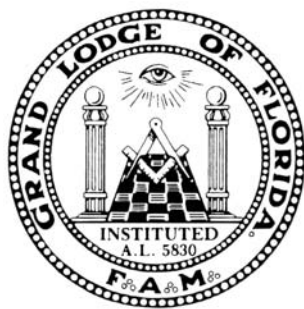


**The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge
of
Free and Accepted Masons of Florida**



**LODGE OFFICER TRAINING COURSE
STUDY GUIDE**

Revised 2011

Series I

**Module II
Lessons 1 through 7
Administration**

Masonic Education Committee

INTRODUCTION

The Worshipful Master as the manager of his Lodge must be able to understand and control all aspects of Lodge finances and the varied responsibilities associated with all the required reports that must be completed during his year in office.

It is equally important for the Worshipful Master to know and to understand these elements and the effect they have on his Lodge when any portion thereof fails to be completed on time or when adequate financing is not planned for and/or ensured.

Completion of this lesson should enable you to better understand the "how to and why for" of Lodge Finances and Required Reports. It should also assist you in working with and understanding the above as well as working through your Lodge Secretary to ensure your reports are submitted to the Grand Secretary accurately and in a timely manner.

LESSON I

LODGE FINANCES AND REQUIRED REPORTS

Lodge income is derived from many sources. These include dues, fees for the degrees, reinstatement fees, transfer fees, charity and special one-time collections for any approved purpose.

Lodge Secretaries should notify the members of their dues obligation between October 15th and December 1st, as all dues are required to be paid by December 27th. On July 1st of the following year, it is the responsibility of the Secretary to send delinquent dues notices to all those members who have not paid their dues as prescribed under Section 20, Article X of the Constitution. On October 1st, the Secretary will issue a final notice and summons to each delinquent member to be present at a stated communication of the Lodge in December, to answer to charges of delinquency or neglect and show cause why he should not be suspended. What a Lodge can charge for Dues, Fees and special collections are approved by the Lodge, with the dues and fees to be written in the Lodge By-Laws.

One point to remember is that all monies must be received and accounted for by the Secretary and turned over to the Treasurer, who is the custodian of all Lodge funds. The Treasurer shall keep the Lodge funds at all times, subject to the immediate control of the Lodge and shall pay out none but return fees and charity funds except by Lodge action and the Master's written order, which in every instance must constitute his voucher, except that Lodge action is not required for the payment of Grand Lodge Annual Revenue and fees. It is a must to effect all money transactions in a "Master Mason" Lodge at a Stated Communication.

Lodges will have a finance committee as prescribed in the Uniform Code of By-Laws, Chapter 24, Section 24.05, 10.02. It may be called budget, finance, planning committee, etc, but it serves the same purpose. Income that must be managed depends upon first the amount coming in, and secondly, the liabilities and long range plans of the Lodge. Each Lodge must assess their assets, define their liabilities, and finally, adopt some sort of plan. The Finance Committee "shall also examine carefully and fully, and report upon in writing within thirty days after the close of the Masonic year, all books, accounts, records and vouchers of the Treasurer and Secretary." Remember, all approvals are made by the Craft while at labor in a Stated Communication in the Master Mason Degree. As all things are the responsibility of the Worshipful Master, he automatically is the one in charge, to appoint Past Masters with forethought, members of the Lodge with experience, and current elected Officers to carry out this task. Normally, a total of five (5) members should be able to function effectively. Insure that they function as a committee and that they report their findings and recommendations to the Craft. It is the Craft that decides a final course of action, after discussion and vote in open Lodge. Insure that motions are recorded in the minutes for future reference. Be aware of actions necessary to change or rescind past actions of the Lodge. In some instances, prior notification to the Craft may be necessary to effect changes to prior adopted items.

The minutes of the Lodge should be taken at all communications, whether it be a stated communication or called communication and is probably the most important record of the Lodge. The minutes should contain the following: Masonic Education, Balloting, Charity, Degree Work, Sick and/or Infirm Reports, all matters effecting expenditures and/or income

In the event of a Lodge opened for the express purpose of a funeral or a degree, only those items applicable to that Lodge are necessary. For example, you would not collect charity at a funeral, or conduct business at a degree.

Notify the Grand Secretary's Office that the Annual Elections were held and furnish names, addresses and phone numbers of newly elected Officers.

Notify the Grand Secretary's Office of those Brothers that will be attending the Annual Grand Communication as voting delegates.

The Individual Data Change Sheet (GL -705) requires prompt completion and forwarding to the Office of the Grand Secretary. Instructions are covered in the Secretary's Administration Guide GL-215. These data changes can greatly enhance your individual preparation of the "Annual Return." If data changes are not done as they occur, you are just going to have to do them as a part of the supporting documentation for your annual return. It is best to do them as they occur.

The Lodge Annual Return is prepared by the Computer and forwarded in duplicate to the respective Lodges on or before January 25th of each year. The Lodge Secretary shall immediately check these returns for accuracy make the necessary corrections and return one corrected copy with remittance to cover the corrected amount to reach the Grand Secretary's Office on or before February 15th. Promptness is necessary to avoid a penalty per Regulations 14.08 and 30.01. The Grand Lodge fiscal year ends March 31st and late returns may disqualify Lodge Representatives from attending the Communication of Grand Lodge, per Article X, Section 22 of the Constitution.

Other reports include the Masonic Education Report, the Public Education and Citizenship Report, the Let Your Pennies Make Good Cents Report and special one-time reports. In all instances, the required report is furnished to the Worshipful Master at the Annual Grand Communication or mailed to the Secretary. Regulation 22.07 "Let Your Pennies Make Good Cents" Reports report what a Lodge has collected the previous quarters, with the reports due in the Grand Secretary's Office within 15 days after the end of the quarter.

Each Lodge must decide exactly who is to manage the report, keep track of required actions and formulate the plans to meet the objective of the report. Perhaps the best one to manage is the Secretary. Items to be considered are as follows:

- a. Thoroughly review the required report.
- b. Establish a plan of action.
- c. Appoint a member to follow up on each segment.
- d. Record the completed action; who, where and date.
- e. Compile the completed report and meet the established due date.

Always know where the finally prepared report is to be sent. It may be the District Deputy, the State or Zone Chairman or perhaps to Grand Lodge.

County, State and Federal Reports

These include application for exemption of property taxes, personal property taxes of the Lodge, Sales Tax Reports where the Lodge collects sales tax and the Federal Income Tax.

County Tax: That part of the Lodge used solely by the Craft is tax exempt. Any part that is rented is levied taxes.

Personal Property Tax: Exemption must be applied for annually. Most applications are automatically sent by the Tax Collector and simply have to be completed and returned for exemption. Know your limits; most Lodges do not have enough personal property to have to pay tax.

State Sales Tax: This is paid monthly to the State Department of Revenue. Rental property is an instance where tax must be collected.

Federal Tax: This is filed annually using Treasury Department Form 990 or 990-T. Due dates are March 15th of each year. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the Grand Secretary's Office.

Any report or return required by State or Federal Law is required to be submitted to the Grand Secretary at least thirty (30) days prior to the final date of filing. Evidence of any exemption should also be submitted thirty (30) days prior to the due date of the report. Examples: Ad Valorem Tax Returns for Exemption of Lodge Property, I.R.S. Form 990, etc.

The Digest of Masonic Law, the Secretary's Administrative Guide GL-215 and various timely letters of instruction provided by the Grand Secretary detail these items. One other thing that may be helpful is that an annual audit of all Lodge funds be performed by an independent accountant.

LESSON II

PETITIONS

This lesson is to familiarize you with the various Grand Lodge Petitions and their proper use in accordance with Masonic Laws as outlined in the *Digest of Masonic Law of Florida*.

GENERAL

- A. All petitions should and must be handled by the Secretary of the Lodge in a *prompt* and professional manner. This procedure is fully covered in the Digest.
- B. There are five (5) basic types of petitions.
 - 1. Petition for initiation
 - 2. Petition for affiliation
 - 3. Petition for plural membership
 - 4. Petition for dual membership
 - 5. Petition for reinstatement

All of which must be accompanied by the necessary fees or dues as the case may be; and a petition for affiliation must be accompanied by a "Transfer Certificate of Good Standing" or a "Dimit" before being accepted by the Secretary. A petition for initiation from a petitioner who lives outside the jurisdiction of the Lodge being petitioned cannot be acted upon, or received by the Lodge until after a Waiver of Jurisdiction has been granted by the Lodge within whose jurisdiction the petitioner resides.

- C. Jurisdiction
 - 1. A Lodge has jurisdiction over the territory surrounding the Lodge and extending in every direction one-half the distance to the nearest Lodge. A Lodge having concurrent jurisdiction with other Lodges shall notify such other Lodges of reception of petitions for the Degrees and for affiliation and of acceptance or rejections of such petitions. (Reg. 18.01)
 - 2. For purposes of receiving petitions for the Degrees, Lodges have concurrent jurisdiction as follows:
 - (a) All Lodges meeting in the same building or Temple;
 - (b) All Lodges in the same city, town or other incorporated area, and
 - (c) All Lodges in the same Masonic District. (Reg. 18.02)
 - 3. Any two or more Lodges with contiguous territories, without regard to boundaries of Masonic Districts or of cities, towns or other incorporated areas, may enter into

agreement for concurrent jurisdiction for reception of petitions for the Degrees, which agreement shall be in writing approved by the adoption of appropriate Resolution at a Stated Communication of each Lodge by majority vote of members present and voting, and shall be effective upon approval by the Grand Master. Such agreement shall not be construed to impair, restrict or limit the concurrent jurisdiction with other Lodges under provisions of Regulation 18.02 nor shall such agreement be construed to enlarge the jurisdiction of Lodges not participating in such agreement.

Procedure: Each Lodge desiring to enter into a Jurisdiction Agreement should notify their membership of the date of such action, and after adoption by a majority vote in each Lodge, a copy of this Resolution from each Lodge must be forwarded to the Grand Master for his approval. (Reg. 18.03)

4. A Lodge of concurrent jurisdiction, may after expiration of six (6) months after rejection, receive the petition for the Degrees of a rejected candidate of another Lodge of the concurrent jurisdiction and no waiver of jurisdiction by the rejecting Lodge shall be necessary or required, but due inquiry shall be made of the rejecting Lodge. (Reg. 36.02)

D. Petitions Committee:

1. The Worshipful Master of each Particular Lodge shall appoint a committee of not less than three and not more than seven members to be known as the Petitions Committee, the duties of which shall be to cause each applicant for the Degrees before his petition has been received by the Lodge to appear personally before the Committee and to be interviewed and give such information to the Committee as may be requested. The Committee shall then make its report to the Worshipful Master after which the petition shall follow the usual Masonic procedure. (Reg. 33.08)

2. The importance of the Worshipful Master's selection of these Committee members cannot be overemphasized as normally they are the first officials of the Lodge that a petitioner will meet with. Therefore, the following recommendations are made:

a. The Committee should consist of Brothers who are knowledgeable and well-versed in Masonic Law in general and particularly those laws pertaining to Petitions.

b. The duty of this Committee is to meet with the petitioner and screen his

petition and ascertain if the petition is made out correctly and that all the questions are answered, jurisdiction satisfied, have the petitioner fill out the form entitled "GL-602, Supplementary Information for Petitioner for the Degrees of Freemasonry." Ensure the form, "GL-601A, Applicant Background Waiver," is accomplished and a check is accompanying to cover the cost of the background check, fees for the petition and first degree. Fully inform the petitioner of just what he is getting himself into, i.e., procedures that his petition must follow, time that will be required of him to be spent away from his family for Masonic instructions, etc. Have the petitioner read a copy of the By-Laws of the Lodge and answer any questions that he may have about our Fraternity.

E. Investigation Committee

1. Upon the Lodge receiving a petition for the Degrees, or for affiliation, or for reinstatement, or for dual membership or Plural Membership , the Worshipful Master shall appoint a Committee of three members of the Lodge to inquire into the character and standing of the petitioner. Each member of the Committee will receive from the Secretary the results of the criminal background investigation and shall investigate independently then submit his report in writing to the Lodge or authorize some Brother to report for him if unable to be present in person. The Committee may make a unanimous report or a divided report, PROVIDED, if only two members of the Committee report, the Worshipful Master, in his discretion, may proceed with the ballot if no objection is made thereto. Upon the filing of a report and acceptance thereof by the Worshipful Master and the Lodge, the Committee is automatically discharged. (Reg. 24.05 By-Law 10.07)

2. This Committee is guided in its duties by Chapter 31 of the Digest, i.e., 31.01, 31.02 and 31.03.

31.01 - Every candidate for Freemasonry must be a man, freeborn, of lawful age, being under the tongue of good repute and well recommended, and, unless Dispensation is granted by the Grand Master, having no maim or defect of body that may render him incapable of learning the art of being advanced to the several Degrees.

31.02 It is a safe rule in these days, though its antiquity may be greatly doubted, that

a candidate should be able to read and write.

31.03 A Lodge may not receive a petition for the Degrees of Freemasonry from any person who has been convicted of a felony and who has not been restored to full civil rights. A Lodge may not ballot on a petition until the Investigating Committee (formally referred to as the “Character Committee”) has reviewed a criminal background investigation. See Chapter 31.03.1

3. It must be understood that the Petitions Committee and the Investigating Committee are two distinctly different committees, each having its own and important duties and responsibilities.

PETITIONS

PETITIONS FOR THE DEGREES

1. PETITIONS: Petition must be complete with every item answered.
2. RECOMMENDATIONS: Two (2) members from the petitioned Lodge.
3. REFERENCES: Three (3) persons who have known him for at least six (6) months.
4. RESIDENCY:
 - a. Actual residence in the State for twelve (12) months and within the jurisdiction of the Lodge for six (6) months.
 - b. Intent of the petitioner to remain permanently in the Lodge jurisdiction.
5. VALIDITY: Submit petition to Lodge Secretary for validity.
6. JURISDICTION MUST BE ASSURED: If petitioner resides outside the Lodge jurisdiction, waiver must be obtained. If there are doubts, a committee should be appointed to resolve all questions that may arise. (34.08, 36.02, 36.03)
7. FEE: Petition must be accompanied by a check for the E.A. Degree and the fee for the criminal background investigation. (Art. X, Sec.13)
8. REJECTION: A petitioner who has been previously rejected in this jurisdiction may not petition the same Lodge, one of concurrent jurisdiction or any other Lodge until after six (6) months from the *Date of Rejection*. A petitioner rejected in another Grand Jurisdiction must have his petition submitted to the Grand Master for his attention and action before it can be acted upon by the Particular Lodge petitioned.
9. If jurisdiction is resolved, information on the petition must go to the Petitions Committee before it is received by the Lodge. (33.08)
10. PRESENT PETITION: The Secretary will present the petition to the Lodge at its next Stated Communication, after the Worshipful Master has received the report from the Petitions Committee. After the Lodge receives a petition it becomes a permanent record of the Lodge and should be filed by the Secretary. (33.03)
11. PETITION RECEIVED: After a petition has been received by the Lodge, it must lie over at least one month for the Brethren to make due inquiry into the character and standing of the candidate. The criminal background investigation report is shown to the Investigation Committee that is appointed by the Worshipful Master. They investigate and report back to the Lodge individually as to acceptance or rejection of the candidate. (Art. X, S.14) (33.02)
12. REFUSED PETITION: If a petition is refused by a Lodge, candidate rejected, or withdrawn by a candidate in the Petitions Committee meeting, fees must be returned. Any fee received for the purpose of a criminal background investigation shall not be returned. (33.03, 33.05)
13. RECEIVED PETITION: Following a report of Petitions Committee, petition must be received or rejected by the Lodge. Petition when received, cannot be withdrawn or returned. It must go to

Ballot. (Art. X, S. 14)

14. **BALLOTING:** Balloting must be done in a Master Mason Lodge, and at a Stated Communication; except by special permission by the Grand Lodge or its authority. (35.01, 6.10(b), 25.02(a))

15. **UNANIMOUS BALLOT:** Ballot must be unanimous. Separate collective ballot may be taken upon five (5) petitions for the Degrees, but when one (1) or more black cubes appear, a separate ballot shall be taken on each petition or request and in the event of a single black cube in such separate ballot, such separate ballot shall be spread again in accordance with requirements of Section 16, Article X of the Constitution. (Reg. 35.08)

16. **PHYSICAL REGULATIONS:** When a petitioner for the Degrees is presented to the Secretary of the Lodge and there is any indication that the petitioner has or suffers some physical disability or handicap he should refer to Regs. 31.01, 31.04 and 31.05

17. **BY-LAWS:** Every Candidate for initiation should read the By-Laws of the Lodge.

18. **JURISDICTION:** When a Lodge lawfully assumes original jurisdiction, it cannot be rudely divested thereof; therefore, no Lodge can lawfully finish work begun by another surviving Lodge without its consent. Jurisdiction may be waived over the candidate elected to receive the Degrees, but not over Entered Apprentices and Fellow Crafts who may request a dimit or Transfer Certificate per Regulation 41.01.

**PETITIONS
DIMITS, AND PETITION WITH TRANSFER CERTIFICATES
AND PETITIONS FOR AFFILIATION WITH A DIMIT**

(See Chapter 41 - Digest of Masonic Law)

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. (Article X, Section 21)

REGULATIONS FREQUENTLY USED

Reg. 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.

The form of dimit for Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft shall be prepared by the Grand Secretary with the approval of the Grand Master, and copies furnished to the particular Lodges, which shall show the complete Masonic History of the Brother receiving the dimit, including, but not limited to, date of initiation and date of passing if a Fellow Craft, and status as to proficiency and other relevant information.

Reg. 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.

Reg 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.

Reg. 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 upon his representation that his original dimit has been lost. A duplicate dimit cannot properly be issued in such cases.

Reg. 41.13 (Excerpt one) A member of a Lodge desiring to dimit therefrom must apply in writing over his signature for either a dimit or a transfer certificate. (Excerpt two) 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.

RULINGS AND DECISIONS

Life of a dimit is not limited in this Grand Jurisdiction but privileges and

benefits of Masonry expire after one (1) year. (1943 Proc., Pg. 48)

PETITIONS

EFFECT OF A DIMIT

Reg. 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.

Reg. 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.

DOCUMENTS HAVING EFFECT OF DIMITS

REGULATIONS FREQUENTLY USED

Reg. 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.

Reg. 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 dimit by such other Grand Jurisdictions.

Reg. 41.18 A dimit from another Jurisdiction or a document having the value of same shall require the Certification 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 a dimit. (1947 Proc, Pg. 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, Pg. 39-40)

Certificate of dismissal certified by the 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, Pg. 196, 199)

PETITIONS 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. (Article X, Section 15; Excerpt)

ELIGIBILITY OF PETITIONERS

Reg. 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.

Reg. 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.

PETITION FOR AFFILIATION

Reg. 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.

PROCEDURE ON PETITION

Reg. 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 from the Lodge nearest his residence and of the Lodge granting his dimit.

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

FEEES

Reg. 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.

UNAFFILIATED MASONS

Reg. 41.37 A Mason residing twelve (12) 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.

PETITIONS

PETITIONS FOR AFFILIATION BY TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Since the procedure of Petitioning for Affiliation by Transfer of Membership per Regulation 41.13 is somewhat involved, the required forms are shown and a step by step procedure is outlined for the guidance of the Secretary.

TRANSFER CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING
THIS BECOMES A DIMIT UPON ELECTION

DOES NOT REQUIRE BACKGROUND CHECK IF IN FL

To All the Enlightened Wheresoever Dispersed to Whom This Shall Come, Fraternal Greetings:

_____ Lodge No. _____, F. & A.M. located in _____, Florida, and working under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Florida.

This is to certify that Brother _____, whose signature appears in the margin, is a Master Mason in good standing in this Lodge, has paid his Dues for this year, and is not currently under any Masonic charges. As such, we commend him to the Fraternal regard of all Regular Lodges.

This Certificate has been granted on the ____ day of _____, _____ and expires on December 27th of the year issued. Upon the Brother's election into another Lodge, this Certificate automatically becomes a Dimit, and when the bottom portion is detached and returned to the Grand Lodge of Florida, his transfer of membership is complete.

This Brother is a Perpetual Member of this Lodge, in the amount of \$ _____. This Perpetual Membership will be transferred to the Particular Lodge in Florida with which he affiliates.

WITNESS our hands and Seal of said Lodge

Worshipful Master

(SEAL)

Secretary

I, Richard E. Lynn, P.G.M., Grand Secretary of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Florida, certify that the Lodge named on this document is a Regular Lodge working under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Florida.



Grand Secretary

(after the member signs in the margin, keep this portion for the receiving Lodge's records)

(Detach and return this portion to complete transfer of membership if out of Florida)

To this Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida:

This is to certify that Brother _____, who was granted a Transfer Certificate of Good Standing on the ____ day of _____, ____ by _____ Lodge No. _____, was properly elected into _____, Lodge No. _____. Under the Grand Jurisdiction of _____ on the ____ day of _____, _____.

Given under my hand and Seal of this Lodge on the ____ day of _____, _____.

Secretary

(Seal)GL-604 02/08

FORM A

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FLORIDA LODGES:

After receiving the Brother's ORIGINAL, SIGNED request for a transfer certificate, his Home Lodge will fill out, sign & seal the top portion of this form. Please also fill out the back portion, showing the Brother's degree dates.

If the Brother is transferring within Florida

Send the entire form to the Lodge he is petitioning. Upon election, the bottom portion is filled out by his new Lodge and sent to his old Lodge. Both Lodges must also submit a GL-705 to the Grand Lodge to report the transfer. The Brother's membership is transferred immediately upon the bottom portion being sent to his old Lodge. The top and bottom portions should be kept by the new and old Lodges respectively, and placed in the member's record.

If the Brother is transferring out of state:

Send the entire form to the Grand Lodge. It will be passed to the other Jurisdiction and the Lodge within. You will be notified when his transfer is complete.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FOREIGN LODGES:

This form automatically becomes a Dimit upon the Brother's election into your Lodge. Please fill out the bottom portion and return it to your Grand Lodge who will return it to us. The top portion should be placed in the Brother's record.

Brother _____

Masonic Record

Initiated: (EA) _____

Passed: (FC) _____

Raised: (MM) _____

Degrees Received in _____

Lodge No. ____ of _____.

If mailing in a window envelope, the address below is placed to appear in the window when this side is facing out.

Grand Lodge of Florida
Grand Secretary's Office
P.O. Box 1020
Jacksonville, FL 32201-1020

FORM B

PLEASE PRINT:

PETITION FOR AFFILIATION BY TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

- NOTE IMPORTANT -

Transfer Certificate properly executed must be attached before the petition may be received by a Lodge. (It is recommended that transfer of membership procedure not be initiated too late in the year, in order that petition will have ample time to be received, investigated, balloted upon and Home Lodge notified before the end of the Masonic year, Dec. 27th. Certificate of Good Standing is Void in Florida after that date.)

To the Worshipful Master, Wardens and Brethren of _____ Lodge No. _____ Free and Accepted Masons of Florida. Brother _____ a member of _____ Lodge No. _____ located at _____ as shown by the attached Certificate, respectfully petitions for affiliation by Transfer of Membership. Should his petition be granted, he will cheerfully conform to all the rules, regulations and by-laws of your Lodge, and to the ancient usages of the Craft.

QUESTIONS

Do you believe in the existence of one ever-living and true God? _____ What is your full name? _____ Where do you reside? House No. & Street _____ Indicate Post Office Box or Mailing Address if other than your residence City _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ How long resided there? _____ How long resided in the State of Florida? _____ Where have you resided during the past five years? _____ What is your Present Occupation? _____ How long? _____ What is your business address? _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ By whom and where employed in the past five years? _____ Where were you born? _____ (CITY OR TOWN) (STATE) Date of your birth: _____ day of _____ A.D. 19 ____ Age: _____ Have you ever before applied for affiliation with a Masonic Lodge? If so, state what Lodge, when and results _____

PETITIONER MUST READ THE FOLLOWING: To be eligible for resident, non-resident or other relief programs a Florida Mason must have been a member in good standing of a Florida Lodge for not less than 10 years, the last 3 years whereof must have been continuous at the time application is made and he would not be eligible for such relief if he had already attained the age of 66 years at the time he became a Florida Mason.

Each petitioner is required to furnish in the space provided below, the names of three (3) persons (preferably Masons, local) as references that have known him for a period of five years or more.

Table with 3 columns: NAME, STREET ADDRESS, CITY/STATE/ZIP. Rows (1), (2), (3) for references.

I hereby certify on my honor that all these answers are true and correct, and that I have read, understood and agree with all statements made on this application form.

SIGN YOUR FULL NAME (in ink) _____

REQUEST FOR MY DMIT

TO: _____ Lodge No. _____ at _____ City _____ State _____ Date: _____

I hereby fraternally request that you immediately issue and forward my DMIT to: _____
 Lodge No. _____ at _____ City _____ State _____

Fraternally yours, _____
 _____ (our name) _____ (our rank) _____ (signature in full)

CERTIFICATE OF ELECTION

This is to certify that Brother _____ Lodge No. _____ F. & A. M. located at _____ was elected to membership in _____
 _____ day of _____ (year) _____ Florida, on the _____ His petition for affiliation was accompanied by Transfer Certificate
 issued by Lodge No. _____ F. & A. M. on the _____ day of _____ (year) _____ Secretary _____

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend the above petitioner, based upon our belief that he is of good moral character, temperate, industrious.

Signatures of Members of the Lodge to which the petition is directed: _____

PETITION FOR AFFILIATION BY TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP OF

To _____ Lodge No. _____
 Fee of \$ _____ paid this _____ day of _____
 _____ Secretary

Received by this Lodge this _____ day of _____
 Referred to Brothers: _____

Date Balloted Upon: _____ Result: _____

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

We have diligently inquired into the character and qualifications of the petitioner and are satisfied that he is a fit person.

Therefore we recommend:

Acceptance _____
 Selection _____
 Acceptance _____
 Selection _____
 Acceptance _____
 Selection _____

GRAND JURISDICTIONS THAT RECOGNIZE TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP FROM LODGES IN OTHER GRAND JURISDICTIONS

Alabama***	Indiana*	Montana*	Puerto Rico*
Arkansas**	Iowa**	Nebraska*	Rhode Island*
California**	Kansas**	Nevada**	South Carolina*
Colorado**	Louisiana**	New Hampshire*	South Dakota*
Connecticut**	Maine**	New Jersey**	Tennessee*
Delaware**	Massachusetts**	New Mexico**	Texas**
District of Columbia**	Michigan**	New York**	Virginia**
Florida**	Minnesota**	North Carolina**	Washington**
Georgia**	Mississippi**	North Dakota**	West Virginia**
Idaho**	Missouri**	Ohio**	Wisconsin**
Illinois**	Nebraska**	Oklahoma***	Wyoming**
	Ohio**	Pennsylvania***	

.. Transfer not complete until dmit is filed.
 ** Only from lodges of other jurisdictions.
 *** Transfer is by certificate of good standing.

FORM D

1. A Brother wishing to transfer his membership to your Lodge should complete and sign Form "A" (Petition for Transfer Certificate of Good Standing) and deliver it to the Secretary of his Home Lodge. Out of State Lodges must be forwarded through respective Grand Secretary's Offices.
2. Immediately upon receipt of Forms "A" and "B" (attached to each other), the Secretary of his Home Lodge should ascertain if the requesting Brother's dues are paid for the current year, and if they are paid, he should present it at the next Stated Communication and it shall be granted by the Worshipful Master. The Secretary of the Home Lodge will then complete the attached Form "B" (Transfer Certificate), sign it over the Seal of the Lodge, detach from Form "A" and forward Form "B" only to the requesting Brother.
3. Upon receipt of Form "B" (Transfer Certificate of Good Standing), the requesting Brother may place same with Form "C" (Petition for Affiliation by Transfer of Membership) properly filled out and signed by himself and (2) two members of your Lodge recommending him, and place same in the hands of the Secretary of your Lodge.
4. The Petition must be presented to and received by your Lodge and referred to an Investigating Committee. The Petition must lie over at least one month and then when the Committee has reported, submitted for ballot at a Stated Communication. If ballot is clear, he is declared to be elected to membership in your Lodge (new Lodge) subject to receipt of his dimit from

his Home Lodge. Even though he was elected to membership, he does not become a member until the date on the dimit.

5. The Secretary of the Electing Lodge then completes Form "D" (Certificate of Election) over his signature and Seal, and if from an out of State Lodge, have the Brother complete and sign his "Request for Dimit" thereon, and the Secretary then detaches this from the Petition and immediately forwards it to the Secretary of the Home Lodge.

6. The Secretary of the Home Lodge, upon receipt of Form "D" (Certificate of Election) and at the next Stated Communication finding no charges pending according to Regulation 41.23 shall immediately cause the dimit to be executed and then forward it to the Secretary of the Lodge being petitioned.

7. Immediately upon receipt of the dimit, the Secretary of the Electing Lodge will record the date on the dimit as the Official Date of Affiliation with the Lodge. (Reg. 41.13)

BOTH LODGES, if Home Lodge is a Florida Lodge, must complete and forward the necessary up-dating status change of membership forms to the Grand Secretary's Office immediately upon completion of this transfer procedure.

PETITIONS

TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP WITH OTHER GRAND JURISDICTIONS

After determining that the other Grand Jurisdiction recognizes Transfer of Membership procedures, the same procedure outlined above is used except all correspondence must clear through the respective Grand Secretaries' Offices.

NOTE: In view of the length of time required in corresponding with other Lodges and necessary period of investigation, it is recommended that no Transfer of Membership Petitions be received after November 1st each year, in order that time will not expire before the end of the Masonic Year, on December 27th, when the Transfer Certificate will become null and void. (Reg. 41.13)

PETITIONERS FOR A NEW LODGE

Members of a U.D. Lodge who have signed the Petition for Charter, and Charter is granted, are automatically terminated from membership in their former Lodges, and become members of the new Lodge on the date the Charter was granted. (A. VII, S.2, Const., Regs. 42.13, 42.14)

NOTE: The Grand Secretary will instruct the Lodges in the correct procedure for termination of members in their former Lodges and establishing the membership in the newly Chartered Lodge, (41.16)

PETITIONS

TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

BROTHER DESIRING TO TRANSFER MEMBERSHIP - FLORIDA LODGE TO FLORIDA LODGE OR A LODGE IN ANOTHER GRAND JURISDICTION WHERE TRANSFER IS ALLOWED WITHOUT FIRST TAKING A DIMIT. Reg. 41.13

1. Brother obtains request form for Transfer Certificate from Home Lodge Secretary.
2. Completes request for Transfer Certificate of Good Standing and forwards to his Home Lodge Secretary with perforated form containing Transfer Certificate of Good Standing attached.
3. Out of State Lodges - Secretary of Florida Lodge must send through respective Grand Secretary's Office. (Requirement of most Grand Jurisdictions Regs. 15.02, 25.33)
4. Upon receipt, the Secretary ascertains if current dues are paid, and it shall be granted by order of the Worshipful Master, if there are no Un-Masonic conduct charges pending, and entered of record, and no formal vote of the Lodge is required.
5. Secretary completes the Certificate of Good Standing over Seal of the Lodge and forwards to requesting Brother, if within State. Out of State must go through the Grand Secretary's Office. (Requirement of most Grand Jurisdictions Regs. 15.02, 25.33)
6. TO AFFILIATE - Brother obtains a Petition for Affiliation by Transfer of Membership.
7. Brother completes Petition with Transfer Certificate attached and forwards to Secretary of Lodge being petitioned.
8. Petition must be received at a Stated Communication, lie over required month for investigation, after which ball ballot must be unanimous.
9. After Election - Secretary completes Certificate of Election and forwards to Member's Florida Lodge.
10. To other Grand Jurisdictions, Secretary forwards Certificate of Election and signed Request for Dimit through the Grand Secretary's Office.
11. On receipt by Secretary of Home Lodge - Present at first Stated Communication, it shall be granted by order of the Worshipful Master and entered of record, and no vote of the Lodge is required. (Reg. 41.13) (If charges are pending, Dimit cannot be issued, Reg. 41.23)
12. Receipt of Dimit by Secretary of Electing Lodge - Forwards up-dating status changes to Grand Secretary. DATE OF DIMIT IS DATE OF AFFILIATION.
13. Secretary notifies Brother of election, takes up old dues card and gives new card according to By-Laws.
14. If Petitioner has reached the age of seventy (70) years, he should be made to fully

understand that he is not eligible for resident or non-resident relief. (Reg. 41.26)

TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP FROM OUT OF STATE MUST GO THROUGH THE RESPECTIVE GRAND SECRETARIES' OFFICES. (Required by Most Grand Jurisdictions, per Regs. 15.02 and 25.33)

LETTER OVER SIGNATURE OF SECRETARY IS NOT A TRANSFER CERTIFICATE.

SECRETARIES SHOULD HAVE A COPY OF "LIST OF LODGES MASONIC." THIS BOOK LISTS THE GRAND JURISDICTIONS THAT RECOGNIZE TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP PROCEDURES.

NOTE:As of June, 1996, the GL604 form was revised and now becomes a Dimit upon election into the Lodge. The use of the new form will eliminate several steps and much time. However, the old form is still valid and may be used if a new form is not available.

PETITIONS

PETITION FOR AFFILIATION - WITH DIMIT

If an unaffiliated Brother from a Lodge in this Jurisdiction or another Jurisdiction recognized by the Grand Lodge of Florida holds a properly certified dimit, he may place this dimit with a regular "Petition for Affiliation" properly filled out and signed by him and two (2) members of your Lodge and place them in the hands of the Secretary. The Petition must be received by the Lodge at a Stated Communication, referred to an Investigating Committee, and after laying over the required month, and the report of the Investigating Committee is received, may be balloted upon at a Stated Communication, and if the Ballot is clear, the Petitioner will become a member of the Lodge from the Date of Election.

PETITIONS

(PROCEDURES)

AFFILIATION BY DIMIT

1. Brother requests dimit from Secretary of his Lodge.
2. Obtains Petition for Affiliation from Lodge to which he wishes to affiliate.
3. Brother completes petition, attaches to dimit and forwards to Secretary with fees, if fixed by Lodge By-Laws.
4. Upon receipt, the Secretary ascertains if the petition is in order. The petition must be presented at the next Stated Communication and lie over the required month* for investigation, after which ball ballot must be unanimous.
5. The Secretary, after election, forwards up-dating status changes to the Grand Secretary. DATE OF AFFILIATION IS THE DATE OF ELECTION.
6. Secretary notifies Brother, collects dues and presents dues card.
7. Life of dimit is not limited in this Grand Jurisdiction, but privileges and benefits of Masonry expire after one (1) year. (1943 Proc. Pg. 48)
8. A Mason, with a dimit, can affiliate with any 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. (Reg. 41.20)

*MONTH means from a Stated Communication of a Lodge to the corresponding Communication in the next succeeding calendar month. (Reg. 33.01)

PETITIONS

PETITIONS FOR DUAL MEMBERSHIP

1. Provisions for dual membership must be adopted in the By-Laws of the Lodge. (Art. X, Sec. 15)
2. Check Grand Jurisdiction. The Petition cannot be received from a Mason from a Grand Jurisdiction prohibiting Dual Membership of its members. Prior to giving an applicant a petition for Dual Membership, ensure the Grand Jurisdiction of his Home Lodge in the "List of Lodges Masonic" is listed as permitting Dual Membership. The procedure is then to inform the Grand Secretary of the petitioned jurisdiction that: Brother _____ of _____ Lodge No. _____ located in _____, _____ has petitioned for "Dual Membership" and the Grand Secretary will write the Grand Jurisdiction of the petitioner informing them of the Brother's desire to become a Dual Member and request that they advise if he is in good standing and eligible for such Dual Membership. The reply will be forwarded to the petitioned Lodge to support the petition.
3. Receiving a petition for Dual Membership has the same requirements of procedure as a petition for affiliation.
4. A Dual Member is vested with all rights and privileges, including the right to hold elective office, appointive office, excluding privileges of the Masonic Home. (Art. X, Sec. 15)
5. Suspension N.P.D., expulsion, etc., in Home Lodge causes automatic suspension from Florida Lodge. (Art. X, Sec 15) Secretary should check on his membership status each year.
6. Upon taking a dimit from his Home Lodge, it shall be his duty to place such dimit, and his full Membership, in the Particular Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction in which he shall have received the privileges of Dual Membership. Failure to do so causes suspension from membership. (Art. X, Sec. 15, Reg. 26.04)
7. Dual Members: Lodges must report changes in status as to Dual Members. (Reg. 26.02)
8. A Dual Member of a Florida Lodge has all the rights of a regular member and may hold plural membership in more than one Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction subject to the laws of his home jurisdiction, he may also be a member of a Memorial Lodge, (Reg. 26.03), and the Florida Lodge of Research (Reg. 45.01). He may not petition a U.D. Lodge (R&D page 310) or have privilege of the Masonic Home.
9. No dimit shall be issued to a Dual Member desiring to withdraw from membership. (Ruling following Reg. 26.04, page 230 and R&D page 310)
10. To be eligible for membership in a Florida Lodge U.D., a Dual Member of a Florida Lodge must secure his dimit from his Home Lodge and become a regular member of

the Florida Lodge. (Reg. 42.07, Art. X, Sec. 15; Ruling and Decision page 310)

PETITIONS

PETITIONS FOR PLURAL MEMBERSHIP

Plural Membership must be a part of the By-Laws duly voted on and adopted by the membership of the Lodge. (Art. X, Sec. 15(b))

A member in good standing of a Particular Lodge in Florida may petition another Lodge in Florida for affiliation without dimitting from his home Lodge. The Lodge petitioned must have adopted and the By-Laws must contain a provision indicating the acceptance of Plural Membership regardless of whether the home Lodge of the petitioner has adopted this provision or not. In such petition all facts and circumstances upon which such petition is based, and the reasons for the Plural Membership thereby sought, shall be fully stated. Upon reception of such petition, it shall take the usual course with respect to investigation and voting. (24.05, 3.02.1)

1. The petition is completed with every item answered. It has the same requirements of procedure as a petition for affiliation.
2. A Plural Member is vested with the same rights and privileges as a regular member of the Lodge but can only hold elective or appointive office in one Lodge at one and the same time.
3. Upon taking a dimit from his home Lodge, it shall be his duty to place such dimit, and his full membership in the Particular Lodge where he was received as a Plural Member. Failure to do so is cause for suspension from membership. (24.05, 3.02.1)
4. Upon suspension or expulsion of a member by any Lodge of which he is a member, such member shall be automatically suspended or expelled from his other Lodge.

PETITIONS

REINSTATEMENT

(Suspension for N.P.D. Only)

Regulations

- Reg. 27.12 Dues are not chargeable during suspension for any cause.
- Reg. 27.13 A member suspended for non-payment of dues can be reinstated only after a petition has been properly submitted, which shall take the same course as a petition for the Degrees, provided, any such petition which is rejected may be renewed by a new petition after three months from date of such rejection. A favorable vote of three-fourths of the members present by ball ballot or secret written vote shall be necessary to reinstate a member suspended for non-payment of dues.
- Reg. 27.14 In handling a petition for reinstatement for N.P.D., a Lodge may collect or remit all dues, including current dues, or any part thereof, but any per capita due Grand Lodge must be paid to Grand Lodge.
- Reg. 27.15 A Mason suspended for non-payment of dues by a Lodge which afterward becomes dormant or defunct, can be restored by the Grand Master upon the recommendation of some regular Lodge, and the payment of all arrearages to the Grand Secretary, who shall issue a Certificate upon which the restored Brother can apply for membership in any regular Lodge, but the payment of dues in arrears may be remitted by the Grand Lodge, or Grand Master in recess, in meritorious cases, upon the recommendation of the Lodge in which the Brother desiring restoration seeks affiliation. (Reg. 9.13)
- Reg. 27.06 If a Lodge reinstates a suspended Mason, and at the same meeting that he was reinstated makes him an Emeritus Member, the Lodge must pay the Grand Lodge dues for him for the year in which the action is taken.
- Reg. 27.09 (In Part) When a member suspended for non-payment of dues by a Particular Lodge is reinstated, the Particular Lodge shall account to Grand Lodge for arrearages of such member. No Lodge shall reinstate a suspended member without collecting or remitting current year's dues, but in case of remission of dues, the Lodges shall account to Grand Lodge for Grand Lodge per capita.

Only the Grand Lodge or the Grand Master can remit any portion of the arrearages of a suspended member, suspended for non-payment of dues.

PETITIONS

REINSTATEMENT

(Suspension - Penal Code)

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

In cases of an appeal from a suspension or expulsion, if the Grand Lodge acquits the accused, or reverses the decision of the Lodge below, or when the Grand Lodge confirms the decisions of the Particular Lodge and subsequently restores the party to the rights and benefits of Masonry, the action of the Grand Lodge does not in either case restore the party to membership in the Lodge from which *he is suspended or expelled without the unanimous consent of the Lodge, as in cases of a ballot for membership*. In all cases of definite suspension, the member returns to his membership upon expiration of the term of suspension. (Article V, Section 3)

Regulations

- Reg. 44.72 A Petition for reinstatement from an indefinite suspension may be filed with the Secretary and voted upon at a Stated Communication after being presented at a previous Stated Communication, but the membership must have due notice. Provided, if such petition is rejected, the Petitioner may not petition the Lodge for reinstatement until after one (1) year from the date of such rejection.
- Reg. 44.73 A member of a Lodge suspended for a definite time becomes a member in good standing again at the expiration of that time without action of the Lodge.
- Reg. 44.74 When, after inflicting the penalty of suspension or expulsion for unmasonic conduct, the Lodge becomes dormant or defunct, the penalty can be removed only by the Grand Lodge or Grand Master, upon the recommendation of some Regular Lodge.
- Reg. 44.75 Grand Lodge has inherent power to reinstate an expelled or suspended member upon petition of such member without necessity of action by a Particular Lodge and may exercise such power after review of all circumstances relating thereto and report of appropriate committee thereon and may entertain and grant petition of a Particular Lodge for reinstatement of a member or former member of the Lodge expelled by the Grand Lodge after investigation and report of appropriate committee thereon.
- Reg. 44.76 When the Grand Lodge, either in the exercise of its original jurisdiction or on appeal, imposes or affirms a penalty of indefinite suspension or of expulsion, no action in respect to reinstatement shall be taken by a Particular Lodge without express written permission or consent of the Grand Lodge or its authority.

PETITION FOR REINSTATEMENT BY A PARTICULAR LODGE

1. The Grand Master or the Grand Lodge may accept the resignation or withdrawal from Freemasonry of any member of a Particular Lodge of this Grand Jurisdiction without leave of reinstatement. The Grand Secretary shall search the records of the Brother who wishes to resign and inform the Grand Master of his findings. Copies of Resignations that are Penal related or that are made when Un-Masonic Conduct charges are pending shall be furnished to the Chairman of the Penal Affairs Panel. Acceptance of the resignation shall terminate Masonic Membership but shall not release such former member from the obligation of secrecy. "Without leave of reinstatement" means the former member forfeits all right and privilege to petition for reinstatement but does not prevent petition by a Particular Lodge for his reinstatement upon such terms and conditions as shall be or may be determined by the Grand Lodge.

a. A period of two years must have elapsed from the date the resignation became effective before a request for restoration will be considered by a Lodge.

b. The Petitioner would have to file his request and state his reasons desiring reinstatement in writing to the Secretary of his Lodge and certify that he has complied with his "obligation of secrecy" during the period that his resignation became effective to the date of his request.

c. After due notice to the membership of the Lodge at a Stated Meeting, the Secretary would read the request, a motion shall be made and seconded to proceed with the request or not to proceed with the request. A vote to proceed with the request would require a unanimous vote of those present, by either Ball or Written Ballot. If the vote is not to proceed with the request, the former member may appeal to the Grand Master who, in his discretion, may issue a Grand Lodge Certificate.

d. If the Lodge votes to proceed with the request, the Worshipful Master over the Seal of the Lodge and signed by the Secretary shall write the Grand Master for his permission to proceed. No action in respect to reinstatement shall be taken by a Particular Lodge without express written permission and consent of the Grand Lodge or its authority.

e. If the Grand Master approves the request of the Lodge by Dispensation, the Lodge may receive the petition for reinstatement. After the petition is received by the Lodge it will lay over for thirty (30) days during which time the membership must have due notice. If such petition is rejected, it cannot be put to vote again until after one (1) year from the date of such rejection.

f. If the Lodge voted to accept the petitioner back into membership, the Grand Master may give his approval at this time and the Petitioner would be restored to membership in the Lodge. Should the Grand Master refuse the request to receive the petition or refuse to restore the membership after the Lodge's approval, the Lodge may appeal to the Grand Lodge.

g. When a Brother has resigned from Freemasonry, it will take the unanimous consent of the Lodge and the consent of the Grand Master before he may be restored to membership in the Lodge.

Reference: Regulation 26.28

LESSON III BALLOTING AND VOTING

Balloting and voting are perhaps two of the most important aspects of Lodge business and operation. It is perhaps that the Brethren exercise their rights of membership and live up to their responsibilities and duties as Master Masons and members of the Lodge. Balloting and voting are TWO SEPARATE ACTIONS and different regulations apply to each.

"VOTING"

Voting is the act of deciding issues before the Lodge. By voting, items of business are decided and the direction and intent of the Lodge is expressed. Voting normally follows a motion, properly made and accepted by the Worshipful Master, and is accomplished by a "show of hands." In this manner the Lodge decides what course of action to follow on its everyday business affairs; such as paying bills, supporting particular charities, whether or not to have a particular function, what to do about Lodge property and/or maintenance of such, etc. It is the duty of each member of the Lodge to take an active part in the business concerns and regular activities of his Lodge and to express his pleasure or concern through the vote.

"BALLOTING"

Balloting differs from Voting in many respects and is reserved for very specific actions of the Lodge. Balloting is accomplished by two methods: first, the paper ballot and second, the ball ballot. Both methods of ballot are secret by Masonic Law. Paper ballot is for the election of Officers for Masonic trials and/or reinstatement of a resigned Brother. The ball ballot is used for deciding upon waivers of jurisdiction, Honorary Members, for petitions and reinstatement of resigned Brothers. All petitions, whether for the Degrees, for advancement, for affiliation or for reinstatement must be by ball ballot. Some very specific regulations govern balloting and must be followed precisely.

All balloting must be done in a Master Mason Lodge, and at Stated Communications, except by special permission of the Grand Lodge or its authority.

All balloting is done in secret and proper precautions must be taken to ensure the secrecy of the ballot. The right of secrecy of the Ballot is guaranteed by Masonic Law and custom allows each member to have perfect freedom in balloting. This right is essential. If the ballot were to be taken by voice or show of hands, it is impossible that improper influences of fear or interest could be avoided. Secrecy insures that each member has the right to vote according to his dictates of reason and conscience. No member has the right to declare how he voted or to inquire how another member voted. If a Mason ascertains by accident, or otherwise how a particular Brother has voted, he has no right to divulge it.

None but the members of a Lodge have a right to ballot, and balloting is considered so important to the welfare of the Lodge that NO MEMBER PRESENT may be excused from balloting on any question before the Lodge, except by a vote of the Lodge, upon good cause shown, nor can a member retire from the Lodge to avoid casting his ballot.

In preparing for the ball ballot certain precautions should be taken. There should be sufficient white balls and black cubes in the box for every member present to vote his preference. Black balls may not be used in balloting. A Mason must be able to tell by sight or feel which way he is voting. The ballot box must be divided into sections; one from which to select either the ball or cube, and the second section, which is secret or hidden, into which the ballot is deposited. The box must be lined on the bottom and sides with felt or other soft material to deaden the sound.

It is entirely possible to make a mistake in balloting and there are provisions for error. A ballot may be considered void or irregular in some cases and it is considered as if no ballot had been taken. When through mechanical error or otherwise, more ballots are cast than there are members of the Particular Lodge present, the ballot must be considered irregular and must be re-spread. If a ballot is spread on a Petition for the Degrees after only one member of the Investigating Committee has reported, then that ballot is void. Voting on a Petition before its Constitutional time is irregular and must be abated. A dark ballot may be reopened when the vote was cast through misunderstanding or it is discovered that the Committee investigated the wrong person. A clear ballot taken and closed while a Brother is temporarily absent from the Lodge room on Lodge business is null and void and must be reopened. A ballot spread, inadvertently or otherwise, upon any petition for initiation, before the Character Committee reports, is null and void and proceedings abate. In any case where there is question as to the regularity of the ballot, the Grand Master, upon request, may grant permission for a re-ballot providing the membership of the Lodge is notified when the balloting is to take place. If only one black cube is present during the first ballot on an individual petition or a collective ballot, the ballot is destroyed and must be re-spread immediately. However, one black cube is sufficient upon the second ballot to cause rejection on an individual petition. See Chapter 35.08

A unanimous ballot is required on petitions for membership, the Degrees and the reinstatement of a resigned Brother. The unanimity of the ballot is considered so essential to the welfare of the Fraternity that the Old Regulations have provided for its preservation.

"But no man can be entered a Brother in any particular Lodge or admitted to be a member thereof, without the unanimous consent of all members of that Lodge present when the Candidate is proposed, and their consent is formally asked by the Master; and they are to signify their consent or dissent in their own prudent way, either virtually or in form, but with unanimity; nor is this inherent privilege subject to a dispensation." (See the Constitutions of 1723.)

Unanimity in the ballot is necessary to secure the harmony of the Lodge, which may be just as seriously impaired by the admission of a candidate contrary to the wishes of one member as to several members. It is unjust to any member, however humble, to impose upon him among his associates one whom he finds unpleasant, and whose admission might compel him to leave the Lodge.

Unanimity is not required for a ballot on reinstatement for non-payment of dues. In this case only three-quarter ballot of the members present is required.

No publicity must be given the case of a rejected petitioner for any of the Degrees or for affiliation, by the Fraternity or any member thereof, under any circumstances.* A Lodge shall not use general trestle boards or bulletins to notify other Lodges of rejected petitions. The notice shall be by sealed first-class mail.

* Ruling and Decision, 1980 Proc

A rejected candidate or applicant for affiliation must wait one year before re-petitioning, except by special dispensation of the Grand Master upon application of the Lodge, and which dispensation should not be granted but for unquestionably good reason. A Lodge of Concurrent Jurisdiction may, after expiration of one year after rejection, receive petition for the Degrees of a rejected candidate of another Lodge of the Concurrent Jurisdiction without waiver of jurisdiction. A Lodge may receive the petition for initiation of a person who has been rejected by another Lodge of this Grand Jurisdiction more than one year previous to his petition, if at the time he resides out of the jurisdiction of the rejecting Lodge and has continuously resided for the last six months in the

jurisdiction of the Lodge to which he petitions, and the last twelve months in this Grand Jurisdiction.

If any Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction receives a petition for the Degrees which shows that the petitioner has been rejected in a Sister Grand Jurisdiction, then such petition must be presented to the Grand Master for his attention and action before any action can be taken by the Lodge.

Collective ballots may be taken upon petitions for the Degrees, upon petitions for affiliation, petitions for waiver of jurisdiction and for Honorary Membership. However, not more than five (5) petitions may be balloted upon at one time and they must all be of one type. Different types of petitions cannot be mixed in the same collective ballot. When one or more black cubes appear in a collective ballot, then the ballot must be re-spread on each request or petition immediately, and if one black cube appears on the separate ballot, then the ballot must also be re-spread immediately. It is then possible to actually ballot on a petition three times before a regular ballot is declared.

When a petitioner has been declared elected to receive the Degrees of Freemasonry and fails to present himself for the Entered Apprentice Degree within six months after election, or fails to qualify for advancement, or to present himself for advancement within six months after having received the preceding Degree, the Lodge shall cause investigation of the petitioner to be made and shall again spread the ballot, but without a new petition.

The refusal of a Lodge to grant a waiver of jurisdiction does not constitute rejection. There is no waiting period before it can be submitted again or for balloting upon it when receiving it the second time. If a Lodge continually rejects a request for waiver, the requesting Lodge may, at its discretion, continually reapply upon receiving notice of the rejection.

It cannot be too strongly stressed that the ballot is not only secret, but sacred. Every Mason, upon approaching the ballot box, should vote his conscience and should use his best judgment in voting for the good and welfare of the Lodge. Rejecting a petitioner because of petty differences is un-Masonic. If you know of no valid reason to reject a petition, then you should accept the recommendation of the Investigating Committee. If the Worshipful Master should be satisfied that the petitioner is likely to be an element of discard in his Lodge, or that he is objectionable to an absent Brother, who intends to oppose his admission, he should not permit any undue advantage to be taken of the accidental or temporary absence of such Brother, or of the Lodge being thinly attended, but should postpone the ballot until a reasonable opportunity is given for a full ballot. The following is the procedure for balloting:

- | | |
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| Secretary | (Reads the petition and the report of the investigating committee and delivers the petition to the Worshipful Master.) |
| W.: Master | "Brother Senior Deacon." |
| Senior Deacon | (Rises when addressed.) |
| W.: Master | "Prepare the Ballot Box." |
| Senior Deacon | While holding the ballot box so that the Junior and Senior Wardens can see that there are no balls or cubes in it, says: "Brother Junior Warden, behold the Ballot Box. Brother Senior Deacon, behold the Ballot Box." He then places the open ballot box on the pedestal in the East. |

W.: Master Inspects the ballot box and then closes it. "Brethren, we are called upon to ballot on the petition(s) of Mr. (Messrs.) full name (Full Name, Full Name, etc.) to receive the three Symbolic Degrees of Freemasonry. The reports of the Investigating Committee(s) is (are) favorable. White balls elect and black cubes reject. Be careful with your ballot.

W.: Master "Brother Senior Deacon, present the ballot box to the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden and the Secretary and then place it on the Altar. (For convenience, the Worshipful Master may direct that the ballot box be presented to the Treasurer when he is occupying his regular place in the Lodge. In such case, it is presented to him first. The ballot box is to be placed on the Altar, North of the Bible. In the event that the Altar is too small to hold the ballot box, it should be placed on a small table next to the Altar, on the West side.)

Senior Deacon (After carrying out the order of the Worshipful Master, takes a place North of the Altar, about six feet West, facing the Worshipful Master.)

W.: Master "Brethren of this Lodge, line up west of the Altar and proceed to ballot."

Junior Deacon (After all have balloted except the Senior Deacon and Tyler, proceeds to ballot and then remains at the Altar awaiting instructions from the Worshipful Master)

W.: Master "Brother Junior Deacon, retire and relieve the Tyler."

Junior Deacon (Retires in the usual manner.)

Tyler (Enters the Lodge room in the usual manner and remains at the Altar)

W.: Master "Brother Tyler (repeats the instruction given the Brethren)"

Tyler (Casts his ballot and then retires in the usual manner.)

Junior Deacon (Enters the Lodge room in the usual manner and then retires to his usual place.)

W.: Master "Brethren, have all members of this Lodge who are present, balloted?"

Senior Deacon (After waiting sufficient time to see if any member has overlooked balloting, approaches the Altar and proceeds to ballot.)

W.: Master "I declare the ballot closed. Brother Senior Deacon, take charge of the ballot box and present it in the South, West and East."

Senior Deacon (Takes charge of the ballot box and presents it to the Junior Warden and turns his back while the Junior Warden inspects the ballot.)

Junior Warden (Rises when the ballot is placed before him, inspects the ballot, and then closes the ballot box. He remains standing until seated by the Worshipful Master.)

Senior Deacon (Again takes charge of the ballot box and presents it to the Senior Warden and turns his back.)

Senior Warden (Rises when the ballot box is placed upon his pedestal, inspects the ballot, and remains standing until seated by the Worshipful Master.)

Senior Deacon (Again takes charge of the ballot box and presents it to the Worshipful Master in the East, and then turns his back. He remains in the East to return the ballot box to its resting place in the Lodge.)

W.: Master "Brother Junior Warden, how do you find the ballot in the South?"

Junior Warden "Clear (Dark) in the South, Worshipful Master."

W.: Master Brother Senior Warden, how do you find the ballot in the West?"

Senior Warden "Clear (Dark) in the West, Worshipful Master."

W.: Master (Opens the ballot box and inspects the ballot, and if found clear, he then destroys the ballot and hands the ballot box to the Senior Deacon.)

Senior Deacon (Returns the ballot box to its resting place in the Lodge Room.)

W.: Master "Brethren, by your clear ballot, you have elected Mr. (Messers) Full Name(s) to receive the Three Symbolic Degrees of Freemasonry."

(If the ballot is dark):

Brethren, by your dark ballot, you have rejected the petition of Mr. (Full Name)."

In case one or both of the Wardens report the findings of the ballot to be different from the findings of the Worshipful Master, he will order the Senior Deacon to again present the ballot box in the South, West and East, after which he will again ask the Wardens how they find the ballot. This is done before any declaration of the results of the ballot is made by the Worshipful Master.)

LESSON IV

PENAL AFFAIRS

The Grand Lodge has the responsibility for Masonic Justice and to establish appropriate regulations to assure its implementation. Any infraction of Masonic obligations, or duly constituted regulations or Law, is subject to action under the Penal Code. If found guilty, the punishment may be in the form of *reprimand, suspension, or expulsion* from the Fraternity.

REPRIMAND: A reprimand is the mildest of the three general penalties and may be properly applied in case of contempt, improper deportment and all minor offenses. It should be administered by the presiding Officer or a Brother appointed by him for that purpose. It should be more or less severe, according to the circumstances of the case.

SUSPENSION: Suspension is the intermediate penalty between reprimand and expulsion. It takes away or suspends, as its name implies, all the fraternal rights, privileges and benefits of its subject during its continuance. It provides an opportunity for reformation and/or subsequent restoration. A definite suspension expires by its own limitation, except as provided in Regulation 44.21, Digest of Masonic Law, after which all former rights and privileges are resumed without specific action.

A definite suspension expires by its own limitation, except as provided in Regulation 44.21, after which all former rights and privileges are resumed without specific action.

An indefinite suspension continues in force until removed by the power inflicting it or until set at naught by the appellate tribunal.

Suspension may properly be applied for non-payment of dues and repetition of an offense for which reprimand is inadequate and expulsion too severe. Regulation 44.57 specifies that vicious practices, such as habitual intemperance, profanity, Sabbath-breaking, gambling, fraud, evil-speaking and the various species of mischief-making are proper subjects for the penalty of suspension.

EXPULSION: Expulsion is the severest penalty for the punishment of offenses against Freemasonry. It is applied only to the gravest offenses known to Masonic Law. It may properly be imposed upon a provoking repetition of an offense for which a Brother has been suspended, for the violation of the Mystic Covenant of Secrecy, or for the violation of any injunction of the moral law which exhibits an intolerable degree of moral depravity.

There are two types of Penal jurisdiction for the Particular Lodges. First, is the *geographic* which relates to the territory around the Lodge which is not subject to concurrent jurisdiction and includes all Masons, whether affiliated or not, who reside within such territory. Second, is *personal* jurisdiction of the Lodge over its members, wherever they may reside. While this may appear to place some Masons in dual jeopardy in an area like some metropolitan districts, other regulations provide that charges brought in another Lodge must be referred to the Lodge of the Brother's membership, if within the same district.

Charges against a current Worshipful Master may be filed with the Grand Master by not less than seven (7) Master Masons in good standing in his Florida Lodge. Charges under Masonic Law must be properly filed in writing in prescribed form with six (6) copies, signed and delivered to the Secretary of the Lodge. Thereupon, the Worshipful Master will examine the charges for proper

form, content and whether an offense against Masonic Law appears to exist. After the normal administrative processes are completed, the charges and the accused Brother's answer shall be read at a Stated Communication of the Lodge, and after appropriate discussion, the Lodge shall, by secret written ballot, determine whether to dismiss or prosecute the charges. The accused has the right to be present when the charges and answer are read, but must retire prior to discussion or voting.

A Brother under charges is not automatically excluded from the Lodge except when discussion and/or voting on the charges is in progress. However, the Worshipful Master may, if he deems it necessary in the best interest of the Lodge, exclude the Brother pending the outcome of the proceedings. The accused has the right to be present at all hearings of testimony. In the taking of testimony, no oath shall be administered; Masons testify on their honor as such; others affirm upon their honor as gentlemen, as prudence and propriety suggest. As in all cases, the Lodge judges the truth of conflicting testimony.

If a Lodge elects to prosecute the charges, either the Lodge or the accused has the right to request a trial by a Grand Lodge Trial Commission. If the Lodge is to try the charges, a Trial Committee of three (3) members is appointed to investigate the charges and prepare the case for trial. After receiving the Trial Committee report, the Worshipful Master shall designate a Stated Communication for the trial and shall announce this in open Lodge.

The Lodge members present shall constitute the jury and, after presentation of the case, argument for the Lodge and for the accused shall be permitted. Upon completion of arguments both the accused and the accuser shall retire and the Lodge, acting as a jury, shall deliberate upon the law and the facts as presented to a reasonable extent. Voting on all questions shall be by secret written ballot with all Brothers present being required to vote and a simple majority controlling.

Upon finding of guilty, the Lodge must determine a penalty that is appropriate to the offense and any mitigating circumstances, that would exemplify the third and fourth cardinal virtues (i.e. prudence and justice). The sentence shall be either *reprimand*, *suspension* or *expulsion* depending upon the severity of the offense as outlined in the definition for each sentence above.

An accused Brother has the right to appeal the findings or sentence according to established procedures as outlined in the Digest of Masonic Law. Charges cannot be made for conduct or actions prior to initiation unless such information was not revealed prior to initiation and would have resulted in rejection of the candidate at the time of election.

All charges of un-masonic conduct shall be tried upon their merits and no quibbling, technicalities or special pleadings shall be allowed to prejudice, retard or defeat the ends of fraternal justice. In Masonic trials, the main points of law shall be: First, a proper charge plainly stated; Second, reasonable notice is given to the accused; and Third, a speedy and impartial trial conducted.

In all cases of appeal by the accused to the Grand Lodge from the action of a Lodge of Special Trial Commission, the Grand Lodge may affirm the action of the Lodge or Trial Commission, which shall end the proceedings, or may reverse the action of the Lodge or Trial Commission and acquit the accused. If the penalty imposed upon the accused was indefinite suspension or expulsion, such reversal and acquittal shall not restore the accused to membership in his Lodge; but he shall, upon such reversal and acquittal have the status of an unaffiliated Mason, and the Grand Secretary shall, on order of the Grand Master or by direction of the Grand Lodge, issue to him a certificate to that effect, which shall constitute a proper basis for application for affiliation with any Lodge.

This lesson only reflects a minor part of the Penal Affairs section of the Digest of Masonic Law. For an in-depth understanding of the Penal Code, Chapter 44 of the Digest of Masonic Law would need to be studied in its entirety and in detail. Source: Digest of Masonic Law.

LESSON V FUNERALS

A widow or family's request that a Lodge perform Masonic Last Rites for a departed Brother should be received with honor and deep respect. It is the distinct honor that the family would charge the Lodge with such a great responsibility and the service should reflect the Fraternity's great respect for the departed Brother, his devotion and love for the Fraternity and the bereaved loved ones he has left behind.

So often our Lodges are called upon to perform this great service for a Brother who is not a member of our own Lodge and probably very little is known of his Masonic career. The request for funeral service provides your Lodge with an opportunity to truly shine before the public; what a tragedy when only a handful of Brothers show up for the service.

To avoid embarrassment of the Lodge and the bereaved family members, it is important that each Lodge discuss and encourage its members and visiting Brothers to attend as many funeral services as possible when called upon.

Each Lodge should establish a "call list" and each Officer should cheerfully accept the opportunity to call ten or fifteen Brothers, providing them with the date, time and location of funeral services, thus ensuring a proper number of Brothers on hand to perform the services. In addition, contacts should be made to promote their awareness and participation.

A Lodge's line Officers should establish open lines of communication with each funeral home in the area and a contact person named. He/she should have the name, address and telephone number of the Lodge Secretary and Worshipful Master. Clearly, this information should be updated each year or whenever any change occurs. In the event the personnel of a particular funeral home are not familiar with Masonic Law governing funeral services, these should be reviewed with the contact person at the home to protect against embarrassment.

When the Lodge may be "in charge" of services, this responsibility should be performed with common sense and respect for the wishes of the departed Brother, his family and their religious beliefs.

Often we will share in the total funeral service. Advance knowledge of this should permit discussion between all participating groups, assuring cooperation and a resulting beautiful service without strained or injured feelings.

Always remember when your Lodge is called upon for a funeral service that this is the LAST act we can ever perform for our departed Brother. We should always do this with pride, sincerity, good attendance and dignity, knowing that our every action is on display before his family, friends and the community.

Common sense, dignity and compassion should be observed at all times during Masonic Last Rites.

Florida Masonic Law deems it proper for a Lodge to inter, with the funeral ceremonies, the remains of a deceased visiting or sojourning Brother in good standing in his home Lodge. Telegraphic information and request from his Lodge is sufficient evidence and authority but information from a non-Mason, no matter how credible, is insufficient for this purpose. However, a

Lodge, in an emergency situation (when the Lodge is unable to contact the deceased's Grand Lodge or home Lodge), may conduct services upon presentation of a current dues card from the deceased's home Lodge.

Ideally, when the Worshipful Master is satisfied as to the Brother's standing at the time of his death, he would establish a time for the service, however, more often than not, the funeral home will contact us with a date and time for the service and it will be our duty to fit this activity into the Lodge's schedule.

If the deceased was a Past Grand Master or an elective or appointive Grand Lodge Officer, our Grand Secretary should be immediately notified by the Secretary or Worshipful Master, as the Grand Lodge of Florida may wish to exercise jurisdiction over the service.

It is interesting to note that a Florida Lodge is not bound to inter with Masonic Honors the remains of a member of another Lodge, when at its request, if the Brother's conduct within its jurisdiction has been reprehensible. By the same token, it is deemed proper for a Lodge to inter with Masonic Honors the remains of a good standing Brother who has committed suicide when the Brethren are satisfied that no wicked motive prompted the act, and not otherwise.

A Lodge is also permitted, at its discretion, to inter with the funeral ceremonies, the remains of an 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.

A Mason residing twelve months or more under the jurisdiction of a 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 he be eligible for funeral rights. Neither will the Fraternity have any charges or responsibility to his family.

The Worshipful Master may call and open a Called Communication of the Lodge for the sole purpose of conducting funeral ceremonies, and thereafter, until the Worshipful Master closes 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 must adhere to Masonic Law applicable to conduct of funeral ceremonies and the Secretary must keep minutes of each funeral ceremony, which minutes must be read and acted upon at the next Stated Communication.

White gloves and aprons are badges of Symbolic Masonry. White or regularly recognized Masonic aprons must be worn in the Lodge where they can be seen at all times, by all present, when working in any of the Three Degrees. White gloves should be worn in the Lodge on special occasions and in funeral and all other types of processions. Every Lodge is required to keep an ample supply of clean, white gloves and aprons on hand at all times.

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

A bereaved Lodge is free to invite other Lodges to join in the funeral services. The guest Lodge need not be opened itself, but its members may attend as visitors to the Communication of the bereaved Lodge. In the public funeral procession, however, the guest Lodge may make their own formation with their own Officers, and the officiating Worshipful Master is in complete charge of the procession and the ceremony.

Funerals are always conducted in the Master Mason degree. For this reason, Fellow Crafts and Entered Apprentices are not entitled to Masonic funerals nor can they be allowed to unite as Masons in the funeral procession of a Brother Mason.

The deceased's family may select their pallbearers from among Brother Masons or family friends. They may also request the services at the grave be closed by a benediction from the attending minister, even though he be a non-Mason. The benediction shall be given when called for by the Worshipful Master, after the completion of the Lodge ceremony.

Whenever civic societies or the military unite with the Masons in the burial of a Mason, the body of the deceased must be in charge of the Lodge having jurisdiction. Additionally, Shriners, York Rite Masons and Scottish Rite Masons and others must remove their hats (or whatever description) and must conduct themselves as Master Masons.

The Worshipful Master may preside over the service, or he may designate a Brother to serve as Master of Ceremonies. The minister may also be requested to pronounce the benediction instead of the Chaplain.

Proper attire for a Masonic funeral is a black hat, black or dark clothing, black necktie, white gloves and a plain, white cloth or lambskin apron, with a band of black crepe around the left arm, above the elbow and a sprig of evergreen on the breast. In addition, the Worshipful Master's gavel, the Warden's columns, the Deacon's and Steward's rods, the Tyler's sword and the Marshal's baton should be trimmed with black crepe, neatly tied with white ribbon. It is also proper for the Bible to be covered with black crepe.

The Monitor calls for a white apron, which means that Officer's aprons and jewels are not to be worn at the Masonic funeral, nor is Grand Lodge regalia in order. This includes present and past Grand Lodge Officers as well as present and past Masters of Lodges.

The white apron is to be laid upon the casket, as near the center as possible, not tied upon the body. The apron is the badge of a Mason at labor, and the deceased Brother has finished his labor and entered into Eternal Refreshment. If the Brother is in the military, the apron is placed on top of the coffin and the flag draped over both the coffin and apron. If the flag is already draped over the coffin, it should be folded back, the apron laid on the coffin and the flag again fully draped over the coffin unless otherwise placed by military personnel.

When the deceased is a member of the Lodge in charge of the service, the Lodge Charter is draped for 28 days. If the deceased was a Grand Lodge Officer, the Charter and Altar are both draped for 28 days. If the deceased was a Past District Deputy Grand Master, his home Lodge only drapes their Charter for 28 days. The staff, gavels and Marshal's baton also should be draped in black, secured by a white ribbon.

If a past or present Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master or Grand Warden should join the funeral procession, they should receive proper recognition and should take a place after the Worshipful Master. Two Deacons, with white rods, may be appointed by the Master to attend such Grand Officers.

The rules of Masonic etiquette are unusually strict as they pertain to Masonic funerals, including public processions. In procession, the same decorum should be observed as in the Lodge room. No smoking, laughter, or loud talking is permitted, nor should Brethren join nor leave the lines without permission of the Worshipful Master. The various rules governing funeral etiquette will be found in the Masonic Monitor and should be followed strictly.

The Worshipful Master and other Brethren having parts in the service should make sure, in advance, that they have the ceremonies well-learned. If they should halt or stumble, or mumble their words, they will place the Lodge in unfavorable light before the public and cause more pain to the already suffering family of the deceased. The service should not be read by the Chaplain but must be recited by the Worshipful Master or his appointee. Not all Masters are gifted in the art of public speaking, since this is an art that is not easily acquired. If a Master finds himself weak in this area, it is his obligation to select from his membership one or more who are capable, thus ensuring the Lodge's capacity to perform the funeral service well when the occasion arises.

Masonic funeral services are of two kinds: "Church or residence" and "grave." Services are held in the Lodge room, Church or residence only when they cannot be conducted at the grave. The service at the Church or residence should not be conducted unless by special request of the family. The "grave" ceremony is always to be conducted at a cemetery. The ceremony in the Lodge room is optional with the Worshipful Master.

In opening the Lodge, the Worshipful Master makes pro-tem appointments to fill any vacancies among his Officers. When the Lodge is opened, he states the purpose of the Communication and the Brethren are instructed in their respective duties and positions in the procession and at the grave. This also provides an excellent opportunity for a rehearsal of the service itself.

The Master selects a suitable Brother to serve as Marshal, and if the procession is very large, he may appoint assistants or authorize the Marshal to appoint them. Before leaving the Lodge room, the Worshipful Master should give special instructions or information that he deems desirable.

When all is in order, the Brethren leave the Lodge room and go in cars to the appointed place of meeting where they form under the direction of the Marshal. At the conclusion of the public service, they return to the Lodge room for closing. No one should leave the procession, either in going to or returning from the funeral, except in case of real emergency.

When an Emergent or Special Communication of a Lodge is called to conduct a Masonic funeral, the Worshipful Master should wear his hat at all times during the Lodge opening and closing except while prayer is being offered, including the Benediction. The provision for a Worshipful Master to be uncovered at a Masonic funeral service shall not apply when the deceased was a member of a religious group which wears a headpiece during a funeral service.

In conducting Masonic funerals, Masters are authorized to use any of the services in the Florida Masonic Monitor, or any arrangement of parts of those various services.

The funeral service should be given with dignity and expression to bring out the meaning. In this service are many words which are difficult to pronounce and many phrases which are not too easy to speak. The proper delivery of the service requires great thought and study on the part of the person who is to deliver it, in order to bring out the warmth and comfort being sought for the bereaved.

It is the strong desire of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida that this service will always be handled with the greatest care, since this is one of our best opportunities to present Florida Freemasonry to the public. It is also one of our most cherished responsibilities to our Brothers.

REFERENCE

DIGEST OF MASONIC LAW

Chapter 25 - Regulations 25.04, 25.12 and 25.14

Chapter 38 - Regulations 38.32 through 38.42 inclusive

Chapter 41 - Regulation 41.37

MASONIC ETIQUETTE

The Lodge System of Masonic Education

Funerals - pages 19 through 21 inclusive

FLORIDA MASONIC MONITOR

General Instructions for Masonic Funeral Services - pages 161 through 167 inclusive

MENTORS MANUAL

Chapter 7 - 7.5 Masonic Burial

LESSON VI

THE MASONIC HOME OF FLORIDA

The grandest charity practiced by members of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida is clearly their active support of the Masonic Home. The purpose of the Home is to provide a place of comfort and security for needy, distressed, worthy Master Masons, their wives, mothers and widows.

The Home is financed by the Craft in great numbers and in many different ways. It is "the" charity that Florida Masons proudly point to when they are asked what charity they support.

The Masonic Home is situated on a large piece of property located at 3201 - 1st Street North East, St. Petersburg, Florida. The buildings and grounds can accommodate approximately 187 guests and the supportive services necessary to see to their care and well-being.

This outstanding charity is supervised by the Board of Trustees of the Masonic Home of Florida. The Board is composed of 10 members. The incoming Grand Master shall appoint, only upon nomination of the incoming Senior Grand Warden, three members of the Craft for a three year term.(2010) The Grand Master shall appoint a Brother to serve as Chairman. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of the Grand Master for the remainder of the vacant term. The Grand Treasurer and the Grand Secretary shall be Treasurer and Secretary, respectively, of the Board. No person shall serve as a member of the Board for more than six consecutive years.

It shall be the duty and responsibility of the Board of Trustees to determine and fix basic policy for operation of the Masonic Home and Relief Programs; to employ an Administrator to implement, administer, and operate the Masonic Home. No member of the Board of Trustees, except the Chairman, shall give or attempt to give instructions or directions to the Administrator in respect to administration or operation of the Masonic Home.

The full control and custody of all Masonic Home property, both real and personal, lies with the Board. It is charged with maintaining the property and obtaining appropriate insurance coverage for same through the Corporate Board. This responsibility includes control over all purchases and contracts, determining the eligibility for admission to the Home, making and adhering to budgets and myriad other duties related to the overall operation of the facility.

Meetings of the Board are held at least once each month as mandated by Grand Lodge rules. Meetings take place at the Home on a regularly scheduled basis, however, the Grand Master or the Chairman of the Board may call meetings at other times and locations as deemed proper.

As with every regular Masonic meeting, the Board meetings are required to be opened and closed with a prayer, as outlined in the Digest of Masonic Law of Florida.

The Masonic Home of Florida derives its financing primarily from the Masonic Home Endowment Fund. This fund was established as a sacred trust fund, the principal amount of which might never be expended for any purpose whatsoever except for investment and reinvestment. The income from this investment cannot be spent for any other purpose save the uses and purposes of Masonic charity. Any unspent balances from this investment income are to be applied as income to the Masonic Home Endowment Fund to further increase that Fund.

All the assets of the Fund are held by the Corporate Board. It is authorized for these funds to be invested in securities which are listed on the recognized stock exchanges in the United States or to be invested in bonds of the U. S. Government or agencies which are fully guaranteed by the U. S. Government. The funds may also be invested in corporate bonds with a rating of "A" or better by one of the nationally recognized rating organizations. Finally, it is also legal for these funds to be deposited in federal savings and loans associations of Florida.

The Corporate Board is instructed by our Constitution to employ the trust department of one or more of the State or National Banks located in Florida or one or more Trust Banks of Florida and to only make investments on the advice of these advisory groups and by majority approval by the Corporate Board and concurrence of the Grand Master. It has been authorized for the Corporate Board to elect to turn over all or part of the assets of the Fund to an advisor or advisors to be held in trust by the bank as custodian of the funds and to have full exercise of control over same for executing sales and purchases.

The Masonic Home Endowment Fund is nurtured and receives its growth as a result of the efforts of the Endowment Procurement Committee. This Committee is composed of the Junior Grand Warden as Chairman and not more than twenty (25) other members appointed annually by the Grand Master. The Committee provides a coordinated program for the solicitation of funds for the Masonic Home and acts through several Sub-Committees including "Let Your Pennies Make Good Cents," "Wills and Gifts" and "Masonic Home 100" and others deemed appropriate by the Chairman.

Additional checks and balances are maintained over the Masonic Home by the Masonic Home Endowment and Investment Committee. This group, made up of nine Master Masons with experience in management and investment of funds or qualified in professions that acquaint them with the duties and responsibilities of fund investment and management, advise the Corporate Board as to the selection of trust banks or bank trust departments to manage and serve as custodians over all or part of the funds of the Masonic Home Endowment Fund.

The Masonic Home Endowment and Investment Committee shall make recommendations to the Corporate Board in respect to the following matters:

- (1) Selection of Registered Investment Adviser(s) to manage, or Registered Representative(s) broker-dealer or its clearing firm to act as custodian for such portions of the Masonic Home Endowment Fund as shall be entrusted to such Registered Investment Adviser(s) or Registered Representative's(s) broker-dealer or its clearing firm by written contract/document with the Grand Lodge. (1999)
- (2) The terms of contract with the Registered Investment Adviser(s) or the Registered Representative's(s) broker-dealer for management and custodianship of the Masonic Home Endowment Fund. (1999)
- (3) The means, methods, and standards for evaluation of the services of the Registered Investment Adviser(s), the Registered Representative(s), or its broker-dealer managing and investing the Masonic Home Endowment Fund. (1999)
- (4) The Committee shall comply with the foregoing in respect to other Grand Lodge funds. (1999)

Our greatest Masonic charity is strongly supported by our membership and the Endowment Procurement fund seems to grow steadily each year. The Masonic Home and our Grand Lodge are continuously gearing up for some of the most phenomenal growth in our history. New facilities are

badly needed to provide our guests with the type and quality of care that they are deserving.

This facility must comply with untold numbers of regulations imposed by both federal and state bureaucracies. Maintaining our grand charity in the style that it deserves becomes an ever greater task. Only by the continued support of Master Masons such as you, can we continue to provide quality care to our worthy, distressed Brethren and families.

REFERENCES

Digest of Masonic Law, Constitution, Article IX, Section 1
 Constitution, Article XIV, Section 8
 Chapter 13, Section 1
 Regulation 13.01
 Regulation 14.09, Section 8
 Regulation 14.12
 Regulation 14.16
 Regulation 14.17.1, 14.17.3, 14.17.4, and 14.17.5
 Chapter 48
 Appendix - Masonic Home Rules and Regulations
 Article XII, Section 2

LESSON VII

PROCEDURES FOR ADMISSION TO THE MASONIC HOME OF FLORIDA

Applicants can be admitted to the Masonic Home under one of two plans:
the **Life Care Plan** and the **Private Pay Plan**.

Life Care Plan

General Information:

All applications for admission to the Masonic Home of Florida under the Life Care Plan **MUST** be submitted through a Masonic Lodge. Master Masons apply through the Lodge of which they are members. Wives and Widows of Master Masons, shall file through his Master Mason eligibility.

The sponsoring Lodge has certain duties and obligations to assume, and it should be familiar with them, and, if it is not willing to accept these duties and obligations, it should so advise the Board of Trustees and the District Deputy Grand Master. These duties and responsibilities of the Lodge do not cease upon admission to the Home, but shall continue through the term of the member in the Home. There are responsibilities upon the sponsoring body regarding furloughs; leaves of absence; discharge and death. (See Appendix, Chapter 8)

The Order of Eastern Star no longer sponsors admissions to the Masonic Home.

Eligibility:

Those eligible for admission to the Home under the Life Care Plan are distressed, needy, worthy Master Masons, dual members, their wives and widows, subject to the conditions, limitations and restrictions set forth in the Rules and Regulations of the Appendix titled "Masonic Home Rules and regulations" of the Digest of Masonic Law. (2008)

All admissions to the Home shall be made at the discretion of the Board of Trustees and not as a matter of right.

Qualifications of a Master Mason, his wife, or widow to be admitted to residency in the Masonic Home under the Life Care Plan:

- (a) The Master Mason must have become a member or dual member of a Florida Lodge before he attained the age of seventy (70) years. (2008) This cannot be waived.
- (b) The Master Mason must have been a member or dual member in good standing in a Florida Lodge for not less than ten (10) years, the last three (3) of which must have been continuous, and in the event he became a member of a Florida Lodge by affiliation from another Grand Jurisdiction, he also must have been a bona fide resident of the State of Florida for ten (10) years after such affiliation. (2008)
- (c) The ten year resident requirement may be waived if the applicant was raised in a Florida Lodge and has been a member in good standing continuously to date of application and meets all other requirements, and by unanimous vote of all Board members present, and by approval of the Grand Master.
- (d) The wife, or widow of a Master Mason is only eligible for residency in the Home under the Life Care Plan based on the Master Mason's Lodge membership.

A person who is mentally incompetent is not eligible for admission to the Home.

Procedure:

The original request for admission to the Home must come from the applicant, nearest relative, or guardian.

Every application for admission to the Home, under the Life Care Plan, MUST be initiated and sponsored by the Lodge of the person on whose membership the application is based and who has met the membership requirements (2008).

All applications MUST be in writing upon Grand Lodge approved forms furnished to the Lodges by the District Deputy Grand Master of that Masonic District. Each District Deputy Grand Master shall procure from the Grand Secretary and keep on hand, at all times, at least one set of application forms. (2008)

The initial preparation shall be the responsibility of the Worshipful Master of the sponsoring Lodge. The Master shall call upon the services of the Case Investigator for completion of the financial information and for such other advice as may be warranted by the particular circumstances of the application. (2008) The Worshipful Master should appoint a Committee of three (3) to visit the applicant at his place of residence to complete the basic information on the form. At this time, the applicant, relatives and/or guardian should be again reminded of the requirements of the Home, such as all assets being turned over to the Grand Lodge, including all stocks, bonds, insurance policies, annuities, property (both real and personal) etc.

The applicant should be notified several days in advance of the Committee's visit and asked to have all pertinent documents available for the Committee's examination and listing.

The thoroughness of the Investigating committee cannot be over emphasized. They must sign the "Investigating Committee Report" included in the application. The Medical Examiner's Report preferably should be completed by the applicant's personal physician. If not, the second preference would be a Masonic physician. The third alternative, of course, would be a recognized physician of good repute. In any case, a current serology test report and chest x-ray MUST be a part of the application.

Every question on the application must be answered. If the question is not applicable to the applicant, a N/A must be used. Special care should be taken to ensure that all correct information is provided. Inaccurate or incomplete information could cause the resident to be discharged from the Home, if found out later.

Any applicant for admission under the Life Care Plan to the Home, who has deeded or disposed of property in any manner within five (5) years prior to making application shall be ineligible unless it is established that such property was disposed of for adequate consideration in order to secure funds to care for such applicant or applicant's dependent, or said property is re-conveyed to applicant and/or conveyed to Grand Lodge for the use and benefit of the Masonic Home; or said property was/is conveyed to a Particular Lodge and/or Grand Lodge and does not constitute a part greater than thirty-three and one third percent (33 1/3%) of applicants estate. (2008)

The agreement in the application must be signed by the applicant. The Committee should carefully go over the agreement with the applicant, making certain the applicant understands all provisions of the agreement. The signing of the agreement must be done in the presence of, and

notarized by, a Notary.

After the Investigating Committee has reported to the Lodge, the Lodge resolution must be read, passed, signed, sealed, and made a part of the application.

The completed application from the Lodge – duly signed by the Worshipful Master and the Secretary and bearing the seal of the Lodge and the signature of the Case Investigator – shall then be presented to the District Deputy Grand Master for his further review, and upon his approval and signature, shall then be presented to the Chairman of the Admissions Committee of the Masonic Home.

All applications for admission to the Masonic Home shall be received by the Chairman of the Admissions Committee at least ten (10) days prior to the next regular meeting of the Board in order to be acted upon. The Chairman shall then refer all proper applications under the Life Care Plan to the Committee, who shall make investigations as may be necessary or required. The Committee shall present such applications to the Board at the next meeting following completion of such investigation, together with the recommendation of such committee. The Board, after reviewing the report of the Admission Committee, may approve or disapprove the admission of the applicant to the Home. When approved by the Board and Grand Master, the applicant may be admitted to the Home. (2008)

Every applicant who is accepted for admittance to the Life Care Plan who owns any property, real, personal or mixed, shall be required to convey all of his or her interest in such property to the use and benefit of the Home, except that a member of a Particular Lodge may assign, give, bequeath, donate, transfer, or by any other means or device, convey up to but not to exceed thirty-three and one third percent (33 1/3 %) of their entire estate to a particular Lodge chartered by the Grand Lodge of Florida and/or to The Grand Lodge of Florida, and retain eligibility for residency in the Masonic Home of Florida.

Subject to assigning 33 1/3% to a Particular Lodge or the Grand Lodge of Florida, every applicant shall sign an agreement to transfer, convey and deliver any and all moneys or property to the Grand Lodge for the use and benefit of the Home which may come to him or her after admittance to the Home and shall execute and deliver power of attorney to facilitate such transfer, conveyance and delivery. (1994)

Said applicant shall be permitted to retain the use and disposition of ten percent (10%) of all of his or her liquid assets subsequently liquidated and/or after acquired, in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for his or her personal use and disposition.

Grand Lodge shall create and maintain separate ledger accounts reflecting the disposition of the liquid assets of the residents.

The first ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) shall be credited to the Resident Members Trust Account, with the balance of the resident's liquid assets being divided and credited as follows:

Ninety percent (90%) to the Resident Member's Trust Account.

Ten percent (10%) for the use and benefit of the Resident, which may be withdrawn by the Resident at any time and from time to time and used in any manner the Resident determines. The balance remaining in said account at the death of the Resident shall be transferred to the Resident Member's Trust Account. Quarterly statements reflecting the balance in each of those accounts shall be provided to the respective residents.

Ten percent (10%) of the Residents monthly excess income over maintenance costs shall be deposited in the Resident's personal account and ninety (90%) of the excess shall be deposited in the Resident's Trust Fund (2003).

If the property of the applicant is held in an estate by the entirety, the Board, with the written approval of the Grand Master shall require:

- Conveyance by applicant and spouse of all such property to the Grand Lodge for use and benefit of the Home, or Conveyance by applicant and spouse of any part or portion of such property to the Grand Lodge for use and benefit of the Home, or
- Conveyance by applicant and spouse of all or any part or portion of such property to the Grand Lodge for the use and benefit of the Home subject to life estate of applicant's spouse in such property or a part or portion thereof, or
- Compliance by applicant and spouse with any combination of the above requirements.

Any conveyance of any property in which applicant's spouse retains a life estate shall provide that said life estate shall terminate in the event such spouse shall sell, convey, assign or transfer or attempt to sell, convey, assign or transfer said life estate to any other person and shall further provide that Grand Lodge shall not sell or convey the property subject to said life estate until after termination of such life estate.

All deeds, bills of sale, checks, assignments and abstracts, title insurance policies, life insurance policies, casualty insurance policies and all other papers and documents affecting and bearing on the right, title and interest of the applicant in and to all property being conveyed, transferred or assigned, shall be transmitted to the Administrator immediately after such applicant has been tentatively approved by the Board for admission together with a letter from the sponsoring Lodge in triplicate, itemizing such papers and documents. The applicant may retain cash and other items being used for living expenses until admitted into the Home at which time such items and the balance of any cash shall be delivered to the Administrator upon arrival of the applicant at the Home, which are to be turned over to the Grand Secretary to be credited in accordance with Regulation 7.04(a) in the Appendix to the Masonic Digest (2008).

All real and tangible personal properties coming into the possession of the Board shall be turned over to the Grand Lodge Properties Committee for disposition, with such property being sold or handled for the best interest of the Grand Lodge for the use and benefit of the Masonic Home, and proceeds thereof to be credited to the Resident Members Trust Account.

Whenever title to real property is being conveyed to the Grand Lodge by any applicant, if requested by the Board of Trustees, the deed shall be accompanied by abstract certified or recertified to date, a title insurance policy in a reputable company designated by or approved by the Grand Master, or other acceptable evidence of title. It shall be the responsibility of the Lodge to see that this is provided.

Whenever any papers and documents are to be recorded in the public records of any county or state, such recording shall not be done until the applicant has entered the Home as a Resident thereof.

Whenever Life Insurance is involved, it is necessary to see that the 'transfer of beneficiary forms' are properly processed.

If any boats, automobiles, trailers, furniture or any other personal property or whatsoever kind or nature are involved, they should be disposed of as soon as practical and the funds be credited to The Resident Members Trust Account.

After six (6) months from the date of entry to the Home of a new Resident, or upon a proper waiver of the six (6) months or in the event of such new Resident's demise after being admitted to

the Home but before the expiration of said six (6) months period, then all property conveyed to the Grand Lodge by such Resident is subject to such disposition as the Grand Lodge or its authority may determine.

When the Board has approved the admission to the Home of an applicant under the Life Care Plan, the following shall be the procedure to further process the application.

- (1) The Secretary or Assistant Secretary of the Board of Trustees shall deliver to the Legal Advisors of the Board of Trustees said application signed by the Secretary and dated the day of approval.
- (2) Said Legal Advisors shall review for legal sufficiency the application and any papers relative to deeds to real estate, personal property, bank saving accounts, insurance policies or anything else accompanying the application.
- (3) Said Legal Advisors shall then forward the application with all papers attached with their comments to the Grand Master.
- (4) When the Grand Master has satisfied himself that everything is in order, he will sign the application and forward it to the Administrator with instruction to admit the applicant to the Home as soon as possible.
- (5) The Administrator shall notify the sponsoring Lodge by letter to bring the applicant and any requirements concerning assets to the Home. If the applicant is not presented within thirty (30) days from date of Administrator's letter, it will be necessary to file a new application unless the Board extends such time in its discretion.
- (6) When the Administrator has completed all of the paper work and secured the information needed for the office, the application shall be transmitted with all official papers to the Grand Secretary for permanent file.

When the sponsoring Lodge receives notice that the Grand Master has approved the applicant's admission to the home, they will provide transportation to the Home for the applicant, and if required, provide attendants, in order that the applicant shall be delivered to the Home at the time designated by the Administrator.

All residents of the Home shall be required to sign an agreement, to agree to, and comply with, and support all the Rules and Regulations, now in effect for as may be hereafter adopted by the Grand Lodge. (2007)

The "Last Will and Testament" at the end of the application will be completed upon arrival at the Home.

It is important that the sponsoring Lodge understand that their responsibility for the welfare of a resident admitted to the Home under the Life Care Plan does not cease upon such admission, but is a continuing responsibility, and the Lodge must assume full responsibility in any situation when notified thereof by the Board or Administrator.

Further, it shall be the duty of the Worshipful Master of the Lodge and District Deputy Grand Master processing an application to advise the applicant and family of all the provisions of these Rules and Regulations. (2008)

Private Pay Plan

General Information:

The Board of Trustees of the Masonic Home may allocate a portion of the rooms available at the Masonic Home for use by Master Masons, their wives, widows, or mothers, from any Grand Jurisdiction recognized by the Grand Lodge of Florida on the Private Pay Plan.

Admission for residency under the Private Pay Plan in the Masonic Home of Florida shall be allowed based upon a monthly fee schedule which will be established by the Board of Trustees and will be comparable to fees charged by commercial life care establishments doing business in the State of Florida.

Application forms for the Private Pay Plan are different than those for the Life Care Plan and are available at the Masonic Home.

Residents admitted under this program will NOT be obliged to convey any of their property interest to the Grand Lodge except for the monthly fees and entry fee deposit.

Eligibility:

Those eligible for admission to the Home under the Private Pay Plan are worthy Master Masons, dual members, their wives and widows, subject to the conditions, limitations and restrictions set forth in the Rules and Regulations of the Appendix titled "Masonic Home Rules and regulations" of the Digest of Masonic Law. (2008)

As under the Life Care Plan, any person who is suffering from any communicable disease, is of unsound mind, is addicted to narcotics or alcoholic liquors, is of such disposition that they cannot live in harmony with the other Residents of the Home, or whose general mobility condition is not acceptable to the Board, shall NOT be admitted to the Home under the Private Pay Plan.

Florida Masons, their wives, widows and mothers will have preference for admission to the Masonic Home of Florida under the Private Pay Plan.

Procedure:

All applications for admission under the Private Pay Plan MUST be in writing upon prescribed forms furnished by Grand Lodge and may be made directly to the Masonic Home.

The Administrator of the Home shall receive all applications under the Private Pay Plan and refer them to the appropriate department heads for recommendation for acceptance or rejection regarding fraternal, financial, health and mobility eligibility.

The Administrator will refer the application with recommendation to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees for his approval with the concurrence of the Grand Master.

All admissions to the Home shall be made at the discretion of the Board of Trustees.

PROCEDURES FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM THE MASONIC HOME BOARD

There are three funds available to those needing financial assistance, but not ready to apply for admission into the Masonic Home, the **Non-Resident Relief Fund**, the **Emergency Relief Fund**, and the **Hal W. Adams Hospital Service Fund**.

NON-RESIDENT RELIEF FUND

General information:

The purpose of the Non-Resident Relief Fund is to render sustaining help, aid and assistance to needy, distressed, worthy Master Masons and their wives, widows and orphans who are eligible to receive the same.

Some eligible worthy Master Masons may be in need of financial assistance, but do not need or want to move into the Home. The Board of Trustees and the Grand Master may approve a set amount to be sent to the needy Brother by the Grand Secretary. All approved applications are on a month-to-month basis, and shall be certified to the Grand Secretary each month. The Board shall, from time to time, request the sponsoring Lodge and District Deputy Grand Master to make investigation and to certify to the Board that further assistance is needed. A Lodge having knowledge of any change in the condition of a recipient of relief funds shall immediately report the same to the Board.

Every application for Non-Resident Relief must be initiated and sponsored by the Lodge of the person on whose membership the application is based and who has met the membership requirements.

Worthy applicants for Non-Resident Relief are not always indigent. It is the duty of the Board to recover, if possible, the monies granted for Non-Resident Relief, so that it might be available for those less fortunate. (See Appendix, Chapter 7.08 (b))

When the applicant for Non-Resident Relief owns real property or other valuable assets, the Board shall have the authority to require of the applicant security for the repayment of the money granted. The Board shall exercise this authority upon Masonic principles of right and justice, and shall have full discretion as to the requirement thereof, and the method, time, etc., in the administration of same.

Eligibility:

The same as for admission to the Home.

Procedure:

Obtain a Non-Resident Relief application from the District Deputy Grand Master and proceed with the same diligence to completion as with an admission form. Return completed form,

with any substantiating documents, to the District Deputy Grand Master. He will review the application and, with his comments, forward it to the Chairman of the Non-Resident Relief Committee of the Board of Trustees.

All applications for Non-Resident Relief shall be received by the Chairman of the Admissions and Non-Resident Relief Committee at least ten (10) days prior to the next regular meeting of the Board.

When approved, the Grand Secretary will send the remittances to the applicant or to the one designated to receive the assistance for the applicant.

All action by the Board pursuant to Section 7.08 (b) shall be subject to the approval of the Grand Master.

EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND

General information:

Emergency relief shall be given only to those needy, distressed, worthy Master Masons, who are members of regular Lodges working under a charter granted by Grand Lodge and to their needy, distressed, worthy wives, widows, or orphans, whose need is urgent and who cannot provide for themselves, are not eligible for sufficient assistance from the State Welfare Board, or who cannot be otherwise provided for. Assistance from this fund shall not exceed the sum of One Thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) in any one case, neither shall it extend for a period of longer than three (3) months. Only by unanimous vote of all Board Members present and approved by the Grand Master, may the limit be increased.

It shall be the duty of the Relief Administrator to thoroughly investigate every application received by him for Emergency Relief and to consider, determine and administer the Emergency Relief in accordance with these Rules and Regulation, as his best judgment may deem proper and necessary.

The Relief Administrator shall keep an accurate, full and complete record of all his transactions, including all receipts and disbursements, and make full report thereof to the Board in writing at each monthly meeting, together with report of all applications and correspondence. The Relief Administrator shall at the last meeting of the Board at the end of the year, submit an annual written report.

Eligibility:

Same as for admission to the Masonic Home.

Procedure:

Applications for Emergency Relief shall be submitted through the Lodge where the Master Mason, upon whose membership the application is based, is in good standing.

Obtain an application form from the District Deputy Grand Master. Every question must be fully answered, the application signed by the Worshipful Master and Secretary, and bear the Seal of the Lodge. In addition, the complete facts in every case must be stated. The Lodge shall recommend the amount of relief needed. The application shall contain an agreement of the Lodge to contribute thirty-three and one-third percent (33 1/3 %) of the relief granted. This can be waived under certain conditions contained in Appendix, Chapter 10, Section 10.04.

The completed application goes to the District Deputy Grand Master, then to the Relief Administrator, and after approval of the Board and the Grand Master, the Voucher goes to the Grand Secretary who will mail relief to the recipient or Lodge as designated.

HAL W. ADAMS HOSPITAL SERVICE FUND

General information:

The purpose of the Hospital Fund is to provide medical, surgical and hospital care or assistance for needy, distressed, worthy Master Masons, their wives, widows and orphans.

Original grants from this fund are not to exceed the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00); provided, however, that where a greater need is apparent to the Relief Administrator, he may, with the approval of the Board make an additional grant.

Assistance for hospitalization from these funds shall provide ward accommodations only, unless the physician in charge shall file in the hospital records of the case a written order that a private room is necessary.

Eligibility:

A worthy Master Mason, his wife, widow and orphans are eligible for assistance from this fund provided:

- 1 – A Master Mason must have been raised in a Florida Lodge and be in good standing at the time of making application for relief.
- 2 – If he became a member of a Florida Lodge through affiliation from another Grand Jurisdiction, he must have affiliated before reaching the age of sixty (60) years; must have been a bona fide resident of the State of Florida and a dues paying member of a Florida Lodge for at least five (5) years; and shall have been a member in good standing for at least five (5) years immediately preceding the date of application.
- 3 – The wives, widows and orphans are eligible based on the Master Mason's eligibility.

The applicant must be sick, afflicted or injured and in need of medical, surgical or hospital care, and be without money, or other means to secure the needed service, or has received these services and is unable to pay for same.

Procedure:

Applications can be requested through the District Deputy Grand Master.

All applications must be filed through the Lodge and shall be processed in like manner as an application for Emergency Relief, except that no contribution shall be required from the Lodge and provided further, that the Relief Administrator may, in cases of extreme urgency, waive the filing of formal application before the grant is made. If it is later found that the applicant is not eligible

under these Rules and Regulations, the Lodge must assume responsibility for such grants.

The Relief Administrator shall process applications as quickly as received, provided they meet all requirements of eligibility. He shall make a written report to the Board at each of the monthly meetings showing all expenditures