

CHAPTER 38  
**RITUAL AND CEREMONIES**  
FORMS AND CEREMONIES  
**Constitutional Provisions**

All ritualistic ceremonies, forms, services, and esoteric work of the Grand Lodge and all Subordinate, Particular, or Individual Lodges, hereinafter referred to as “Forms and Ceremonies” as transcribed and written and adopted in Annual Grand Communication, April 26, A.L. 5967, A.D. 1967, and on file in the Office of the Grand Secretary, together with such changes, amendments, and deletions as from time to time may be duly authorized and made, is declared to be the true, authentic, and genuine Forms and Ceremonies of the Grand Jurisdiction of Florida, and are the only Forms and Ceremonies authorized for use in such Grand Jurisdiction, and no other Forms or Ceremonies shall be used by the Grand Lodge or any of the Subordinate, Particular, or Individual Lodges of said Grand Jurisdiction. (Art. XV, Sec. 1)

There shall be one (1) original and up to thirty-five (35) duplicate copies of the Forms and Ceremonies described herein. There shall also be one Spanish Translation and three (3) duplicate copies of the Spanish Translation of the Forms and Ceremonies. There shall also be on (1) digitized copy of the original and Spanish Translation of the Forms and Ceremonies. (2019)

The digitized copy shall be used for the purposes of updating, printing corrections, or replacement copies of the bound volumes of the Forms and Ceremonies as necessary and approved. The digitized copy shall only be accessed on a computer or printing device that, as applicable, 1) has received all operating system updates and 2) is running an updated version of virus protection software and 3) is not connected to any network (including the internet) either physically or wirelessly or through any other connection means and 4) does not have any form of removable media attached except the media containing the digitized copy. (2019)

The original shall be permanently bound in not more than three volumes and shall not be used unless such use is specifically authorized by appropriate Resolution of Grand Lodge, which Resolution shall specify in detail the use to be made of such original and the terms and conditions governing such use. (1992)

The duplicate copies of the Forms and Ceremonies shall be permanently bound in such number of volumes as the Grand Master may from time to time direct by Edict, and may be moved to a committee room in the Grand Lodge Building, but shall not be removed to any other building or place except by direction of the Grand Master and only after the Lodge in the requesting District has signed a satisfactory contract and agreement with The Grand Lodge of Florida and agreed to pay the cost incurred in the reproduction of the duplicate copies and provides a safe to house the “Books.” The duplicate copy of the “Forms and Ceremonies” retained at the Grand Lodge Building will be used as the “Master” for producing those duplicates. (2009)

There shall also be a First Letter Cipher of the Forms and Ceremonies, which shall be available to all Master Masons in Good Standing in a Particular Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction. This Cipher shall contain the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Three Degrees, the Degree Work of the Three Degrees, the Lectures of the Three Degrees, and the Catechisms of the Three Degrees. There shall also be two untitled and uncredited booklets containing the First Letter Cipher of the Catechisms of the Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Degrees, which shall be available for use by the Particular Lodges of Florida to assist the candidates. (1997)

There shall also be a Grand Lodge Officers First Letter Cipher Code Book. Copies of this Grand Lodge Officers Code Book shall be prepared at no cost to the Grand Lodge; printed on 8½ X 11 inch sheets, mounted in a cover folder and kept with the Aprons of the Elected and Appointed Grand Lodge Officers having speaking parts for their use during the year. A master copy of said Grand Lodge Officers Code Book shall be prepared and held by the Grand Secretary in order to provide further replacement copies if necessary. (2001)

The Grand Lodge by Regulation may further regulate the use of such duplicate copies and Ciphers. (1995) (Art. XV, Sec. 2)

The original and duplicate copies of the Forms and Ceremonies described herein shall be kept in a safety deposit box permanently anchored in the vault in the Grand Lodge building, which safety deposit box shall be provided with lock which can only be opened by operation of two different keys, one of which keys shall be in the custody of the Grand Master except as hereinafter provided and the other of such keys in the custody of the Grand Secretary.

The safety deposit box herein above referred to shall not be opened except by the Grand Master and the Grand Secretary in the presence of at least one Past Grand Master and a member of the Committee on Work; *provided, however*, the Grand Master may be represented by the Deputy Grand Master, Senior Grand Warden, or Junior Grand Warden when he shall so direct in writing.

In the event of illness, incapacity, or unavoidable absence of the Grand Secretary, the Grand Master may designate, in writing, an additional Past Grand Master to act for the Grand Secretary. A record shall be provided and kept on file in said safety deposit box showing each time that said safety deposit box is opened, what was removed therefrom, the use made thereof of the original or duplicate copy, the persons present at the time of opening of said safety deposit box and the time of return of anything removed therefrom. (Art. XV, Sec. 3)

At no time and under no circumstances and by no person shall any copy be made of the secret work adopted by the Grand Lodge, nor any notes or memorandum made or prepared therefrom, nor any changes, amendments, or deletions made thereto or therefrom, unless authorized by Grand Lodge in Annual Grand Communication, and then only after sixty (60) days notice to the Particular Lodges of any proposed change, modification, abridgement, amendment, or repeal hereof.

At no time and under no circumstances and by no person shall any copy be made of the Ciphers authorized by Grand Lodge, nor any notes or memorandum made or prepared therefrom, nor any changes, amendments, or deletions made thereto or therefrom, unless authorized by the Grand Lodge. (1995) (Art. XV, Sec. 4)

The provisions hereof shall not be changed, modified, abridged, amended, or repealed by any manner or means whatsoever except by direct action of the Grand Lodge in Annual Grand Communication after not less than sixty (60) days notice to all Particular Lodges of any proposed change, modification, abridgement, amendment, or repeal hereof. (Art. XV, Sec. 5)

#### **Rulings and Decisions**

Article XV, Section 3, requires that the Grand Master, the Grand Secretary, at least one other elective Grand Lodge Officer, and at least one Past Grand Master be personally present at the opening and closing of the vault wherein is kept the written Forms and Ceremonies. (1971 Proc. 301-302)

### **FLORIDA MONITOR**

#### **Regulations**

**38.01** The latest approved "Florida Monitor" and "Cipher," together with the approved excerpts therefrom are the official Monitors and Cipher for use of the Lodges in this Grand Jurisdiction. (1996)

**38.02** The Committee on Work shall proofread the reprinting of Florida Monitors and approved excerpts therefrom.

#### **Rulings and Decisions**

It is improper to present a Monitor to an E.A. (1946 Proc. 34)

### **RULINGS OF GRAND LODGE**

#### **Regulations**

**38.03** The Particular Lodges are required to conform to every known Edict of the Grand Lodge concerning the Work, and to yield implicit obedience to all ritualistic decisions and requirements of the Grand Lodge, which their representatives should be neither slow nor derelict in fully and accurately communicating to the Brethren whom they represent.

### **FORMS AND CEREMONIES**

#### **Regulations**

**38.04** (a) All ritualistic ceremonies, forms, services, and esoteric work of the Grand Lodge and all Subordinate, Particular, or Individual Lodges, hereinafter referred to as "Forms and Ceremonies" as transcribed and written and adopted in Annual Grand Communication, April 26, A.L. 5967, A.D. 1967, and on file in the Office of the Grand Secretary, together with such changes, amendments, and deletions as from time to time may be duly authorized and made, is declared to be the true, authentic, and genuine Forms and Ceremonies of the Grand Jurisdiction of Florida, and are the only Forms and Ceremonies authorized for use in such Grand Jurisdiction, and no other Forms or Ceremonies shall be used by the Grand Lodge or any of the Subordinate, Particular, or Individual Lodges of said Grand Jurisdiction.

(b) There shall be one (1) original and up to thirty-five (35) duplicate copies of the Forms and Ceremonies described herein. There shall also be one Spanish Translation and three (3) duplicate copies of the Spanish Translation of the Forms and Ceremonies. There shall also be on (1) digitized copy of the original and Spanish Translation of the Forms and Ceremonies. (2019)

The digitized copy shall be used for the purposes of updating, printing corrections, or replacement copies of the bound volumes of the Forms and Ceremonies as necessary and approved. The digitized copy shall only be accessed on a computer or printing device that, as applicable, 1) has received all operating system updates and 2) is running an updated version of virus protection software and 3) is not connected to any network (including the internet) either physically or wirelessly or through any other connection means and 4) does not have any form of removable media attached except the media containing the digitized copy. (2019)

The duplicate copies of the Forms and Ceremonies shall be permanently bound in such number of volumes as the Grand Master may from time to time direct by Edict, and may be moved to a committee room in the Grand Lodge Building, but shall not be removed to any other building or place except by direction of the Grand Master and only after the Lodge in the requesting District has signed a satisfactory contract and agreement with The Grand Lodge of Florida and agreed to pay the cost incurred in the reproduction of the duplicate copies and provides a safe to house the "Books." The duplicate copy of the "Forms and Ceremonies" retained at the Grand Lodge Building will be used as the "Master" for producing those duplicates. (2009)

(c) The original and duplicate copies of the Forms and Ceremonies described herein shall be kept in a safety deposit box permanently anchored in the vault in the Grand Lodge Building, which safety deposit box shall be provided with lock which can only be opened by operation of two different keys, one of which keys shall be in the custody of the Grand Master except as hereinafter provided and the other of such keys in the custody of the Grand Secretary. These keys shall be delivered to the successors in Office of Grand Master and Grand Secretary.

The safety deposit box hereinabove referred to shall not be opened except by the Grand Master and the Grand Secretary in the presence of at least one Past Grand Master and a member of the Committee on Work; *provided, however*, the Grand Master may be represented by the Deputy Grand Master, Senior Grand Warden, or Junior Grand Warden when he shall so direct in writing.

In the event of illness, incapacity, or unavoidable absence of the Grand Secretary, the Grand Master may designate, in writing, an additional Past Grand Master to act for the Grand Secretary. A record shall be provided and kept on file in said safety deposit box showing each time that said safety deposit box is opened, what was removed therefrom, the use made thereof of the original or duplicate copy, the persons present at the time of opening of said safety deposit box and the time of return of anything removed therefrom.

(d) At no time and under no circumstances and by no person shall any copy be made of the secret work adopted by the Grand Lodge, nor any notes or memorandum made or prepared therefrom, nor any changes, amendments, or deletions made thereto or therefrom, unless authorized by Grand Lodge in Annual Grand Communication, and then only after sixty (60) days notice to the Particular Lodges in advance of said Annual Grand Communication that a proposed change, amendment, or deletion will be presented.

(e) The provisions hereof shall not be changed, modified, abridged, amended, or repealed by any manner or means whatsoever except by direct action of the Grand Lodge in Annual Grand Communication after not less than sixty (60) days notice to all Particular Lodges of any proposed change, modification, abridgement, amendment, or repeal hereof.

(f) There shall also be a First Letter Cipher of the Forms and Ceremonies, which shall be available to all Master Masons in good standing in a Particular Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction. This First Letter Cipher shall contain the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the Three Degrees, the Degree Work of the Three Degrees, the Lectures of the Three Degrees, and the Catechisms of the Three Degrees. There shall also be two untitled and uncredited booklets containing the First Letter Cipher of the Catechisms of the Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Degrees, which shall be available for use by the Particular Lodges of Florida to assist the candidates. At no time and under no circumstances and by no person shall any copy be made of the Ciphers authorized by Grand Lodge, nor any notes or memorandum made or prepared therefrom, nor any changes, amendments, or deletions made thereto or therefrom, unless authorized by the Grand Lodge. (1995)

There shall also be a Grand Lodge Officers First Letter Cipher Code Book. Copies of this Grand Lodge Officers Code Book shall be prepared at no cost to the Grand Lodge; printed on 8½ X 11 inch sheets, mounted in a cover folder and kept with the Aprons of the Elected and Appointed Grand Lodge Officers having speaking parts for their use during the year. A master copy of said Grand Lodge Officers Code Book shall be prepared and held by the Grand Secretary in order to provide future replacement copies if necessary. (2001)

### **Rulings and Decisions**

The official work adopted by the Grand Lodge in 1967 Annual Grand Communication cannot be changed in any manner except by action of the Grand Lodge in accordance with Regulation 38.04. (1968 Proc. 57, 212)

The Florida Masonic Code Book and the Grand Lodge Officers First Letter Cipher Code Book shall not be used or opened during Grand Lodge Session or any Called or Stated Communication of a Particular Lodge. The Florida Masonic Code Book or Grand Lodge Officers First Letter Cipher Code Book may be used for the instruction of a Brother and during a Grand Lodge or Particular Lodge practice. (2012 Proc. 142-143)

The merged Handbook of Floorwork Procedures shall not be used or opened during any Called or Stated Communication of a Particular Lodge inasmuch as it contains the same information as the Florida Masonic Code Book. The merged Handbook of Floorwork Procedures may be used for the instruction of a Brother during a Particular Lodge Practice. The violation of this Ruling and Decision shall be subject for Masonic discipline. (2023 Proc. \_\_\_\_)

**EXCERPTS OF RESOLUTIONS****Resolution For Opening Safes Containing Duplicate Copies of Work**

“For purpose of opening the safe, vault, or strong box in a Temple, the Grand Master shall designate a member of the Committee on Work to whom shall be delivered one of the keys or combinations and either an Elected Grand Lodge Officer, a District Deputy Grand Master, a District Instructor, or a Past Grand Master, to whom shall be delivered the other key or combination. Under no circumstances shall both keys or combinations be delivered to or be in the possession of any one individual except the Grand Master or Grand Secretary.

None of the safes, vaults, or strong boxes shall be opened except upon written order of the Grand Master, which order shall specify the date or dates for opening thereof and the date or dates for closing thereof, which order shall specify the person or persons for delivery of the keys or combinations as provided in above paragraph hereof and directions for return of said keys or combinations to the custody or control of the Grand Master.

The duplicate copy of Forms and Ceremonies be transferred from the vault in which is located the original Forms and Ceremonies and transferred to the safe or strong box in the Office of the Grand Secretary and after said transfer that the same may be removed and used in the same manner and under the same procedures and safeguards as set forth in Resolving Clauses in the previous section of this Resolution.” (1982 Proc. 431)

“The Grand Master may appoint additional designees for opening duplicate copies from a list of Brothers submitted to him by the Committee on Work. Such Brothers shall be Past Zone Chairmen of the Committee on Work, Past District Instructors, or Past District Deputy Grand Masters, selected from the District or Districts containing duplicate copies of the “Forms and Ceremonies.” The permission procedure will be as currently required by Regulations.” (2010 Proc. 350-351)

“The Grand Master may, at his discretion, issue one (1) Directive for his term in office to allow the State Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Committee on Work to authorize the opening of the safes for the removal of the books for work and instruction or Ritual Competition provided that the Grand Master be notified by electronic or U.S. Mail not less than seven (7) days in advance of each such opening. A compilation of these Open Books will be included in the annual report of the Committee on Work. All other requirements of this Chapter will be adhered to.” (2014 Proc. 343-345)

**Resolution on a Merged Floorwork/Ritual Book**

“The merged Work, as prepared by the Committee on Work, including the corrections to the irregularities, grammar, and punctuation be adopted, printed, and distributed by the Grand Secretary’s Office.

The Cipher be revised to accurately reflect these corrections, ensuring that the Cipher is an accurate reflection of the Merged Work as adopted. (2018 Proc. 343-344)

**Resolution Regarding the Creation and Management of a Back Up for the Digital Copy of the “Forms and Ceremonies”**

“A secondary digitized copy be made and stored on a separate device from the primary storage devices for the purpose of having a secured backup in case of primary device failure.

The secondary digitized copy be stored in a separate secured location as prescribed in Article XV, Section 3, of the Constitution.

Access to the secured location for the secondary digitized copy be prescribed by Article XV, Section 3, Paragraphs 2 and 3, in the Constitution.” (2019 Proc. 330)

**Resolution on the Encryption of the Digital Copies of the Forms and Ceremonies and the Creation and Management of Encryption Keys**

“The digitized copy of the Work, as prepared by the Committee on Work, including the Forms and Ceremonies and the Merged Word be encrypted on the digital media device using security industry recommended encryption methods and practices.

The Encryption Keys should be held in secret and confidence by key stewards comprised of the Grand Master, the Grand Secretary, and the Chairman of the Committee on Work only.

The Encryptions Keys should be changed annually or when any of the key stewards are changed.” (2019 Proc. 328)

**Resolution on the Usage of Coffin in the Second Section of the Master Mason Degree**

“A coffin shall not be used in conferring or exemplifying the Second Section of the Master Mason Degree neither shall one be displayed in the Lodge Room. A tracing Board or Lithograph of a coffin will be allowed for the Master Mason Lecture only. (2019 Proc. 325)

**Resolution for Adding Installation Procedures to Merged Book**

“The “Procedure for Open Installation” as prepared by the Committee on Work by merging the written wording and directions from the “Florida Masonic Monitor” with the floorwork as included in the “Handbook of Forms and Ceremonies Procedures” be included in future printings of the “Handbook of Forms and Ceremonies Procedures” in place of the “Installation of Lodge Officers” that is currently on pages 121 through 126.

The “Procedure for Closed Installation” as prepared by the Committee on Work be adopted as Official Work and included in future printings of the “Handbook of Forms and Ceremonies Procedures” immediately following the “Procedure for Open Installation.” (2021 Proc. 361)

**Resolution to Allow Allied and Appendant Bodies to  
Assist with Open Installations**

“The Committee on Work will add wording to the Ritual for Open Installations stating when and where our Allied and Appendant Bodies will be able to participate in our Open Installations. This participation will only be allowed prior to the Installing Officer starting the section where he is explaining our Fraternity to the non-Masons and will be restricted to the area west of the Altar.

Any of these participants that are in a uniform that includes some form of a hat will be allowed to wear their hats and cover when they stand to participate in the ceremony and will uncover when they are finished and take their seats.” 2021 Proc. 362)

**CORNERSTONES**

**Regulations**

**38.05** The ceremonies of laying cornerstones shall be under the direct control and supervision of the Grand Master.

**38.06** When an application is made to the Grand Master for laying the cornerstone of a building, it should be accompanied by a statement of the plan of the edifice, the purpose for which it is to be used, or to which it is to be devoted, and such further information as he shall call for so as to enable him to determine whether the building to be constructed will meet the requirements of our Ancient Law and usages relating to this ceremony. If the building will meet such requirements, the Grand Master will fix the time for performing the ceremony.

**38.07** The question of whether or not a building is too far advanced for the laying of a cornerstone by The Grand Lodge of Florida is left to the discretion of the Grand Master.

**38.08** The ceremonies of laying cornerstones shall be under the direct control and supervision of the Grand Master. (Same as 38.04)

**38.09** For the purpose of laying a cornerstone the Grand Master may call to his assistance a Particular Lodge or Lodges; in either case he will, if present, preside. In his absence, his Special Deputy will preside unless the Deputy Grand Master be present, who will take precedence over the Special Deputy. Other Grand Officers present will take their respective stations and places, unless requested to serve elsewhere. The minutes of all such Emergent Communications shall be furnished to the Grand Secretary in addition to the Grand Master’s record.

**38.10** The official inscription to be placed on cornerstones laid by The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Florida shall be as hereinafter set forth, *provided*, the Grand Master may by Dispensation permit a different calendar date for the A.D. date:



A. L. \_\_\_\_\_

A. D. \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of Lodge or Public Building)  
 (Square and Compass)  
 (Letter "G" Emblem)

THIS CORNERSTONE LAID

BY

THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE

OF

FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

OF FLORIDA

**38.10.1** When any building owned by the Grand Lodge or a Particular Lodge shall be sold or demolished or abandoned, all Masonic insignia, plaques, cornerstones, and all other indicia of Masonic ownership or use shall be removed and appropriately preserved as directed by the Grand Master or Grand Lodge.

When any public building having a Masonic cornerstone is sold, demolished, or abandoned, appropriate effort shall be made for removal and preservation of such cornerstone as shall be directed by the Grand Master or Grand Lodge.

### **Rulings and Decisions**

Cornerstone of Lodge or public building may have inscribed thereon the name of such Lodge or public building. (1967 Proc. 75, 211)

When a cornerstone is removed, it is not necessary to repeat cornerstone ceremony but should be kept as near its present position as possible and not be covered. (1950 Proc. 53)

### **DEGREE WORK UNDER AUSPICES OF GRAND LODGE**

#### **Regulations**

**38.11** The Grand Lodge will entertain no petition for Initiation into Masonry, or for any Degree.

### **OFFICIAL VISITS**

#### **Regulations**

**38.12** The Particular Lodges are required to receive the Official Visits of the Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, the Senior Grand Warden, the Junior Grand Warden, the Past Grand Masters, and District Deputy Grand Masters (in their own Districts) with Grand Honors, respect, and obedience. The Grand Treasurer, the Grand Secretary, Past Deputy Grand Masters, and Past Grand Wardens may be received as a courtesy. A regularly elected Worshipful Master is entitled to Grand Honors at time of installation. (None others, except those provided for by Regulation, are entitled to be received with Grand Honors. See Monitor.) (2002)

**Rulings and Decisions**

Action of Grand Master in requiring written apology for discourtesies to District Deputy Grand Master on occasion of Official Visit was proper and in accord with requirements of Masonic Law. (1969 Proc. 58, 212)

**DEGREE WORK****Regulations**

**38.13** Articles of jewelry that cannot be removed from the person of a candidate shall not be considered in the matter of his preparation to receive any of the Degrees.

**38.14** Mere affirmations are not to be accepted in taking solemn Masonic obligations. (Same as 37.04)

**38.15** The presentation of the apron as part of the ritualistic work of the Entered Apprentice Degree is purely symbolic, and the short form set forth in the Florida Monitor shall be used. The presentation of a lambskin apron to keep permanently is optional with the Lodge, but if a lambskin apron is to be presented it shall be done in the long form set forth in the Florida Monitor after the Brother has passed satisfactory examination upon the catechism of all Three Degrees. The presentation of an apron may be made in a public ceremony at the option of the Lodge. (2003)

**38.16** The Worshipful Master shall not permit a section of any Degree to be postponed until a future Communication of the Lodge. Any Degree started in a Communication must be completed, which shall include a lecture of the Degree, if possible.

**38.17** Every Particular Lodge of Florida is charged with the responsibility of the conferring of Degrees and no Lodge can assign this responsibility to a Degree Team. The Worshipful Master shall remain in charge of all work, even though he has requested a Degree Team to confer a Degree.

**38.18** The Worshipful Master may permit any proficient Brother Mason to confer the Degrees, in his presence, in the Lodge; but the Worshipful Master, or acting Worshipful Master, who confers the Degrees, or permits the same, or any portion thereof, should not permit the same to be conferred in any Lodge in an improper manner.

## PRESENTATION OF LAMBSKIN APRON

### References

(The Committee on Work recommends and Grand Lodge approves the use of a genuine lambskin apron in the conferring of the Entered Apprentice Degree, and formal presentation after satisfactory examination in the Master Mason Degree.) (1959 Proc. 179)

### Rulings and Decisions

M.M.'s should wear their aprons as M.M.'s during work in the E.A. Degree. (1944 Proc. 31)

A Florida Lodge cannot properly permit the use of any outside ritual by out of state Degree Teams. (1942 Proc. 43)

It is not permissible to Raise twin brothers at the same time with two separate Degree Teams. (1947 Proc. 32)

No Dispensation is necessary for a Lodge to confer the Master Mason Degree on six candidates during the same evening. (1954 Proc. 69)

If a Lodge is so fortunate as to have a Brother capable of delivering the Charges of the Three Degrees from memory, it is most proper for him to do so; otherwise, if such is not the case, the Charges should be read. (1962 Proc. 83, 296)

The Degrees shall not be conferred by anyone who can not speak and understand the English language, except Spanish speaking Lodges may confer the Degrees upon Spanish speaking candidates. (1969 Proc. 219)

Any Degrees started in a Called or Stated Communication shall include a lecture. Therefore, it is the Worshipful Master's responsibility to ensure that a Brother proficient in delivering the lecture for the scheduled Degree has been requested to be present. Only under EMERGENCY situations shall a Degree be closed without the lecture being delivered. (2012 Proc. 143)

## DEGREE TEAMS

**38.19** The Grand Master may, in the exercise of great caution, permit the organization of Masonic Degree Teams under the following conditions:

(a) All members of Degree Teams must be Master Masons, in good standing.

(b) They may have such Officers as may be necessary for the harmonious handling of all matters pertaining to such teams.

(c) No controversial question shall be discussed in meetings of the members of Degree Teams.

(d) There shall be no special fees or dues for membership of Degree Teams. They may be financed by voluntary contributions.

(e) Any particular type of dress for Degree Teams shall be optional including a headpiece when it is a part of a costume of the era of the legend of the Third Degree; *provided, however*, that all present shall wear aprons and the Worshipful Master or acting Worshipful Master shall be covered.

(f) All Laws and Regulations of the Grand Lodge shall be observed.

(g) No Degree Team shall undertake any function other than Degree work or conducting Masonic funerals.

(h) The work in all Three Degrees shall conform to the Official Florida work without change or addition; all requirements of the Regulations of Grand Lodge must be complied with.

(i) The general purpose of Degree Teams shall be to promote good fellowship among Freemasons and assist in observance of the official Florida Degree work.

(j) The Worshipful Master of the Lodge in which the Degree is conferred shall remain in charge of all work even though he has requested a Degree Team to confer the Degree.

(k) Any function of a Degree Team shall be under the jurisdiction of a Particular Lodge and its Worshipful Master shall be responsible for their conduct.

## MASTER'S AUTHORITY

### Regulations

**38.20** The Master has absolute and supreme control over the work of the Lodge, and when there are two or more applicants for the same Degree elected and waiting at the same time, it is his discretion to direct which shall have precedence. (Same as 20.06)

**38.21** The Worshipful Master guides and controls all the work and business of the Lodge; opens, closes, dispenses, calls off, and calls on, at his pleasure.

### Rulings and Decisions

If the Master so instructs, it is proper to salute the West on entering or retiring from Lodge while at Labor. (1946 Proc. 37)

The Worshipful Master of the Lodge guides and controls all the work, and it is not necessary to have a Dispensation for him to direct that a candidate likely to suffer injury in the conferring of the Degrees, be handled in such way as to avoid injury. (1954 Proc. 67)

It is not in order for the Worshipful Master to require the membership to repeat the obligations with the candidates or to repeat prayers with the Chaplain. (1954 Proc. 67)

## WARDEN'S AUTHORITY

### Regulations

**38.22** A Senior Warden or Junior Warden presiding, in the absence of the Master, may call any Past Master or any competent Brother to the East to do the work of the Lodge, but he is not required to do so. (1985)

**38.23** A Warden, vacating his position as such, or any other Brother, may confer a Degree and give the lecture, or do any part of the work of the Lodge in the presence and at the request of the Master. In this, the Master does not, and cannot, vacate or transfer his authority; but he can always act through any Brother whose assistance or skill he may desire, and the acts thus performed in his presence, and by his authority, are his acts.

## OPENING AND CLOSING FOR DEGREE WORK

### Regulations

**38.24** Each Degree must be opened and closed with its own appropriate ceremony; hence, the opening of a Master Mason Lodge does not open the E.A. or F.C. Lodge.

**38.25** When a Communication is called for the sole purpose of conferring a specific Degree, it is not necessary to open the Lodge in any other Degree.

## FURNITURE OF LODGE

### Constitutional Provisions

Every Particular Lodge must be furnished with a Seal and appropriate Jewels, Furniture, and Working Tools\*\*\*. (Excerpt; Art. X, Sec. 23)

(c) The Volume of the Sacred Law, open upon the Altar, is an indispensable furnishing of every regular Lodge while at labor. (Excerpt; Art. XIII, Sec. 2)

### Regulations

**38.26** Every Particular Lodge must display the Flag of the United States of America in the Lodge Room at all Communications of the Lodge, but without ceremony, but this Regulation shall not be construed to prohibit a recital of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

**38.27** It is recommended that each Particular Lodge provide itself with a Masonic banner of blue, having on it the name and number of the Lodge, and the place of its location, together with the words "F. & A. M. of Florida."

### Rulings and Decisions

The United States Flag shall be displayed at every Lodge Communication but without ceremony. (1942 Proc. 51)

Use of Bible containing extraneous matter is not proper. The First Grand Light in Masonry is the unadorned Holy Bible. (1941 Proc. 82)

It is proper to incorporate the lights behind the Master's and Wardens' stations by appropriate symbols for those stations, if the symbols can be easily removed when other organizations are using the same hall. (1962 Proc. 81, 296)

It is improper to provide a room in the East enclosed with glass in which the Secretary could and would sit during the Lodge Communications. (1962 Proc. 81, 296)

## WRITTEN INFORMATION

### Regulations

**38.28** Any member of a Lodge of this Grand Jurisdiction who uses or refers to any written or printed books, manuscripts, or papers purporting to disclose or expose the secret work of Freemasonry, except the authorized written work of this Grand Jurisdiction when lawfully authorized so to do, shall be subject to discipline.

### Rulings and Decisions

A cipher procured by E.A. Brother innocently should be destroyed. (1946 Proc. 37)

## SIDE DEGREES

### Regulations

**38.29** What are termed Side Degrees are not under the protection of this Grand Lodge, though some of them, when consistent, may be useful.

## PUBLIC PROCESSIONS AND DIVINE SERVICES

### Constitutional Provisions

Every Particular Lodge has the right and it is the duty of its members when summoned by the Worshipful Master to turn out in public procession on the anniversaries of Saints John and in funeral

procession of a Master Mason, or laying a cornerstone, but on all extraordinary Masonic occasions (except attendance on Divine Service for which no Dispensation is necessary), a Dispensation should be obtained from the Grand Master. (Art. X, Sec. 27)

#### **Regulations**

**38.30** Dispensations may be granted for public processions on extraordinary occasions. A Worshipful Master may summon the members of his Lodge to turn out in public procession without Dispensation on the anniversaries of the Saints John, for Masonic funerals, or to attend with the Grand Master or his Special Deputy in the ceremony of laying a cornerstone. A Lodge may meet and attend Divine Services, but not in Masonic regalia and the members shall not be summoned for the occasion. (See Article X, Section 27, Constitution)

**38.31** A Lodge cannot lawfully meet or work on Sunday, except for funerals, or to attend Divine Service, or for very urgent charity. But the members of Lodges shall not be summoned to attend Divine Service at any time, nor attend in Masonic regalia.

#### **Rulings and Decisions**

No Dispensation is required to open Lodge and attend Divine Service in a body without Masonic regalia. (1942 Proc. 43)

It is not proper to wear Masonic regalia when attending Divine Services. (1946 Proc. 34)

It is not proper for Lodge membership to attend Church services clothed as Masons. (1941 Proc. 86)

With written consent and approval of the Grand Master, Lodge Officers may wear regalia, jewels, and emblems of office on public occasions when representing the Fraternity. (1975 Proc. 66)

### **FUNERALS**

#### **Regulations**

**38.32** White gloves and aprons are badges of Symbolic Masonry. White or regularly recognized Masonic aprons shall be worn in the Lodge where it can be seen at all times, by all present, when working in the Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, or Master Mason Degree. White gloves should be worn in the Lodge on special occasions and in funeral and all other processions. Every Lodge is required to keep an ample supply of clean white gloves and aprons on hand at all times.

**38.33** It is competent for a Lodge to inter, with the funeral ceremonies, the remains of a deceased, visiting, or sojourning Brother in good standing, telegraphic information and request from his Lodge is sufficient evidence and authority, but the testimony of non-Masons, however creditable, is insufficient

for that purpose; *provided*, that a Lodge, in an emergency situation, on the presentation of a current dues card issued by his Lodge may conduct Masonic funeral services, (emergency meaning the Lodge is unable to contact his Grand Lodge or home Lodge on weekends and holidays.)

**38.34** A Lodge is not bound to inter, with Masonic Honors, the remains of a member of another Lodge, even at its request, when his conduct within its jurisdiction has been reprehensible.

**38.35** It is proper for a Lodge to inter with Masonic Honors the remains of a deceased Brother in good standing at the time of his death, who has committed suicide, when the Brethren are satisfied that no wicked motive prompted the act, and not otherwise.

**38.36** A Lodge may, at its discretion, inter with the funeral ceremonies the remains of a deceased unaffiliated Mason whose petition for affiliation has been rejected within one year prior to his death, or when his petition is pending or under any circumstances not in conflict with Masonic Law, and usage, or the true spirit of Freemasonry.

**38.37** A bereaved Lodge is at liberty to invite other Lodges to participate in the funeral service. They should not in such case, be themselves opened; but their members attend as visitors to the Communication of the bereaved Lodge. In the procession, however, the invited Lodge may make their own formation with their own Officers, the officiating Master being in complete charge of the procession and of the ceremony.

**38.38** Funeral processions must be formed in the Master Mason Lodge, in which Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts are not admitted.

**38.39** The family of a deceased Brother Mason may select the pallbearers from among Brother Masons or family friends. The family may request the services at the grave to be closed with the benediction by the attending minister, even though he be a non-Mason, which benediction shall be given when called for by the Worshipful Master after the Lodge ceremony has been completed.

**38.40** In all public processions, the Lodge moves and acts in Lodge capacity. It must not, therefore, be called to refreshment, but form and proceed regularly as a Lodge to do its outdoor work.

**38.41** A Mason residing twelve months or more under the jurisdiction of any Particular Lodge, willfully unaffiliated, shall not be entitled to any of the rights, privileges or benefits of Masonry,



including the right to visit Lodge; nor shall the funeral rites be paid to his memory in death, nor shall the Fraternity have any charge or responsibility as to his family.

**38.42** The Worshipful Master, in his discretion, may call and open a Called Communication of the Lodge for the sole and only purpose of conducting funeral ceremonies and thereafter, until the Worshipful Master shall close such Special Communication, members of the Lodge may be summoned, attend, meet, move in funeral procession, and conduct funeral ceremonies in Lodge formation without opening and closing of the Lodge. The Lodge shall in all other respects adhere to Masonic Law applicable to conduct of Masonic funerals. The Secretary shall keep minutes of each funeral ceremony, which minutes shall be read and acted upon at the next ensuing Stated Communication of the Lodge.

### **Rulings and Decisions**

It is not proper to allow aprons to be worn at a funeral conducted by Appendant Order. Aprons may be worn only when Lodge conducts funeral. (1947 Proc. 32)

A Mason suspended for N.P.D. or otherwise who dies while under such term of sentence can not be buried with Masonic rites. (1942 Proc. 57-58)

Lodge requesting courtesy funeral service by Lodge of another Jurisdiction must pay expenses incurred by Lodge performing services when requested to do so. (1941 Proc. 88)

It is proper for a Lodge to conduct graveside funeral service for interment of ashes of deceased Brother, as these ashes constitute the remains of the Brother. (1954 Proc. 67)

It is proper for a Lodge to conduct graveside funeral services for interment of ashes of deceased Brother whose remains were cremated. (1959 Proc. 57, 164)

A Mason who is delinquent in his Lodge dues but has not been suspended from the Lodge for such delinquency is eligible for Masonic funeral. (1964 Proc. 65, 268)

## **LODGE OF SORROW**

### **Regulations**

**38.43** A "Lodge of Sorrow" may be held by a Particular Lodge in the Lodge Room or be held in a church or public hall, or in the presence of friends in the Lodge Room, but should not be substituted for the funeral service at the time of interment, or at an early date thereafter.

### **Rulings and Decisions**

A Lodge of Sorrow may be held in Lodge without Dispensation, but if held in public, a Dispensation is required. (1942 Proc. 47)

A Lodge of Sorrow Ceremony may not be used in lieu of a funeral ceremony. (1946 Proc. 39)

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**38.44** According to proper Masonic usage and custom, no Brother Mason shall wear his hat, or any kind of head covering, in the Lodge, except the Worshipful Master, Acting Worshipful Master, or Grand Master.

**38.45** Upon request of the Worshipful Master a Past Grand Master may close any Lodge in ample form prescribed by the Committee on Work. (2008)

**Rulings and Decisions**

It would be improper for members of a Degree Team to wear caps in Lodge meeting. (1961 Proc. 162, 168, 318)

It is proper for Low Twelve Club to display an open Bible on Altar but not proper to display Three Great Lights. (1967 Proc. 57, 211)

In conducting funeral ceremonies, the Master shall remove his hat for the opening prayer and remain uncovered until after the Benediction. (1981 Proc. 130, 374)

The wearing of a small skullcap by a Jewish Brother while in open Lodge does not violate Regulation 38.44 and should be permitted. (2000 Proc. 97)