it respread. When taking a second ballot no one must have left the room and no discussion is in order. (E. N. Eubank)

1903 D-19, §-2.107

Black cubes may be used in the ballot box in place of black balls. (E. N. Eubank)

1913 D-2, §-2.107

The ballot is secret and sacred and it is not proper nor legal to question either the act or the motive of a member as to his ballot. (W. L. Andrews)

1933 D-17, §-2.107, §-2.108

It is contrary to Masonic law to publish in any form the name of a rejected candidate. (H. K. Green)

1950 D-4, §-2.107

While the use of more than one ballot box at a time is discouraged, yet if the Worshipful Master deems it expedient to permit the use of more than one, and is satisfied that absolute secrecy can be maintained, he may so order. (A. D. Smith, Jr.)

1950 D-12, §-2.107

1965 D-1, §-2.107

1977 D-3, §-2.107

1977 D-4, §-2.107

Pertaining to D-1-1965 upheld. "The ballot cannot be respread after it has been declared from the East. The petitioner, who may have been rejected in error, must await the lapse of twelve months before applying again." (A. D. Smith, Jr., M. H. Robbins, L. D. Delano and L. D. Delano)

1980 D-2, §-2.107

Worshipful Master, by his own admission, was in violation of Section 2.107 of the Virginia Methodical Digest in that he destroyed the ballot without having it presented in the South and in the West and then declaring it in the East. Believing his action was an oversight and that the ballot was not clear, permission to reballet on candidate not granted. District Deputy Grand Master notified that candidate must wait required time and reapply. (M. L. Lacy, II)

1990 D-26, §-2.107

Advised that a Mason cannot properly disclose his ballot on a petition whether it be positive or negative. (Overruled D-13, 1906) (C. F. Cobbs)

Sec. 2.108. The Publication of Any Rejection, Suspension or Expulsion Shall Not be Authorized or Permitted by a Lodge. — No Lodge shall authorize or permit the publication of any rejection, suspension or expulsion, but is authorized to publish the name of a candidate for the degrees after he has been elected to receive the same. (2009)

DECISIONS

1916 D-22, §-2.108

1933 D-17, §-2.107, §-2.108

1964 D-4, §-2.108

It is contrary to Masonic law to publish in any form the name of a rejected candidate. (J. B. Wood, H. K. Green and J. P. Stokes)

1916 D-22, §-2.108

1933 D-19, §-2.97, §-2.108

The names of applicants for the degrees should not be sent to members of a Lodge in bulletins or otherwise. (J. B. Wood and H. K. Green)

Sec. 2.109. When a Rejected Petitioner Can Again Apply and to What Lodge. — No petitioner for the degrees, who is rejected in any Lodge under the jurisdiction of this Grand Lodge, shall be eligible to another recommendation in that or any other such Lodge until the expiration of twelve months; nor shall he be allowed, while his residence continues within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Virginia to make application to any other Lodge for the

degrees, unless he has been granted a waiver of personal jurisdiction by the rejecting Lodge, or, if it be suspended or extinct, by another chartered Lodge in the same Masonic district. (1987)

DECISIONS

1905 D-42, §-2.109

1933 D-13, §-2.109

Virginia Lodge may entertain petition of non-Mason rejected in another Grand Jurisdiction which claims perpetual jurisdiction over rejected material, but he should be informed that he cannot visit in the jurisdiction which rejected him. (T. N. Davis and H. K. Green)

1911 D-10, §-2.109

Virginia does not claim jurisdiction over rejected material after they leave our state. (W. B. McChesney)

1930 D-8, §-2.109

Rejected petitioner of Kentucky Lodge who did not state his rejected status on his Virginia petition was declared an illegal E.A. and his status was that of a rejected petitioner of Kentucky. (J. T. Cochran)

1939 D-5, §-2.109

Lodge entertaining petition of rejected non-Mason who had lived at one time in its jurisdiction and initiated him an E.A. He was instructed to apply to the Lodge which initiated him and, if elected, to repeat the E.A. Degree and confer the others. (J. N. Hillman)

1940 D-1, §-1.03, §-2.109

Non-Mason living on Virginia side of Bristol who is rejected by the Tennessee Lodge in Bristol cannot petition Shelby Lodge in Bristol, Virginia These Lodges have concurrent jurisdiction in the city. (N. S. Turnbull)

1940 D-10, §-2.109

Rejected petitioner must wait twelve months and then can petition only the Lodge which rejected him so long as he lives in its jurisdiction. (N. S. Turnbull)

1954 D-4, §-2.109

Lodge initiating and passing a candidate who had been previously rejected in another Lodge having concurrent jurisdiction; and who failed to list his rejection on his petition, must pay over to the rejecting Lodge all fees collected and the candidate's future advancement rests solely on the rejecting Lodge's favorable ballot. (O. M. Miles)

1974 D-3, §-2.109

Petitioner whose petition stated that he had been rejected by a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction was elected and degrees conferred by a Virginia Lodge. Grand Master considered Lodge's procedure improper and not fault of petitioner. Healed as Master Mason. (W. C. Vaughan)

1979 D-1, §-2.109

District Deputy Grand Master reported petitioner rejected in his district in 1968 had been elected to membership in another Lodge within district in 1978. Absence of waiver of jurisdiction by rejecting Lodge caused Grand Master to halt work until compliance with Section 2.109 evidenced. (R. R. Kennedy, Jr.)

1981 D-3, §-2.109

According to the information under review, a petition was balloted on prior to receipt of a waiver of jurisdiction from the rejecting Lodge. The petition was entertained shortly after statewide concurrent jurisdiction became effective and there appeared to be confusion present. No intentional wrong was detected and the Secretary was admonished to provide correct information to petitioners promptly. Finding no willful error and to diminish disharmony and dismay, I healed the irregularity in the case with due instruction that great care be exercised in keeping the records of our Brethren. (C. E. Wallace)

1981 D-5, §-2.109, §-4.01

A Brother having been irregularly made a Mason by receiving the degrees in one Lodge while still under the jurisdiction of another is to be continued under the jurisdiction of the original Lodge until advanced or granted a waiver by that Lodge and not eligible to visit Masonically. The Lodge conferring the degree illegally was directed to bring charges against the endorers of the illegal petition for allowing, with foreknowledge, the illegal making of a Mason. (C. E. Wallace)

1982 D-3, §-2.109

Inasmuch as it was impossible to ascertain which Lodge a man had petitioned some fifteen or twenty years ago by search of Lodge records in the particular Masonic district. Section 2.109 of the Virginia Methodical Digest was set aside to permit a Lodge to ballot on the man's petition. (S. M. Rogers)

1982 D-5, §-2.109

Long standing error healed in case of Brother being balloted upon without receipt of a waiver of jurisdiction from the rejecting Virginia Lodge. No willful error evident and long years of good standing of Brother considered. (S. M. Rogers)

1990 D-9, §-2.109

Provisions set aside to allow rebaloting on two petitions rejected through misuse of the ballot box. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-13, §-2.95, §-2.109

Provisions of the law were set aside to allow rebaloting on a petitioner rejected for reasons of his national origin. Balloting is on moral fitness, regardless of national origin. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-24, §-2.95, §-2.109

Provisions of the law were set aside to rebalot on a petition rejected in a Lodge in which all petitions were being blackballed; the last five having been rejected and seven years elapsed without a petition being approved. A vote for rejection on other than moral fitness grounds is un-Masonic. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-25, §-1.42, §-2.95, §-2.109

Provisions of the law were set aside to rebalot on the petition of an otherwise qualified candidate rejected on the grounds of his race (2.95 and 2.109). Where the ballot was again not clear the result was recorded and then set aside and directed the petitioner to be received in the Lodge and to receive the degrees of Masonry (1.42). Race is not a proper ground for the rejection of a candidate. (C. F. Cobbs)

2003 D-9, §-2.109

2003 D-11, §-2.109

In two instances, due to mitigating circumstances, I set aside the twelve-month waiting period for a rejected petitioner and allowed the individual to repetition the Lodge subject to the ballot. The Lodges were cautioned to follow proper Masonic procedure. (F. G. Martin, III)

ADVANCEMENT

Sec. 2.110. Candidate for Advancement Must be Examined in Open Lodge; A Ballot Taken on His Masonic Proficiency. — An Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft, desiring advancement, must be examined in open Lodge in the degree from which he seeks to be advanced, and should prove himself proficient in the catechism of the degree, after which a voice vote shall then be taken upon his Masonic proficiency, and if there be a majority in his favor he is thereby eligible for advancement.

Only Master Masons are entitled to ballot.

The Worshipful Master may, if he so desires, have a voice vote on Masonic proficiency collectively on all candidates examined on the same degree at that communication. If a majority voice vote is not favorable, a separate voice vote will be taken on the Masonic proficiency of each candidate.

Requests for the conferring of degrees by Lodges of other Grand Jurisdictions as a courtesy to a Virginia Lodge shall be transmitted only through the Grand Secretary of this Grand Jurisdiction, as required by Section 2.103. (2008)

DECISIONS

1909 D-53, §-2.110

It is improper to issue a dispensation to allow a candidate to advance who cannot be taught the catechism. If his inability was due to the lack of intelligence he should not have been initiated. (J. W. Eggleston)

1929 D-8, §-2.95, §-2.110

Defective ballot box which prevented Master and Wardens seeing a black ball and, who declared the ballot clear but were afterwards informed of the negative ballot caused the Grand Master to declare the ballot void. The status of the candidate was the same as before the ballot was spread. (W. L. Davis)

1940 D-9, §-2.110

Master of Lodge guilty of Masonic irregularities when he allows candidate to whose advancement there is opposition to be balloted upon when the objector is absent, calling several communications to accomplish this. The objector was thus deprived of his right to ballot. Ordered that each member of the Lodge be notified that the ballot would be spread at the next regular meeting on the petition of the Brother thus advanced, for membership. (N. S. Turnbull)

1950 D-2, §-2.95, §-2.110

Lodge cannot by resolution provide for receipt of and balloting on petitions in any other manner than that specified in the Methodical Digest. (A. D. Smith, Jr.)

1961 D-13, §-2.110

The edict of June 10, 1960 requiring each Brother being examined in the catechism of a degree to recite the entire obligation does not change the requirements of Section 2.110. (C. M. Flintoff)

1968 D-8, §-2.110

Entered Apprentice was passed to Degree of Fellowcraft by Lodge conferring degrees as a courtesy to sister Lodge without ballot on moral fitness. Candidate was healed and declared F.C. Reaffirms 1959, D-15. (H. B. Green)

1980 D-2, §-2.107, §-2.110

Worshipful Master, by his own admission, was in violation of Section 2.107 of the Virginia Methodical Digest in that he destroyed the ballot without having it presented in the South and in the West and then declaring it in the East. Believing his action was an oversight and that the ballot was not clear, permission to reballoon on candidate not granted. District Deputy Grand Master notified that candidate must wait required time and reapply. (M. L. Lacy, II)

1986 D-3, §-2.110

Worshipful Master, by his own admission, was in violation of Section 2.95 and Section 2.110 of the Methodical Digest in that he spread the ballot more times than permitted by law and destroyed the ballot more times than permitted by law and destroyed the ballot without having it presented in the South, in the West, and then declaring it in the East. Candidate declared rejected and must await the required time (six months) before a renewed petition for advancement can be considered by the Lodge. (J. B. Obenchain)

1994 D-30, §-2.92, §-2.101, §-2.110, §-2.112, §-2.114

Set law aside and ordered Entered Apprentice, dying of cancer, to be made a Master Mason. (W. H. Morlock)

2008 D-3, §-2.110

Allows a voice vote to be taken on Masonic proficiency. (E. Cohen)

Sec. 2.110(a). Alternative Requirements for Advancement. — The Worshipful Master MAY, at his option, elect to have some or all candidates for advancement use these alternative requirements in lieu of the requirements set forth in Section 2.110 of the Methodical Digest.

The alternative requirements for advancement are:

A committee of three members of the Lodge, as appointed by the Worshipful Master, shall provide to him oral or written certification that: (a) the candidate has memorized that portion of the catechism which deals with the modes of recognition; namely the grips, words, due guards, and signs, and that he understands the obligation and its accompanying responsibilities and that: (b) the Lodge Educational Officer or other well qualified Master Mason, specifically designated by the Worshipful Master, has covered the appropriate material in the Grand Lodge Educational Proficiency Manual for Entered Apprentices, Fellowcrafts and Master Masons with the candidate and that: (c) the committee having dialogue and discussions with the candidate ascertains that he fully understands the material. (2004)

Sec. 2.111. Granting Extension of Time to Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft Prior to Expiration of Six Months From Date of Receiving His Degree. — An Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft who has not been examined on his proficiency in the catechism of his last degree, or one who has been rejected because of lack of proficiency, may, prior to the expiration of six months from the date he received the degree, apply either in writing or by proxy, at a stated communication of the Lodge having personal jurisdiction over him or, if it be suspended or extinct to another chartered Lodge in the same Masonic district, for an extension at that or a future stated communication by a majority viva voce vote. If granted, the extension shall be for

six months from the date of the grant and shall entitle him to sit in a Lodge working in any degree he has received.

An Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft who has been rejected for advancement because of lack of Masonic proficiency may, prior to the expiration of six months from the date of his last degree, and with the permission of the Worshipful Master of the Lodge which rejected him, be reexamined at any communication of the Lodge. When six months have elapsed since he received his last degree, and he has neither advanced nor been granted an extension of time he is not entitled to further instruction or to sit in a Lodge of any degree. He must proceed in conformity with the provisions of Section 2.112. (1987)

DECISIONS

1905 D-35, §-2.111

An E.A. or F.C. Brother removing from jurisdiction of his natal Lodge and desiring to advance in another Lodge must await consideration of his petition by second Lodge at least one month after jurisdiction has been relinquished. (T. N. Davis)

1920 D-8, §-2.111

To waive jurisdiction over a rejected E.A. who has moved to another Grand Lodge jurisdiction, an application for advancement should be presented, lie over for one month and then receive a clear ballot. (S. Cutchins)

1933 D-10, §-2.111

Rejected E.A. or F.C. cannot sit in Lodge and has no Masonic privileges except to apply for advancement after the required lapse of time. (H. K. Green)

1968 D-17, §-2.111

An E.A. declared rejected in 1950 was elected to receive the Degree of Fellowcraft after several rejections by the Lodge. He had previously paid for the second degree. The right to instruction in the First Degree was granted and the Lodge was instructed to confer the F.C. Degree without further cost if their records showed payment therefor had been made. (H. B. Green)

Sec. 2.112. Granting Extension of Time to Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft After Expiration of Six Months From Date of Receiving His Last Degree. — When six months have elapsed since he received his last degree an Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft who has not advanced solely because of lack of Masonic proficiency, and has not been granted an extension of time as provided for in Section 2.111, may apply for the right to further instruction. His application must be made in writing at a stated communication of the Lodge having personal jurisdiction over him or, if it be suspended or extinct, to another chartered Lodge in the same Masonic district. (1975)

DECISIONS

1933 D-11, §-2.112

Lodge entertained petition and conferred E.A. Degree on candidate having residence in another city. Fees were ordered paid to D.D.G.M. to be given Lodge to which candidate applied. He did not follow instructions and was declared an E.A. who did not qualify on proficiency in due time and must apply for advancement as such. (H. K. Green)

1959 D-14, §-2.112

Candidate who received E.A. Degree ten years before and due to military service had not advanced must follow the procedure outlined in Section 2.112 requesting instruction and the right to advance. Master should let the request lie over for four weeks before granting right to be instructed because of the long interval since initiation. Thereafter he should proceed as though the time had not elapsed. (E. S. Wallace)

1994 D-30, §-2.92, §-2.101, §-2.110, §-2.112, §-2.114

Set law aside and ordered Entered Apprentice, dying of cancer, to be made a Master Mason. (W. H. Morlock)

Sec. 2.112(a). If the Lodge receiving his application is one in which he was elected to receive his last degree, it may grant his request by a majority viva voce vote at the communication during which it was received or at a future stated communication. (1987)

Sec. 2.112(b). If the Lodge receiving his application is one holding personal jurisdiction over him by acceptance of a waiver, or is one acting in lieu of a suspended or extinct Lodge, it must be audibly read and held over at least four weeks to a future stated communication before being voted upon. It may then grant him the right to further instruction by a majority viva voce vote.

Granting the right to further instruction as provided in this section extends that right and eligibility to sit in a Lodge working in any degree which he has received for six months from the date of the grant. (1987)

DECISIONS

1960 D-4, §-2.111, §-2.112(b)

A rejected F.C. is not eligible to sit in a Lodge on the First or Second Degrees of Masonry. (S. D. Forbes)

Sec. 2.113. What Lodge Can Entertain Request for Instruction or Advancement. — Delete entirely—covered in Section 2.111 and 2.112. (1975)

Sec. 2.114. Advancement Only With Consent of the Lodge Holding Personal Jurisdiction-Advancement If Such Lodge Be Suspended or Extinct. — No Lodge shall advance an Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft residing in the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Virginia without the consent of the Lodge holding personal jurisdiction over him or, if it was held by a Virginia Lodge which is suspended or extinct, by a chartered Lodge in the same Masonic district.

If jurisdiction over him is held by a suspended or extinct Lodge which was holden under a Grand Lodge outside Virginia, consent of the Grand Master of that Grand Lodge must be obtained. (1975)

DECISIONS

1936 D-9, §-2.114

The advancement of an E.A. rests entirely with the Lodge and the Grand Master is not competent to rule on his advancement. (T. W. Hooper)

1942 D-5, §-2.114

(1) A candidate who lives approximately equidistant from two Lodges and having petitioned one, receiving therein a degree or degrees, thereafter being rejected for further advancement cannot then petition the other Lodge though he may live slightly nearer to it. Having made his choice he is equitably estopped in avoiding the consequences.

(2) No Lodge may advance an E.A. or F.C. residing in its jurisdiction without consent of Lodge in which he received the preceding degree, if still in existence, but a Lodge may waive jurisdiction over a rejected candidate by unanimous ballot. (C. D. Freeman)

1950 D-13, §-2.114

A demit issued an E.A. or F.C. by a Grand Lodge which does not request or perform courtesy work, should be in fact, a waiver of jurisdiction and may be accepted as such. (A. D. Smith, Jr.)

1994 D-30, §-2.92, §-2.101, §-2.110, §-2.112, §-2.114

Set law aside and ordered Entered Apprentice, dying of cancer, to be made a Master Mason. (W. H. Morlock)

Sec. 2.115. Procedure When Lodge Which Initiated Him Has Become Suspended or Extinct, or Petitioner Has Moved His Residence. — If the Lodge which held personal jurisdiction over an Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft has been suspended or become extinct and had not granted him a waiver prior to ceasing to work, he may apply for a waiver from another chartered Lodge in the same Masonic district in conformity with the provisions of Section 2.103. (1975)

DECISIONS

1895 D-3, §-2.115

That the status of a Fellowcraft, expelled for U.M.C. was a matter of law to be ruled upon by the Master of the Lodge and not settled by a resolution. That the Lodge which initiated him had exclusive jurisdiction over him after reinstatement. The rights and privileges to which the Fellowcraft was thus reinstated was the right to apply to that Lodge and that Lodge alone for advancement. (J. P. Fitzgerald)

MEMBERSHIP

Sec. 2.116. Status of a Brother Raised to Sublime Degree of Master Mason as to Membership. — A Brother raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason shall be a member of the Lodge in which he was elected by ballot to receive said degree. The only methods for terminating the membership of a Brother shall be withdrawal, suspension, expulsion or death.

DECISIONS

1897 D-1, §-2.116

That name of Lodge member cannot be dropped from the rolls by order of the Worshipful Master, without charges or trial and without hearing. Lodge membership can be terminated only by withdrawal, suspension, expulsion or death. (A. R. Courtney)

1916 D-3, §-2.116

Brother becomes a Master Mason as soon as the obligation is conferred. Illness which prevents his completing the work at that meeting did not affect his status. (J. B. Wood)

1964 D-15, §-2.116

Communication of second section of the Degree of Master Mason authorized for a Brother who had suffered a heart attack while being obligated. Reaffirms 1916, D-3. (J. P. Stokes)

Sec. 2.117. A Brother May Be a Member of Several Lodges. — A Virginia Master Mason may be a member of as many Virginia Lodges as admit him.

A Master Mason who is a member of a Lodge holden under a Grand Lodge outside Virginia is not eligible for membership in a greater number of Virginia Lodges than are permitted by the laws of that Grand Jurisdiction. (1975)

DECISIONS

1893 D-5, §-2.117

The only way to acquire membership in a Virginia Lodge is by initiation, passing and raising in a regular Lodge Ancient, Free and Accepted Mason, (or by dual membership or transfer from a regular Lodge holden under a Grand Lodge with which Virginia is in fraternal amity.) (W. H. Pleasants)

1903 D-6, §-2.117

A Brother holding a demit can petition for affiliation at pleasure and does not have to live under the jurisdiction of the Lodge any specified time. (E. N. Eubank)

1909 D-21, §-2.117

Lodge must satisfy itself that person who presents a demit is, in fact, a Mason (by examination or avouchment). Demit is simply evidence that the person named therein is withdrawn from a Lodge. It cannot be used for avouchment. (J. W. Eggleston)

1940 D-4, §-2.117

Mason who formerly held membership in and was demitted from Lodge in another state has right to petition Virginia Lodge. It is the responsibility of the Lodge to satisfy itself as to the previous Masonic status of the applicant. (N. S. Turnbull)

1961 D-4, §-2.117

Grand Lodges which permit dual membership allow member to hold his membership in one Lodge in that state and one Virginia Lodge. Plural membership allows the member to retain membership in his Lodge and to be a member of several Virginia Lodges when so elected. In Virginia a member may belong to as many Lodges as he wishes, subject to the ballot. (C. M. Flintoff)

1964 D-1, §-2.117, §-2.129

Residence within the jurisdiction of a Lodge is not required for honorary membership. Requirement as to residence apply only to petitioners for the degrees. (J. P. Stokes)

1966 D-1, §-2.117

Residence is not a prerequisite for membership in a Lodge and a member of a Lodge holden under another Grand Lodge may apply to a Virginia Lodge for membership if his own Grand Lodge permits dual membership. (W. A. Porter)

Sec. 2.118. Liability of a Lodge for Dues of a Brother to Another Lodge of Which He is Also a Member. — If any Lodge shall admit to membership a Brother who is in arrears to another Lodge, it shall be responsible for such arrearages, and may be suspended by the Grand Master if it fails to pay them when demand is made therefor.

DECISIONS

1890 D-2, §-2.118

That Lodge under dispensation is not liable (as chartered Lodges would be) under Section 2.118 for dues in arrears in a chartered Lodge on the part of the members of such Lodge under dispensation. (R. T. Craighill)

Sec. 2.119. A Brother May Be a Member of Several Lodges. — Repeal entirely—covered in Section 2.117. (1975)

Sec. 2.120. A Brother Holding Plural Membership Must Make Known to Each Lodge His Membership, Pending Charges, or Suspensions in Another Lodge: Secretaries Shall Report to All Other Lodges to Which Such Member Belongs. — It shall be the duty of every Brother who is a member of two or more Lodges to make known to each of said Lodges the other Lodges in which he holds membership.

When any such member shall voluntarily terminate his membership or shall be suspended from any such Lodge for non-payment of dues, or when charges of un-Masonic conduct are preferred against him, as well as when the result of such charges has been announced, it shall be the duty of the Secretary to immediately inform the other said Lodges of such action, as well as all Lodges in the same Masonic district in which action was taken. (2020)

DECISIONS

1940 D-6, §-2.120

Brother from a Grand Lodge, which does not permit dual membership, cannot be a member of a Virginia Lodge. (N. S. Turnbull)

1959 D-6, §-2.120

Member of Japanese Lodge, not recognized by Virginia, received degrees in Lodge under G. L. of the Philippines, was allowed to apply for membership in a Virginia Lodge if petition was accompanied by a signed form of renunciation of his Japanese connection with Masonry there. (E. S. Wallace)

1959 D-7, §-2.120

Candidate passed and raised by Cherrydale Lodge No. 42 as courtesy to Tokyo Lodge No. 125, Grand Lodge Philippines, sought admission to Cherrydale Lodge after Tokyo Lodge had joined in the formation of the G. L. of Japan. He was required to file the form of renunciation, making it a part of his application for membership. (E. S. Wallace)

1961 D-22, §-2.120

A Cuban Mason, who through no fault of his own, could not pay his dues, is eligible to apply for membership in a Virginia Lodge, if he holds a dues card from his Cuban Lodge indicating that his dues were paid as long as the political circumstances of that country permitted him to do so. (C. M. Flintoff and J. P. Stokes)

1964 D-13, §-2.120

Sec. 2.121. Applications for Membership to be made at a Stated Communication; How Long to Lie Over; Ballot to Be Unanimous. — Applications for membership must be made at a stated communication of the Lodge, and must lie over for at least four weeks; and a unanimous ballot shall, in all cases, be necessary to admit to membership. All applications for membership shall state the Lodge or Lodges to which the applicant belongs or from which he has withdrawn, and it shall be the duty of the Secretary of the Lodge to which he applies to notify all such Lodges of the application. Out-of-state Applications for Membership must include a signed Authorization for Release of Information form to have a criminal background check investigation performed. (2021)

If the applicant be a non-affiliate he should present a demit from the Lodge in which he last held membership when applying for admission. Demits thus presented, regardless of the date of issue, shall be acceptable. The depositing of such demit does not obligate the Lodge to elect the Brother to membership therein. Any Brother may himself, or through another, withdraw his application for membership at any time prior to the spreading thereon.

A Brother may deposit his demit and apply for membership in the Lodge of his choice without regard to residence in its jurisdiction.

When more than one application is to be balloted upon, the Worshipful Master may, if he so desires, have the ballot spread collectively on all applications. If the collective ballot is not clear, it must then be spread separately on each of the applicants included in the collective ballot. The ballot must be clear to elect the applicant(s).

A Lodge which receives an application and is also asked to accept a Life Membership transfer, must first determine and advise the applicant if it will accept the Life Membership because of the yearly amount it will pay the Lodge. If the transfer of Life Membership is not accepted, the application for membership and related transfer may be withdrawn. (1996)

DECISIONS

1901 D-1, §-2.121

There is no specified time for a Mason who has been regularly demitted from a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction to wait before he can apply for membership in a Virginia Lodge. He is immediately eligible. (H. O. Kerns)

1902 D-2, §-2.121

Brother who has demitted from Lodge should present demit or other evidence of his good standing at the time of his withdrawal, if he again applies for membership. This may be done by documentation or the personal avouchment of another Brother. (H. O. Kerns)

1921 D-28, §-2.121

Brother desiring to become a member of a Virginia Lodge must pay all arrearages to native Lodge and secure demit (or certificate of good standing) before his application can be entertained. (W. W. Galt)

1922 D-9, §-2.121

An applicant for membership may request in person or by proxy that his application be withdrawn at any time prior to the spreading of the ballot. (J. S. Bottimore)

1926 D-3, §-2.121

Brother desiring to join Lodge should make application and be recommended by at least one voucher. (C. H. Callahan)

1932 D-17, §-2.121, §-2.122

Expelled member who is reinstated to rights and benefits of Masonry but not to membership is not entitled to demit but may receive a certificate that he has been restored to rights and benefits of Masonry. (A. M. Showalter)

1937 D-10, §-2.121

Brother holding demit from Virginia Lodge and residing outside Virginia may apply to his original Lodge (or any other Virginia Lodge) for membership. (L. P. Harrell)

1974 D-4, §-2.121, §-2.140

Member of Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction unable to present dues card but presented letter bearing Seal of his Grand Lodge attesting dues card was in order. Grand Master ruled that letter was acceptable to Virginia Lodge as proof of good standing. (W. C. Vaughan)

1992 D-8, §-2.95, §-2.121

Ruled that a vote on only one type of petition/application could be taken at a time. (W. F. Perdue)

1998 D-9, §-2.95, §-2.121

2003 D-5, §-2.95, §-2.121

Permitted a Lodge to vote on petitions which fell short of the prescribed waiting period by three days due to adverse weather conditions. (A. H. Tignor, Jr. and F. G. Martin, III)

1998 D-10, §-2.121

Healed an irregularity in the records of a Lodge which inadvertently elected a member who was not in good standing, and expelled the member for un-Masonic conduct. (A. H. Tignor, Jr.)

1999 D-4, §-2.121

Healed irregularity in voting for an application for membership with an elapsed time of three, rather than four weeks. Rejected ballot let stand. (G. H. Chapin)

2025 D-1, §-2.94, §-2.95, and §-2.121

Nothing contained within section 2.94, 2.95, and/or 2.121 shall preclude the Grand Secretary from changing procedures for the submission of Petition or Application information, or background check requests, or any other procedural changes necessary in an effort to keep up with current technology or available resources. Any such changes will be immediately communicated to each Lodge Secretary. (G. D. Huffman)

2025 D-2, §-2.88, §-2.121, §-2.152, §-2.158, §-2.159, 1926 D-3, and 1980 D-6

A completed Application for Membership, containing a recommendation by at least one voucher, submitted on the form provided by the Grand Lodge of Virginia, is required to affiliate with any Virginia Lodge. All out-of-state applicants must submit to a criminal background check through a third-party vendor approved by the Grand Lodge of Virginia. Before balloting on an out-of-state affiliation, the Grand Lodge of Virginia shall receive, and approve the results of, his completed criminal background check, and the Lodge shall verify through the Office of the Grand Secretary that the member is in good standing in his home grand jurisdiction. The fee for each out-of-state affiliation must be collected by the Lodge prior to balloting on the Application. Such fee shall be forwarded to the Office of the Grand Secretary immediately after the stated communication at which the Brother is elected to membership. (G. D. Huffman)

Sec. 2.122. How Often Rejected Brother May Apply for Membership. — A Brother rejected for membership may renew his application to the same Lodge, or may apply to any other Lodge at any stated communication; provided, that he shall not apply to any Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction more often than once in four months.

DECISIONS

1916 D-10, §-2.122, §-2.123, §-2.155

Question involved Brother suspended n.p.d. who was reinstated to rights and benefits but not to membership. (a) His status is that of a non-affiliate, (b) He may apply to any Lodge for membership. (c) Since has not restored to membership a demit cannot be granted him. (J. B. Wood)

1932 D-17, §-2.121, §-2.122

Expelled member who is reinstated to rights and benefits of Masonry but not to membership is not entitled to demit but may receive a certificate that he has been restored to rights and benefits of Masonry. (A. M. Showalter)

Sec. 2.123. Non-Affiliate Defined; Disqualifications. — A nonaffiliate shall not unite in any Masonic procession or visit any Lodge; nor shall he be entitled to right of pecuniary aid from any Lodge, or to Masonic burial.

The following are non-affiliates:

(1) A Master Mason who, having been a member in good standing of a Lodge or Lodges, has been granted a demit from such Lodge or Lodges, and who fails to obtain membership in a Lodge within six months after the date the demit is granted.

(2) A Master Mason who, having been suspended or expelled, is reinstated to the rights and benefits of Masonry, but is rejected for membership in a Lodge.

(3) A Master Mason, a member in good standing of one Lodge when such Lodge surrenders its Charter, is suspended, or becomes extinct, and who fails to obtain membership in a Lodge within twelve months.

DECISIONS

1897 D-5, §-2.123

A non-affiliated Mason cannot of right enter a tiled Lodge in the interest of an expelled Mason seeking reinstatement. The rights of a non-affiliate are fixed by Grand Lodge law. (A. R. Courtney)

1901 D-12, §-2.123

A Brother restored to the rights and benefits of Masonry but rejected for membership is a non-affiliate and subject to the disabilities of such. (H. O. Kerns)

1901 D-13, §-2.123

A Lodge must wait for the expiration of full twelve months in arrears before citing a Brother to show cause why he should not be suspended n.p.d. (H. O. Kerns)

1908 D-9, §-2.123

A non-affiliate, having no rights in Masonry (except the right to petition a Lodge for membership) must not instruct candidate in Masonry. (S. J. Quinn)

1909 D-43, §-2.123

Brethren securing demits and those who are members of Lodges which become extinct are liable to the disabilities of a non-affiliate after a lapse of six months. The only right of a non-affiliate being to apply to any Lodge in Virginia for membership. (J. W. Eggleston)

1903 D-4, §-2.123

1916 D-10, §-2.122, §-2.123, §-2.155

1916 D-12, §-2.123

1935 D-3, §-2.123

Question involved Brother suspended n.p.d. who was reinstated to rights and benefits but not to membership. (a) His status is that of a non-affiliate. (b) He may apply to any Lodge for membership. (c) Since has not restored to membership a demit cannot be granted him. (E. N. Eubank, J. B. Wood, J. B. Wood and W. M. Brown)

1932 D-1, §-2.123

Member suspended n.p.d. is not entitled to Masonic funeral, this being one of the rights and benefits of Masonry. (A. M. Showalter)

1968 D-4, §-2.123

Brother who had received his degrees in a Virginia Lodge as a courtesy to a Lodge in France, now in darkness was declared a non-affiliate under the provisions of Section 2.123 (3) and eligible to petition the Virginia Lodge in which he had received his degrees, for membership. (H. B. Green)

1988 D-11, §-2.123, §-4.25

Former member of Lodge suspended for non-payment of dues, paid up his arrearage but was rejected for restoration to the rights and benefits of Masonry and membership. Appealed under Section 4.25 which was approved and he was declared a non-affiliate with the right to petition a Lodge for affiliation. (D. M. Robey)

Sec. 2.124. A Member Cannot be Required to Attend Upon a Sick Brother. — A member of a Lodge cannot be required by the Lodge or by the Master to attend upon a sick Brother, but should be always prompt to render such service voluntarily whenever occasion requires, so far as may be in his power.

Sec. 2.125. Withdrawal of Membership. — Any member of a Lodge, except the Worshipful Master, may, upon payment of all Lodge dues or their remission by the Lodge, voluntarily withdraw his membership provided no Masonic charges are pending against him. No demit shall be issued except upon the written request of the member desiring such voluntary withdrawal. If any charges be pending against the member, his withdrawal of membership cannot be considered until after the proceedings of the investigation or trial of the charges have been concluded. Every withdrawal shall be noted upon the records of the Lodge. (1977)

DECISIONS

1932 D-13, §-2.125

Member who was mentally unbalanced asked to be dropped from rolls of Lodge. His request was not complied with and the Lodge lost contact with him. Lodge should remit dues and grant him demit rather than show him as deceased. (A. M. Showalter)

1988 D-5, §-2.125

Due to extenuating circumstances, ruled that a Lodge could issue a demit to a member which was requested by his father who was a member of the Lodge. (D. M. Robey)

Sec. 2.126. Removal of Residence from Territorial Jurisdiction of Lodge Does not Relieve Member From Dues; a Member Removing Should Inform the Secretary of His Post Office Address. — Every member removing his residence outside of the territorial jurisdiction of his Lodge shall continue to be liable to Lodge dues and to the penalty for non-payment thereof, and should inform the Secretary as to the post office to which communications by mail should be forwarded to him.

Sec. 2.127. Brother From Another Grand Jurisdiction Desiring to Affiliate with Lodge in Virginia. — Section Repealed - 1966. See Sec. 2.140.

Sec. 2.128. When Members of Suspended or Extinct Lodges or Brethren Who Have Withdrawn from Membership Become Non-Affiliates. — Members of suspended Lodges and members of Lodges becoming extinct shall not be subject to the disabilities of non-affiliation unless they shall fail within twelve months to obtain membership, and Brethren withdrawing from membership, unless they shall fail within six months to obtain membership.

DECISIONS

1909 D-45, §-2.128

A former member of an extinct Lodge who has forgotten the ritual and ceremonies should have his petition for membership laid over until he can be instructed. It is unfair that a Lodge should have a member absolutely ignorant of what we consider vital and important. (J. W. Eggleston)

HONORARY MEMBERS

Sec. 2.129. Who May be an Honorary Member; How Elected. — A Lodge may, at a stated communication, elect as an honorary member any Past Master. Any Brother not a Past Master, who shall have an aggregate time of fifty years in good standing in a Virginia Lodge or a Lodge holden under a Grand Lodge recognized by this Grand Lodge, may also be elected an honorary member.

In addition, a Lodge may request a dispensation to elect any other Brother, in good standing in a Virginia Lodge, to honorary membership therein for special meritorious service or services. Such request for dispensation shall set forth the Brother's name in full, the date of his raising, age, and any other data that may assist the Grand Master to properly consider such dispensation. No dispensation shall be considered unless the proposed Brother shall have at least twenty-five years aggregate time in good standing in a Lodge as hereinbefore required for a Brother not a Past Master.

Every motion to elect any honorary member shall lie over four weeks and if a dispensation shall be required, the motion to elect shall not be considered until the dispensation shall have been received by the Lodge. (1977)

DECISIONS

1910 D-18, §-2.129

Lodge may elect one of its own Past Masters an honorary member. (J. W. Eggleston)

1944 D-1, §-2.129

Honorary membership is a life membership conferred for meritorious service rendered as well as an expression of appreciated leadership; and is not to be taken away except under charges. (W. R. Weisiger)

1964 D-1, §-2.117, §-2.129

Residence within the jurisdiction of a Lodge is not required for honorary membership. Requirement as to residence apply only to petitioners for the degrees. (J. P. Stokes)

1969 Opinion No. 9, §-2.129

Brother who receives a fifty year Veterans' Emblem does not automatically become an honorary member of that or any other Lodge. Honorary membership requires unanimous ballot and an aggregate of twenty-five years good standing in a Virginia Lodge is one of the requirements for Brethren who are not Past Masters. (J. A. White)

1976 D-6, §-2.129

1977 D-9, §-2.129

2001 D-1, §-2.129

2002 D-1, §-2.129

A Lodge desired to confer honorary membership on one of its Past Masters provided that that portion of the law dealing with the motion to elect lying over for consideration for four weeks be waived. Medical prognosis for the proposed honorary member was considerably less than four weeks and the Lodge's request to waive that portion of Section 2.129 concerning "the motion to elect shall lie over for consideration for four weeks" was granted on basis of member's service as Past Master. (S. J. Levy, L. D. Delano, J. D. Cole, and C. A. Parker)

1977 D-10, §-2.129

A Lodge requested that Section 2.129 be waived so that honorary membership might be conferred on a regular visitor suffering from a terminal disease. In this instance none of the qualifications stipulated in Section 2.129 were present and the request was denied. (L. D. Delano)

1988 D-20, §-2.129

Certain provisions of Section 2.129 were set aside to permit Cherrydale Lodge No. 42 to elect to Honorary membership Brother David B. Sentelle due to his meritorious services to Freemasonry in general. (D. M. Robey)

2000 D-8, §-2.129

Permitted a Lodge to ballot on honorary membership for Brother James Stuart Gilmore, III, to recognize his meritorious service on behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia and Freemasonry. (W. L. Holliday)

Sec. 2.130. Honorary Members-Ballot Must Be Spread as for Ordinary Membership. — The ballot for honorary membership must be spread as for ordinary membership. However, if more than one petition for honorary membership is presented, and all such petitions are fifty year members, the ballot may be spread collectively on all such fifty year members, provided that if such ballot should be "not clear," such petitions for honorary membership would revert to their original status and the ballot would be then spread separately on each petition. (1975)

DECISIONS

1923 D-32, §-2.130

Election to honorary membership requires unanimous ballot. (J. H. Price)

1956 D-8, §-2.130

Brother proposed for honorary membership and on which proposal the ballot was found not clear, may be proposed again at next stated communication or any future stated communication in regular manner. (W. J. McMahon)

Sec. 2.131. Rights of an Honorary Member. — Honorary membership confers the right to participate in the proceedings of the Lodge, to vote and to hold office.

Honorary membership once conferred cannot be withdrawn by the Lodge. Upon consolidation of two Lodges all honorary members retain their honorary status in the remaining Lodge.

Sec. 2.132. Not Liable to Dues or Assessments; Grand Lodge Dues to be Paid by His Lodge. — An honorary member shall not be liable to any dues or assessments, but the Lodge of which he is an honorary member shall pay his annual dues to the Grand Lodge as provided in Section 2.19.

VISITORS

Sec. 2.133. Who May Be Permitted to Visit a Lodge. — Any Master Mason who is a member in good standing of a Virginia Lodge or of a Lodge holden under a Grand Lodge recognized by the Grand Lodge of Virginia may be permitted to visit any just and legally constituted Lodge open in any of the three Symbolic Degrees.

An Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft who is eligible for Masonic instruction may be permitted to visit a Lodge working in any degree which he has received. (1975)

DECISIONS

1909 D-17, §-2.48, §-2.133

Everyone admitted to a Lodge, whether a member or not, must have the Worshipful Master's permission. (J. W. Eggleston)

1916 D-7, §-2.133

German Masons given right to visit Virginia Lodges (despite involvement of their country in World War I at the time.) (J. B. Wood)

1916 D-4, §-2.133

1919 D-14, §-2.133

No member of a Virginia Lodge can visit a Lodge holden under a Grand Lodge not recognized by Virginia, nor can a Virginia Lodge receive visitors from a Lodge holden under Grand Lodge not recognized by our own Grand Lodge. (J. B. Wood and E. L. Cunningham)

1936 D-8, §-2.133, §-2.135

Admission of a visitor is always in the discretion of the Master, subject to the right of any member present to voice his own objection, which is sufficient to exclude visitor. A subordinate Lodge has no right to admit a visitor owing allegiance to a Grand Lodge which Virginia does not recognize. (T. W. Hooper)

1959 D-8, §-2.133

Question was raised by member of the Armed Forces overseas about visiting Oregon Military Lodge in Germany, which also allowed Negro visitors, Grand Master advised that each Grand Lodge had its own rules and regulations and visiting in any Lodge holden under a Grand Lodge with which we are in fraternal relations is proper. (E. S. Wallace)

Sec. 2.134. Visitors Must Be Examined Unless Avouched For. — If no Brother present can avouch for the visitor, the Master shall appoint a committee of Brethren skilled in the work to examine him.

DECISIONS

1915 D-6, §-2.134

If Brother has sat in Lodge with another Mason or if he knows from legal Masonic examination or other legal information that a third person is a Mason, he may avouch for him. It is the Master's unquestioned prerogative to require an examination of any visitor seeking admission to his Lodge. (P. K. Bauman)

Sec. 2.135. A Visitor, Other Than a Grand Officer or a District Deputy Grand Master Cannot Enter, or Remain in Lodge if Any Member Objects. — If any member of the Lodge objects to sitting in the Lodge with any visitor, except an officer of the Grand Lodge, Past Grand Master, or the District Deputy Grand Master, the Master shall refuse him admittance, or if he has been admitted, require him to withdraw. (2008)

DECISIONS

1906 D-23, §-2.135

Every Lodge is a household, belonging to the members thereof, and each and all can say who shall not be permitted to visit, other than the Grand Officers and District Deputy Grand Master who has supervision of the Lodge, and the Master cannot say nay. (T. N. Davis)

1909 D-13, §-2.135

Member cannot file permanent objection to admission of a visitor. His right to object exists only when he is present. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-14, §-2.135

Member cannot object to the presence of a visitor at a Lodge banquet if the Lodge desires to entertain him. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-48, §-2.135

A visitor cannot object to the presence or admission of another visitor. (J. W. Eggleston)

1924 D-9, §-2.48, §-2.135

The Master directs and controls the affairs of his Lodge and the exclusion of visitors is a proper exercise of his prerogatives, when he deems it in the best interest of his Lodge. (J. H. Price)

1936 D-8, §-2.133, §-2.135

Admission of a visitor is always in the discretion of the Master, subject to the right of any member present to voice his own objection, which is sufficient to exclude visitor. A subordinate Lodge has no right to admit a visitor owing allegiance to a Grand Lodge which Virginia does not recognize. (T. W. Hooper)

1990 D-27, §-2.135

A member cannot object to the presence of a Masonic or other visitor in his Lodge on grounds of race. Whether the objection is premised on race to be determined by the Worshipful Master. (C. F. Cobbs)

2008 D-7, §-2.135

Interpreted that a Past Grand Master is considered an Officer of the Grand Lodge. (E. Cohen)

Sec. 2.136. What to be Done Before Visitor Can be Examined. — Before the visitor can be examined as to his knowledge of Masonry he must state the name and location of the Lodge of which he is then, or was lately a member, or in which he received the Masonic Degrees, which shall be reported to the Master, or the Lodge, before a committee of examination can be appointed.

DEMITTS

Sec. 2.137. Definition of a Demit. — A demit is a simple certificate that the Brother to whom it has been issued has been a member of the Lodge and has voluntarily withdrawn his membership; and that at the time of his withdrawal he was not indebted to the Lodge and had no charges pending against him. No such demit shall be issued except upon the written request of the demitting Brother.

Prior to granting such demit the Worshipful Master of the Lodge, or his duly designated representative, shall make personal contact with the Brother to determine if assistance is needed and to encourage him to retain his membership. Personal contact shall consist of a personal visit, telephone call, or personal letter to the demitting Brother. If contact proves impossible the Lodge may take such action as it deems appropriate. (1990) [Refer: E-6-1989]

DECISIONS

1899 D-5, §-2.137

A demit when granted, cannot be reconsidered at a subsequent meeting of the Lodge. The demitted Brother must apply for membership if he wishes to come back into the Lodge. (R. T. W. Duke)

1908 D-27, §-2.137

A member requesting a demit is separated from the Lodge when the Master declares the affirmative action on the matter (or orders the demit himself). The demit itself is a written certificate of the severance of his membership. (S. J. Quinn)

1920 D-13, §-2.36, §-2.137

An officer of a Lodge who applies for and receives a demit forfeits his office and his subsequent election to membership in the Lodge does not restore him to office vacated. (S. Cutchins)

1921 D-27, §-2.137

A demit is the property of the individual to whom it was issued and when his petition for membership is rejected the demit should be returned to him without notation thereon of the rejection. (W. W. Galt)

1930 D-4, §-2.137

Brother may deposit demit at any stated communication of his own or other Lodge and apply for membership. There is no time limit on demits. (J. T. Cochran)

1935 D-5, §-2.137

Brother who is a member of two Lodges may request and receive demit from one without prejudicing membership in the other. (W. M. Brown)

Sec. 2.138. When a Brother Is in Good Standing. — If no charges or unsatisfied citations for non-payment of dues be pending against him, a Brother shall be regarded as in good standing. (1962)

Sec. 2.139. Secretary to Furnish Demit When Ordered by the Lodge or by the Master. — The Secretary shall furnish the demitting Brother with a demit signed by himself, under the Seal of the Lodge, whenever he shall be ordered to do so by the Lodge, or by the Master. (1968)

DECISIONS

1902 D-6, §-2.139

Demit is effective when granted and membership ceases at that time. Failure of the Secretary to furnish and Brother to receive demit makes no difference in his membership status. (H. O. Kerns)

1923 D-15, §-2.139

Master has no right to rescind the action of Lodge in granting a demit. (J. H. Price)

1924 D-6, §-2.139

A demit may be ordered by the Master, but it is assumed that the authority will be exercised wisely and prudently. (J. H. Price)

1929 D-2, §-2.139

Duplicate demit should not be issued until Brother requesting it has identified himself to the entire satisfaction of the Lodge or the Master. (W. L. Davis)

1942 D-4, §-2.139

Duplicate demit should be a complete duplicate of the original except the signature which should be typed in. It should bear a notation that it is a duplicate issued to replace the original which should be signed by the Secretary and the Master. (C. D. Freeman)

Sec. 2.140. To Retain Membership in One Lodge Until Elected in Another. — A Brother desiring to transfer his membership from one Lodge to another and yet be continuously affiliated, may file application at a stated communication of the Lodge in which he desires membership, with a certificate of good standing and receipt for dues, from the Secretary of the Lodge of which he is a member, showing that his dues have been paid at least three months in advance. Out-of-state Applications for Membership must include a signed Authorization for Release of Information form to have a criminal background check investigation performed. (2021)

This application shall lie over at least four weeks and be balloted upon at a stated communication.

If he desires to terminate his membership in the original Lodge, he shall file with the Secretary of the Lodge to which he applies a Request for Demit form, properly signed by him, which shall be mailed to the Secretary of the original Lodge upon the date of his election to membership.

This provision for continuous membership shall apply to members of Lodges in other Grand Jurisdictions recognized by the Grand Lodge of Virginia, provided such Grand Jurisdictions extend like consideration to members of Virginia Lodges. (1966)

DECISIONS

1929 D-11, §-2.140

A "certificate of non-indebtedness" from a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction is not an acceptable substitute for either a demit or a certificate of good standing in order to petition a Virginia Lodge. (W. L. Davis)

1960 D-7, §-2.140

Lodge must ascertain the Masonic standing of Brother seeking to affiliate, preferably before balloting on his application. (S. D. Forbes)

1974 D-4, §-2.121, §-2.140

Member of Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction unable to present dues card but presented letter bearing seal of his Grand Lodge attesting dues card was in order. Grand Master ruled that letter was acceptable to Virginia Lodge as proof of good standing. (W. C. Vaughan)

Sec. 2.141. What a Diploma Is. — A diploma is a certificate of the Grand Lodge that the Brother named therein was at the time of his death, or is at the date of the diploma, a member in good standing of the subordinate Lodge named therein.

A diploma is also a certificate of proficiency in the catechisms of the three degrees, issued upon recommendation of the Lodge of which the Brother is a member and in which he has stood examination and has been declared proficient by a vote of the members thereof. [Refer: Sec. 2.21 for fees.]

DECISIONS

1961 D-5, §-2.141

To qualify for the diploma specified in Section 2.141 it is only necessary for the Brother to pass an examination on the Master Mason's catechism and be voted proficient. These diplomas or certificates of proficiency are intended to encourage Master Masons to memorize the catechism of that degree. Proficiency in the Degrees of E.A. and F.C. are a prerequisite for advancement. (C. M. Flintoff)

Sec. 2.142. Diploma Issued Only a Recommendation from Subordinate Lodge. — No diploma shall be issued until the above facts are certified to the Grand Secretary by an extract from the minutes of a stated communication, or a special communication called for that purpose, of which the members of the subordinate Lodge shall have had due notice, and the diploma should bear the date of the action of the Lodge. [Refer: Sec. 2.21 for fees.]

Sec. 2.143. When New Recommendation Necessary. — Unless the diploma be applied for, and the fees paid within thirty days after such action of the Lodge, the diploma shall not be issued to any living Brother without a new recommendation from his Lodge.

The provisions of this Section shall not apply to the diploma for Masonic proficiency in the catechisms.

Sec. 2.144. No Fee for a Diploma Required of Widow or Minor Children of a Deceased Brother. — The widow and minor children of a deceased Brother shall be entitled to the diploma without any charge.

Sec. 2.145. Must be Written or Printed; How Signed, Attested and Sealed; Autograph Signature Necessary, etc. — The diploma shall be written or printed upon parchment; shall be signed by the Grand Master and the Grand Secretary, and be attested by the Seal of the Grand Lodge, and if the Brother be living he shall be required before receiving it, to place his autograph signature thereon.

The diploma for Masonic proficiency in the catechisms shall be printed on parchment type paper; shall be signed by the Grand Master and the Grand Secretary, and shall be attested by the Seal of the Grand Lodge.

NON-PAYMENT OF DUES

Sec. 2.146. Penalty for Non-Payment of Lodge Dues. — Lodge dues are payable by January of one year to be current for that same year, e.g. 1985. Any member who does not pay the current year's dues by December 31 shall be liable to the penalty of suspension on the following January 1, e.g., 1986. If he be suspended he shall not be liable for dues during the period of such suspension. Unless assessments are covered by Lodge by-laws as collectible as dues, no Brother shall be suspended for failure to pay such assessment if his dues be paid. (1985)

DECISIONS

1989 D-2, §-2.146

Two Non-payment of Dues suspensions were complicated by protracted mail deliveries of which the Brethren were innocent victims. Noting that their arrearages had been settled within the specified times, I healed the irregularities in their records and ordered the suspensions expunged from the minutes of the Lodges. (G. H. Jones, Jr.)

Sec. 2.147. Delinquent Brother to Be Cited, etc. — Prior to the citation of any Brother for non-payment of dues the Worshipful Master of his Lodge, or his duly designated representative, shall make personal contact with the Brother to determine if assistance is needed and to encourage him to retain his membership. Personal contact shall consist of a personal letter or one or more of the following, personal visit, telephone call or an e-mail to the delinquent Brother. If contact proves impossible the Lodge may take such action as it deems appropriate. [Refer: E-6-1989]

Prior to the actual issuance of a citation to the delinquent Brother, each subordinate Lodge Secretary shall inform the Grand Secretary, in writing, of those members who are subject to suspension. This information may be submitted at any time, but not later than August 1. This

cut-off date is necessary in cases where the ninety day waiting period is required before suspending the delinquent Brother.

The Grand Secretary will cause each Brother listed on the delinquent form to be mailed a letter from the Grand Master showing his concern for the delinquent Brother, with notification being sent to each subordinate Lodge concerned.

Subordinate Lodges are free to take action to cite the delinquent Brother at the first stated communication of their Lodge following receipt of notification from the Grand Secretary that the Most Worshipful Grand Master's letter has been mailed to the Brother. This should provide sufficient time for the delinquent Brother's response before the Lodge proceeds to issue a citation. [Refer: E-2-2008]

In addition to the amount of dues owed, the delinquent Brother shall be charged for the Lodge's cost to serve the citation when it is sent via restricted delivery certified mail as specified in Section 2.148; this fee shall be charged even if the Brother endeavors to pay his arrearage immediately after receiving the citation. No summons for such purpose shall ever be issued.

If the delinquent Brother has been notified of an impending citation and informs the Lodge by handwritten (not oral or typewritten) request that his name be stricken from the roll, he may be suspended without being served a citation. (2014)

DECISIONS

1903 D-21, §-2.147

A Lodge may not suspend a Brother at any other than a stated communication. This is the legal time for answering citations. (E. N. Eubank)

1933 D-22, §-2.147

Lodge erred in suspending for n.p.d. Brother cited to appear on December 27th without revision of citation when communication was changed to December 29th. Dues of delinquent were sent by Junior Deacon who was prevented by accident from attending the meeting on December 29th. (H. K. Green)

1960 D-21, §-2.147

Suspension of Brother who had not been billed for dues nor cited by Lodge was held illegal and ordered expunged from minutes of Lodge. (S. D. Forbes)

1963 D-2, §-2.147

1967 D-4, §-2.147

1968 D-10, §-2.147

Due to a misunderstood statement in the forms used in past years for affiliation which stated in effect that election in the Lodge applied to would sever the applicant's membership in his original Lodge and/or other failure of communication, the suspension of the Brother in his original Lodge was expunged and his good standing maintained. (E. H. Cann, G. E. Kidd, and H. B. Green)

1975 D-5, §-2.147, §-2.148

Lodge action to suspend member n.p.d. prior to the date he is cited to show cause is premature, irregular and unlawful. (S. W. Miner)

1975 D-6, §-2.147, §-2.148

Suspension of member n.p.d. is irregular when elapsed time between serving of citation and action by Lodge is less than ten days, and prior to time suspension action could have been lawfully undertaken. (S. W. Miner)

1983 D-6, §-2.147

Noting no willful violation of Masonic law in several cases, irregularities in record keeping were healed and the records of the Brethren in question were restored to their original integrity. (L. U. Jefferson)

1991 D-5, §-2.147

Lodge allowed to expunge from its records the suspension of two Brethren whose arrearages had been mailed in a timely manner but not received by the Lodge due to postal delay. (G. W. Farley)

1997 D-7, §-2.147, §-2.148

Set aside the suspension of a member for nonpayment of dues when the Lodge could not produce the necessary documentation for the suspension. (A. W. Adkins)

1997 D-8, §-2.147, §-2.148

2002 D-3, §-2.147, §-2.148

Set aside the suspension of a member for nonpayment of dues when the Lodge did not follow correct Masonic procedure, and cautioned the Master and Secretary to follow proper procedures. (A. W. Adkins and C. A. Parker)

Sec. 2.148. How Citation to be Served; What Equivalent to Personal Service of Citation. — A citation must be signed by the Secretary with the Seal of the Lodge attached and may be served in person by the Tiler or other Mason designated by the Master for that purpose, or by restricted delivery certified mail.

If not served in person and the post office address of the Brother is known, the Secretary shall forward to him by restricted delivery certified mail, a copy of the citation, and when the certified receipt thereof, signed by the Brother himself, is returned to the Secretary it shall be equivalent to personal service.

Whether the citation is served in person, or by restricted delivery certified mail, the Brother shall be allowed at least ten days from the date he received the citation before action can be taken as to his suspension.

The Tiler or other Master Mason serving a citation, in person, shall make a written report to the Secretary of the Lodge, showing the date and time of delivery of the citation to the delinquent Brother.

A restricted delivery certified receipt card signed by the delinquent Brother shall be considered sufficient service of the citation and the Lodge can act thereon after ten days. (1984)

DECISIONS

1928 D-3, §-2.148

Delinquent Brother whose citation was served by registered mail and who acknowledged receipt of such service can be suspended for n.p.d. Personal service is not essential in such cases. (J. Bowman)

1934 D-5, §-2.148

Registered letter marked "To be delivered to addressee only" and receipt card for same is sufficient notice to permit Lodge to act on suspension n.p.d. (J. C. Padgett)

1934 D-8, §-2.148

Member cannot be suspended n.p.d. without service of citation in person or by registered (or certified) mail with signed return receipt. (J. C. Padgett)

1960 D-19, §-2.148

Citation for non-payment of dues should be served in person if possible but certified mail may be used. If neither is successful Lodge must wait ninety days before suspending the delinquent. (S. D. Forbes)

1975 D-5, §-2.147, §-2.148

Lodge action to suspend member n.p.d. prior to the date he is cited to show cause is premature, irregular and unlawful. (S. W. Miner)

1975 D-6, §-2.147, §-2.148

Suspension of member n.p.d. is irregular when elapsed time between serving of citation and action by Lodge is less than ten days, and prior to time suspension action could have been lawfully undertaken. (S. W. Miner)

1982 D-2, §-2.148

The record of suspension for non-payment of dues of a Brother was ordered expunged from the minutes of a Lodge when the Brother had made the effort to comply by issuing and mailing his check prior to the deadline. Lateness in delivery by mail was held no fault of the Brother. (S. M. Rogers)

1993 D-4, §-2.148

The records were expunged and the suspension healed of several members who were suspended for non-payment of dues. Their dues were received within a few days after their suspension and, in most cases, were late due to mail service. (J. R. Dean)

1993 D-5, §-2.148

The records were healed of a Brother who was suspended for non-payment of dues because of a wrong address. He had affiliated with another Lodge and was in good standing when it was discovered that he had been suspended from another Lodge. (J. R. Dean)

1997 D-7, §-2.147, §-2.148

Set aside the suspension of a member for nonpayment of dues when the Lodge could not produce the necessary documentation for the suspension. (A. W. Adkins)

1997 D-8, §-2.147, §-2.148

2002 D-2, §-2.148

2002 D-3, §-2.147, §-2.148

Set aside the suspension of a member for nonpayment of dues when the Lodge did not follow correct Masonic procedure, and cautioned the Master and Secretary to follow proper procedures. (A. W. Adkins and C. A. Parker)

Sec. 2.149. If Citation is Served, Vote to be Taken Upon Suspension, Unless Lodge Grants Further Time; When a Brother May be Suspended When Citation is Not Served; Effect of Payment of Part of Dues. — When the citation is returned as served, or the postal receipt duly signed as provided in the preceding section is received, the Master shall take a viva voce vote at a stated communication of the Lodge on whether to suspend the delinquent; provided, that the Lodge may, by a majority vote, grant the delinquent further time. If, for any reason the citation cannot be served, he shall not be suspended in less than ninety days from the date of citation. When a Brother cited appears and pays a portion of his dues, but not enough to reduce his indebtedness below the amount authorizing citation, it is for the Lodge to decide whether he has or has not shown cause why he should not be suspended. But if he pays enough to reduce his indebtedness below the amount authorizing suspension, then the Lodge has no right to suspend him.

The action of a Lodge in suspending a Brother for non-payment of dues is not subject to review, alteration or rescission by the Lodge at a later communication. If the Master be satisfied that an error has been committed, he may set aside the suspension.

When the Lodge grants a definite extension of time to a Brother it cannot suspend him without first notifying him of the date of the final disposition of his case.

When the Lodge grants a definite extension of time to a Brother for the payment of his arrearages, he may be suspended on that date without the issuance of a new citation. (1985)

DECISIONS

1902 D-1, §-2.149

Brother who applies for reinstatement from suspension n.p.d. and whose request is refused cannot appeal his suspension. Such an appeal should have been made before applying for reinstatement. (H. O. Kerns)

1921 D-29, §-2.149

In case error is discovered in the suspension of a Brother holding dual membership and the penalty of automatic suspension is invoked against him, the Masters of both Lodges must declare the suspension null and void, giving the Lodges a full explanation for their decisions. (W. W. Galt)

1939 D-6, §-2.149

(1) When citation is issued for n.p.d. and Brother pays portion of his dues requesting additional time and if Lodge accepts his payment and request as a satisfactory answer, the citation is void. If further time is granted to a specific stated communication, the citation is still in force.

(2) The granting of an extension of time to a future stated communication does not authorize the Lodge to add dues up to and including that communication to the amount for which he was cited.

(3) If a delinquent Brother's answer to a citation is satisfactory to Lodge and he subsequently fails to keep up his payments, he cannot be suspended without the issuance of a new citation. (J. N. Hillman)

1994 D-19, §-2.149, §-2.151, §-2.155

Authorized Lodge to expunge the suspension of a Brother for non-payment of dues. Dues had been paid, but Lodge suspended him while Secretary was ill. (W. H. Morlock)

Sec. 2.150. A Brother's Suspension Void When He Appears or Satisfactorily Answers the Citation at that Communication at Any Time Before the Closing of the Lodge; Master's Duty. — If, at any time before the closing of a communication at which a Brother has been suspended for non-payment of dues, he should appear and pay enough to reduce his indebtedness below the amount authorizing citation, it is the duty of the Master to declare the suspension null and void, and order the record of it expunged.

DECISIONS

1895 D-2, §-2.150

Brother cited to show cause why he should not be suspended n.p.d. may do so at any time during the communication and his suspension, if done before he appears and pays up his arrearages, is null and void. There is no regular order of business for a stated communication and the citation may be answered at any time before the Lodge is closed. (J. P. Fitzgerald)

Sec. 2.151. Reinstatement and Restoration of Brother Suspended for Non-payment of Dues in One Lodge, Does not Restore Him to Membership in any Other Lodge. — The reinstatement of a Brother who has been suspended for non-payment of dues, even when followed by restoration to membership in the Lodge which first suspended him, does not restore him to membership in any other Lodge, but gives him the right to apply for such membership under the provisions of Section 2.121.

DECISIONS

1895 D-1, §-2.151

That the suspension of a Brother for n.p.d. cannot be rescinded or altered by the Lodge at a subsequent communication. The legality of such suspension may be appealed to the Grand Master. If the Worshipful Master is satisfied that he erred, he can, at a subsequent communication, without motion, set aside the suspension and declare the action null and void. (J. P. Fitzgerald)

1994 D-19, §-2.149, §-2.151, §-2.155

Authorized Lodge to expunge the suspension of a Brother for non-payment of dues. Dues had been paid. (W. H. Morlock)

Sec. 2.152. Effect of Suspensions For Non-Payment of Dues. — All suspensions involve absolute exclusion from all the rights and benefits of Masonry throughout the world, during the continuance of such suspension. (2004)

DECISIONS

1905 D-32, §-2.152

A suspended Mason is not liable for dues during the period of his suspension. (T. N. Davis)

1961 D-23, §-2.152, §-2.158

The provisions of Section 2.152 and Section 2.158 operate to suspend a Virginia Mason holding dual membership in another Grand Jurisdiction if he is suspended in it for any reason. (C. M. Flintoff)

1977 D-6, §-2.152

Officers and Brethren admonished via District Deputy Grand Master to preclude perpetuation of irregularities connected with out-of-state affiliations by discussion of our laws and procedure in Lodge with emphasis on indoctrination of those holding office. (L. D. Delano)

1979 D-9, §-2.152, §-2.158

Neither a Brother's affiliation with one Lodge nor his suspension by another Lodge had been exchanged by the two Lodges so involved. Situation was of long standing and Brother's current physical and mental conditions precluded his supplying information. No intentional violation noted and dues remitted in affiliate Lodge by Brother's wife. Irregularity healed, Brother's record restored to original integrity, and Lodges admonished to take note of the matter and let their records so attest. (R. R. Kennedy)

1980 D-6, §-2.152, §-2.158

Irregularities in two cases of affiliation healed when no intentional violations of laws in either Grand Jurisdiction could be uncovered. Lodge officers admonished to clear out-of-state affiliations through office of Grand Secretary. (M. L. Lacy, II)

1981 D-1, §-2.152, §-2.158

The records of four affiliated Virginia Masons revealed suspension by the members' Mother Lodges in the sister Grand Jurisdictions. The men's records indicated a lengthy span of good time in the Virginia Lodges and neither the men, the Virginia Lodges, nor the Grand Secretary carried any records of the suspension in the records. Deliberating all aspects of the facts presented, I could discern no willful violation of law. Via the District Deputy Grand Master the Brethren were instructed to settle the arrearage and comply with the sister Grand Jurisdictions, I then healed the irregularity in the records thereby restoring them to their original integrity. (C. E. Wallace)

2025 D-2, §-2.88, §-2.121, §-2.152, §-2.158, §-2.159, 1926 D-3, and 1980 D-6

A completed Application for Membership, containing a recommendation by at least one voucher, submitted on the form provided by the Grand Lodge of Virginia, is required to affiliate with any Virginia Lodge. All out-of-state applicants must submit to a criminal background check through a third-party vendor approved by the Grand Lodge of Virginia. Before balloting on an out-of-state affiliation, the Grand Lodge of Virginia shall receive, and approve the results of, his completed criminal background check, and the Lodge shall verify through the Office of the Grand Secretary that the member is in good standing in his home grand jurisdiction. The fee for each out-of-state affiliation must be collected by the Lodge prior to balloting on the Application. Such fee shall be forwarded to the Office of the Grand Secretary immediately after the stated communication at which the Brother is elected to membership. (G. D. Huffman)

Sec. 2.153. Suspensions For Non-Payment of Dues Must be Immediately Communicated to Grand Secretary, Amount to be Stated. — All suspensions in any subordinate Lodge shall immediately be communicated to the Grand Secretary and the amount due, shall be mentioned in the report of the suspension. (2004)

REINSTATEMENTS

Sec. 2.154. When and Under What Condition Application for Reinstatement of a Brother Suspended for Non-Payment of Dues May be Granted. — No application for reinstatement of a Mason suspended for non-payment of dues can be considered until all dues and assessments of the Lodge in which he was suspended, and to all other Lodges of which he was a member at the time of his suspension, shall be paid or remitted by a vote of such Lodges.

DECISIONS

1905 D-10, §-2.154, §-2.155, §-4.25

Brother suspended for non-payment of dues can apply for and be granted reinstatement and restoration at any stated communication of the Lodge which suspended him, the provisions of Sections 2.154 and 2.155 having been complied with. (T. N. Davis)

1932 D-10, §-2.154

Brother suspended n.p.d. who pays his arrearages but fails to be elected for reinstatement is not entitled to have his payment refunded. (A. M. Showalter)

1932 D-15, §-2.154

Member suspended n.p.d. cannot be legally restored to membership until his dues are paid. (A. M. Showalter)

1942 D-1, §-2.154

1942 D-7, §-2.154

Brother holding dual membership was suspended in both for non-payment of dues. These two Lodges subsequently consolidated. The suspended member must pay the full amount for which he was suspended in each Lodge before reinstatement. In the consolidation of Lodges the assets as well as the liabilities of the retiring Lodge are acquired by the remaining Lodge. (C. D. Freeman)

1950 D-6, §-2.154

Every Brother suspended n.p.d. must pay arrearages in all Lodges before being reinstated and must be reinstated in every Lodge by its independent action if he desires to be a member. (A. D. Smith, Jr.)

1958 D-11, §-2.154

Brother who seeks reinstatement after suspension n.p.d. and who pays his arrearage owing at the time of suspension is not entitled to refund if he does not pass the ballot. The Lodge has merely collected the amount belonging to it. (A. B. Gay)

1964 D-10, §-2.154

Suspended Mason who pays arrearages and dies before the Lodge reinstates him is not entitled to Masonic funeral. The Lodge is not obligated to return his payment as this was tendered to settle existing debt. (J. P. Stokes)

1986 D-7, §-2.154

In two instances of suspension, I felt the Brethren so involved were not at fault. In the one case, a money order was lost in the mail and in another case the postmark from a distant state had a retarded delivery to the Lodge Secretary. Deliberating all aspects I could find no violation on the Brethren's part and healed the suspensions in each instance. The irregularity in a Brother's record caused by the inaccurate transmittal of information was also healed. (J. B. Obenchain)

Sec. 2.155. Brother May Be Reinstated and Restored to Membership at Any Stated Communication; Vote Necessary. — Subject to the provisions of the preceding section, a Mason suspended for non-payment of dues may apply in writing or through some member orally at a stated communication of the Lodge which first suspended him, for reinstatement to the rights and benefits of Masonry and also for restoration to membership in the Lodge. The ballot required to reinstate and/or restore a suspended Mason shall be unanimous. The Master, in his discretion, may order a single ballot when both reinstatement and restoration to membership are applied for.

The Master, in his discretion, may require such application to lie over for four weeks, except when the applicant has been suspended for more than three months, in which case it must lie over for four weeks. Any suspended Mason who is rejected for reinstatement and restoration to membership may not apply therefor more often than once in four months.

If the Lodge shall refuse to reinstate a Brother suspended for non-payment of dues, it has the right to retain the payment made to it of dues owed at the time of suspension and paid by the petitioner as a requirement for consideration of his reinstatement request. (1973) [Refer: Sec. 4.32.]

DECISIONS

1905 D-10, §-2.154, §-2.155, §-4.25

Brother suspended for non-payment of dues can apply for and be granted reinstatement and restoration at any stated communication of the Lodge which suspended him, the provisions of Section 2.154 and 2.155 having been complied with. (T. N. Davis)

1916 D-10, §-2.122, §-2.123, §-2.155

Question involved Brother suspended n.p.d. who was reinstated to rights and benefits but not to membership. (a) His status is that of a non-affiliate. (b) He may apply to any Lodge for membership. (c) Since has not restored to membership a demit cannot be granted him. (J. B. Wood)

1923 D-14, §-2.155

The same vote is required to restore a Brother to the rolls of a Lodge as was required to admit him to Masonry, namely a unanimous one. (J. H. Price)

1932 D-19, §-2.155

Application for reinstatement from members suspended n.p.d. can be balloted upon at same stated communication money is received. (A. M. Showalter)

1940 D-8, §-2.155

Suspended Master Mason who dies cannot be subsequently restored to good standing by payment of delinquent dues. The law requires him to make application for reinstatement which, obviously, a dead man cannot do. (N. S. Turnbull)

1989 D-1, §-2.155

2001 D-4, §-2.155

Healed an irregularity, where the petition(s) for reinstatement were read and balloted on without having been laid over for four weeks. Finding no willful violation in the error, I ordered that the records of the Brother/Brethren reinstated stand as balloted on by the Lodge. (G. H. Jones, Jr. and J. D. Cole)

1994 D-19, §-2.149, §-2.151, §-2.155

Authorized Lodge to expunge the suspension of a Brother for non-payment of dues. Dues had been paid. (W. H. Morlock)

Sec. 2.156. Rights and Benefits of Suspended Masons. — A Mason who, on proper application to the Lodge which first suspended him for non-payment of dues, is reinstated to the rights and benefits of Masonry may thereafter apply to any Lodge for membership. The ballot to elect must be unanimous. If rejected, he shall not apply to any Lodge holden under this Grand Lodge more often than once in four months. (2004)

Sec. 2.157. How Reinstated If His Lodge Becomes Suspended or Extinct. — If the Lodge which suspended him becomes suspended or extinct, he may pay his arrearage of dues to the Grand Secretary, and thereafter any other Lodge of which he was a member at the time of his suspension, or in the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, shall have authority to reinstate him. (1975)

DECISIONS

1935 D-4, §-2.157

Affiliate of Virginia Lodge from Grand Jurisdiction which permits dual membership stands suspended in the Virginia Lodge if suspended by Lodge under other Grand Lodge. If restored there he must apply again to the Lodge for membership. There is no automatic restoration. (W. M. Brown)

Sec. 2.158. In Case of Dual Membership, Suspension in One Lodge Suspends in All.

— The suspension by one of his Lodges of a Brother who holds dual membership, suspends him from membership in all of his Lodges. [Refer: Sec. 2.152] The only exception to this is that discontinuance of membership in a Research Lodge for non-payment of dues does not affect the Brother's standing in his regular Lodge (or Lodges). (2002)

DECISIONS

1933 D-9, §-2.158

Lodge erred in suspending dual member on oral information as suspension n.p.d. in other Lodge, which later proved erroneous. Suspension was ordered expunged from records. (H. K. Green)

1959 D-3, §-2.158

Hunter's Lodge illegally received and balloted on request for reinstatement of dual member who had not paid his arrearages to Snowville Lodge. Hunter's Lodge was ordered to nullify his election, take up his dues card and return any part of his payment to them over the amount for which he was suspended. (E. S. Wallace)

1961 D-23, §-2.152, §-2.158

The provisions of Section 2.152 and Section 2.158 operate to suspend a Virginia Mason holding dual membership in another Grand Jurisdiction if he is suspended in it for any reason. (C. M. Flintoff)

1979 D-9, §-2.152, §-2.158

Neither a Brother's affiliation with one Lodge nor his suspension by another Lodge had been exchanged by the two Lodges so involved. Situation was of long standing and Brother's current physical and mental conditions precluded his supplying information. No intentional violation noted and dues remitted in affiliate Lodge by Brother's wife. Irregularity healed, Brother's record restored to original integrity, and Lodges admonished to take note of the matter and let their records so attest. (R. R. Kennedy)

1980 D-6, §-2.152, §-2.158

Irregularities in two cases of affiliation healed when no intentional violations of laws in either Grand Jurisdiction could be uncovered. Lodge officers admonished to clear out-of-state affiliations through office of Grand Secretary. (M. L. Lacy, II)

1981 D-1, §-2.152, §-2.158

The records of four affiliated Virginia Masons revealed suspension by the members' Mother Lodges in the sister Grand Jurisdictions. The men's records indicated a lengthy span of good time in the Virginia Lodges and neither the men, the Virginia Lodges, nor the Grand Secretary carried any records of the suspension in the records. Deliberating all aspects of the facts presented, I could discern no willful violation of law. Via the District Deputy Grand Master the Brethren were instructed to settle the arrearage and comply with the sister Grand Jurisdictions, I then healed the irregularity in the records thereby restoring them to their original integrity. (C. E. Wallace)

1987 D-3, §-2.158

The purging of our roster of members uncovered several cases of affiliated Brethren suspended for the non-payment of dues. Suspensions were of some twenty or more years and in some cases involved Masonic Veterans of half century. After consultation with the suspending sister Grand Jurisdiction and, finding no willful violation on the part of those suspended Brethren, I healed the irregularity in those records provided the members settled arrearage in the suspending Lodge promptly. Virginia affiliates with suspensions of long-standing were given ninety days to set their records right under this decision. (O. W. Tate)

2025 D-2, §-2.88, §-2.121, §-2.152, §-2.158, §-2.159, 1926 D-3, and 1980 D-6

A completed Application for Membership, containing a recommendation by at least one voucher, submitted on the form provided by the Grand Lodge of Virginia, is required to affiliate with any Virginia Lodge. All out-of-state applicants must submit to a criminal background check through a third-party vendor approved by the Grand Lodge of Virginia. Before balloting on an out-of-state affiliation, the Grand Lodge of Virginia shall receive, and approve the results of, his completed criminal background check, and the Lodge shall verify through the Office of the Grand Secretary that the member is in good standing in his home grand jurisdiction. The fee for each out-of-state affiliation must be collected by the Lodge prior to balloting on the Application. Such fee shall be forwarded to the Office of the Grand Secretary immediately after the stated communication at which the Brother is elected to membership. (G. D. Huffman)

Sec. 2.159. Research Lodges. — A special classification of subordinate Lodges is hereby established, to be known as Research Lodges, with authority to conduct research, hold discussions, gather and preserve Masonic information, maintain a library, supply papers or speakers at the request of other Lodges when convenient, and conduct a program of general service to the Craft in the field of Masonic education and information, subject to all the provisions of the Virginia Methodical Digest except:

- a) The word “Research” shall be included in the name of the Lodge.
- b) A Research Lodge shall have no power to confer degrees, and accordingly their by-laws may not specify any fee for the degrees.
- c) A Research Lodge shall be exempt from all Grand Lodge dues and assessments, and accordingly shall not be entitled to representation in the Grand Lodge nor have any vote therein.
- d) The stated communication of a Research Lodge shall be held according to the provisions of their by-laws. This may result in meetings being held less frequently than monthly.
- e) No Brother shall be eligible to be installed Worshipful Master of a Research Lodge unless he shall have already been elected and installed Master of some other Lodge. The provisions of the Methodical Digest dealing with the qualifications of the Worshipful Master shall not apply to the officers of Research Lodges or proposed Research Lodges, provided that before the Master-elect can be installed he must produce a certificate from a member of the Committee on Work certifying to his proficiency in the ritual of Opening and closing a Master Mason's Lodge as well as Calling from Labor to Refreshment and from Refreshment to Labor.

- f). Membership in a Research Lodge chartered by the Grand Lodge of Virginia is contingent upon two restricting factors: (1) the Brother must maintain membership in a regular Lodge recognized by the Grand Lodge of Virginia and (2) the Brother can obtain membership only through the process of affiliation. Application for membership must be presented at a stated communication, and if there be no objection may be balloted on at this same communication. At the request of a Brother or at the discretion of the Master, designated applications will be held over to the next stated communication for action. A collective ballot may be taken on all applications approved for consideration at a stated communication. If the ballot not be clear, the Master may have the ballot respread but on this subsequent ballot each application must be balloted on separately. (1992)
- g) If a member of a Research Lodge fails to pay the Lodge dues for two or more years, the Lodge may, at a stated communication vote to have the member's name removed from the roll. Such action will not affect that member's standing in a regular Lodge. [See Section 2.158] (2002)

DECISIONS

2025 D-2, §-2.88, §-2.121, §-2.152, §-2.158, §-2.159, 1926 D-3, and 1980 D-6

A completed Application for Membership, containing a recommendation by at least one voucher, submitted on the form provided by the Grand Lodge of Virginia, is required to affiliate with any Virginia Lodge. All out-of-state applicants must submit to a criminal background check through a third-party vendor approved by the Grand Lodge of Virginia. Before balloting on an out-of-state affiliation, the Grand Lodge of Virginia shall receive, and approve the results of, his completed criminal background check, and the Lodge shall verify through the Office of the Grand Secretary that the member is in good standing in his home grand jurisdiction. The fee for each out-of-state affiliation must be collected by the Lodge prior to balloting on the Application. Such fee shall be forwarded to the Office of the Grand Secretary immediately after the stated communication at which the Brother is elected to membership. (G. D. Huffman)

Section 3.00

The Individual Mason

DEPARTMENT

Sec. 3.01. How Brother Must be Clothed in Lodge. — Every Brother must always appear in his Lodge properly clothed and in clean and decent apparel.

DECISIONS

1991 D-11, §-2.92, §-3.01

A petitioner who is otherwise qualified shall not be rejected because he is required by his religious beliefs to wear a headdress at all times outside the confines of his home. This does not authorize the wearing of a headdress in a tiled Masonic Lodge for those who simply wish to wear same and are not required by their religious beliefs or physical condition. (G.W. Farley)

1994 D-11, §-3.01

Ruled that a Brother may not wear a “32° apron” or a “Worthy Patron” (Eastern Star) apron while attending his Symbolic Lodge. The white apron is the officially prescribed garb for every Brother, and it cannot be worn in Lodge when it bears the symbols, insignia, or names of other bodies. (T. F. May)

Sec. 3.02. Must Attend all Meetings When Duly Summoned, etc. — He must attend all meetings, whether stated or emergent, when duly summoned, unless he can offer such plea of necessity for his absence as the by-laws and general regulations admit; and to all these laws and regulations he must render a willing and cheerful obedience.

Sec. 3.03. Must Not Engage in Private Conversation While Lodge is Engaged in its Usual Labors, etc.; Must Not Interrupt Officers or Members, etc. — While the Lodge is engaged in its usual labors Masons must not hold private conversations or committees without leave from the Master; nor introduce any remarks irrelevant to the business before them. They must not interrupt the Master or Wardens or any Brother addressing the presiding officer nor act ludicrously while the Lodge is engaged in what is serious and solemn; but every Brother shall show due respect to the Master and Wardens and other Brethren.

Sec. 3.04. Discussions Relating to Nations, Religions, or Politics Must Not be Introduced Within the Walls of the Lodge. — No discussion relating to nations, religions, or politics must ever be introduced within the walls of a Lodge; Masons, as such, professing the universal religion, recognizing only those political maxims in which all men agree, and considering all nations as members of the same human family.

DECISIONS

1909 D-19, §-3.04

It is contrary to Masonic law to discuss religious matters within a Lodge. Such discussions provoke only discord. (Religion and politics are personal matters.) (J. W. Eggleston)

1964 D-14, §-3.04

Reprinting and circulation of material dealing with civil rights and integration of Armed Forces held improper. These are areas in which the individual must act in his own interest and not involve his Lodge. (J. P. Stokes)

2024 D 1, § 3.04

The presentation by wearing or display of any badge, pin, article of clothing, or any other item which endorses or promotes a candidate or political party are prohibited on the property of any Lodge holden under this Grand Jurisdiction. These are just, as cited by Most Worshipful Brother Stokes, areas in which individuals must act in his own interest but not involve his or any other Virginia Masonic Lodge. (J. K. Lewis)

Sec. 3.05. Prohibition Upon Masons as to Visiting Clandestine Lodges, Holding Masonic Intercourse with Clandestinely Made Masons, etc. — No Mason shall visit any Lodge of clandestine Masons, or hold Masonic intercourse with any clandestinely made Mason, or visit any Lodge in the state of Virginia not authorized to work by a Charter from the Grand Lodge or a dispensation from the Grand Master, or hold any Masonic intercourse with any person claiming to have been made a Mason in any such Lodge.

DECISIONS

1959 D-8, §-2.133, §-3.05

Question was raised by member of the Armed Forces overseas about visiting Oregon Military Lodge in Germany, which also allowed Negro visitors. Grand Master advised that each Grand Lodge had its own rules and regulations and visiting in any Lodge holden under a Grand Lodge with which we are in fraternal relations is proper. (E. S. Wallace)

Sec. 3.06. Criticisms, Animadversions or Reflections on the Acts of Any Officer May Not be Published in Any Journal. — There shall be no publication by any Mason in any printed or public journal or through public electronic communication of any animadversion or reflection upon the official acts of any officer in Grand Lodge or in subordinate Lodge in this jurisdiction, or any criticism of such acts, either while said officer is in office or after his term has expired. The publishing of such criticisms, animadversions or reflections in the public press, or public electronic communication, whether in a journal professing to be Masonic or otherwise, is un-Masonic conduct, and shall be so treated by the Lodge to which the Brother so publishing belongs. Any just cause of complaint by any Brother against the acts of any officer in Grand Lodge or a subordinate Lodge, shall be made in accordance with Masonic usage and custom, and not in any public journal or other public communication media, including e-mail, list serves, news groups, etc. (1999)

Sec. 3.07. Use of Masonic Emblems. — The use of Masonic emblems and devices on business cards or signs, or by way of advertisement, except for legitimate Masonic purposes, is strictly forbidden.

DECISIONS

1921 D-3, §-3.07, §-4.02

Brother wearing Masonic emblem contrary to the laws of Virginia and not leading life worthy of a Mason should have charges brought against him (rather than prosecution under existing civil statutes.) (W. W. Galt)

1931 D-3, §-3.07

The wife, widow, daughter, sister or mother of a Master Mason in good standing at the time or at his death may wear Masonic emblems. (F. T. McFaden)

1954 D-1, §-3.07

Permission refused for two Lodges to furnish rosters of members to non-Masonic organization for the supply of annual passes to its grounds. This violates the spirit of Section 3.07. (O. M. Miles)

1960 D-5, §-3.07

Insurance Association cannot use the word Masonic as a part of its title nor solicit business under the name of Masonry. (S. D. Forbes)

1961 D-7, §-3.07

Question concerning Masonic Section decoration in cemetery. P.G.M. commented use of Masonic emblems for commercial purposes should be discouraged. (C. M. Flintoff)

1961 D-15, §-3.07

Lodge may enter a float in a parade provided no Masonic symbols except those customarily displayed in public are used. (C. M. Flintoff)

1985 R-1, §-3.07

Recommended that permission be granted to Lodges to display a marker, approved by this Grand Lodge, in keeping with the dignity and good taste of the Fraternity, in towns and cities or wherever appropriate, throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. The marker may be donated by any member or members of the Lodge provided the Lodge concurs in its use. The maintenance of the marker will be the responsibility of the Lodge or Lodges. (R. J. Wimmer)

1988 D-18, §-3.07

Allowed the use of signboards to be mounted on the sides of a vehicle used in parades depicting location of Lodges in the area, programs supported by the Lodges and a large square and compasses. The Grand Lodge office to be notified of each parade in which the signboards were to be used. (D. M. Robey)

1990 D-6, §-3.07

It is permissible to display a Lodge name and number and Masonic emblems on uniforms, etc. furnished by the Lodge to members of Little League or similar teams. (C. F. Cobbs)

1995 D-2, §-3.07

Allowed the square and compasses to be printed on T-shirts and programs for a charity fund raising softball tournament conducted by a Lodge. (T. F. May)

Sec. 3.08. Use of Alcohol by Subordinate Lodges. — No Mason, whether sojourning or a member of a Lodge holden under this Grand Lodge shall bring alcoholic beverages into any building or facility being used as a Lodge in this the Commonwealth of Virginia for social functions, except that the use of wine, when called for or allowed in the ritual, is specifically permitted. This shall include the laying of cornerstones and dedication ceremonies, and Table Lodges. Lodges shall also be permitted to allow the temperate use of alcoholic beverages in their Temples when rented for wedding receptions, or similar events, provided that there is proper supervision and its use is in compliance with Federal, State, and local laws and ordinances.

For purposes of this section: a Lodge is the Lodge room, ante-room, preparation room, dining or social hall, grounds, and outside shelters used for picnics or other events when the property is owned or rented by a subordinate Lodge, and the property is being used by a subordinate Lodge for a Masonic event. It does not include such property when being used by an appendant or concordant body such as, but not limited to the Scottish Rite, Shrine, Knights Templar, and the Eastern Star, provided its use is in compliance with Federal, State, and local laws and ordinances. (2011)

DECISIONS

2006 D-1, §-3.08

Due to some confusion as to the interpretation of this section, I clarified that a pavilion is part of the Lodge's facility and having alcohol available in it is the same being anywhere else on the Lodge's property whether inside or outside of the building itself. (G. H. Jones, III)

Sec. 3.09. Use of the Lewis Jewel. -- The Lewis Jewel is permitted to be worn on Masonic occasions by Master Masons whose fathers are Master Masons in good standing (or were at the time of their death) and likewise by Master Masons whose sons are Master Masons in good standing (or were at the time of their death). The Lewis Jewel is suspended from two chains, with two bars. The upper bar containing the name of the father and date he received the Sublime Degree of Master Mason and the lower bar containing the same information of the son. Additional bars may be added when required (e.g. grandfather, son, and grandson). The cost of the jewel, to include shipping, shall be borne by the individual Mason applying for the jewel. Applications for the Lewis Jewel shall be made through the Grand Lodge office on forms provided to the Lodge Secretary or from the Grand Lodge website, which upon confirmation of the good standing of both father and son, will cause the jewel to be issued. A Virginia Mason in possession of a valid Lewis Jewel issued by another Grand Jurisdiction recognized by the Grand Lodge of Virginia will be authorized to wear his jewel. (2016)

Sec. 3.10. Carrying of Firearms in Subordinate Lodges. -- The carrying of firearms by certain members in a subordinate Lodge is permitted under the following circumstances: (a) active and honorably retired federal, state, or local law enforcement officers and all members of the Grand Lodge Committee on Security and pertains to all tiled Lodges in which these Brethren enter; and (b) members of any Lodge in which the Worshipful Master has decided to allow a reasonable number of Concealed Carry Permit Holders to carry a concealed weapon in the Lodge. However, these members must first be examined by the Worshipful Master, who may delegate such examination to active and honorably retired federal, state, or local law enforcement officers to ascertain the member's ability to safely handle firearms and applies solely to the Lodge in which they are a member. The Lodge Secretary will maintain the names of those designated by the Worshipful Master, and a copy is to be immediately forwarded to the Grand Lodge office.

No member who is carrying a weapon, concealed or openly, shall participate in the floor work of any degree being performed.

A Lodge is permitted to having an educational program involving nonfunctional/disabled weapons that cannot be fired. (2017)

Section 4.00

Masonic Offenses

Investigations, Charges,

Trials, Etc.

MASONIC OFFENSES, INVESTIGATIONS, CHARGES AND TRIALS FOR UN-MASONIC CONDUCT

Sec. 4.01. What Constitutes a Masonic Offense. — Masons owing allegiance to the Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M., of Virginia, and sojourning Masons while in the Commonwealth of Virginia, must obey the civil laws, support the establishment of government, keep inviolable the mysteries of the Order, preserve and obey the laws and resolutions of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, observe the Ancient Landmarks of Masonry and discharge their duties and obligations to their families, to each other and to mankind in general. (2022)

In addition to the requirements related to Masonic conduct outlined in this Section, in the Decisions related to this Section, and elsewhere in the Methodical Digest, including those offenses and charges set forth in Chapter I, Section III and Chapter II, Section IV of The Constitution of Masonry, a Masonic Offense shall be construed to include: slander or defamation of character by one Mason against another; behavior or actions by one Mason resulting in physical or substantial emotional harm to another Mason; and oral, verbal, written or electronic communication by any Mason which brings dishonor to the Fraternity or any of its members or creates disharmony or discord in the Fraternity or among its members. (2022)

Willful failure to comply with any of these requirements shall constitute a Masonic offense and subject the offender to Masonic trial, and, if found guilty, to discipline.

The determination of whether a Mason may be guilty of a Masonic offense shall be determined solely through the process of a Masonic trial, except where exceptions have been made in Masonic law granting the Grand Master the authority to act in specific circumstances. The definition of any conduct required and the definition of any term, phrase or word outlined herein shall be determined in the sole discretion of the trial commission or the Grand Master. (2010)

DECISIONS

1898 D-3, §-4.01

A Lodge has no right to prefer charges against Brethren who had been notified to attend a meeting of the Lodge called for a specific purpose and who failed to attend. (R. T. W. Duke)

1909 D-25, §-4.01

It is un-Masonic for a Brother to print his Masonic affiliations on his advertising matter. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-40, §-4.01

It is a Masonic offense for a Mason to desert his wife and leave her without means of livelihood: such an act being in direct conflict with the whole spirit of Masonry. (J. W. Eggleston)

1910 D-9, §-4.01

Nothing contained in the Constitution of Masonry can interfere with the right of Masons to settle their financial difficulties according to civil law. The Constitutions are published as a matter of information. The Methodical Digest contains the written laws of Virginia Freemasonry. (J. W. Eggleston)

1921 D-30, §-4.01

1932 D-11, §-4.01

So-called Masonic chain letters and chain prayers violate the postal laws and must not be used by Masons for this reason. (W. W. Galt and A. M. Showalter)

1924 D-1, §-, §-4.01

The possession of a printed ritual is a Masonic offense. (J. H. Price)

1924 D-7, §-4.01

Any Brother found guilty of violating the laws of the land enjoys no special privileges and immunities at the hands of the Fraternity. No one should ever have the opportunity to point the accusing finger. (J. H. Price)

1939 D-7, §-3.07, §-4.01

No Masonic Lodge or individual Mason can use Masonic emblem for advertising purposes, other than legitimate Masonic business without violating the law. If the use of such emblem contributes to the advantage of any Mason, such use comes under the heading of “commercialized Masonry.” (J. N. Hillman)

1975 D-10, §-4.01

Although a court may legally declare as bankrupt anyone who is unable to pay his debts, bankruptcy of itself does not constitute a Masonic offense. However, if any cause or contributing factor to such bankruptcy is considered outside the law, appropriate action should be taken to the end that Masonic justice prevails. (S. W. Miner)

1981 D-5, §-2.109, §-4.01

A Brother having been irregularly made a Mason by receiving the degrees in one Lodge while still under the jurisdiction of another is to be continued under the jurisdiction of the original Lodge until advanced or granted a waiver by that Lodge and not eligible to visit Masonically. The Lodge conferring the degree illegally was directed to bring charges against the endorsers of the illegal petition for allowing, with foreknowledge, the illegal making of a Mason. (C. E. Wallace)

1994 D-16, §-4.01

Reprimanded and suspended from membership and rights and benefits of Freemasonry, for a period of one calendar year, a Master Mason affiliate who published and distributed a key code of our Virginia Masonic ritual in violation of our Masonic obligation and law. (T. F. May)

4.01(a). Procedure Regarding Conviction of a Felony. — On being satisfied of the validity of a conviction of a felony and whether or not a sentence was in fact imposed, or the entry of a plea of guilty or no contest (non contendere) or a plea under *Alford v. North Carolina* to a felony charge, the Grand Master shall forward a copy of the conviction order in the case or of court documentation reflecting his entry of such a plea to the Brother concerned and allow him a period of forty (40) days in which to show cause why he should not be expelled from the Craft. In the event he does not show such cause to the satisfaction of the Grand Master, he shall be forthwith expelled from the Craft, and his Lodge, or in the case of a sojourning Mason, his Grand Lodge duly informed. (2022) [Refer: E-5-1989 and E-8-1989]

Sec. 4.02. Who May Prefer Charges. — Any officer or member of a Lodge may make written accusation against any officer, member, non-affiliate, Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft of the Lodge for Masonic offense committed by him; or against any sojourning Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft or Master Mason for offenses committed within the jurisdiction of the Lodge but after one Lodge prefers charges, no other Lodge shall prefer charges for the same offense.

It is the duty of any officer knowing a Masonic offense committed by a member of his Lodge, to prefer charges against him.

It is the duty of every Mason, whether sojourning in this jurisdiction or a member of a Lodge holden under this Grand Lodge, particularly that of the Worshipful Master or Secretary of such a Lodge, on receiving any information regarding the conviction of any Lodge member or sojourning Mason of a felony by any State or Federal Court wheresoever situated or the entry by any such member or Mason of a plea of guilty or no contest (non contendere) or a plea under *Alford v. North Carolina* to a felony charge, immediately to forward such

information to the Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, together with, if possible, a certified copy of the court order imposing or recording such conviction. (2022) [Refer: E-5-1989]

DECISIONS

1893 D-3, §-4.02

That a Brother who is a member of a chartered Lodge and a Lodge U.D. should be tried for an alleged offense, committed before the U.D. Lodge came into existence, by the chartered Lodge. (W. H. Pleasants)

1909 D-38, §-4.02

There is no method of preparing charges for un-Masonic conduct against a F.C. for an act done before his initiation. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-41, §-4.02

Any member of a Lodge can prefer charges against another member of his own Lodge or in a Lodge under whose jurisdiction the offender is sojourning. (J. W. Eggleston)

1915 D-7, §-4.02

A Brother suspended for non-payment of dues is still subject to Masonic charges, trial and discipline, if found guilty. (P. K. Bauman)

1921 D-3, §-3.07, §-4.02

Brother wearing Masonic emblem contrary to the laws of Virginia and not leading life worthy of a Mason should have charges brought against him (rather than prosecution under existing civil statutes.) (W. W. Galt)

1922 D-14, §-4.02

Under the doctrine that "once a Mason always a Mason," suspension and/or withdrawal from a Lodge does not prevent his trial and punishment by a Lodge having jurisdiction, for Masonic offense committed therein. (J. S. Bottimore)

1990 D-8, §-4.02

A demitted Brother under charges is still under Masonic status or jurisdiction until the disposition of the charges. (C. F. Cobbs)

Sec. 4.02 (a) Suspension Pending a Trial. — From time to time, the Grand Master may become aware of acts by a Mason that may in his belief constitute a Masonic offense as outlined in Section 4.01 and present a clear and present danger to the continued operation of a Lodge or Lodges. This may be the result of personal observation, credible information received, or by the communication of charges as outlined in Section 4.07. In any event, the Grand Master may determine that it is in the best interest of the Fraternity or its members to act, pending final determination by a Trial Commission. Therefore, in addition to the expulsion of felons, as outlined in Section 4.01(a), the Grand Master may, in his sole discretion, suspend any member from the rights and benefits of Freemasonry until such time as a trial commission may be impaneled to make a final determination in the matter. If the Grand Master thus suspends a Mason, a trial commission shall be assembled as soon as reasonably possible, but no more than 180 days from the date of such suspension, and a timely Masonic trial shall proceed as outlined elsewhere in the Methodical Digest. Should circumstances warrant, prior to the conclusion of the Masonic trial, the Grand Master, or any successor, may remove the suspension and restore the man to membership. (2022)

Sec. 4.03. The Accused to Stand to the Determination of the Commission. — If a complaint be made against a Brother and he be found guilty, he shall stand to the determination of the Commission. This is not to be construed as interfering with his right of appeal.

DECISIONS

1990 D-10, §-4.03, §-4.08, §-4.14

Personally reprimanded a Lodge member for commission of certain criminal acts after setting aside Section 4.03, 4.08 and 4.14 in order to expedite the disposing of Masonic charges against the Brother after two years delay. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-18, §-4.03, §-4.08, §-4.14

Provisions of the law were set aside to allow a Brother to plead guilty to Masonic charges, waive Masonic trial and accept a sentence of indefinite suspension from membership in all Masonic Lodges and the rights and benefits of Masonry. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-20, §-4.03, §-4.08, §-4.14

Provisions of the law were set aside to allow a Brother to plead guilty, waive Masonic trial and accept a sentence of indefinite suspension for findings of un-Masonic conduct. (C. F. Cobbs)

Sec. 4.04. Investigation to be Made. — If the aggrieved person be a Mason in good standing, he shall make his accusations in writing, so far as it is proper to do so, setting out— first, the accusations; and second, the specifications of circumstances or acts upon which the accusations are based, stating time and place, as far as possible, of the acts complained of, which together with an oral statement of such portions of the accusation as may not with propriety be written, shall be delivered by the accuser to the Worshipful Master of a Lodge having jurisdiction. If appropriate, the Worshipful Master shall appoint a committee to endeavor to effect a reconciliation of the two Brothers at variance, and if successful, shall obtain from the accuser written withdrawal of the accusation and present same with their report to the Worshipful Master, who shall then consider the matter closed. (2022)

Sec. 4.05. Procedure if Reconciliation Cannot be Effected. — If the Worshipful Master ascertains that the offense is not a personal one as between the accused and the accuser, or if it is personal, and the efforts of the committee to effect a reconciliation are unavailing the Worshipful Master shall refer the accusation to the chairman of the Grand Lodge Committee on Security. Upon receiving the accusation, the chairman will immediately notify the Grand Secretary as well as the District Deputy Grand Master of the District where the accusation originated. Upon making proper notifications, the chairman will appoint an investigative team from members of that Committee to investigate the accusations. That team will determine whether probable cause existed that a Masonic offense occurred and report in writing to the chairman as to the findings of their investigation.

Upon report that a Masonic offense occurred, the chairman will return appropriately worded charges and specifications to the Worshipful Master. If it is the determination that no probable cause existed of a Masonic offense, the Worshipful Master will consider the matter closed.

The Worshipful Master shall present the charges and specifications to the Lodge at the first stated communication held after delivery to him; the charges and specifications shall be entered in the minutes of that communication and shall not be withdrawn except at a stated communication of the Lodge and by unanimous ballot. (2025)

DECISIONS

1933 D-20, §-4.05

Masonic charges against Brother may be withdrawn at any stated communication of the Lodge in which they were preferred, by unanimous consent of the members. (H. K. Green)

Sec. 4.06. A Brother Under Charges Cannot Act as Worshipful Master or Officer — No Brother, while under charges, can act as Worshipful Master or other officer of the Lodge, but he shall have the right to ballot or vote until found guilty. (2022)

Sec. 4.07. Charges to be Transmitted to the Grand Master. — The Secretary of the Lodge shall within ten days after the stated communication at which the charges were entered in the minutes: (1) transmit under Lodge Seal to the District Deputy Grand Master of the district in which the Lodge is located, the charges and specifications as prepared by the Committee on Security, and (2) notify in writing the accused and any other Lodge which has jurisdiction that charges have been prepared. (2022)

The District Deputy Grand Master shall within ten (10) days after receiving the charges and specifications from the Secretary of the Lodge, review the documentation submitted, develop a synopsis of the case, add his own knowledge, if any, of the circumstances causing the charges to be made, state whether he has any personal interest in the case or is related to the accused or accuser, and forward all such material to the Grand Master, along with his recommendation of whether or not a Masonic trial on said charges should be held.

If the Grand Master determines that there is an inadequate basis for a Masonic trial, he will instruct the District Deputy Grand Master to inform the Secretary of the Lodge involved of his decision, such Secretary shall reflect this determination of the Grand Master on the margin of the minutes where the charge was entered; no further action shall be taken by the accused or accuser. If, however, the Grand Master deems a trial to be warranted, he will return the case materials, charges and other information to the District Deputy Grand Master for the district in question or other such district as he may determine in which said charges are to be tried, and direct him to form a trial commission. (2022)

Sec. 4.07(a). Waiver of Trial. — A Brother may plead guilty to a Masonic offense, agree to waive trial, and accept a penalty imposed by the Grand Master. Such plea, waiver, and request must be made in writing and presented to the Grand Master, through the District Deputy Grand Master, with his recommendations. The Grand Master may, at his discretion, honor the request and impose a penalty, or order the District Deputy Grand Master to proceed with the normal process of a Masonic Trial. (1991)

Sec. 4.08. Trial Commission to be Formed to Conduct a Masonic Trial. — If the Grand Master deems a trial to be warranted, he will return the case materials, charges and other materials to the District Deputy Grand Master for the district in question or such other district in which he determines the charges are to be tried.

The Grand Master will send copies of the case materials, charges and other materials to the Grand Lodge Committee on Masonic Trials and direct them to appoint a chairman for the upcoming trial. The Grand Master will direct the District Deputy Grand Master for the district in question to form the trial commission, consisting of four (4) members, who shall be Past Worshipful Masters, Past District Deputy Grand Masters, or Past Grand Masters, from any

district within the Commonwealth of Virginia, who will serve with the chairman as a five member Trial Commission. Three (3) members present including the chairman shall constitute a quorum. No one shall be appointed to a commission who is a member of the Lodge in which the charges originated, or a relative of any interested party.

The Trial Commission Chairman shall have authority to summon all witnesses by the methods and in the manner hereinafter prescribed and shall set the date and time for the hearings. All hearings will take place in the conference room of the office of the Grand Lodge of Virginia in Richmond or such other location as the Grand Master may designate.

The Lodge and the accused may each designate a Master Mason in good standing to represent them at the trial, but without expense to the Grand Lodge. The accused and the designated Lodge representative shall be served with a notice of the time and place of the trial at least ten (10) days beforehand, and such notice shall be served as a summons is served. (2022) [Refer: E-9-1989]

DECISIONS

1922 D-1, §-4.08

A non-affiliate cannot appear as counsel in a Masonic investigation or trial. (J. S. Bottimore)

1932 D-20, §-4.08

Past Grand Masters disapproved decision which placed the duty of summoning witnesses on the Trial Commission. Lodge must summon its own witnesses and present its evidence. Trial Commission has right to summon any witness it deems proper. (A. M. Showalter)

1934 D-4, §-4.08

Charges filed against a member confined in prison should be tried in usual way and notice given the accused as provided by law. (J. C. Padgett)

1972 D-2, §-4.08

Charges against a Brother cannot be carried on indefinitely without having a trial commission appointed by the District Deputy Grand Master. Lodge was ordered to decide whether it wished to prosecute charges or drop them and advise the D.D.G.M. (C. F. Shuler)

1990 D-10, §-4.03, §-4.08, §-4.14

Personally reprimanded a Lodge member for commission of certain criminal acts after setting aside Section 4.03, 4.08 and 4.14 in order to expedite the disposing of Masonic charges against the Brother after two years delay. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-18, §-4.03, §-4.08, §-4.14

Provisions of the law were set aside to allow a Brother to plead guilty to Masonic charges, waive Masonic trial and accept a sentence of indefinite suspension from membership in all Masonic Lodges and the rights and benefits of Masonry. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-20, §-4.03, §-4.08, §-4.14

Provisions of the law were set aside to allow a Brother to plead guilty, waive Masonic trial and accept a sentence of indefinite suspension for findings of un-Masonic conduct. (C. F. Cobbs)

Sec. 4.09. Summons, How Signed and Sealed. — A summons must be signed by the Secretary, with the Seal of the Lodge attached, and must set out the reasons therefor; but a summons by a trial commission signed by the chairman thereof, shall have the same authority and effect as if signed by the Secretary of a Lodge and containing a Seal.

Sec. 4.10. Summons, How and by Whom Served. — A summons shall be served by the Tiler or by some Mason designated for that purpose by the Trial Commission Chairman by delivering a copy thereof to the accused in person, or if he cannot be found, by leaving a copy thereof at his last known residence with some adult member of his family. The summons should be returned ten days before the trial date, with an endorsement of the time and manner of service, or with a statement of reason for failure to serve.

A summons issued by a Trial Commission Chairman to a witness and mailed to the last known address by registered mail, with return receipt shall be equivalent to personal service. Electronic notice to a witness, acknowledged by the recipient, shall constitute valid service. (2022)

DECISIONS

1893 D-4, §-4.10

That in Masonic trials summons should not be issued to non-Masons. (W. H. Pleasants)

Sec. 4.11. The Commission to be Admonished. — The commission, before entering into a trial, shall be admonished by the District Deputy Grand Master or by the Grand Master to conduct the trial to the end that Masonic justice prevail.

Sec. 4.12. Who is to be Admitted and Testify. — All trials shall be tiled and such trials may be attended by such persons as the commission may determine. No Master Mason testifying shall be sworn, but all other witnesses shall be sworn by the Trial Commission Chairman. Some witnesses may affirm instead of being sworn. All witnesses shall be examined separately and apart, unless the commission should otherwise order. (2022)

Sec. 4.13. Upon Confession of Guilt. — The accused, if present at the meeting of the trial commission and in the event of a guilty plea or a confession of guilt, and the prosecution have the right to present evidence on the issue of punishment. The confession shall be made a matter of record, and the commission shall immediately determine by majority vote the measure of punishment, all persons not members of the commission being excluded from the meeting when the question of punishment is considered. (2013)

Sec. 4.14. The Commission to Report. — After all evidence is given, and both parties have been afforded a reasonable opportunity to argue their cases, the commission shall retire and consult among themselves and pronounce such judgment as a majority of those present deem proper. The commission's chairman shall within fifteen days communicate its findings in writing to the Lodge where the charges originated, to the accused and the accuser and send an information copy to the Lodge's District Deputy Grand Master as well as to the District Deputy Grand Master in whose district the charges were tried if the Grand Master has designated a particular district. At the same time he shall forward to the Grand Secretary's office for permanent retention all trial records, papers, and evidence (reduced to writing, if proper to be written) concerning the case. (2022)

DECISIONS

1900 D-3, §-4.14

Under no circumstances should counsel for the accused (or the accuser) be permitted to vote or be present when the ballot is taken to determine the guilt or innocence of the accused. (G. W. Wright)

1968 D-7, §-2.59, §-4.14

The records of a trial commission and the minutes of a Lodge are confidential and copies cannot be furnished for use in a civil trial. (H. B. Green)

1976 D-10, §-4.14

Evidence developed at Masonic trials must be considered directly from electronic cassette tape recordings used at the trials and all trial records are to be stored in the office of Grand Secretary. (S. J. Levy)

1990 D-10, §-4.03, §-4.08, §-4.14

Personally reprimanded a Lodge member for commission of certain criminal acts after setting aside Section 4.03, 4.08 and 4.14 in order to expedite the disposing of Masonic charges against the Brother after two years delay. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-18, §-4.03, §-4.08, §-4.14

Provisions of the law were set aside to allow a Brother to plead guilty to Masonic charges, waive Masonic trial and accept a sentence of indefinite suspension from membership in all Masonic Lodges and the rights and benefits of Masonry. (C. F. Cobbs)

1990 D-20, §-4.03, §-4.08, §-4.14

Provisions of the law were set aside to allow a Brother to plead guilty, waive Masonic trial and accept a sentence of indefinite suspension for findings of un-Masonic conduct. (C. F. Cobbs)

Sec. 4.15. How an Appeal May be Taken. — After the Lodge receives the report from the trial commission, it shall notify the accused and accuser, and said judgment shall be recorded in the Lodge record at the expiration of sixty days after said report is made in the Lodge, provided no appeal has been taken, and said judgment shall be enforced unless the accused or accuser shall, as hereinafter provided appeal to the Grand Master. (2022)

Notice of an intended appeal shall be given to the Lodge in writing by the accused or accuser within sixty days after the communication of findings by the Commission's Chairman, and such notice shall be entered in the minute book at the meeting when the same is received. If such an appeal be taken, the notice of the appeal and the judgment of the trial commission shall be forwarded through the District Deputy Grand Master to the Grand Master for his personal consideration. The Grand Secretary shall also be notified of this action and upon receipt of such notification that an appeal has been taken, he shall forward a certified copy of all trial records and papers concerning the case, including the evidence reduced to writing as heretofore described, to the Grand Master who is authorized and empowered to make a final decision. If the Grand Master refers the appeal to the Committee on Appeals, action by the Committee shall be final when its report is made to and approved by the Grand Lodge. (2022)

The Grand Secretary shall promptly notify the Lodge and the accused of the action of the Grand Master, and the Secretary of the Lodge shall enter upon the Lodge minutes the notification of the Grand Secretary. (2022)

Such necessary expenses incident to the trial as may be approved by the Grand Master on the recommendation of the District Deputy Grand Master shall be paid out of the funds of the Grand Lodge. (1994)

DECISIONS

1923 D-26, §-4.15

Past Master who ignores charges against him and does not appear at his trial cannot demand list of witnesses and copies of their testimony from the Secretary. His recourse lies in an appeal within the proper time limit. (J. H. Price)

1980 D-5, §-4.15

Sixty days' waiting period for appeal expired. Brother, sentenced by trial commission to receive reprimand, desired to appeal. Evaluating all data, request to set aside sixty days' waiting period denied. Further litigation considered detrimental to the Brother and the Lodge. (M. L. Lacy, II)

Sec. 4.16. When Trial May be Reopened. — In any case where the summons is not actually served on the accused in person and he should be convicted, then, upon his showing to the District Deputy Grand Master, or to the Grand Master, within sixty days after learning of his conviction, that he did not receive such summons, or proper notice thereof, in time to be present at such trial, or was too ill to be present, such trial may be reopened and retried. (2022)

Sec. 4.17. If the Verdict be that of Reprimand. — If the verdict of a trial commission be that of reprimand, and if the accused, after being duly summoned, fails to present himself to receive the reprimand or make a satisfactory excuse for his non-attendance, he shall be then and there suspended and reported as such to the Grand Lodge. (2022)

The penalty of reprimand shall be administered by the Worshipful Master of the Lodge in which the charges originated, or by some Brother designated by him for that purpose. (2022)

DECISIONS

1932 D-14, §-4.17

Member who receives sentence of reprimand and fails to appear in Lodge to receive it, when summoned to do so, stands suspended. (A. M. Showalter)

1932 D-16, §-4.17

Member must be properly served with summons to attend Lodge to receive reprimand when such is decision of trial commission, and failure to appear when first summoned shall not be cause for invoking penalty of suspension if he appears later to answer a properly served summons. (A. M. Showalter)

Sec. 4.18. Status of the Accused. — The status of the accused, pending an appeal, shall be that of a Master Mason under charges, and he shall be reported as a member; but he shall not have the right to attend or visit any Lodge pending an appeal from suspension or expulsion. No member shall be imposed upon a Lodge without its consent, but when a member is suspended or

expelled, if such judgment be reversed upon appeal, such reversal shall have the effect of restoring the accused to his rights of membership in the Lodge.

DECISIONS

1906 D-15, §-4.18

A Brother acquitted in a Masonic trial has same status as before charges were preferred, and after reversal of verdict on appeal, he is restored to membership and good standing. (T. N. Davis)

1910 D-16, §-4.18

The status of the accused, pending an appeal from a verdict of acquittal, is that of one acquitted and he retains all his rights as officer and member. (J. W. Eggleston)

Sec. 4.19. Record of “Not Guilty.” — When it has been finally determined that a Brother was “not guilty” of the charge, a record of that fact shall be made by the Secretary of the Lodge on the margin of the minute book where the record of the accusation was entered.

If the accuser notes no appeal, the verdict of “not guilty” shall be considered as final and the accused shall not be subjected to further trial or review by any Mason or Masonic body. (1978)

PENALTIES

Sec. 4.20. Reprimand; How Administered. — The penalty of reprimand shall be administered in open Lodge at a stated communication. (2022)

Sec. 4.21. Suspension For Un-Masonic Conduct Must be for Indefinite Time. — Every suspension for un-Masonic conduct must be for an indefinite time. (2004)

Sec. 4.22. Effect of Suspensions and Expulsions For Un-Masonic Conduct. — All suspensions and expulsions involve absolute exclusion from all the rights and benefits of Masonry throughout the world, during the continuance of such suspension or expulsion. (2004)

Sec. 4.23. Suspensions and Expulsions For Un-Masonic Conduct Must be Immediately Communicated to Grand Secretary. — All suspensions and expulsions for un-Masonic conduct in any subordinate Lodge shall immediately be communicated to the Grand Secretary. (2004)

Sec. 4.24. To What Lodge Application for Reinstatement Should be Made. — The Lodge in which the punishment was first imposed, so long as it continues to be a working Lodge, shall have exclusive jurisdiction to entertain an application for reinstatement. In cases where the penalty is imposed by the Grand Master, the Grand Master shall at that time determine and so notify the respective Lodge(s) which Lodge shall have jurisdiction to entertain an application for reinstatement. (1991)

DECISIONS

1992 D-7, §-4.24

Applied Section 4.24 as amended in 1991 to jurisdiction relative to a member who was suspended in 1989. (W. F. Perdue)

Sec. 4.25. Applications for Reinstatement; When, How and After What Time Made, and When and How Frequently Can be Renewed. — All applications for reinstatement must be made at a stated communication of the Lodge. A Mason suspended or expelled for un-Masonic conduct shall make written application for reinstatement; Provided, that a Mason suspended for un-Masonic conduct shall not apply for reinstatement to the rights and benefits of Masonry until after the expiration of six months from the date of his suspension, and cannot apply again until after the expiration of six months; and a Mason expelled for un-Masonic conduct shall not apply for reinstatement until after the expiration of twelve months from the date of his expulsion, and cannot again apply until after the expiration of twelve months.

Individuals expelled for conviction of a felony shall not be eligible for reelection for membership in any Lodge so long as that conviction shall remain in effect. If the expelled Mason shall have received an absolute pardon or have been granted a Writ of Actual Innocence by the Supreme Court of Virginia with his civil rights restored, he shall be eligible to petition for reelection. (2022) [Refer: E-5-1989]

DECISIONS

1905 D-10, §-2.154, §-2.155, §-4.25

Brother suspended for non-payment of dues can apply for and be granted reinstatement and restoration at any stated communication of the Lodge which suspended him, the provisions of Sections 2.154 and 2.155 having been complied with. (T. N. Davis)

1926 D-8, §-4.25

Brother expelled nine years ago has no right to appeal. His recourse is to apply for reinstatement to the Lodge which expelled him. (C. H. Callahan)

1988 D-11, §-2.123, §-4.25

Former member of Lodge suspended for non-payment of dues, paid up his arrearage but was rejected for restoration to the rights and benefits of Masonry and membership. Appealed under Section 4.25 which was approved and he was declared a non-affiliate with the right to petition a Lodge for affiliation. (D. M. Robey)

Sec. 4.26. Proceedings Upon Such Application; Application to be Read and Noted on Record, to Lie Over, and Notice to be given. — The Worshipful Master shall direct such application to be read audibly and noted upon the record and shall order notice to be given to all the members of the Lodge that the application has been presented and laid over for consideration. (2022)

DECISIONS

1991 D-4, §-4.26

Error in entertaining application when received, rather than laid over, healed. (G. W. Farley)

Sec. 4.27. When Such Application May Be Considered; Every Member to Vote Unless Excused by Unanimous Vote. — At any stated communication thereafter, of which the members shall be duly notified, the application may be considered and every member present, unless excused by unanimous consent of the Lodge, shall be required to vote. (2004)

Sec. 4.28. Vote Necessary to Reinstate Expelled or Suspended Mason. — A unanimous vote shall be necessary to reinstate an expelled or suspended Mason to the rights and benefits of Masonry. If the applicant shall petition for restoration to membership as well as reinstatement, the Worshipful Master may order a single ballot thereon. (2022)

Sec. 4.29. Vote, in all Cases, to be by Ballot. — In all cases of suspension or expulsion, the vote on reinstatement or restoration must be taken by ballot.

DECISIONS

1986 D-4, §-4.29

In a protracted case of a request for restoration to rights and benefits dating back to 1952, a man's request was continually denied. A very thorough investigation of the matter was made including a personal visit with the man. Erroneous influence of personality and coercion were apparent in the investigation and the Lodge was instructed, via the District Deputy Grand Master, that the man's appeal had been heard by the Grand Lodge and that restoration to rights and benefits had been granted by the Grand Master. (J. B. Obenchain)

Sec. 4.30. A Mason Suspended or Expelled by a Trial Commission May Present Application for Reinstatement to District Deputy Grand Master. — A Mason suspended or expelled by a Trial Commission may present an application for reinstatement to the District Deputy Grand Master. (2022)

Sec. 4.31. To What Lodge District Deputy May Refer Such Application, and its Jurisdiction in the Premises. — The District Deputy Grand Master shall refer the application to the Lodge of which the applicant was a member when he was suspended or expelled, or if that Lodge be then suspended or extinct, to some working Lodge, and the Lodge to which it is so referred shall have full jurisdiction in the premises.

Sec. 4.32. If Application is Rejected, Applicant May Appeal to the Grand Lodge. — If an application for reinstatement to the rights and benefits of Masonry be rejected, the applicant shall have the right of appeal through the District Deputy Grand Master to the Grand Lodge.

Section 5.00

Legacy Membership in Perpetuity Plan

Sec. 5.01. Name of Plan. — The name of this plan shall be: “Legacy Membership in Perpetuity of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, A.F.& A.M.” (2023)

Sec. 5.02. Eligibility. — A Legacy Membership may be purchased for or by any member in good standing of a Lodge holden under the Grand Lodge of Virginia, subject to the rules. A Memorial Life Membership may also be purchased for a deceased Master Mason (who was in good standing at the time of his death) in any Lodge in Virginia upon acceptance of the Memorial Life Membership by vote of the Lodge. (2023)

Memorial Legacy Memberships may also be purchased for deceased Master Masons of any Lodge of any jurisdiction recognized by the Grand Lodge of Virginia; provided, that his good standing has been ascertained in advance through the office of the Grand Secretary, and upon acceptance of the membership by vote of the Lodge. (2023)

Sec. 5.03. Legacy Membership Fees. — The Legacy Membership Fee shall be equal to twenty-five (25) times the amount of the Annual Dues and assessments of his Lodge at the time of the purchase. Dues for the year in which he purchases the Legacy Membership must have been paid before the purchase, and are not included in the total calculation, except when the purchase is in memory of a deceased member. (2023)

Sec. 5.04. Method of Payment. — The Legacy Membership Fee from a member shall be paid to the Secretary of the Lodge, who will make a record thereof and forward the fee to the Grand Secretary. A completed application, in duplicate, on a form prescribed by the Grand Lodge, must be submitted with the fee. The fee is payable to Grand Lodge. (2023)

Sec. 5.05. Administration of the LMIP Fund. — The LMIP Fund shall be administered by the Grand Lodge of Virginia Finance Committee in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Methodical Digest, as a separate fund for the sole use of the LMIP program. (2023)

Sec. 5.06. Certificate of Legacy Membership in Perpetuity. — Upon receipt of the full purchase price, the Grand Secretary shall issue a Certificate of Membership to the Participant. Such Certificate shall be signed by the Grand Master, attested by the Grand Secretary under the Seal of the Grand Lodge. The Grand Secretary shall forward such Certificate to the District Deputy Grand Master for appropriate presentation. The Grand Lodge will issue Permanent Legacy Membership cards and pins to Legacy Members. (2023)

Sec. 5.07. Delivery of Payments by Grand Secretary. — Any payments into the LMIP Fund received by the Grand Secretary shall be promptly delivered to the LMIP Fund Manager. (2023)

Sec. 5.08. Payments by the LMIP Fund Manager. — On or before January 1 of each year after the year in which the Participant became a member of the LMIP Fund, the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge shall pay from the Fund the following for each qualified member of the Fund: (2023)

1. To the Grand Lodge of Virginia general fund, the amount of the existing Grand Lodge dues at the time the Participant became a member of the LMIP Fund. (2023)
2. To the Participant's Lodge, the amount of the existing Lodge dues at the time the Participant became a member of the LMIP Fund. (2023)

Payment to the Grand Lodge general fund of the amount of the Grand Lodge dues as set forth above shall relieve the Participant and his Lodge of the liability for the dues payment which would otherwise be required for such Participant. Payment to the Participant's Lodge of the amount of dues as above set forth, shall relieve the Participant of the liability for the dues payment which would otherwise be required for such Participant.

Sec. 5.09. Dues Increases or Decreases. — Future increases or decreases in the Participant's Lodge dues shall have no effect upon the payments made or to be made by a Participant or the LMIP Fund Manager of the Grand Lodge, unless any deferred payments of the purchase price are not made as required. (2023)

Sec. 5.10. Special Assessments. — A participant shall not be liable for special assessments. (1996)

Sec. 5.11. Death of a Participant. — Upon the death of a Participant, the Fund Manager shall continue to make the payments set forth in this LMIP Fund to the Grand Lodge general fund and to the Participant's Lodge. (2023)

Sec. 5.12. Refunds and Disciplinary Action. — No refund shall be made from the LMIP Fund to any Participant, any other person or any Lodge for any reason. No Participant shall be exempt from disciplinary action as provided by Section 4.00 of the Virginia Methodical Digest. In the event of the suspension or expulsion of a Participant, the LMIP Fund Manager shall continue to pay to the Grand Lodge general fund and to the Participant's former Lodge any amounts which would have been paid had the Participant not been suspended or expelled. A Legacy Member expelled, subsequently restored and again elected to membership in the same Lodge is also restored to all the rights pertaining to his Legacy Membership. (2023)

Sec. 5.13. Dues Card. — The Secretary of a Participant's Lodge shall cause to be issued a dues card to each Participant in good standing, with the designation Legacy Membership in Perpetuity (LMIP) indicated thereon. (2023)

Sec. 5.14. Dual Membership. — A Brother desiring to purchase Legacy Membership and who holds plural membership within this Grand Jurisdiction may purchase a Legacy Membership in any or all Lodges in which he holds membership. A Legacy Membership in one Lodge, however, shall not excuse the member from dues and assessments payments in Lodges in which he holds dual or plural membership. (2023)

Sec. 5.15. Transfer. — Any transfer of a Legacy Member to another Lodge within the Commonwealth of Virginia shall have his Legacy Membership account transferred to his new Lodge, with the new Lodge accepting the Legacy Membership as previously paid. A Legacy Membership purchased with Lodge funds cannot be transferred without approval by vote of the Lodge and the agreement of all other parties involved. [Ref: Sec. 2.121] If a Lodge consolidates, surrenders its Charter, or has its Charter arrested, the funds credited to this Lodge in the Legacy Membership Fund shall follow the member in accordance with the relevant section of the Methodical Digest dealing with consolidation, surrenders and arrests of Charters, for whatever reason, or has its Charter arrested, and does not consolidate shall revert to the Grand Lodge. (2023)

Sec. 5.16. Membership in a Non-Virginia Lodge. — If a Participant holds or acquires membership in a non-Virginia Lodge or Lodges, or transfers his membership to a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction, no payments shall be made by the LMIP Fund Manager to such non-Virginia Lodge. The LMIP Fund Manager shall continue payments to the Grand Lodge general fund and the Virginia Lodge in which he was originally a member, as herein provided. (2023)

Sec. 5.17. Fund Manager to Account. — The Committee on Finance and Grand Secretary shall hold, administer, and distribute assets of the LMIP Fund as one Perpetual Membership fund. However, he shall maintain adequate records of the payments for each Participant in the LMIP Fund. The LMIP Fund Manager shall pay the reasonable costs of the administration of the fund and the LMIP Fund Manager shall observe standard accounting practices in the maintenance of the records of the LMIP Fund. At the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, the LMIP Fund Manager shall submit a written report of their administration of the LMIP Fund. At the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, the LMIP Fund Manager shall also make any recommendations to the Grand Lodge as they may consider necessary and proper for the continued proper administration of the LMIP Fund. (2023)

Sec. 5.18. Legacy Membership in Perpetuity Committee. — The Grand Lodge shall establish a Legacy Membership in Perpetuity Committee as a Standing Committee which shall be appointed by the Grand Master. Said Committee shall consist of nine (9) members. It shall be the duty of the Committee to evaluate procedures and implement changes in procedures as may be necessary for the efficient operation of the program. The Grand Master shall annually appoint one member as Chairman. All members shall serve at the will and pleasure of the Grand Master. The Committee shall annually meet prior to the time of Grand Lodge and shall report to the Grand Lodge each year. (2023)

Sec. 5.19. Modification of Rules. — These rules may be modified or amended at any time by the Fund Manager, subject to ratification by the Grand Lodge and, provided that no changes may affect any Legacy Membership in Perpetuity in effect at the time of such change. (2023)

Sec. 5.20. Effective Date. — This legislation is effective at the close of the 1992 Grand Lodge Session. (2023)

Sec. 5.21. Charter Legacy Member. — Any Brother applying for Legacy Membership before the end of 1992 will have his Legacy Membership card stamped as a Charter Legacy Member. The application and fees for a Charter Legacy Membership must be post-marked no later than December 28, 1992. Legacy Membership will always be available. (2023)

— 0 —

PREVIOUS ENACTMENTS

Previous Enactments, etc., Repealed. — All previous enactments of the Grand Lodge of a general nature, not herein contained and in conflict herewith, are hereby repealed.

Grand Masters' Decisions

CONCERNING

Cornerstone Ceremonies

Funerals

Masonic Home

Veterans' Emblems

Cornerstone Ceremonies

DECISIONS

1895 D-5, §-2.16

That an electric powerhouse erected by a corporation does not, nor does a county prison, belong to that class of public buildings, the cornerstones which Masonic Lodges have been accustomed to lay. (J. P. Fitzgerald)

1899 D-2, §-2.13, §-2.16

1912 D-5, §-2.16

1920 D-3, §-2.13

A cornerstone cannot be laid on Sunday. No Masonic work can be done on Sunday and the laying of a cornerstone is actual work. (R. T. W. Duke, W. B. McChesney and S. Cutchins)

1905 D-37, §-2.13, §-2.16

1961 D-16, §-2.13, §-2.16

It is out of order to lay the cornerstone of a completed building as the ceremony does not conform to the conditions. (T. N. Davis and C. M. Flintoff)

1905 D-38, §-2.30

A Lodge working under dispensation is not empowered to lay cornerstones. (T. N. Davis)

1905 D-50, §-2.16

Lodges cannot lay cornerstones without a dispensation from the Grand Master. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-19, §-2.15

In the erection of a building the laying of the cornerstone with ceremony is a matter of taste and sentiment. There is no landmark or law governing this. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-28, §-2.16

The ceremony prescribed by the Grand Lodge for laying cornerstones is official and when permission is given a Lodge to lay a cornerstone the ceremony must be conformed to and complied with. (T. N. Davis)

1920 D-4, §-2.13

Lodge should not lay a cornerstone for a silk mill. (S. Cutchins)

Funerals

DECISIONS

1905 D-40, §-2.48

The Worshipful Master, if he deems it best, can omit the reading of the burial service over the grave of a deceased Brother. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-2, §-2.13

The Masonic Fraternity cannot exclude other orders from the procession accompanying the remains of a deceased Brother to place of interment. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-3, §-2.13

The selection of pall and flower bearers is the right of the family of the deceased. If they desire, or it is requested by a non-Masonic organization that pall and flower bearers be equally distributed, there can be no objection. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-4, §-2.13

The Masonic Fraternity by reason of its antiquity and tradition is entitled to the first place in funeral processions. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-5, §-2.13

The first place in the procession is next to the hearse, or if pall and flower bearers immediately precede the hearse, the Masonic body immediately precedes the aforesaid attendants. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-6, §-2.13

Arriving at the grave the procession halted and the two files faced inwardly, the order reversed so as to enable the Masons to reach the grave and perform their ceremony first. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-7, §-2.13

Any religious service at the grave should precede the Masonic ceremony unless otherwise agreed. (T. N. Davis)

1906 D-8, §-2.13

It would be improper and disrespectful to the Masons, after they have performed their ceremony, not to await the conclusion of the ceremonies of other organizations. (T. N. Davis)

1909 D-26, §-2.13

The proper place for a Lodge, when one or more orders are in a funeral procession is the post of honor, usually immediately in front of the hearse. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-27, §-2.13

The Lodge should conduct its funeral service either first or last, at the option of the Master, but it must be one or the other. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-29, §-2.13

The Lodge should be guided by local custom and proper courtesy to the family and friends. In leaving the graveside of a deceased Brother, whose rites have been performed. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-30, §-2.13

It is not the province of Masons to dictate the place of any other organization in funeral processions. On account of its dignity and antiquity, the Lodge must have the post of honor and have charge of the remains. (J. W. Eggleston)

1909 D-31, §-2.13

It is not for Masons to dictate a Marshal for the whole funeral procession. They may, by agreement, settle the arrangements with others. The Lodge must have a Marshal for such occasions. (J. W. Eggleston)

1917 D-12, §-2.13, §-2.111

- (a) E.A. Brother has no right to a Masonic burial.
- (b) E.A. Brother cannot attend burial of a Brother as member of the Lodge.
- (c) E.A. Brother has no right to wear Masonic pin. It is the emblem of a Master Mason. (J. A. Cabell)

1918 D-2, §-2.13

Mason holding diploma from United Grand Lodge of England is entitled to Masonic funeral rites if the Lodge knows the deceased to have been in good standing. (E. L. Cunningham)

1929 D-1, §-2.13

It is for family of deceased Brother to select pall bearers; whether any or all of them are Masons has no bearing on burial by Masonic Lodge. (W. L. Davis)

1931 D-4, §-2.13

It is not necessary that the pall bearers at a Masonic funeral be Masons. (F. T. McFaden)

1932 D-1, §-2.13, §-2.123

Member suspended n.p.d. is not entitled to Masonic funeral, this being one of the rights and benefits of Masonry. (A. M. Showalter)

1932 D-22, §-2.13

Lodge was correct in conducting the funeral for Brother when requested by family even if documentary proof was not available, but when evidence indicated him to be in good standing. (A. M. Showalter)

1958 D-14, §-2.13

Only Master Masons are entitled to a Masonic burial service. (A. B. Gay)

1964 D-10, §-2.154

Suspended Mason who pays arrearages and dies before the Lodge reinstates him is not entitled to Masonic funeral. The Lodge is not obligated to return his payment as this was tendered to settle existing debt. (J. P. Stokes)

1968 D-21, §-2.13

It is proper to conduct a Masonic funeral for a Brother whose body has been cremated and whose ashes are to be deposited. (See Va. 1945, p. 21 for funeral of Mt. Wor. John T. Cochran.) (H. B. Green)

1977 D-8, §-2.13

Masonic burial denied Master Mason who shot and killed wife and himself. Act of deceased voided his right to Masonic burial. (L. D. Delano)

2001 D-7, §-2.13, §-2.14, §-2.16

Declared the apron used in the Masonic funeral service, both graveside and evening memorial, should be a "white leather or candidate apron," not a cloth apron. (J. D. Cole)

Masonic Home

DECISIONS

1961 D-28, Masonic Home

The widow of a Master Mason who was not in good standing at the time of his death is not eligible to be admitted to the Masonic Home. (C. M. Flintoff)

1968 D-20, Masonic Home

In accordance with ruling approved at the 189th Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge, I authorized the Board of Governors of the Masonic Home to transfer the balance of \$22,000 left from the previous years operations to a reserve account, thereby activating this reserve fund. (H. B. Green)

Veterans' Emblems

DECISIONS

1950 D-1, Veterans' Emblems

Qualification for twenty-five year emblem requires member to have been in good standing for an aggregate time of twenty-five years in a regular Lodge. Past Grand Masters recommended and Grand Lodge approved the award of fifty year emblems only to those who have fifty years aggregate membership in a regular Lodge. (A. D. Smith, Jr.)

1956 D-6, Veterans' Emblems

Fifty Year Veterans' Emblems may not be presented until the Brother has an aggregate membership of fifty years in good standing. Payments of dues for a period of suspension does not constitute membership for this purpose. (W. J. McMahon)

1957 D-6, Veterans' Emblems

Time cannot be waived for the presentation of Fifty Year Veterans' Emblems. (W. V. Fentress)

1960 D-18, Veterans' Emblems

A Brother who became a M.M. in West Virginia and was suspended there n.p.d. and who affiliated with a Virginia Lodge without revealing his suspension is not entitled to a Veterans' Emblem. (S. D. Forbes)

1964 D-7, Veterans' Emblem

Veterans' Emblems for fifty years service may be presented in the month in which the recipient was raised fifty years before, without regard for the day of the month. (J. P. Stokes)

1968 D-16, Veterans' Emblems

Request to allow Lodge to present Veterans' Emblem before the attainment of fifty years was denied. Reaffirm 1959, D-17. (H. B. Green)

1968 D-26, Veterans' Emblems

Veterans' Emblem may not be presented in advance to a Brother who might not survive until his anniversary date. (H. B. Green)

1969 Opinion No. 9, §-2.129

Brother who receives a fifty year Veterans' Emblem does not automatically become an honorary member of that or any other Lodge. Honorary membership requires unanimous ballot and an aggregate of twenty-five years good standing in a Virginia Lodge is one of the requirements for Brethren who are not Past Masters. (J. A. White)

1974 D-1, Veterans' Emblems

Authorized presentation of Fifty Year Veterans' Emblem and Gold Card when proven facts shown misinformation caused membership lapse preventing eligibility. All dues to Grand Lodge for period of lapse were paid. (W. C. Vaughan)

1974 D-2, Veterans' Emblems

When research of all existing records showed "Administrative Oversight" was cause of error preventing eligibility for Fifty Year Veterans' Emblem, error was healed. (W. C. Vaughan)

1980 D-1, Veterans' Emblems

Lodge requested permission to honor ten Brethren on one evening with presentation of the Sixty Years' Emblems. Dates on which emblems were due for presentation covered periods beginning in March and ending in September of the same year. Request for presentation of all emblems on one evening was denied in compliance with Decision 7 (1964) and Decision 26 (1968). (M. L. Lacy, II)

1990 D-16, Veteran's Emblems

The records of the Grand Lodge of Virginia must govern in the event of a dispute concerning a Brother's eligibility for a 50 year pin or other long service award. (confirms D-6, 1956) (C. F. Cobbs)

Edicts

An Edict

E-1-1960

WHEREAS, it has been reported that some confusion exists as to the proper method of conducting the examination of Brethren as required by Section 2.110 of the Methodical Digest for advancement, and in qualifying for the Grand Lodge diploma as specified in Paragraph 2 of Section 2.141, and,

WHEREAS, Section 1.75(u) of the Methodical Digest endows the Grand Lodge Committee on Work with the functions of Custodians of the Work, thereby making the said Committee responsible for the ritual, including the catechism of the degrees, and the rendition thereof by our Brethren in Virginia Lodge or in classes of instruction held by or under the auspices of any Virginia Lodge or group of Lodges, and,

WHEREAS, the Committee on Work has taught and continues to teach that the obligation of each degree should be recited in full by each candidate, when more than one Brother is being examined, as a prerequisite for advancement or to qualify to receive the diploma herein referred to;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Charles Malone Flintoff, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, do by this Edict, direct that each Brother examined in the catechism of any of the degrees, either for advancement or for the Grand Lodge diploma, shall recite the entire obligation of each of the degrees on which he is being examined. Such recitation shall be in open Lodge and to the entire satisfaction of the members of such Lodge, as expressed by their ballot thereon.

Nothing herein contained shall be deemed as forbidding the examination of several Brethren simultaneously in the catechisms, provided the terms of this Edict shall be fully enforced at such examination, and no Brother shall be declared proficient unless he shall have recited the entire obligation of the degree on which he is being examined.

This Edict shall be read in all subordinate Lodges at the next stated communication after its receipt and a record of such reading shall be made a part of the minutes of that communication.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Virginia this tenth day of June, A.L. 5960, A.D. 1960.



CHARLES M. FLINTOFF
Grand Master

Attest:
Archer B. Gay
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-1-1966

I, Walter Albert Porter, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, do by this Edict, direct that no Lodge holden under our Grand Lodge shall use any Federal Funds for the construction, maintenance or operation of any building owned by it.

I do direct that this Edict be read at the next stated communication of every Virginia Lodge, and recorded in the minutes thereof.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge in the City of Richmond, this 13th day of January A.L. 5966, A.D. 1966, and in the 188th year of our Grand Lodge.



WALTER A PORTER
Grand Master

Attest:
Archer B. Gay
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-1-1976

WHEREAS, the Commission on Information at the 1973 Conference of Grand Masters of North America reported that the Universal League of Free and Accepted Masons was indiscriminate in its selection of members, and,

WHEREAS, the 1973 Conference of Grand Masters further reported that the Universal League accepted members holden to Grand Lodges which were not recognized by any of the Grand Lodges accredited to the Conference, and,

WHEREAS, Edicts and Resolutions against membership in the aforesaid organization have been issued by some thirty Sister Grand Lodges, and

WHEREAS, the 1975 Proceedings of the Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia, records the Grand Master's criteria pertaining to the Universal League of Free and Accepted Masons should Virginia Freemasons be solicited by said organization,

NOW THEREFORE, I, L. Douglas Delano, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, do by this Edict declare the Universal League of Free and Accepted Masons is clandestine and irregular, and,

BE IT ALSO KNOWN, by order of this Edict that membership in that body is forbidden, and any Master Mason having residency in the Commonwealth of Virginia is forbidden to hold Masonic correspondence or fellowship with the Universal League of Free and Accepted Masons or any of its membership.

FURTHERMORE, any invitation or contact by the irregular organization and subject of this Edict are to be promptly reported to the Grand Secretary.

This Edict shall be read in its entirety at the next stated communication of every subordinate Lodge in Virginia and duly recorded in the Minutes thereof.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge this seventh day of June, A.L. 5976, A.D. 1976, and in the one hundred ninety-eighth year of our Grand Lodge.



L. DOUGLAS DELANO
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-2-1976

WHEREAS, the final tribute of deceased Master Masons in good standing inculcated in the precepts of universal Freemasonry as the spirit of brotherly love is exemplified in the Grand Jurisdiction of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia in both the graveside rite and the evening memorial service, and,

WHEREAS, said tribute is conducted only upon the request of the family, or authorized representative, of the deceased Master Mason in good standing, and,

WHEREAS, the validity of the deceased Master Mason's standing constitutes authorization for the conduct of the final tribute according to the funeral rites approved in this Grand Jurisdiction.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, L. Douglas Delano, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, do by this Edict, direct that the standing of deceased Master Masons whose membership is carried on the rolls of subordinate Lodges holden under the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia be verified by the deceased member's standing according to the Worshipful Master or Secretary of his Lodge, or directly from the master file in the Office of Grand Secretary, and,

WHEREAS, consistency is consonant with the spirit of cooperation practiced by Sister Jurisdictions, I, by this Edict, do further direct that the validity of the standing of the deceased Brother sojourning in the Jurisdiction of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia be requested through the Office of the Grand Secretary of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia, and that the presence of the deceased sojourning Brother's current dues card does not constitute entitlement to requested rite until such standing of the deceased Brother is validated by the Office of Grand Secretary, Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia, and,

Be it further directed that minutes of the emergent communication conducted as a courtesy for a Sister Jurisdiction, accompanied by all attendant financial obligations borne by the Virginia subordinate Lodge, i.e. requested floral tribute and newspaper obituary notice, be forwarded to the Office of Grand Secretary of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia.

This Edict shall be read in all subordinate Lodges at the next stated communication after its receipt and a record of such reading shall be made a part of the minutes of that communication.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia this first day of November, A.L. 5976, A.D. 1976.



L. DOUGLAS DELANO
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-1-1979

WHEREAS, the Constitution of Masonry as adopted by the Grand Lodge, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia, in the year 1791 states in Chapter I, Section I, the following concerning God and Religion:

“Whosoever from love of knowledge, interest or curiosity, desires to be a Mason, is to know that as his foundation and great cornerstone, he is to believe firmly in the Eternal God, and to pay that worship which is due to Him as the great Architect and Governor of the Universe,” and

WHEREAS, the PROCEEDINGS OF THE GRAND LODGE OF VIRGINIA, 1975, p. 159 sets forth Monotheism as the fundamental belief that must be met by Grand Lodges seeking recognition and an exchange of representatives, and

WHEREAS, official information received from the Grand Lodge of Belgium announces that the Grand Master of Masons of that Grand Jurisdiction has stated that a belief in God was not a condition of membership in the Grand Lodge of Belgium and certainly would not be a requirement by him,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MATTHEW LYLE LACY, II, Grand Master of Masons in the Commonwealth of Virginia and obligated to conform to and abide by the ancient landmarks, the customs, and uses of Masons, and in evaluation of the announcement by the Grand Master of Masons in Belgium, do by this Edict withdraw Fraternal Recognition from the Grand Lodge of Belgium and hereby recall Grand Representatives between the Grand Lodge of Virginia and the Grand Lodge of Belgium, for reasons aforesaid.

Any Brother holding dual membership in a Lodge holden under the Grand Lodge of Virginia and a Lodge holden under the Grand Lodge of Belgium shall have ninety days from the date of this Edict to decide in which Grand Lodge he shall place his allegiance.

This Edict shall be read in all subordinate Lodges at the next stated communication after its receipt and a record of such reading shall be made a part of the minutes of that communication.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Virginia this thirtieth day of May, A.L. 5979, A.D. 1979.



MATTHEW LYLE LACY, II
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-1-1983

WHEREAS numerous inquiries are being made concerning the serving of alcoholic beverages in our Masonic temples, and

WHEREAS it has been for many years the consensus of opinion among our membership that there was in existence a law prohibiting the use of alcoholic beverages in our Masonic temples, and

WHEREAS the opinion exists that this practice is merely a tradition which has prevailed down through the years,

NOW, therefore, I, William Munford Johnson, as Grand Master of Masons in the Commonwealth of Virginia do by this edict declare it illegal and an un-Masonic act for any Mason to bring into or serve alcoholic beverages in any building or facility being used as a Masonic Lodge in this Commonwealth.

I further direct that this edict be read by the Secretary of the subordinate Lodge at the next stated communication after receipt of same and a record of its reading be made a part of the minutes of said communication.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia this fifth day of December, A. L. 5983, A. D. 1983 and the 206th year of our Grand Lodge.



WILLIAM M. JOHNSON
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

1999 D-5, E-1-1983, E-1-1989

Allowed the moderate or temperate use of alcohol in Lodge fellowship halls when rented for wedding receptions or similar events, with proper supervision. (G. H. Chapin)

This edict is included for historic significance. Its intent is now incorporated in Section 3.08.

December 13, 1983

TO: Grand Lodge Officers
Past Grand Masters
District Deputy Grand Masters
Masters and Wardens of all Subordinate Lodges

Dear Brethren:

The Most Worshipful Grand Master has directed that clarification of his Edict of December 5th, 1983 be stated.

The Edict declares that it is illegal for any Mason to bring into or serve alcoholic beverages in any building or facility being used as a Masonic Lodge in this Commonwealth. The Edict applies ONLY to the use of alcoholic beverages for social functions held in a Masonic Lodge.

Those ceremonies which have used wine in their ritual from time immemorial (i.e., cornerstone ceremonies, dedication ceremonies, and rituals of appendant bodies using Masonic Temples, etc.) will remain unaffected by the Edict of December 5th, 1983. When the ritual specifies the use of wine, its use is permitted.

Special permission or dispensation to comply with the ritual in using wine is not required.

Fraternally,
JOHN P. STOKES,
Grand Secretary

JPS:gk

(Ref: E-1-1983)

An Edict

E-1-1987

The Jewel signifying the Office of District Deputy Grand Master is to be worn **ONLY** by the District Deputy Grand Master currently occupying that office only and is to be worn on the jewel hanger furnished by the Grand Lodge.

District Deputy Grand Masters have been duly installed and invested with these words “I now invest you with the Jewel of your office, **PROPER TO BE WORN BY YOU** on all Masonic occasions during your **TENURE IN OFFICE**. ”

While Past District Deputy Grand Masters deserve recognition for their service to our Brethren, by virtue of this Edict, I declare it illegal for Past District Deputy Grand Masters to wear a Jewel identical in size and general appearance to the Jewel representing the office of District Deputy Grand Master.

This Edict shall be read in all subordinate Lodges at the next stated communication after its receipt and a record of such reading shall be made a part of the minutes of that communication.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Virginia this nineteenth day of March, A.L. 5987, A.D. 1987.



DONALD M. ROBEY
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-1-1989

WHEREAS, on December 5, A. L. 5983, A. D. 1983, William Munford Johnson, then Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, issued his Edict declaring it illegal and un-Masonic for any Mason to bring or serve alcoholic beverages in any building or facility being used as a Masonic Lodge in this Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, on December 13, A. L. 5983, A. D. 1983, said Edict was clarified by a ruling of the aforesaid Grand Master of Masons in Virginia that said Edict applied only to the use of alcoholic beverages for social functions held in a Masonic Lodge and did not apply to the use of wine for ritualistic ceremonies; and

WHEREAS, it appears even now that confusion exists as to the rules applying to the use of alcohol on Masonic premises, including sessions of the Grand Lodge of Virginia;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Cabell Flournoy Cobbs, Grand Master of Masons in the Commonwealth of Virginia, do by this Edict reaffirm and clarify the aforesaid Edict of William Munford Johnson, issued December 5, A. L. 5983, A. D. 1983, in the following terms:

1. No sojourning Mason or Mason belonging to a Lodge holden under the Grand Lodge of Virginia shall bring into or serve alcoholic beverages for social purposes in any building or facility being used as a Masonic Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction, nor shall such beverages be served or offered for social purposes at the expense or behest of the Grand Lodge of Virginia during any of its sessions, annual or otherwise.

2. This Edict shall not apply to nor prohibit the introduction of wine on Masonic premises or during the sessions of the Grand Lodge of Virginia for ritual purposes, as provided in the ritual and ceremonies of any Masonic or appendant body, as for example, in the cornerstone and dedication ceremonies, table Lodges, and particular ceremonies of the Knights Templar.

3. This edict further does not prohibit the private, temperate social use of alcohol by Masons present at sessions of the Grand Lodge of Virginia.

This Edict is to be read by the Secretary of every subordinate Lodge at the stated communication next held after its receipt, a record of the reading being made in the minutes, and a copy posted in a conspicuous place in the Lodge's lobby or anteroom.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this fifteenth day of February, A. L. 5989, A. D. 1989 and in the 212th year of our Grand Lodge.



CABELL F. COBBS
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

1999 D-5, E-1-1983, E-1-1989

Allowed the moderate or temperate use of alcohol in Lodge fellowship halls when rented for wedding receptions or similar events, with proper supervision. (G. H. Chapin)

This edict is included for historic significance. Its intent is now incorporated in Section 3.08.

An Edict

E-2-1989

WHEREAS, over the years an unjustified pall of secrecy, based on ignorance and apathy, has enveloped this fraternity and led our Brethren to erroneous conclusions with regard to what may be said to prospective candidates about the Craft and membership therein; and

WHEREAS, our ancient Masonic law requires only that a candidate come to us of his own free will and accord, there being no specific prohibition of solicitation in this Grand Jurisdiction, other than to require him to state that he is unbiased by friends and that his petition is not the result of importunity but motivated by his favorable impression of the institution; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary for information to be provided to a prospective candidate in order for him to conceive any impression of our Craft; and

WHEREAS, Masonic authority defines solicitation as "persuasion or importunity" and such definitions are in direct conflict with Masonry's concept of free will and accord; and

WHEREAS, some Grand Jurisdictions having found it necessary to issue various definitions and similar rules for the guidance of the Brethren in disseminating Masonic information to prospective candidates and others, positive direction appears to be necessary in this area.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Cabell Flournoy Cobbs, Grand Master of Masons in the Commonwealth of Virginia, do by this Edict declare that it is permissible to make a carefully worded and neutral approach to a prospective candidate, known to meet the Craft's requirements of character and reputation and otherwise to be qualified for initiation, in which the nature of our institution and its requirements for membership may be explained. It is further permissible to make one further approach to the candidate on a later occasion to determine whether or not he is interested in petitioning a Lodge for membership. Explanations will be offered through use of the Grand Lodge of Virginia pamphlet entitled "for your information."

CARE will be taken neither to persuade or importune any person to petition the Craft, but the prospective candidate may be invited to Friendship Nights or other open meetings held by a Lodge. In the event a petition is requested, it will be furnished with the clear explanation that all petitions must be endorsed by two Master Masons in good standing and that the petition must be unanimously approved by the Lodge to which it is directed.

This Edict will be read in all subordinate Lodges at the stated communication next after its receipt, a record of the reading being made in the minutes, and a copy thereof conspicuously posted in the Lodge's lobby or anteroom.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this fifteenth day of February, A. L. 5989, A. D. 1989 and in the 212th year of our Grand Lodge.



CABELL F. COBBS
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-4-1989

WHEREAS, Sections 2.03 and 2.07, METHODICAL DIGEST, provide that every Lodge shall hold its sessions in the Master Mason's Degree (except for work and instruction in the First and Second Degrees), and that every Lodge shall practice the Ancient York Ritual as taught by the Grand Lodge Committee on Work, to include the ceremonies of dispensing with the Master Mason's Lodge for the purpose of opening a Lodge of inferior degree for work and instruction, thereafter resuming labor in the Master Mason's Lodge and closing as a part of the Ancient York Ritual; and

WHEREAS; it is clear from our history and our ritual that the ceremonies of dispensing with a Master Mason's Lodge, opening a Lodge of inferior degree for work and instruction, and thereafter resuming labor were intended to be a part of the Ancient York Ritual for use only on those occasions when a Master Mason's Lodge was open for other purposes and it was desired to "call off and call on" for work and instruction in an inferior degree; and

WHEREAS; it was not a part of the Ancient York Ritual, nor was it ever intended that a Master Mason's Lodge be opened on a called communication solely for the purpose of dispensing with it in order to open a Lodge of inferior degree for work and instruction, thereafter resuming labor in the Master Mason's Lodge for the purpose of closing; and

WHEREAS, such is an unwarranted and unnecessary innovation in our ritual;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Cabell Flournoy Cobbs, Grand Master of Masons in the Commonwealth of Virginia, do by this Edict forbid the use and practice of opening a Master Mason's Lodge, dispensing with the same for the purpose of work and instruction in an inferior degree, and thereafter resuming labor and closing in the Master Mason's Lodge on all occasions other than stated communications of said Lodge. When degree work is to be performed on called occasions, a Lodge will be directly opened in the degree in which work and instruction is to be had, and closed when such work is completed. On such occasions, the ritual to be utilized will be that used in all ages past, as taught by our Committee on Work. Minutes of each such communication will be kept and approved as for other called communications.

I further direct that this Edict be read by the Secretary of every subordinate Lodge at the stated communication next held after its receipt; its reading be made a part of the minutes, and a copy thereof be posted conspicuously in the Lodge's lobby or anteroom.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this fifteenth day of February, A. L. 5989, A. D. 1989 and in the 212th year of our Grand Lodge.



CABELL F. COBBS
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-5-1989

WHEREAS, our Craft has, from time when the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, required that our membership be and remain men of good character and good reputation; and

WHEREAS, some of our Brethren from time to time have committed serious offenses; have been tried by the civil magistrates, either State or Federal, and convicted of felonies, that is to say, a crime punished by confinement in the penitentiary for a period of more than one year, whether imposed or not; and

WHEREAS, conviction of a member of the Craft of a felony, regardless of the sentence imposed, most seriously reflects upon the Craft and renders him unfit to continue as a Freemason; and

WHEREAS, once such conviction is had and finalized in a State or Federal Court, there is really no issue left to be heard by a Masonic Trial Commission, the individual's guilt being established by our constitutional system of justice;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Cabell Flournoy Cobbs, Grand Master of Masons in the Commonwealth of Virginia, do by this Edict declare and require that it is the duty of every Mason, whether sojourning in this jurisdiction or a member of a Lodge holden under this Grand Lodge, particularly that of the Master or Secretary of such a Lodge, on receiving such information regarding the conviction of any Lodge member or sojourning Mason of a felony by any State or Federal Court wheresoever situated, immediately to forward such information to the Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, together with, if possible, a certified copy of the Court order imposing or recording such conviction.

On being satisfied of the validity of a conviction of felony and whether or not such sentence was in fact imposed, the Grand Master shall forward a copy of the conviction order in such case to the Brother concerned and allow him a period of forty (40) days in which to show cause why he should not be expelled from the Craft. In the event he does not show such cause to the satisfaction of the Grand Master, he shall be forthwith expelled from the Craft, and his Lodge, or in the case of a sojourning Mason, his Grand Lodge duly informed.

It is my further edict that individuals expelled hereunder for conviction of a felony shall not be eligible for re-election to membership in any Lodge so long as the conviction shall remain in effect.

The Grand Master shall report all cases of action taken hereunder to the Grand Lodge during its Annual Session, but the action of the Grand Master in expelling a felon hereunder is not appealable to the Grand Lodge.

Any provisions of Section 4.00, et seq., of the METHODICAL DIGEST which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Edict are hereby appropriately amended or set aside.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this fifteenth day of February, A. L. 5989, A. D. 1989 and in the 212th year of our Grand Lodge.



CABELL F. COBBS
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-6-1989

WHEREAS, it is the duty of every Mason to stretch forth his hand to sustain a falling Brother; and

WHEREAS, Executive Orders have heretofore routinely required that personal contact be made with a Brother before he is cited for non-payment of dues or granted a demit in order to see if assistance is needed and to encourage his retention of membership, and

WHEREAS, it is clearly our obligation to inquire thusly into the circumstances and affairs of our defaulting Brethren;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Cabell Flournoy Cobbs, Grand Master of Masons in the Commonwealth of Virginia, do by this Edict declare as follows:

1. Prior to the citation of any Brother for non-payment of dues or the grant to him of a demit, the Worshipful Master of his Lodge or his duly designated representative, shall make personal contact with the Brother to determine if assistance is needed and to encourage him to retain his membership. Personal contact shall consist of a personal visit, telephone call, or personal letter to the demitting or delinquent Brother. If contact proves impossible, the Lodge may take such action as it deems appropriate.

2. This Edict shall be read at the next stated communication following its receipt and shall be similarly brought to the attention of the Brethren at any communication at which the Worshipful Master orders any Brother cited or in which any demit is presented for action.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this fifteenth day of February, A. L. 5989, A. D. 1989 and in the 212th year of our Grand Lodge.



CABELL F. COBBS
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-7-1989

WHEREAS, by Executive Order No. 3, 1987, then Grand Master Donald Maynard Robey, for reasons therein cited, authorized Worshipful Masters to dispense with the reading of the minutes at the close of called communications; and

WHEREAS, the aforesaid Grand Master Robey, in his address to the Grand Lodge of Virginia on February 8, 1988, recommended amendment of Section 2.59 of the Methodical Digest to permit the Worshipful Master to dispense with the reading of the minutes at the called communications in accordance with the aforesaid Executive Order No. 3; and

WHEREAS, the Report of the Committee of Past Grand Masters at that Grand Annual Communication approved the recommendation with the deletion of certain language, which unfortunately rendered its report and the Delegates' subsequent approval of the Committee's action ambiguous; and

WHEREAS, it appears that the Delegates to the 1988 Grand Lodge session intended to amend Section 2.59 of the Methodical Digest as recommended by Most Worshipful Brother Robey and the Committee of Past Grand Masters, and it further appears that dispensation with reading of the minutes at called communications is presently practiced in this Grand Jurisdiction and believed to be proper;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Cabell Flournoy Cobbs, Grand Master of Masons in the Commonwealth of Virginia, do by this Edict hereby reaffirm the action of the Delegates of the 1988 Session of the Grand Lodge of Virginia and thereby eliminate the ambiguity of the matter. Further clarification and definition is hereby rendered with amendment of the provisions of Section 2.59 of the Methodical Digest to permit the Worshipful Master to dispense with the reading of the minutes at the close of called communications. Such dispensation is permissible only at called communications.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this fifteenth day of February, A. L. 5989, A. D. 1989 and in the 212th year of our Grand Lodge.



CABELL F. COBBS
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-8-1989

WHEREAS, it has been necessary to suspend indefinitely certain officers of an appendant body, which requires its members to be Master Masons in good standing, for willful disobedience of Masonic law and defiance of the Grand Master's orders to comply therewith, all in disobedience of their Masonic obligations; and

WHEREAS, many requests have been received for guidance as to future participation in each organization by our our Master Masons in good standing and sojourning Masons in this Grand Jurisdiction;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Cabell Flournoy Cobbs, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, do hereby edict and direct the following:

1. No Master Mason sojourning in the Commonwealth of Virginia or member of a Lodge holden under the Grand Lodge of Virginia, A.F. & A.M., shall attend any meeting or gathering of any appendant body* or of any of its component groups when the presiding officer or line officers of the appendant body are suspended or expelled Masons in attendance.

2. No Master Mason sojourning in Virginia or a member of a Lodge holden under the Grand Lodge of Virginia, A.F. & A.M., may petition for membership in, or be a voucher on a petition for membership in any appendant body which does not:

(a) recognize that all Master Masons in that body are bound to obey the laws, resolutions, and edicts of the Grand Lodge of Virginia; **OR**

(b) permits its presiding officer or line officers to be Master Masons who are suspended or expelled.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this twenty-sixth day of July, A. L. 5989, A. D. 1989 and in the 212th year of our Grand Lodge.



CABELL F. COBBS
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

*An appendant body is one which requires as a prerequisite for membership current Masonic membership in a Symbolic Lodge.

An Edict

E-1-1994 (W.H.M.)

WHEREAS, Sections 2.13 and 2.14 of the Methodical Digest designates a Masonic funeral service to be a public occasion and allows participants to wear Masonic regalia during this event before the public, and

WHEREAS, Section 2.16 of the Digest requires these ceremonies to conform to those prescribed by the Grand Lodge. The "Manual of Ceremonies," published by the Grand Lodge, prescribes the funeral service ritual, physical arrangements, and certain guidelines and requirements based on law and related decisions of Past Grand Masters, and

WHEREAS, varying practices have been observed regarding the conducting of the service and the use of aprons by those in attendance. Therefore, I, Werner Herman Morlock, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, in the interest of presenting a dignified appearance that enhances the public image of Freemasonry, and one that is uniformly carried out in this Grand Jurisdiction, do hereby direct that:

1. All officers (whether actual or *pro tem*) participating in a funeral service will wear the jewels and aprons of the offices they represent, and will wear white gloves.
2. All attending Master Masons who assemble in the procession and gather together for the final rites will wear Masonic aprons and, if available, white gloves. This includes those who may be attired in a military, police, or other occupational uniform, or in the recognized uniform of an appendant Masonic organization, excluding headwear.
3. All attenders will wear their aprons on the OUTSIDE of the coat; in cold weather for graveside services, outside of the topcoat.
4. These requirements apply to all funeral services, whether at graveside or in a funeral home or church.
5. The Grand Lecturer, Committee on Work, and District Instructors of Work will include these requirements in their instruction and guidance to the Brethren about the conduct of funeral services.
6. Each Worshipful Master is responsible for the enforcement of this Edict at each funeral service conducted by his Lodge.

**WERNER HERMAN MORLOCK***Grand Master*

February 9, 1994

Attest:

JOHN P. STOKES*Grand Secretary*

An Edict

E-1-1994 (T.F.M.)

WHEREAS, Section 2.12 of the Methodical Digest prohibits any Lodge or association of Masons from setting up or promoting, or being concerned in managing or drawing any lottery, gift concert, gift enterprise, or raffle, or knowingly permitting any such act to take place in any building under its control, or accepting the benefit of any monies or any other thing of value acquired by means of such acts; and

WHEREAS, it now appears that many such enterprises are now permitted by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and local ordinances to be conducted for charitable purposes by recognized bodies,

NOW, I, Thomas Frederick May, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, do hereby edict and declare the following:

1. Any appendant body of Freemasonry situated in this Grand Jurisdiction may use any of the means heretofore prohibited by Section 2.12 of the Methodical Digest or other legal means to raise funds for a recognized charity on the following conditions:
 - a. All funds collected by any of these means must go to a recognized charity, Masonic or otherwise, excluding only a reasonable sum for defraying the actual expenses of conducting the endeavor.
 - b. No funds so collected may be used for entertainment or other expenses of the sponsoring body.
 - c. The sponsoring body must comply with all State and local laws regarding the conduct of such endeavors, including obtaining the necessary permits and licenses and making any required reports to authorities.
2. So much of the provisions of Section 2.12 of the Methodical Digest as are in conflict with the provisions of this Edict are hereby set aside.
3. The provisions of this Edict do not apply to subordinate Lodges in this Grand Jurisdiction, and they will continue to be governed by the provisions of Section 2.12 of the Methodical Digest.

DONE this 6th day of April in the year A. L. 5994 and A. D. 1994, under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Virginia.



THOMAS F. MAY
Grand Master

Attest:
JOHN P. STOKES
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-1-1995

WHEREAS, our Nation has long recognized the fitness of our youth to assume the role of adults on attaining the age of eighteen years, by subjecting them to military service in time of war and national emergency and conferring upon them the privilege of participating in our political processes at that milestone in their lives; and

IT THEREFORE APPEARING from such precedents that there is good and sufficient reason to permit any young man who has attained the age of eighteen years to petition for and receive the degrees in Freemasonry,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Thomas Frederick May, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, do hereby edict and declare the following:

1. Any young man who has attained the age of eighteen (18) years, may petition and receive the degrees of Freemasonry, if he is of good character, properly recommended, and otherwise meets the qualifications for admission to our Lodges.

2. This Edict affects only the age at which individuals may petition for the degrees in Freemasonry, and any provisions of the Methodical Digest in conflict herewith are hereby set aside and annulled. All other requirements for processing and voting on a petition remain in effect.

DONE this 29th day of November in the year A. L. 5994 and A. D. 1994, under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Virginia.



THOMAS F. MAY
Grand Master

Attest:
WILLIAM F. PERDUE
Grand Secretary

This Edict is included for historic significance. Its intent is now incorporated in Section 2.92.

An Edict

E-2-1995

WHEREAS, Section 2.19 of the Methodical Digest, has provided for the payment to the Grand Lodge of Virginia, A.F. & A.M., of a fee of \$30.00 by each subordinate Lodge when a candidate is raised in or at the request of said Lodge, to the degree of Master Mason; and,

WHEREAS, the number of candidates so raised, has precipitously declined since the amount of that fee was set by resolution in Grand Lodge, thereby causing a serious loss of funds to the Grand Lodge; and,

WHEREAS, it is necessary to take immediate action to eliminate the losses thus occasioned and enable the Craft to be better served by its Grand Lodge,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Thomas Frederick May, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, do hereby edict, declare, and ordain, that, effective in the case of all petitions received on and after the effective date of this Edict, the raising fee paid to the Grand Lodge of Virginia, on the raising of such candidate shall be \$50.00, and shall be forwarded to the Grand Secretary as soon after each such raising as is practicable.

Section 2.19 of the Methodical Digest is hereby amended to incorporate the terms of this Edict.

This Edict shall become effective on January 2, 1995.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the most Worshipful Grand Lodge, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons, of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 2nd day of January, A.L. 5995, A.D. 1995, and in the 217th year of our Grand Lodge.



THOMAS F. MAY
Grand Master

Attest:

WILLIAM F. PERDUE
Grand Secretary

This Edict is included for historic significance. Its intent is now incorporated in Section 2.19.

An Edict

E-1-1996

WHEREAS, the need to change the day, date, and/or time of the stated Lodge communication and/or the need to change the location of a stated or called Lodge communication due to local conditions occurs frequently, and,

WHEREAS, the occasion of severe weather conditions at times warrants the cancellation of a stated Lodge communication until the weather conditions clear and the subsequent rescheduling of a new date and time, and now,

THEREFORE, by means of this Edict, authorization is hereby granted to each District Deputy Grand Master to grant such limited dispensations for the purpose of cancelling for weather conditions, rescheduling for all conditions, and/or changing the temporary meeting location for all conditions in his district, provided that:

1. The alternative date and time are provided to the District Deputy Grand Master at the time of the request, and
2. The Lodge Secretary shall send the request in writing to the District Deputy Grand Master within seven (7) days, and
3. The District Deputy Grand Master completes the special form letter of approval to the Lodge and provides a copy to the Grand Lodge office, and
4. The members of the Lodge are, when practical, advised of any weather cancellation by telephone and of any new temporary location, day, date, and/or time in the usual emergent communication arrangement procedure.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia at the City of Richmond this 15th day of November, A. L. 5995, A. D. 1995 and in the Two Hundred and Eighteenth year of our Grand Lodge.



JAMES BERNARD WILKINSON
Grand Master

Attest:
WILLIAM F. PERDUE
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-1-1997

WHEREAS, many Regularly Constituted Lodges, holden under Grand Lodges which are recognized by the Grand Lodge of Virginia, A. F. & A. M., desire to hold a tiled communication in the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia for any purpose, including the conferral of degrees upon their candidates using the ritual of their respective Grand Lodge, and

WHEREAS, the Grand Lodge of Virginia wishes to cooperate fully with other Grand Jurisdictions and the desires of their subordinate Lodges,

NOW, THEREFORE, by means of this Edict authorization is hereby granted to any Regularly Constituted Lodge, holden under a Grand Lodge recognized by the Grand Lodge of Virginia, A.F. & A.M., to hold a tiled communication in the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia, PROVIDED the Grand Master of the visiting Lodge has issued his dispensation authorizing such communication to be held. Prior arrangements must be made for the use of the meeting room and host Lodge to welcome the visiting Lodge to our Grand Jurisdiction.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia at the City of Richmond this 13th day of November, A. L. 5996, A. D. 1996 and in the Two Hundred and Nineteenth year of our Grand Lodge.



ALAN W. ADKINS
Grand Master

Attest:
WILLIAM F. PERDUE
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-1-2008

WHEREAS, Section 2.12 of the Methodical Digest prohibits any Lodge or association of Masons except for Appendant Bodies and the Masonic Home of Virginia from having a raffle; and,

WHEREAS, Virginia law allows raffles to be held - but only for charitable purposes; and,

WHEREAS, we are seeking to provide increased funding for our four Grand Lodge Charities: the Masonic Home of Virginia, the Masonic Relief Fund, the Grand Lodge Scholarship Fund, and the Grand Lodge Library Museum, and the various Lodges are also seeking to raise funds for their scholarship programs and other charitable endeavors,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Edmund Cohen, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, do hereby edict and declare the following:

The Masonic Home of Virginia, the Masonic Relief Fund, the Grand Lodge Scholarship Fund, and the Grand Lodge Library Museum, and the subordinate Lodges may hold raffles provided they comply with state and local laws and are solely to benefit recognized charitable causes.

The raffles must operate under the tax identification number (EIN), for example, the EIN of a Lodge.

The raffles conducted under each EIN cannot exceed \$25,000 in gross receipts on an annual basis.

Separate records must be kept to demonstrate that raffle proceeds are used exclusively for charitable purposes.

Appropriate tax documentation will be issued to anyone winning more than \$600 in value, in accordance with IRS regulations.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia at the City of Richmond this 17th day of April, A.L. 6008, A.D. 2008 and in the Two Hundred and Thirtieth year of our Grand Lodge.



EDMUND COHEN
Grand Master

Attest:
Alan W. Adkins
Grand Secretary

This Edict is included for historic significance. Its intent is now incorporated in Section 2.12.

An Edict

E-2-2008

WHEREAS, the number of suspensions for non-payment of dues is of grave concern; and,

WHEREAS, it is clearly our obligation to inquire into the circumstances and affairs of our defaulting Brethren;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Edmund Cohen, Grand Master of Masons in the Commonwealth of Virginia, do by this Edict declare as follows:

1. Prior to the actual issuance of a citation to the delinquent Brother, each subordinate Lodge Secretary shall inform the Grand Secretary, in writing, of those members who are subject to suspension. **This information may be submitted at any time, BUT NOT LATER THAN AUGUST 1.** This cut-off date is necessary in cases where the ninety day waiting period is required before suspending the delinquent Brother.

2. The Grand Secretary will cause each Brother listed on the delinquent form to be mailed a letter from the Grand Master showing his concern for the delinquent Brother, with notification being sent to each subordinate Lodge concerned.

3. Subordinate Lodges are free to take action to cite the delinquent Brother at the first stated communication of their Lodge following receipt of notification from the Grand Secretary that the Most Worshipful Grand Master's letter has been mailed to the Brother. This should provide sufficient time for the delinquent Brother's response before the Lodge proceeds to issue a citation.

4. This Edict shall be read at the next stated communication following its receipt and shall be similarly brought to the attention of the Brethren at any communication at which the Worshipful Master orders any Brother cited.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia at the City of Richmond this 17th day of April, A.L. 6008, A.D. 2008 and in the Two Hundred and Thirtieth year of our Grand Lodge.



EDMUND COHEN
Grand Master

Attest:
Alan W. Adkins
Grand Secretary

This Edict is included for historic significance. Its intent is now incorporated in Section 2.147.

An Edict

E-3-2008

WHEREAS, Executive Orders have heretofore routinely permitted Lodges to confer the Degrees on candidates simultaneously; and,

WHEREAS, the Grand Lecturer and the Committee on Work have promulgated the procedures for multiple candidates in the subordinate Lodge;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Edmund Cohen, Grand Master of Masons in the Commonwealth of Virginia, do by this Edict declare as follows:

The Worshipful Master of a Lodge holden under this Grand Lodge **MAY**, at his option, confer the Degree of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and the first section of the Master Mason Degree on **no more than** three candidates simultaneously. A conductor is required for each candidate. Worshipful Masters exercising this option are **REQUIRED** to follow the procedures established and promulgated by the Grand Lecturer and the Committee on Work. The second section of the Master Mason Degree **MUST** be conferred individually. In order to complete the degree(s), the lecture must be given concurrent with the conferral of the degree; it cannot be deferred.

This Edict shall be read at the next stated communication following its receipt.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia at the City of Richmond this 17th day of April, A.L. 6008, A.D. 2008 and in the Two Hundred and Thirtieth year of our Grand Lodge.



EDMUND COHEN
Grand Master

Attest:
Alan W. Adkins
Grand Secretary

This Edict is included for historic significance. Its intent is now incorporated in Section 2.104(a).

An Edict

E-4-2008

WHEREAS, Executive Orders have heretofore routinely authorized Lodges to hold joint communications to receive the Grand Master; and,

WHEREAS, those joint communications involve all of the Lodges in the district, or all of the Lodges in two or more districts;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Edmund Cohen, Grand Master of Masons in the Commonwealth of Virginia, do by this Edict declare as follows:

Authorization is hereby granted to each of the Lodges holden under our Grand Lodge to meet in joint communication with the approval of the respective District Deputy Grand Master for the purpose of receiving the Grand Master.

The District Deputy Grand Master shall convey the information in this Edict to the Lodges in his district, together with the place and date of the meeting to be held for the purpose of receiving the Grand Master. The District Deputy is given authority to allow the Lodges to meet in a place other than the usual meeting place of the host Lodge if expedient to accommodate the attendance expected. He is also charged to see that the minutes of the meeting are properly documented by reference to this Edict; that copies are sent to each Lodge, the Grand Master, and the Grand Secretary. It is recommended that one Secretary be designated to take the minutes for the joint meeting.

This Edict shall be read at the next stated communication following its receipt.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia at the City of Richmond this 17th day of April, A.L. 6008, A.D. 2008 and in the Two Hundred and Thirtieth year of our Grand Lodge.



EDMUND COHEN
Grand Master

Attest:
Alan W. Adkins
Grand Secretary

This Edict is included for historic significance. Its intent is now incorporated in Section 2.09(a).

An Edict *REVISED*

E-1-2010

WHEREAS, the success of our Fraternity is dependent on the ability of our members to labor together in peace and harmony, and further,

WHEREAS, our Masonic obligations prohibit our Brethren from documenting the exact nature of Masonic conduct as outlined in the various obligations of Freemasonry; and,

WHEREAS, a strict review of our Methodical Digest discloses that the definition of a Masonic offense could be more appropriately defined; and,

WHEREAS, the process of a Masonic trial may take many months and during such time, the Fraternity could be harmed further during the process; and,

WHEREAS, as Grand Master, I must be prepared and able to act in the best interests of the Fraternity;

THEREFORE, I, William Earle Rorer, Jr., Grand Master of Masons in Virginia do by this Edict amend Section 4.01 of the Methodical Digest to more effectively define what constitutes a Masonic offense and I also insert a new Section 4.02(a) entitled "Suspension Pending Trial." The new Section 4.01 as amended by this Edict is included below, with the new wording underlined. The new Section 4.02(a) Suspension Pending Trial is also included below.

This Edict and the amended Sections of the Digest shall be in full force and binding upon every member of the Grand Lodge of Virginia and each of its subordinate Lodges as of the date of this letter and shall remain so until voted upon by the delegates at the next Annual Communication of Grand Lodge and if approved by them, shall constitute an amendment to the Methodical Digest.

Sec. 4.01. What Constitutes a Masonic Offense. – Masons owing allegiance to the Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M., of Virginia, and sojourning Masons while in the state of Virginia, must obey the civil laws, support the establishment of government, keep inviolable the mysteries of the Order, preserve and obey the laws and resolutions of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, observe the Ancient Landmarks of Masonry and discharge their duties and obligations to their families, to each other and to mankind in general.

In addition to the requirements related to Masonic conduct outlined in this Section, in the Decisions related to this Section, and elsewhere in the Methodical Digest, including those offenses and charges set forth in Chapter I, Section III and Chapter II, Section IV of The Constitution of Masonry, a Masonic Offense shall be defined to include: slander or defamation of character by one Mason against another; behavior or actions by one Mason resulting in physical or substantial emotional harm to another Mason; and oral, verbal, written or electronic communication by any Mason which brings dishonor to the Fraternity or any of its members or creates disharmony or discord in the Fraternity or among its members.

Willful failure to comply with any of these requirements shall constitute a Masonic offense and subject the offender to Masonic trial, and, if found guilty, to discipline.

The determination of whether a Mason may be guilty of a Masonic offense shall be determined solely through the process of a Masonic trial, except where exceptions have been made in Masonic law granting the Grand Master the authority to act in specific circumstances. The definition of any conduct required and the definition of any term, phrase or word outlined herein shall be determined in the sole discretion of the trial commission or the Grand Master.

Sec. 4.02 (a) Suspension Pending a Trial – From time to time, the Grand Master may become aware of acts by a Mason that may in his belief constitute a Masonic offense as outlined in Section 4.01 and present of clear and present danger to the continued operation of a Lodge or Lodges. This may be the result of personal observation, information provided by other Masons under oath, or by the communication of charges as outlined in Section 4.07. In any event, the Grand Master may determine that it is in the best interest of the Fraternity or its members to act, pending final determination by a Trial Commission. Therefore, in addition to the expulsion of felons, as outlined in Edict E-5-1989, the Grand Master may, in his sole discretion, suspend any member from the rights and benefits of Freemasonry until such time as a trial commission may be impaneled to make a final determination in the matter. If the Grand Master thus suspends a Mason, a trial commission shall be assembled as soon as reasonable and a timely Masonic trial shall proceed as outlined elsewhere in the Methodical Digest. Should circumstances warrant, prior to the conclusion of the Masonic trial, the Grand Master, or any successor, may remove the suspension and restore the man to membership.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia at the City of Richmond this 15th day of January, A.L. 6010, A.D. 2010 and in the Two Hundred and Thirty-second year of our Grand Lodge.

WILLIAM EARLE RORER, JR.
Grand Master



Attest:
Alan W. Adkins
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-2-2017

REVISED

WHEREAS, our Masonic teachings, as exhibited in both our ritual and in our longstanding practice, have clearly prohibited members from bringing firearms into a tiled Lodge meeting, and

WHEREAS, due to the changing times that our Country is now facing with terrorists and other individuals, who may be bent on causing harm to Freemasonry as a means to generate notoriety, and

WHEREAS, questions have arisen concerning the ability of members to lawfully carry firearms in a tiled Lodge setting,

NOW, THEREFORE, I have decided to make two exceptions to our longstanding practice and allow the carrying of firearms by certain members as provided herein.

The first exception is hereby granted to active and honorably retired federal, state, or local law enforcement officers and all of members of the Grand Lodge Committee on Security. This exception applies to all tiled Lodges in which these Brethren enter.

The final exception is granted for members of any Lodge in which the Worshipful Master has decided to allow a reasonable number of Concealed Carry Permit Holders to carry a concealed firearm in the Lodge. However, these individuals must first be examined by the Worshipful Master, who may delegate such examination to active and honorably retired federal, state, or local law enforcement officers to ascertain the individual's ability to safely handle firearms. The Lodge Secretary will maintain the names of those designated by the Worshipful Master, and a copy is to be immediately forwarded to the Grand Lodge office. This exception is granted for such designated Concealed Carry Permit Holders solely in the Lodge in which they are a member.

No member who is carrying a weapon, concealed or openly, shall participate in the floor work of any degree being performed.

This Edict does not prevent a Lodge from having an educational program involving nonfunctional/disabled weapons that cannot be fired.

This Edict replaces entirely Edict 2017-1, which is hereby **WITHDRAWN**.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia at the City of Richmond this 31st day of May, A.L. 6017, A.D. 2017 and in the Two Hundred and Thirtieth-ninth year of our Grand Lodge.



VERNON STUART COOK
Grand Master

Attest:
Alan W. Adkins
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-1-2023

WHEREAS, our society has devolved to the point where extreme acts of violence and the threats thereof, directed against schools, churches, and other meeting places are becoming more common, and

WHEREAS, serious credible threats of violence have been placed against Lodges holden under this Grand Jurisdiction and the members thereof, and

WHEREAS, in responding to protect the members and property of our Lodges requires immediate reaction and positive steps to ward off approaching danger,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Donald Ellis Strehle, Grand Master of Masons in Virginia, do hereby authorize the Worshipful Master of any subordinate Virginia Lodge, who upon learning of a credible threat of imminent danger against persons or property under his Masonic control, to postpone and/or cancel any stated communication, or called communication, or any scheduled function, solely on his authority, provided that:

- The District Deputy Grand Master in the affected district be informed immediately in detail of the impending threat, and
- The Grand Master be notified as soon as possible by the District Deputy Grand Master of the situation, along with the surrounding circumstances, and
- The members of the affected Lodge be notified as expeditiously as possible, and
- Notice(s) be posted on the door of said Lodge advising of the closure.
- Alternate dates for a make-up communication must be conveyed to the District Deputy Grand Master within thirty (30) days, for authorization, by limited dispensation, to reschedule a canceled stated communication, and notice shall be provided by the District Deputy Grand Master to the Grand Lodge office.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia at the City of Richmond this 14th day of November, A.L. 6022, A.D. 2022 and in the Two Hundred and Forty-fifth year of our Grand Lodge.



DONALD ELLIS STREHLE
Grand Master

Attest:
Douglas V. Jones
Grand Secretary

An Edict

E-3-2023

WHEREAS, many regularly constituted Lodges holden under The Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M, of Virginia. desire to display a variety of flags within the Lodge room or on property owned or controlled by the Lodge, and

WHEREAS, the Grand Lodge of Virginia wishes to standardize the practice of flag display within the Lodge room itself and on Lodge property,

NOW, THEREFORE, by issuance of this Edict, only the following flags will be displayed within the Lodge room of any Lodge holden under the Grand Lodge of Virginia or on any property held by or controlled by any Lodge:

1. The flag of the United States of America,
2. The flag of the Commonwealth of Virginia,
3. The Masonic flag,
4. Any other flag authorized for use by later approval of the Grand Lodge, and
5. Any flag authorized to be used by any appendant body using the Lodge.

No flag other than those listed above shall be flown or displayed in any Lodge holden under this Grand Lodge or displayed on the property of the Lodge or property controlled by it.

This Edict does not apply to flags used for historical educational purposes in a particular program. At the conclusion of the stated or called communication at which the program was presented, the flag(s) will be removed from the Lodge.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia at the City of Richmond this 27th day of January, A.L. 6023, A.D. 2023 and in the Two Hundred and Forty-Fifth year of our Grand Lodge.



DONALD ELLIS STREHLE
Grand Master

Attest:
Douglas V. Jones
Grand Secretary

**Standing
Resolutions**

Standing Resolutions

Adopted February 14, 1924

The Grand Lecturer and District Deputy Grand Masters shall emphasize the teaching of the catechism of the Master Mason's Degree in each of the subordinate Lodges. The Grand Lodge of Virginia urges the stationed officers of the subordinate Lodges to use their influence to induce those who are raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason to learn the catechism of the Master Mason's Degree.

The Master of each subordinate Lodge shall read this resolution to every Brother who is raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason.

Adopted February 13, 1929

The book containing the proceedings of the Grand Lodge is the property of the Grand Lodge, and is issued for the exclusive use of the Grand and Subordinate Lodge Officers, Past Grand Masters, and others as designated in Section 1.59, Methodical Digest. This book is to be used for Masonic purposes only, and if used by a Mason for any other purpose it shall be considered a Masonic offense and subject such Mason to trial for un-Masonic conduct. If used by, or found in possession of persons other than those designated in this resolution, the Grand Secretary shall assert the right of ownership for and in behalf of this Grand Lodge.

This resolution shall be printed on the cover and the title page of the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge hereafter published.

Adopted February 13, 1935

Application for fraternal recognition by a foreign Grand Lodge shall be referred to the Standing Committee on Foreign Correspondence which shall make a thorough investigation of the application and make a recommendation to the Grand Lodge. The Grand Lodge may extend such recognition if it appears to its satisfaction:

The foreign Grand Lodge in question represents a substantial unity of the Freemasons of the territory over which it assumes jurisdiction: i.e., the country, province or state, or else shares such territorial jurisdiction with another Grand Lodge by mutual consent.

It has been lawfully organized by three or more regular Lodges or that it has been legalized by a Grand Lodge recognized by this Grand Lodge.

It is an independent, self-governing organization, having sovereign Masonic authority within its jurisdiction.

Its ritual is fundamentally in accord with the Ancient Landmarks, customs, and usages of the Craft. This involves:

- (a) Monotheism;
- (b) The Volume of the Sacred Law, a part of the furniture of the Lodge;
- (c) Secrecy;
- (d) The symbolism of the operative art;

- (e) The division of Symbolic Masonry into the three degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason;
- (f) The legend of the Third Degree.

It makes Masons of men only.

It is non-sectarian and non-political: i.e., that its dominant purposes are charitable, benevolent, educational, and moral.

Adopted February 13, 1964

**Regulations for Presentation of the
George Washington Distinguished Service Award**

Qualification of Recipients:

1. For distinguished service in some field of endeavor beneficial to mankind, or in the public service, to any Freemason in good standing in a Virginia Lodge or in a Lodge in any jurisdiction recognized by the Grand Lodge of Virginia.

2. For eminent leadership and outstanding achievement in and service to Freemasonry at large, to any member of a Virginia Lodge, or to a member of a Lodge in any jurisdiction recognized by the Grand Lodge of Virginia.

Design of the Medal:

The Medal is to be of sterling silver suspended by a tri-color ribbon of red, white and blue; the obverse side to contain the raised head of George Washington with appropriate language around the perimeter; the reverse side to have engraved upon it the Seal of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, and the tri-colored ribbon to which the Medal is fastened shall be suspended from a silver bar with the word "VIRGINIA" in raised letters thereon.

The Number to Be Awarded:

The Award in each of the categories enumerated shall be limited to one in the term of office of any Grand Master; provided, however, that the Committee on Awards or the Grand Master may refrain from making a nomination or any award in either or both of the foregoing categories in any year.

Committee on Awards:

A Committee on Awards, of not less than three, should be created for the purpose of receiving and reviewing all nominations for the Distinguished Service Medal, and for selection of not more than one nominee in each category. The Committee shall thereafter communicate its recommendations to the Grand Master for his approval and concurrence or disapproval. The selection of the recipient, if any, shall be made not later than October 25th, but no announcement thereof shall be made under any circumstances except by the Grand Master.

Nominations for the Award should be accompanied by a citation showing the accomplishments of the nominee. (Added to requirements February 15, 1967.)

Presentation of the Award:

The Grand Master may present such Award at such time and in such place as he may determine to be feasible, preference being given to the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge.

Adopted February 9, 1966

Any subordinate Lodge holden under the Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. or any officer or member of such Lodge, receiving a request for information or a questionnaire concerning Freemasonry, its organization, rules, regulations, finances, or membership or any related phase of our Fraternity, from any organization, agency or individual not recognized as Masonic shall immediately forward such request for information, questionnaire and all papers in connection therewith to the Grand Master of Masons in Virginia for his consideration and action.

Adopted February 13, 1968

**Regulations for Presentation of the
John Blair, Jr. Award**

Number to be Presented:

The Grand Master is permitted to bestow two John Blair, Jr. Awards on whomever he desires, one within and one without the State.

Citation to be Prepared:

A Citation shall be prepared in each instance by the Grand Master, setting forth his reasons for the presentation.

Adopted February 14, 1968

Instructions by the Worshipful Master presiding in the east immediately before the candidate is conducted into the Lodge room at the beginning of the Second Section of the Degree of Master Mason. (2022)

My Brethren:

A candidate is about to be raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason. The Lodge room will be used as a stage to enact a drama which, symbolically, unfolds the great lesson of the immortality of the soul.

To properly impress the candidate with the seriousness of this ceremony, there must be no talking, or whispering, laughing or other commotion during the conferring of the degree.

Bear in mind the fact the Temple, for this portion of the degree, is supposed to be silent and unoccupied.

Only the participants in the drama are to speak, and they are instructed to make no facial expressions, gestures, or unusual oral deliveries which might induce levity. The cooperation of each one here present is expected.

An adherence to these instructions will help serve as an impressive climax to the candidate's progress in Freemasonry and this section of the degree could well be one of the richest experiences of his life.

Adopted February 11, 1986

The expenditures of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, A.F. & A.M., shall not exceed its income during any fiscal year.

DECISIONS

1991 D-10, Re: Standing Resolution 1986

Set aside in order to pay bills accrued in 1990 not anticipated and not included in the budget. (G. W. Farley)

Adopted November 10, 2018

That after opening a Lodge, the Flag of Our Country will be presented at the altar, and the Worshipful Master will say: (2018)

“ALL CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES WILL JOIN ME IN PLEDGING ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF OUR COUNTRY.”

Adopted February 9, 1993

This standing resolution dealt with making an annual contribution to the three youth organizations supported by the Grand Lodge of Virginia. It has since been incorporated into law under Section 2.19.

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