

DIGEST
of
Masonic Law of Florida
F. & A. M.



REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE ON MASONIC DIGEST
A.L. 5975-5976 A.D. 1975-1976
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY OF THE MOST
WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE OF FREE AND
ACCEPTED MASONS OF FLORIDA
A.L. 5976 A.D. 1976

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PROCLAMATION

By virtue of the authority vested in me by The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida, I do hereby declare and promulgate the within Digest of the Masonic Law of Florida as the official Masonic Law of this Grand Jurisdiction.

My thanks and the thanks of the Masons of Florida go to the committees listed herein which have had the revision of the Digest in charge.

A careful study of the provisions of our law as contained herein will afford the answers to practically all questions of law that may arise in the conduct of Masonic affairs of this Grand Jurisdiction.

Given under my hand and the Seal of The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida, at Cross City, Florida, this 25th day of April, A.L. 5977, A.D. 1977.

**RICHARD F. GRIFFIE
Grand Master of Masons of Florida**

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RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Masons of the State of Florida have been fortunate to have the advantage of an established Digest of Masonic Law to guide the operations and deliberations of the Masonic organizations of the State; and

WHEREAS, the Digest has been kept current over the years by a diligent and active Digest Committee operating through the auspices of and under the direction of The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Florida; and

WHEREAS, the excellence of the Digest and the diligent work of the Committee has been a direct result of the dedication, devotion, and perseverance of its Chairman M.:W.: J. Lewis Hall; and

WHEREAS, the 1976 Edition of the Masonic Digest, introduced at Grand Lodge on April 27, 1977, is a continuing credit to the Committee and its Chairman and should be properly acknowledged.

NOW THEREFORE be it resolved by The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, in Regular Communication assembled at Orlando, Florida, this 28th day of April, 1977, that the 1976 Edition of the Digest of Masonic Law of the State of Florida be and is hereby dedicated to our distinguished Past Grand Master and beloved Brother, M.:W.: J. Lewis Hall.

IT IS further resolved that this dedication be evidenced by the insertion of an appropriate page in the front of each volume of the 1976 Edition of the Digest of Masonic Law of the State of Florida.

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

George L. Myers, P.G.M., Chairman
Perry R. Marsh, P.G.M., Vice Chairman

I certify that this Resolution was unanimously adopted in the 148th Annual Communication of Grand Lodge on April 27, 28, and 29, 1977.

William A. Whitcomb, Grand Secretary

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THE DIGEST-HOW TO USE IT

It has been said that half of knowledge is knowing where to find it.

In recognition of this truism this revision of the Digest provides several aids for finding the Masonic Law of Florida for which search is being made.

These aids are:

- (1) General Index
- (2) Index of Chapters
- (3) Outline of the Digest-Constitution
- (4) Outline of the Digest-Regulations
- (5) Quick References
- (6) Masonic Home Rules and Regulations-Index
- (7) Forms-Adopted
- (8) Key Words-Pronunciation and Style
- (9) Table of Constitutional Amendments
- (10) Table of Numbered Regulations
- (11) Cross References

In addition to the above aids, each Chapter contains not only the applicable Regulations but also excerpts from the Constitution relevant to the subject of the Chapter and the Rulings and Decisions of the Grand Lodge interpreting the Constitution and Regulations and also cross references to other provisions of the Constitution and other Regulations that are relevant to the subject.

The Digest also contains extensive Tables showing the derivation and history of the Constitution, the Regulations, and the changes made therein.

The Digest has a dual system of numbering in that pages are numbered in sequence: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc., and each page of the Constitution shows the Article and Section number of the first Section appearing on that page and each page of the Regulations shows the Chapter number and the Regulation number of the first Regulation appearing on that page.

The Outline of the Digest, the Quick Reference Table, and the General Index all refer to the Article and Section of the Constitution or to the Regulation number and the page number.

The Uniform Code of By-Laws for Particular Lodges appearing in Chapter 24, and the Masonic Home Rules and Regulations appearing in the Appendix are prefaced by outlines, with a special index for Masonic Home Regulations.

The General Index is cross indexed with each regulation and constitutional provision outlined under each applicable category.

We trust that our efforts will be of assistance to the Craft.

The Digest Committee

FREEMASONRY

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Freemasonry has for its guide certain clear and definite, unchanging and unchangeable precepts, principles, tenets, and beliefs which every Mason shall subscribe to and abide by and which Freemasonry shall never forsake without hazard of dissolution and from which no Mason shall ever depart without loss of his identity as such, which precepts, principles, tenets, and beliefs are universally known and designated "Landmarks" and among which are the following:

- (1) A belief in the existence of one ever living and true God.
- (2) A belief in the immortality of the human soul and a resurrection thereof to a Future Life, and
- (3) The Volume of the Sacred Law, open upon the Altar, is an indispensable furnishing of every Lodge while at Labor; and

WHEREAS, every meeting of Masons on Masonic affairs is opened and closed with prayer invoking the blessing of Deity; and

WHEREAS, every Mason is bound by his tenure to obey the moral law and live by the eternal virtues, among which are charity, temperance, tolerance, truth, and justice; and

WHEREAS, Freemasonry inculcates in its ritual and exemplifies by its Degrees, the great moral principles of charity, temperance, tolerance, truth, and justice and by an organized and systematic program of education teaches the principles of patriotism and the duties and responsibilities of citizenship; and

WHEREAS, it is a fundamental tenet of Freemasonry that every man is a creature of a Supreme Creator and as such is endowed with certain inalienable rights, one of which is the right to charity, aid, and assistance from his fellow creatures when his need is greater than theirs; and

WHEREAS, The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, and each of the Particular, individual and subordinate Lodges Masonically Chartered by it, are bound by Masonic Law, precepts, principles, tenets, and beliefs to subscribe and adhere to the Landmarks above referred to and to inculcate and exemplify the principles of patriotism and the duties; and

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responsibilities of citizenship, and to provide for those who by reason of age, misfortune, or infirmity have claim upon the sympathy and charity of their fellowman, and in accordance therewith conducts and maintains a program of education which teaches the principles of patriotism and the duties and responsibilities of citizenship and have established and maintained charitable institutions and operations for the relief of mankind; and

WHEREAS, the Congress of the United States, by enactment of the 1969 Tax Reform Act recognized that Freemasonry is characterized by and possessed of all those attributes that make and distinguish non-sectarian religious organizations, educational organizations, and charitable organizations and that the Grand Lodge and Particular Lodges of regular Freemasonry are entitled to all the rights, privileges, and immunities provided for and granted to such organizations; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida, for itself and all the Particular, individual, and subordinate Lodges Masonically Chartered by it publish and proclaim that by reason of its fundamental precepts, principles, tenets, and beliefs that Freemasonry is a non-sectarian religious organization and that by reason of its program of education it is an educational organization, and that by reason of its charitable programs, activities, and operations it is a charitable organization, and that by reason thereof may, shall be, and is hereby denominated as such.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida, in Annual Grand Communication assembled, this 26th day of April, A.L. 5972, A.D. 1972, for itself, and all the Particular, individual and subordinate Lodges Masonically Chartered by it, does hereby proclaim and publish that Freemasonry is a non-sectarian religious organization, an educational organization, and a charitable organization founded upon, possessed of, and adhering to all those principles, precepts, tenets, and beliefs that characterize and distinguish such organizations. (1972 Proc. 284)

FREEMASONRY CHARITY

RESOLUTION

~~WHEREAS, the Masonic Medical Research Laboratory in Utica, New York, was founded and originally funded by the Masons of New York; and~~

~~WHEREAS, this is the only known Medical Research Facility in this country and perhaps the world, that began with the support of Freemasons; and~~

~~WHEREAS, the basic biomedical research done there and the findings shared with all mankind, Masons, and non-Masons alike, have led to remarkable discoveries in heart disease; the number one killer of man; and~~

~~WHEREAS, the Grand Lodge Officers, beginning with the Grand Master in 1994 and each succeeding Grand Master until the present time has seen fit to continue support of the Laboratory by naming it his charity; and~~

~~WHEREAS, the Grand Line Officers for the next three years have found it to be most beneficial to all mankind and have pledged their continuing support.~~

~~THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that The Grand Lodge of Florida designate the Masonic Medical Research Laboratory as its continuing FLAGSHIP CHARITY which all Blue Lodge Masons can support and point to with pride and say, "That's our Charity; That is what distinguishes us, we support a cause that helps everyone." (1997 Proc. 440)~~

Repealed at the 187th Annual Grand Communication (2016)

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QUICK REFERENCES**Affiliation**

- (1) General information Chapter 41.
- (2) Petition must be presented at Stated Communication. (Reg. 25.02; Const., Art. X, Sec. 15)
- (3) Referred to Investigating Committee. (Const., Art. X, Sec. 15)
- (4) One month must intervene before ballot on petition. (Const., Art. X, Sec. 15)
- (5) If petition is rejected, it may be renewed at any subsequent Stated Communication. (Reg. 41.32)
- (6) Unanimous ball ballot required for acceptance. (Art. X, Sec. 16)
- (7) Waiver of jurisdiction not required. (Reg. 41.20)

Balloting

- (1) General information Chapter 35.
- (2) For Degrees. (Reg. 35.09)
- (3) For affiliation. (Reg. 35.09)
- (4) For waiver of jurisdiction. (Reg. 34.02)
- (5) For reinstatement NPD. (Reg. 27.13)
- (6) Collective. (Reg. 35.08)
- (7) Re-ballot after one black ball. (Reg. 35.11)
- (8) Vote on proficiency. (Reg. 37.15)

Dimits

- (1) General information Chapter 41.
- (2) Dimit may be granted upon request to any member including E.A.'s and F.C.'s, if not under charges and is in good standing. (Reg. 41.01)
- (3) Dues must be paid before dimit issued. (Const., Art. X, Sec. 21)

Election of Lodge Officers

- (1) General information Chapter 19.
- (2) Held at first Stated Communication in December. (Const., Art. X, Sec. 4)

- (3) Secret written ballot, majority necessary to a choice. (Const., Art. X, Sec. 2)
- (4) Installed on December 27th. (Const., Art. X, Sec. 4)

Honorary Membership

- (1) General information Chapters 25 and 26.
- (2) Resolution for honorary membership must be presented at Stated Communication. (Reg. 25.06) (Reg. 26.10)
- (3) Ballot at subsequent Stated Communication. (Reg. 25.06)
- (4) Unanimous ball ballot required for approval. (Reg. 25.06)
- (5) May be revoked by majority vote at any Stated Communication. (Reg. 25.06) (Reg. 26.10)

Initiation and Advancement

- (1) General information Chapter 37.
- (2) Entered Apprentice Degree may be conferred upon up to five candidates at the same time. (Reg. 37.01)
- (3) One month must intervene between conferring any two Degrees. (Reg. 37.06)
- (4) Grand Master may grant Dispensation to confer Degrees short of time. (Reg. 6.10 (b))

Installation of Lodge Officers

- (1) General information Chapter 19.
- (2) Any Past Master, the Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, or District Deputy Grand Master may act as installing officer. (Const., Art. X, Sec. 9)
- (3) Installed on December 27th. (Const., Art. X, Sec. 4)

Petition for the Degrees

- (1) General information Chapter 33.
- (2) Presented at a Stated Communication. (Const., Art. X, Sec. 14) (Reg. 25.02)
- (3) Referred to Petitions Committee. (Reg. 33.08) (Uniform Code By-Law 10.04)
- (4) Referred to Investigating Committee. (Reg. 33.10) (Uniform Code By-Law 10.07)

Quick References**Reinstatement**

- (5) One month must intervene between presenting of petition and ballot thereon, which ballot must be at a Stated Communication. (Const., Art. X, Sec. 14)

Reinstatement, non-payment of dues

- (1) General information Chapter 27.
- (2) Petition for reinstatement takes same course as petition for Degrees. (Reg. 27.13)
- (3) Favorable vote of 3/4 of members present by ball ballot or secret written ballot. (Reg. 27.13)
- (4) May be renewed after three months. (Reg. 27.13)
- (5) Per Capita due Grand Lodge must be paid. (Reg. 27.14)

Rejection

- (1) General information Chapter 36.
- (2) A rejected candidate for the Degrees must wait six months before presenting another petition. (Reg. 36.01)
- (3) Rejected petitioner for affiliation may renew petition at any subsequent Stated Communication. (Reg. 41.32)
- (4) Rejected petitioner for reinstatement for non-payment of dues may renew petition after three months from date of rejection. (Reg. 27.13)

Suspension for non-payment of dues

- (1) General information Chapter 27.
- (2) Procedure. (Uniform Code By-Law 4.02)
- (3) Members in arrears for six months must be notified of such arrearage. (Const., Art. X, Sec. 20) (Uniform Code By-Law 4.02)
- (4) After three months notice of arrearage member may be suspended by vote of the Lodge. (Const., Art. X, Sec. 20) (Uniform Code By-Law 4.02)

Waiver of Jurisdiction

- (1) General information Chapter 34.
- (2) Requires unanimous ball ballot. (Reg. 34.02)
- (3) No waiver over non-mason permanently removed. (Reg. 34.05)

Digest of Masonic Law

Corporate Status

**CORPORATE STATUS OF THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE
OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF FLORIDA AND THE
SUBORDINATE OR PARTICULAR LODGES MASONICALLY
CHARTERED THEREBY**

Chapter 4281, Laws of Florida, Acts of 1893, incorporated the Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, and the Grand Wardens of The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida as a body politic and corporate by the name and style of "The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida" and providing that such corporation shall be capable and liable in law to sue and be sued, to contract and be contracted with, to plead and be impleaded, and to acquire, own, hold, possess, and convey property either real, personal or mixed, either by purchase, gift, or devise, and to issue Masonic Charters according to its own constitution, By-Laws, Rules, and Regulations to such subordinate, particular, or individual Lodges of Free and Accepted Masons as it may see fit, with full power to recall, abrogate, revoke, or annul any such Masonic Charter.

This act further provided that the Worshipful Master and the Junior and Senior Wardens and their successors in office of any and all particular, individual, or subordinate Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons heretofore or hereafter Masonically Chartered by the Grand Lodge are declared to be separate and independent bodies politic and corporate, under such general corporate names and styles as may be assigned to them respectively in their Masonic Charters, and shall have the right to contract and be contracted with; to sue and be sued; plead and be impleaded; and to acquire, own, hold, possess, and convey property of all kinds, real, personal, and mixed, so long as their Masonic Charters shall remain unrevoked by said Grand Lodge; and to elect their said corporate officers at such times and places as their own Rules, Regulations, and By-Laws not in conflict with the Rules and Regulations properly laid down for them by said Grand Lodge, may provide.

Said act further provided that whenever the Masonic Charter of any particular, individual, or subordinate Lodge shall be recalled, abrogated, revoked, or annulled by the Grand Lodge, such particular or individual Lodge shall cease to have corporate existence except for the purpose of being sued for its legal obligations; and upon such cessation of its corporate existence all of its property, real, personal, and mixed shall revert to and belong to the Grand Lodge, subject to

any debts that may have been contracted by such particular or individual Lodge. By specific provision of said act the Grand Lodge shall in no event be responsible or liable for any indebtedness created by any particular, individual, or subordinate Lodge.

In quo warranto proceedings in the Circuit Court of the Second Judicial Circuit in and for Leon County, Florida, entitled "The State of Florida, ex rel., Earl Faircloth, as Attorney General of the State of Florida, Plaintiff, vs. William M. Hollis, as Grand Master of Masons of Florida, et als., Defendants, Case No. 11497," said court held Chapter 4281 to be a valid act of the legislature and that The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge and the particular, individual, or subordinate Lodges Chartered by it were lawfully entitled to all of the rights, privileges, and benefits hereinabove enumerated and lawfully entitled to exercise all of the powers vested in them by said act.

The report of the special committee on the above litigation and copy of the judgment entered therein appears in the 1967 Proceedings of The Grand Lodge of Florida at pages 232-243 and the opinion and decision of the Court is reported in Florida Supplement, Volume 27, at pages 15-24.

A copy of the entire proceedings is on file in the office of the Grand Secretary.