

CHAPTER 41

DIMITS; TRANSFER CERTIFICATES AND AFFILIATION

DIMITS

Constitutional Provisions

Any member of a Lodge who has no charges preferred against him has a clear Masonic right to withdraw from membership by dimit, on payment of all dues against him. (Art. X, Sec. 21)

Regulations

41.01 Any member of a Lodge, including Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts, in good standing and not under pending or anticipated charges shall be entitled to a dimit or transfer certificate upon request therefore in writing or in open Lodge.

41.02 A Resolution requiring a Brother to dimit is irregular.

41.03 It is improper for those attending a Lodge Communication to dimit all who are present, leaving no members of the Lodge to transact business or conduct the closing ceremonies. Such action would be void.

41.04 A dimit signed by a Worshipful Master or Warden acting as such, and by a Secretary, who were present and were among the dimitees, under such circumstances would have no force or effect, for, if such action were valid, their membership and official authority would cease as soon as the Lodge had voted to dimit them, per Article X, Section 11, and Article X, Section 21, of the Constitution, and Regulations 19.13 and 41.10. (1985)

41.05 After a dimit has been granted, but not delivered, it may be withheld by order of the Master, upon cause shown, for the purpose of Masonic investigation.

41.06 When a member by affiliation desires to be dimitted, he must take a new dimit, for his former one cannot be returned to him.

41.07 Where a Brother, by mistake or inadvertence, has been recorded as dimitted, the records will be corrected and his name restored to the roll; but he is liable for his dues.

41.08 A dimit must be signed by the Master, countersigned by the Secretary, and have an impression of the Lodge Seal upon it.

41.09 If a dimitted Brother has lost his dimit, the Lodge, with due caution, may upon his application, grant him a Certificate that he was regularly dimitted on a given day, and that such Certificate has been granted him on his representation that his original dimit has been lost. A duplicate dimit cannot properly be issued in such cases.

41.10 Art. X, Sec. 21 of the Constitution, provides that any member of a Lodge can dimit, but Art. X, Sec. 11 makes a distinction between member and Master and Wardens by inhibiting the resignation of Master and Wardens during their term of office, and as dimitting has the same force as resigning, so far as giving up office is concerned, it logically follows that Masters and Wardens cannot dimit.

41.11 Members of a Lodge whose Charter has been forfeited or surrendered, whose only dereliction or disability rests upon arrears for dues, shall, upon paying the same to the Grand Secretary together with \$1.00 fee for the use of the Grand Lodge, receive a Grand Lodge Certificate, upon which he can make application for membership to any regular Lodge.

41.12 A Mason whose name does not appear upon the rolls of a Lodge at the time it becomes dormant, must produce conclusive evidence that he was a member in good standing in said Lodge at the time of its demise, before he is entitled to a Certificate from the Grand Secretary qualifying him to make application for membership in a regular Lodge.

Rulings and Decisions

Lodge may give dimit without giving transfer certificate. (1947 Proc. 32)
 Life of dimit is not limited in this Grand Jurisdiction but privileges and benefits of Masonry expire after one (1) year. (1943 Proc. 48)
 Action of Lodge dimitting thirteen (13) of total nineteen (19) members including Secretary and three (3) principal Officers was irregular and proceedings abated. (1942 Proc. 56)
 The term "in good standing" refers to Master Masons and not to Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Masons. A Transfer Certificate may only be issued to a Master Mason "in good standing." A Transfer Certificate may not be issued to Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Masons inasmuch as said Brothers are not subject to Lodge dues and may only be suspended as a result of chargers of unmasonic conduct being filed against them, being found guilty, and the penalty imposed by the Lodge or Grand Lodge being suspension or expulsion. Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Masons may be issued EA/FC Dimits (Form GL-611) as long as their progress has not been arrested, in accordance to Regulation 37.07 of the Digest of the Masonic Law of Florida. (2019 Proc. 114)

TRANSFER CERTIFICATES

Regulations

41.13 A member of a Lodge desiring to dimit therefrom must apply in writing over his signature for either a dimit or a transfer certificate.

If he is in good standing in the Lodge at the time of the first Communication at which his application may be acted upon, his request, if for a dimit, shall be granted by order of the Master and

entered of record, and no vote of the Lodge is required; if for a transfer certificate, it shall be granted by order of the Master and a certificate shall be issued signed, by the Secretary, with the Seal of the Lodge affixed.

The certificate shall state that the holder thereof is a member in good standing, that no charges are pending against him and that there is no reason to anticipate any such charges and that the certificate may be presented with and in support of a petition for affiliation with any Florida Lodge and any Lodge of another Grand Jurisdiction with which this Grand Lodge maintains fraternal relations where a similar provision of law prevails. The certificate shall not be addressed to any named Lodge but to any and all Lodges to which the certificate may be presented.

If the petitioner is elected to membership, the electing Lodge shall give notice of such election to the Lodge issuing the certificate; and such Lodge shall at its next Stated Communication transmit to the electing Lodge for a dimit for the member transferring his membership.

The Secretary of the electing Lodge will record the date of said dimit, and the Brother shall be a member of that Lodge from the date of the dimit.

A transfer certificate issued by a Lodge of another Grand Jurisdiction with which this Grand Lodge maintains Masonic relations may be presented in support of a petition for affiliation and proceedings thereafter thereon to be generally as herein provided.

No dimit shall be issued after issue of transfer certificate except upon request of Lodge electing certificate holder to membership or to the certificate holder upon return of the transfer certificate and request for dimit.

A dimit is fully effective from date of issue until surrendered to the Lodge with which the holder affiliates and no dues are payable after issuance of the dimit until affiliation with a Lodge.

A transfer certificate is effective from date of issue until the end of the Masonic year in which it is issued and does not excuse the holder from payment of dues.

EFFECT OF DIMIT

Regulations

41.14 A member paying his dues in full and applying for a dimit prior to December 27th is not chargeable with dues for the following year, for want of Lodge action, as action should be taken by the Lodge on or before December 27th.

41.15 If a Brother seeks to continue his membership after request for dimit has been granted but before the paper dimit has been delivered, he must apply for affiliation in the usual way and submit to the ballot.

Rulings and Decisions

A dimitted Brother is still under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge. (1948 Proc. 50)
When a dual member takes his dimit from his Lodge of original membership and places it in the Lodge of dual membership, he automatically becomes a full member of the latter Lodge without need of filing a petition or being balloted upon. (1954 Proc. 73)

DOCUMENTS HAVING EFFECT OF DIMITS

Regulations

41.16 A certificate from a regular Grand Lodge or its competent authority, stating that the holder thereof is a regular Master Mason, was a member in good standing when his Lodge made its last Returns, and that such Lodge is defunct, has the force and effect of a dimit in Florida.

41.17 Particular Lodges in this Grand Jurisdiction may recognize as a dimit, any document or documents from a Grand Jurisdiction or a Particular Lodge thereof with which this Grand Jurisdiction is in fraternal relations in those cases and under those circumstances where such documents are recognized and treated as dimits by such other Grand Jurisdictions.

41.18 A dimit from another Jurisdiction or a document having the value of the same, shall require the Certificate of the Grand Secretary of the Grand Jurisdiction of issue, that the same is regular, when deemed necessary by the Grand Secretary of The Grand Lodge of Florida.

Rulings and Decisions

Lodge may accept certificates of dismissal from another Grand Jurisdiction presented by E.A. Brother as dimit. (1947 Proc. 32)

Letter from Secretary of Lodge stating that bearer is in good standing will not support petition for affiliation with Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction. (1946 Proc. 39-40)

Certificate of dismissal certified by Grand Secretary of another Grand Jurisdiction may be received in lieu of dimit with petition for affiliation by an Entered Apprentice from such other Grand Jurisdiction. (1965 Proc. 196, 199)

Rulings and Decisions

It is my decision that Ornan Lodge No. 117, F. & A. M., having received the petition and acted in good faith upon the affiliation of Brother Melvyn A. Courtney and having received authorization from the Secretary of a sister jurisdiction on November 18, 1982, that Brother Courtney is an affiliated member of Ornan Lodge No. 117, F. & A. M., and this Grand Jurisdiction with effective date of said affiliation as recorded in the minutes of Ornan Lodge No. 117, F. & A. M., June 29, 1984. (1985 Proc. 90)

The term “in good standing” refers to Master Masons and not to Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Masons. A Transfer Certificate may only be issued to a Master Mason “in good standing.” A Transfer Certificate may not be issued to Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Masons inasmuch as said Brothers are not subject to Lodge dues and may only be suspended as a result of charges of unmasonic conduct being filed against them, being found guilty, and the penalty imposed by the Lodge or Grand Lodge being suspension or expulsion. Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Masons may be issued EA/FC Dimits (Form GL-611) as long as their progress has not been arrested, in accordance to Regulation 37.07 of the Digest of the Masonic Law of Florida. (2019 Proc.114)

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AFFILIATION Constitutional Provisions

Any upright Mason, on presentation of satisfactory evidence of his having paid all dues against him, and having regularly withdrawn from a Lodge from which he was last a member, may present a petition in writing, which must be vouched for by two members of the Lodge, at a Stated Communication, and which must lie over at least one month for the Brethren to make due inquiry into the character and standing of the petitioner; ***. (Art. X, Sec. 15(a); Excerpt)

DEFINITION

Regulations

41.19 (346) The word “membership” as it occurs in Article X, Sections 14, 15, and 16 of the Constitution, shall be construed to mean and include “affiliation.”

ELIGIBILITY OF PETITIONERS

Regulations

41.20 A Mason, with a dimit, can affiliate with any regular Lodge that will receive him, regardless of his residence, without waiver of jurisdiction from the Lodge within whose jurisdiction he may reside, but due inquiry should be made of the Lodge nearest his residence and the Lodge granting his dimit, as to his Masonic standing.

41.21 A Mason, whose Lodge is dormant or defunct, is not suspended, but merely unaffiliated, and may apply for affiliation only upon a proper Certificate from the Grand Secretary, to whom a fee of one dollar and all arrears must be paid; *provided*, that it shall be in the power of the Grand Lodge, or the Grand Master in recess, to remit such arrears in meritorious cases, upon the recommendations of the Lodge to which such Mason proposes to apply for affiliation. (See Regs. 27.15 and 43.06)

41.22 A petition for affiliation from a person claiming to have been made a Mason by a Lodge under a Charter from a Grand Body not recognized by this Grand Lodge, cannot be entertained in this Grand Jurisdiction.

41.23 A Lodge cannot lawfully affiliate a dimitted Mason while he is under charges in another Lodge.

41.24 When a Brother is rejected upon his petition for affiliation, by one of two or more Lodges having concurrent jurisdiction over primitive material, he may apply to either of the others.

41.25 Masons made in Military Lodges may, upon satisfactory evidence produced, be affiliated with any Regular Lodge, but the Lodge should carefully guard against imposition.

Rulings and Decisions

A candidate for affiliation is not restricted as to residence. (1942 Proc. 55)
 Lodge having jurisdiction may receive petition for F.C. Degree from E.A. of a defunct Lodge certified by the Grand Secretary. (1942 Proc. 45)
 Members suspended from now defunct Lodge of another Jurisdiction must be reinstated in original Jurisdiction before application for affiliation can be received by Florida Lodge. (1944 Proc. 31)
 A petition for affiliation will not be received on dimit from Lodge under direct jurisdiction of Grand Lodge with which Grand Lodge of Florida is not in fraternal accord. (1950 Proc. 65)
 Proceedings of Lodge, admitting to membership by affiliation of member of a Lodge not recognized by the Grand Jurisdiction of Florida, were irregular and should be abated by order of the Master. (1961 Proc. 162, 168, 319)

PETITION FOR AFFILIATION

Regulations

41.26 Petitions for affiliation used by the Particular Lodges for petitioners from Grand Jurisdictions other than Florida shall be amended forthwith to include the following: Do You Know: To be eligible for resident and/or non-resident relief, a Mason must have been a member in good standing in a Florida Lodge for not less than 10 years, the last three years whereof must have been continuous at the time the application is made?

_____.

Do you know it is further provided that a Mason affiliating with a Florida Lodge subsequent to attaining the age of 70 years shall not be eligible for resident and/or non-resident relief? (2003)

_____.

41.27 A Lodge can properly refuse to receive a petition for affiliation. A Brother has the right to offer his petition, but the Lodge may refuse to receive it at its pleasure.

Rulings and Decisions

A new petition for affiliation is not necessary after rejection but same petition may be renewed at any subsequent Communication. (1946 Proc. 36)

PROCEDURE ON PETITION

Regulations

41.28 It is the duty of a Lodge, before admitting to membership a dimitted Mason residing outside of its territorial limits, to make due inquiry as to his Masonic standing of the Lodge nearest his residence and of the Lodge granting his dimit.

41.29 When a Brother affiliates his dimit must be filed in the archives of the Lodge.

41.30 The Secretary of the Lodge must not place his file mark upon a Brother's dimit, unless he be accepted; for in the case of rejection, it should be returned without mutilation.

41.31 A Brother by affiliation, or upon receiving the M.M. Degree, thereby becomes a member of the Lodge in which he was elected to receive it.

41.32 The petition of a Brother rejected for affiliation, may be renewed at any subsequent Stated Communication of the Lodge.

References

A collective ballot may be taken upon petitions for affiliation. Reg. 35.08

Rulings and Decisions

Petitioner cannot withdraw petition for affiliation and dimit after it has been received by Lodge action. (1946 Proc. 40)

Vote on petition for affiliation before Constitutional time is irregular and proceedings should abate. (1943 Proc. 75)

Petition of applicant for affiliation from Jurisdiction requiring certificate of election before issuance of dimit may be voted on before applicant secures dimit. (1943 Proc. 79)

Correct procedure on petition for affiliation supported by dimit from Lodge in Grand Jurisdiction with which we do not enjoy fraternal relations is for petitioner to renounce allegiance to that Lodge and proceed as any non-Mason. (1946 Proc. 39)

The Grand Jurisdiction of Florida is in fraternal relations with the Grand Lodge of Japan and Florida Lodges may properly receive and act upon petition for affiliation from a member of a regular Lodge of that Grand Jurisdiction. (1968 Proc. 57, 212)

All Petitions requiring an investigation and a ball ballot, with the exception of a Petition for Plural Membership or a membership transfer from one Florida Lodge to another, require a Background Check. (2009 Proc.121)

FEES

Regulations

41.33 Whether or not an affiliation fee shall be charged is left with the Lodges, respectively, but the amount of fee, if any, must be fixed by By-Law.

41.34 An applicant for affiliation cannot be charged with Lodge dues while he holds his dimit, nor is he liable to any pecuniary assessments.

41.35 A By-Law of a Particular Lodge, requiring from an applicant for affiliation, a fee of one dollar, or any other amount, for each year the applicant has held his dimit, is in conflict with the Constitution of the Grand Lodge, and is therefore void.

Rulings and Decisions

A Brother who withdraws from a Lodge by dimit is required to pay all current dues before issuance of dimit and if the Brother in that same year affiliates with another Florida Lodge he is not required to pay dues to the Lodge with which he affiliates because Masonic Law does not contemplate a Brother paying dues more than one time each year. (1959 Proc. 60, 164)

UNAFFILIATED MASONS

Regulations

41.36 An applicant for affiliation must present his dimit, and abide the result of the ballot. He cannot force himself into the membership of any Lodge, and therefore has no right to demand an investigation in case of rejection.

41.37 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.

References

As to penal jurisdiction over unaffiliated Mason, see Reg. 44.12.

Rulings and Decisions

When it is made to clearly appear that a dimit was requested through error from a Particular Lodge, it being the Brother's intent to request dimit only from Appendant Order, such request for dimit may be withdrawn and if any dimit has been issued thereon the same may be returned to the Lodge and cancelled. (1959 Proc. 57, 164)

- (a) A dimit more than one year old will support and is an adequate predicate for petition for affiliation.
- (b) It is not the age of the dimit that deprives a dimitted Brother of his Masonic right, but it is the willful unaffiliation for more than one year which deprives him of such rights. (See Regulations 38.41, 41.37) (1959 Proc. 58, 164)