

THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE  
OF THE MOST ANCIENT AND HONORABLE FRATERNITY  
OF FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS  
OF PENNSYLVANIA AND MASONIC JURISDICTION  
THEREUNTO BELONGING

# Digest of Decisions

OF THE

## Grand Lodge and Grand Masters



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PENNSYLVANIA, F.&A.M  
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# FOREWORD

The first *Digest of Decisions*, which was prepared by Brother James M. Lamberton, was issued in December, 1912. Prior to that time, the Decisions were included in a Section of the *Ahiman Rezon*.

In 1923, it was decided that the Digest needed revision and Brother Abraham M. Beitler, R.W. Grand Master, agreed to assume this task. The second Digest was published in 1925 with the full approval of Brother Samuel M. Goodyear, then R.W. Grand Master.

In 1937, a Supplement to the Digest was issued and this supplement has since been revised several times. In recent years many new Decisions have been issued, while some were revoked and others amended. These changes were made by the use of “stickers”.

In 1965, the Digest was again revised and published in loose leaf form to simplify revisions. This was authorized by Brother Earl F. Herold, R.W. Grand Master, and published in 1966 by Brother Robert E. Deyoe, R.W. Grand Master.

In 1986, Brother Carl W. Stenberg, Jr., R.W. Grand Master, recognized that the Digest was again in need of a complete revision to comply with the latest edition of the *Ahiman Rezon*. He assigned Brother Robert A. Pote, Brother Walter L. Sykes and Brother Robert Batto, all Past District Deputy Grand Masters, this responsibility.

Along with the complete revision, the numbering of the articles was changed to conform to the *Ahiman Rezon*. The revised edition was also printed on light blue paper to distinguish it from previous editions.

In 2014, it was determined that the Digest needed to be updated and published in a different format. To distinguish this edition from previous versions, it was decided to use standard 3-ring binders with printing on special 3-hole punched paper with reinforced edging to prevent tearing from the rings. This version also incorporated larger type size. By direction of Brother Robert J. Bateman, R.W. Grand Master, staff at the Grand Lodge undertook the responsibility of incorporating all Decisions issued from the last reprinting in 2008 to bring the *Digest of Decisions* up to date.

In 2020, it was determined that the Digest will no longer be published in paper form. Online PDF copies were made available for all Master Masons accessing our membership system. Only the current updated version will be posted.

**This 2026 *Digest of Decisions* is published with my approval and replaces all former issues which should not be used hereafter.**

**Robert D. Brink**  
***R.W. Grand Master***

January 8, 2026



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# DIGEST OF DECISIONS

*In Freemasonry what is not permitted is prohibited.*

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## 1 ADDRESSES

### Speeches, Lectures, Motion Pictures

1.1 Addresses upon purely Masonic subjects may with propriety be given before members of the Fraternity as for instance, upon the Masonic Villages, the use of motion pictures or slides being permitted after the Lodge is closed. The address without slides may be delivered in the Lodge room during the meeting.

*Williams, 1914.*

1.2 Permission is hereby granted for the showing of motion pictures of the Masonic Villages and The Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation, produced by or under the direction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, in all Masonic Halls, Masonic Temples and Lodge Rooms, provided, however, that such showing be in conformity with all rules and regulations for fire protection.

Permission is also granted for the insertion in the Lodge Notice of information relating to the showing of such motion pictures.

*Chilcote, 1959; Williamson, 1983.*

1.3 Permission is hereby granted to use tapeplayers, VCRs and other devices in Masonic Temples and Halls and such devices may be used in Masonic Lodge Rooms if the Lodge is not conferring nor rehearsing the esoteric work.

It is the duty of the Worshipful Master to prevent the recording of any of the esoteric work at any time or at any place and he will be held to a strict accounting of this duty.

*Kimmel, 1973; Stoner, 1990.*

## 2 ADMISSION OF MEMBERS AND VISITORS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 24.01*

2.1 The Master of a Lodge has an absolute right to admit visitors at his pleasure. He is bound, however, to maintain the harmony of his Lodge and it should never be his pleasure to admit a visitor to whom objection is made by a member in open Lodge.

*Arnold, 1893.*

2.2 The power of the Master to refuse admission to any one desiring to visit the Lodge is undoubted. The harmony of the Lodge is entrusted to his care and he must have the power to say who may or who may not be admitted to its meetings.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

2.3 A visitor is admitted as an act of courtesy and not as a matter of right.

*Nisbet, 1879.*

2.4 A Master Mason possesses the unqualified right of objecting to the admission of a visitor, being answerable to his own conscience alone, that his objection is founded upon good and sufficient cause. A Master Mason objecting to a visitor is bound neither to account to the Lodge nor to give his reason for the objection.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

2.5 In order to clarify an apparent misunderstanding which seems to be prevalent in this Jurisdiction relative to Article 24.01, of the *Ahiman Rezon*, I have decided that Entered Apprentice Masons may be admitted as visitors to Entered Apprentice Lodges, and Fellow Craft Masons may be admitted to Entered Apprentice and Fellow Craft Mason Lodges if properly vouched for or having passed a satisfactory examination. Decision 2.11 is not to be applied to such members.

*Lathwood, 1943.*

2.6 A Tyler of a Lodge may vouch for a visitor whom he has not sat with in a Lodge, if the visitor is introduced to him outside of the Lodge by one with whom he has sat, who vouches to the Tyler, in the presence of the proposed visitor, that the said visitor is a Master Mason. What is requisite in every such case is, that all three Brethren shall be present together; that one Brother should have been Masonically known to the other, and one of these two vouches to the other that the third party is a Master Mason.

*MacCalla, 1889.*

2.7 If a Brother A, who has sat in a Master Mason's Lodge with a Brother B, meets a Brother C otherwise than in Lodge, and personally introduces B to C as a Master Mason, C can vouch for B. If B and C are both present at the opening of the Lodge, when the question as to B's being a Master Mason comes up, C can vouch for him at once. If the Lodge is already open, and C is in the Lodge, when the name of B is announced as a visitor, C must go outside and satisfy himself by personal inspection that B, whose name is so announced, is the identical B to whom he was introduced as a Master Mason by A. This method of vouching cannot be carried further in

succession; that is, C cannot after the introduction to him of B by A, as a Master Mason, introduce B to D, and then D vouches B upon such information.

*Perkins, 1872.*

2.8 To sit with a person, somewhere else than in a regular Blue Lodge, is not lawful Masonic information that he is a Master Mason in good standing.

*Mitchell, 1886.*

2.9 The Lodge can only admit a visitor, or examine those whose membership is in a subordinate Lodge of a Grand Lodge recognized by our Grand Lodge.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

2.10 A Brother visiting a clandestine Lodge or affiliating with clandestine Masons, must not be admitted to a Lodge in this Jurisdiction. Members of Lodges holding Masonic intercourse with clandestine Masons give cause to have charges preferred against them.

*Kelly, 1898.*

2.11 A visitor to a Lodge shall personally fill in a visitor's card and hand it to the Tyler, at the same time exhibiting a receipt for current dues. If he cannot produce such a receipt, the Tyler, through the Pursuivant, shall so inform the Worshipful Master, who must satisfy himself that the visitor is in good standing before admitting him. If the Brother is a frequent visitor, his receipt need be shown only once in any Masonic year.

*Rust, 1936; Trate, 1981.*

2.12 The names of members and visitors must be written by themselves, and handed to the Tyler, and by him to the Pursuivant.

*Brown, 1904.*

2.13 No private examination of a visitor is sufficient to authorize a Brother to vouch for one who applies to visit a Lodge.

*Perkins, 1872.*

2.14 It is necessary in this Jurisdiction that either a Grand Lodge certificate or a receipt for dues for the current year, with the seal of the Lodge attached, be presented before entering upon the examination of a visitor.

*Deyoe, 1966; Trate, 1981.*

2.15 One cannot be admitted as a visitor on documentary evidence alone. He must prove himself in the usual way. A competent committee in making an examination considers all the facts of the case and the known character of the visitor and must be satisfied.

*Lamberton, 1871.*

2.16 The examination should never be made in any other place than a Lodge room and there only by a committee appointed by the Master or, if the Lodge be not meeting, by the Master in the interval between meetings. No one except the Master or the committee of the Lodge has authority to make such an examination and no place except that above specified is proper for the same.

*Africa, 1891.*

2.17 The Junior Warden should not be named on the Committee. His duties are well defined and among them is not the examination of visitors.

*Lamberton, 1871.*

2.18 The committee may report in either a Master Mason's, a Fellow Craft or an Entered Apprentice Lodge.

*MacCalla, 1889.*

2.19 After the examination is completed the visitor should retire to the anteroom and be introduced in the usual manner, after the committee has made its report.

*Perkins, 1872.*

2.20 All members of, or visitors to a Lodge shall or shall not be announced by name in the Lodge at the discretion of the Master. Announcement, if made, of the names of members shall be to the Master by the Pursuivant and of visitors, to the Master by the Senior Warden. The Master may admit visitors if known or vouched for, or deny them admission at his will or pleasure. Several members may be announced together.

*McKinley, 1962.*

2.21 When a visitor is actually present in a Lodge, he has no right to interfere with the work of the Lodge he is visiting. This is the right of a member only, who can by his objection, obstruct the initiation of a candidate. A visitor is permitted by courtesy to state his information, if, in his judgment the petitioner is unqualified. If, in the judgment then of the Master, the objection shows a disqualification he ought, in the exercise of a wise discretion, suspend his work for further inquiry. If, however, there is no disqualification, he is at entire liberty to proceed with his work. A visitor can no more make a valid objection to be obligatory on the Master, than he can deposit a black ball in the Lodge in which he is a visitor.

*Lamberton, 1871.*

*See 72.11-13*

2.22 One of the requirements a visitor must meet before he can be admitted into the body of an Open Lodge working under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania is to have and present a dues card which verifies that his dues have been paid for the current year.

*Trate, 1981.*

### 3 ADVANCEMENT

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 17.28; Art. 19.03*

3.1 It is the duty of a Lodge to advance a Brother desiring it, unless charges are preferred against him.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

3.2 The Master of a Lodge should select competent Brethren of his Lodge, whose duty it should be to instruct candidates in the several degrees, so that they may give evidence of proficiency before advancement.

*Kendrick, 1906.*

3.3 Pennsylvania Lodges may perform courtesy work for other Lodges in Pennsylvania or for Lodges in other Jurisdictions, and Lodges in other Jurisdictions may perform courtesy work for Lodges in Pennsylvania. A Pennsylvania candidate, on returning to Pennsylvania, is to be fully instructed by his Lodge in the Pennsylvania work and is subject to the proficiency requirements. Notification is to be given to the District Deputy Grand Master.

Approval for Lodges in other Jurisdictions performing courtesy work for Lodges in Pennsylvania must come through the Office of the Right Worshipful Grand Secretary with notification to the District Deputy Grand Master.

*(Rev. 1993)*

*Fowler, 1993.*

3.4 The question of proficiency in the work must be left to the judgment of the Master, not to be interfered with, except in case of gross negligence or misconduct.

*Mitchell, 1885.*

3.5 Before a candidate will be advanced he should have general familiarity with the work of the degrees that he has received. He should learn and know the signs and grips of the degrees he has previously received and demonstrate an understanding of the obligations. For the avoidance of doubt, he need not be letter perfect in the work in order to be advanced.

*Africa, 1891; Gamon, 2020.*

3.6 Proficiency before advancement within the meaning of the *Ahiman Rezon* means such as to enable a Brother to prove himself a Brother of the Degree he has taken and pass an examination for admission into a Lodge.

*(Rev. 1997)*

*Arnold, 1893; See Ahiman Rezon Art. 19.03;*

*Weisser, 1996.*

3.7 An Entered Apprentice Mason must prove his proficiency within sixty days of receiving his Degree or be disbarred from advancement by being suspended at the next Stated Meeting of the Lodge, unless the sixty-day period is extended by the Worshipful Master at the written request of the Entered Apprentice.

*(Rev. 1986)*

*(Removed 1996)*

*Lamberton, 1871; Stenberg, 1986.*

3.8 A Brother under charges cannot be advanced.

*MacCalla, 1889.*

3.9 “I directed a Lodge not to advance a Brother for the reason, that an investigation of his case developed the fact that he was not under the tongue of good Masonic report. Such authority is clearly incident to the office of the Grand Master, and I consider it his bound duty to exercise that power, when there is evidence of any lack of a proper investigation by a Lodge, coupled with clearly proven facts, that should prevent a man of doubtful probity becoming a member of our Fraternity.”

*Orlady, 1909.*

3.10 If it is alleged that an Entered Apprentice or Fellow Craft Mason was not, or is not under the tongue of good Masonic report, charges may be preferred against him. In support of such charges any evidence may be introduced that goes to prove the bad character of the accused. His entire character is under review. While a Brother cannot have been guilty of unmasonic conduct before he was made a Mason he may have deceived his present Brethren as to his real character. He must be charged with unmasonic conduct, and this conduct must have been exhibited since initiation.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

3.11 As soon as a petitioner is initiated, he becomes a Member of the Lodge, and upon becoming proficient is entitled to advance, unless charges are preferred against him in open Lodge; notice of these charges must be given him. The Lodge may act on the charges by referring them to a Committee, and a majority of the Members shall decide whether the objections have been sustained; and, if not sustained, the Brother is entitled to advancement. Every Brother must have due Masonic notice of the charges preferred against him, and when and where they will be investigated, and ample time allowed him to put in a defense.

*Nisbet, 1880; Williamson, 1983.*

3.12 If a Member of a Lodge states that he has charges against a Brother, or should objection be made to the advancement of a Brother, the Master should allow a reasonable time to prepare the charges, which ought always to be prepared carefully, specifying distinctly the offense or offenses complained of. When objection is so made, and it is declared that the charges will be formally preferred, the Master ought to announce in open Lodge that he will postpone the advancement until the next Stated Meeting, and unless the charges shall then be preferred, he will proceed with the work. At such meeting, the charges should be made, or the Brother advanced.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

3.13 To promote a newly-made Mason's proficiency in the craft as dictated by Article 19.03 of the *Ahiman Rezon*, he shall use the proficiency program prescribed by the Grand Lodge, and must, to the satisfaction of the Worshipful Master of the Lodge, prove his proficiency within sixty days of receiving each Degree before he can be advanced, or receive his dues card. Should he fail to prove his proficiency within sixty days after receiving each of the three Degrees, he is to be suspended at the next Stated Meeting of the Lodge. The Worshipful Master may, given just cause, extend the period upon written application of the newly-made Mason.

Once the newly-made Mason has proved his proficiency in the third Degree, and is issued his dues card, he may then petition another organization requiring, as a prerequisite, membership as a Master Mason in a Lodge in this Jurisdiction.

(Rev. 1986)

(Removed 1996)

Carpenter, 1984.

## 4 AHIMAN REZON

*See Ahiman Rezon, Sec. 12*

4.1 The three copies of the *Ahiman Rezon* sent to the Lodge should be on the pedestals of the Master, and Senior, and Junior Wardens, while the Lodge is open and at work. They do not belong to the Members who fill those stations.

*Arnold, 1894.*

4.2 A Lodge has not the power to change, amend, alter, modify, set aside or evade, any provision of the *Ahiman Rezon*, or any form or ceremonial contained therein.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

## 5 ALTAR

5.1 Altars to be used in Lodge rooms should be approximately 34 inches long, 24 inches wide and 24 inches high, with the lights 5 feet 6 inches apart. The Altar to be located equidistant from the lights.

*Hamilton, 1927; Deyoe, 1966.*

5.2 There is no objection to the use of electricity in lighting the three Lesser Lights.

*Arnold, 1894*



## 6 ANCIENT ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE

6.1 The Scottish Rite Bodies in America have always disclaimed any right to confer or control the Symbolic degrees and their Constitution expressly states that an applicant must be a Master Mason made in a regularly constituted Lodge.

*Eichbaum, 1888.*

6.2 The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania does not claim jurisdiction over the Bodies of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite, but does claim the right to prohibit members of the Masonic Fraternity of its obedience from visiting or having Masonic intercourse with any bodies or individuals called Masonic that have not been sanctioned by the Grand Lodge.

*Eichbaum, 1887.*

## 7 ANCIENT CHARGES

7.1 The Ancient Charges are not a part of the esoteric work. However, I decree that the Charges at the Opening and the Closing of a Lodge at all Stated Meetings, and the Charge at the conclusion of degrees are mandatory. **The Charges to be used are not to be read, but must be recited from memory.** It is not required that the Worshipful Master or the Acting Worshipful Master personally give the Charges, in which event they shall be given by a Brother designated by him.

*McCain, 1977.*

## 8 APPEALS TO THE GRAND LODGE

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 13.11-.19; Art. 22.03*

8.1 After charges and trial, an appeal may be made to the Grand Lodge by an accused, or by a member of his Lodge which has taken final action in his case. Any member may appeal.

*MacCalla, 1889.*

8.2 If any member of the Lodge is dissatisfied with its action or the action of the Master, the course for him is to appeal.

*Perkins, 1873.*

8.3 As Master there is no appeal in your Lodge from any decisions you make, but you must bear in mind that it is your duty to protect every Brother in his rights and privileges in the Lodge. Your decisions should be governed by the broadest principles of Masonic justice and equity, and, while there is no appeal from them therein, any Brother may appeal from them to the Grand Master.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

## 9 ASSESSMENT

9.1 A Masonic Lodge cannot assess its members upon the death of one of their numbers, to pay a stated sum to the family of the deceased as a funeral benefit. A Masonic Lodge does not exist for that purpose, while other organizations do. "What is not permitted is prohibited" in Freemasonry.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

## 10 AUDITING COMMITTEE

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 17.16*

10.1 Masonic Law requires that an auditing committee shall be appointed each year. It does not provide that they are to be salaried officers nor do your By-Laws so provide. They are, therefore, not entitled to be paid for their services and any appropriation made for that purpose is not warranted.

*Beitler, 1923; Deyoe, 1966.*

10.2 A practice appears to be prevalent among the Lodges of giving a banquet to the Auditing Committee, usually composed of three Brethren.

Invitations to attend this banquet are extended by the Worshipful Master and in many instances the affairs have been quite costly.

If the work of auditing the accounts of the Secretary and Treasurer and of the Trustees of a Lodge make it proper that the Committee and the Officers, whose books, vouchers and accounts are being examined, should be given a supper, there can be no objection to such an expenditure of the funds of the Lodge, but to spend the money of the Lodge to defray the expenses of a banquet at which only a selected group of the members of the Lodge are privileged to attend, is not a Masonic use of Lodge funds and such banquets and such use of Lodge Funds are forbidden.

*Beitler, 1922.*

10.3 The Worshipful Master in appointing an auditing committee should select competent members of the Lodge, preference being given to accountants, bookkeepers or clerks accustomed to such work who are to check and recheck all items of income and expenditure; ascertain that all items of income are entered in the Secretary's cash book and properly posted in the ledger; that receipts are turned over to the Treasurer; that orders are promptly drawn; outstanding dues checked; Trustees accounts properly audited; and everything done toward a full and complete audit of the accounts of the Lodge.

*Rust, 1936.*

10.4 The Auditing Committee must examine the accounts and make out the report. It is not to be made out by the Secretary or the Treasurer.

10.5 Article 17.16 of the *Ahiman Rezon* provides for the appointment of an Audit Committee to audit the accounts of the Lodge as of the close of the current year.

Accordingly, the Trustees of the Lodge shall present a copy of their report to the Audit Committee by February 15 and report to the Lodge at the stated meeting next following such date.

The Audit Committee shall then submit their report to the Lodge no later than the March stated meeting for approval, a copy of which shall immediately be sent to the District Deputy Grand Master.

After review by the District Deputy Grand Master, the report shall be at once forwarded to the Grand Secretary, to arrive no later than April 15.

The by-laws of Lodges which may be in contravention of the foregoing are hereby declared null and void.

*(Rev. 1986, 1990)*

*Carpenter, 1985.*

## 11 BALLOTING ON PETITION

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 21.02, .04, .06, .08, .13-.16*

11.1 Black balls, and not black cubes, must be used in balloting in a Lodge.

*MacCalla, 1890; Grand Lodge, 1895.*

11.2 A petitioner for initiation must be balloted upon at a stated meeting but may be initiated at an extra meeting.

*Mitchell, 1886.*

11.3 A Lodge may, at its option, use voice voting for petitioners. If any objection is made to a voice vote, however, a standard ballot must be used. When a standard ballot is used, the ballot box must be placed on the Altar when the Members vote and every Member present should vote. (Rev. 2001, 2003)

*Orlady, 1908; Deyoe, 1966; Dluge, 2000; Cunningham, 2003.*

11.4 The custom is to hand the ballot box to the elected officers only; not from any respect to them, but to obviate the necessity of their leaving their stations.

*Mitchell, 1886.*

11.5 If a visitor sends in his card and desires an examination, the Master can defer action in his case until after the balloting is over. If, however, while a Committee is examining a visitor, a Committee of Inquiry on a petitioner for initiation and membership should make a report to the Lodge, the Master should either postpone action on the ballot until the Committee on Examination has conducted its duty, or invite it to return to the Lodge while the ballot is being held.

*Henderson, 1895.*

11.6 The Master has the power to excuse a Brother from balloting, but when he has reason to believe that the application is due to a desire to invade the secrecy of the ballot in the slightest degree, or will have a tendency to produce such a result, it must be refused.

*Guthrie, 1911; Deyoe, 1966.*

11.7 It is not customary, before balloting for a petitioner, for members to volunteer openly in the Lodge information as to whom and what the petitioner is; but, if the Master thinks it proper to enable his Lodge to vote intelligently, or if the information be asked by a member, then it is proper that it be given.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

11.8 It is usual to ballot upon petitioners in the order in which their petitions were received; still it is in the power of the Master to use his discretion and direct a ballot to be taken upon any or either of them first.

*Arnold, 1894.*

11.9 When a number of petitions appear upon the Lodge notice, the balloting when commenced, must be continuous upon those upon which favorable reports have been made, and action shall not be taken upon any petition reported on later the same evening; unless the Master shall

have, at the conclusion of the first balloting, announced his intention so to do. **There can be no test ballot on a test ballot.**

*Beitler, 1923.*

11.10 In every case of a ballot on a petitioner for initiation and membership, where the Wardens have made their announcements, the Master should make his announcement also, and then, if he considers it necessary, he may order a test ballot.

*MacCalla, 1889.*

11.11 No Brother has a right to demand the result of the ballot on a petitioner. Neither the Master nor the Wardens should disclose the result in any way different from that which they are taught to use at their respective stations.

*Eichbaum, 1887.*

11.12 The Master will not allow a Brother to state that he had cast the black ball and withdraw his objections. This is not permitted to be done.

*Lamberton, 1871; Williamson, 1983.*

11.13 It is reprehensible and unmasonic for a Brother to divulge how he voted on a petition.

*Wagner, 1899.*

11.14 It is not within the power of the Grand Master to set aside a rejection by ballot, unless it has been done contrary to Law.

*Brown, 1904.*

11.15 The Master, after confirming the reports of the Wardens, may of his own volition, or at the request of a Brother, order a test ballot to ascertain if an error has occurred in the vote just taken, but such test ballot cannot be taken if any Brother has retired.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

11.16 When a test ballot is had, it is not necessary to say so in the Minutes. But the ballot must be had at once, before any of the Brethren have retired. Only those Members within the tyled Lodge are to vote on a test ballot.

*Arnold, 1893; Stenberg, 1987.*  
*See 14.1-.9; 72.14; 81.1; 85.1-.27*

11.17 Subordinate Lodges may ballot on multiple petitions for initiation and membership by a single ballot provided they adhere to the following procedures:

- i. No more than five (5) petitions may be balloted upon using a ballot on more than one petition for initiation and membership.
- ii. A voice vote is not permitted on more than one petition for initiation and membership at the same time.
- iii. In the event that one (or more than one) blackball is cast in any ballot on more than one petition for initiation and membership, each petition must thereafter be balloted or voted upon separately as provided for in Section 11.3.

Voice voting is permitted on multiple petitions for membership only.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a standard ballot box must be used to ballot upon each petition for initiation and membership or membership only if any member entitled to vote on such petition objects to the use of a single ballot or voice vote, as the case may be.

*Carpenter, 1985; Stenberg, 1987;  
Kurtz, 1989; Weisser, 1997; Gamon 2020.*

11.18 If a ballot were to be held at a Stated Meeting that was cancelled or postponed due to local or weather emergencies, the ballot must not occur at the rescheduled meeting. The ballot must be laid over to the next Stated Meeting.

*Gardner, 2008.*

## 12 BANQUET

12.1 A Table Lodge is a Lodge at Labor and must be held at the place where the Lodge meets regularly. If a Lodge desires to hold the Table Lodge elsewhere, it must first request permission from the District Deputy Grand Master of that Lodge's Masonic District.

A Table Lodge must be held in strict accordance with the prescribed ritual as approved by the Grand Lodge. Any change in, or deviation from, the prescribed ritual – such as additional toasts – shall have first received approval from the Director of Ritualistic Work and the District Deputy Grand Master of that Lodge's Masonic District.

A Lodge may, with permission of its District Deputy Grand Master, conduct an "open" Table Lodge according to the procedures approved by the Grand Lodge for that purpose.

*Carpenter, 1984; Dluge, 2000.*

12.2 Non-Masons are permitted to address banquets and other activities of a Masonic Lodge. This includes banquets and activities even though held before or after Stated, Special or Extra Meetings. The speaker and the subject must have the prior approval, in writing, of the District Deputy Grand Master. A copy of the approval must be provided, as soon as issued, to the Grand Secretary for record purposes.

*Kimmel, 1972; McCain, 1976.*

12.3 If your banquet will be held in a place which cannot be tyled, your Master should caution the speakers to avoid saying anything about Masonry, which ought to be said only in the Lodge. Be careful that none are present but Masons, and the waiters should be required to retire while the speaking is taking place.

*(Rev. 1986)*

*Arnold, 1894.*

*See 47.1*

## 13 BIBLE

13.1 There must be three copies of the Holy Bible for the use of a Lodge; one on the Altar, one on the Master's pedestal, and one for use in the Examining Room.

*Wagner, 1900.*

13.2 Requests were received from several Lodges for permission to present a copy of the Holy Bible to each new initiate. I can see no objection to the inauguration of this custom provided no other embellishment appears on the Bible other than that of the Masonic emblem, and that the data inserted on the inside page contains only the name of the Lodge, the name of the Brother, the dates he received the several degrees; and signed by the Master or Secretary, and provided further, that the Book does not contain Masonic literature adverse to the Pennsylvania Law and work.

*Brehm, 1940.*



## 14 BLACK BALL

### (Rejections)

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 21.14*

14.1 The use of the black ball is a right secured to every Master Mason, which he should be permitted to exercise without supervisory interference or questioning by any Brother. If he makes known the fact of having voted a black ball, and admits that in doing so his motives were false and malicious, he must take the consequences of his indiscretion and admission. A Brother may remove the veil of secrecy and unfold the reason for his conduct, if he sees fit; but until he does so voluntarily and of his own accord, it is Masonically wrong to seek to penetrate or force his mystery from him. The Grand Lodge has not decided that a Brother cannot be expelled for indiscriminate use of the black ball, no matter what cause or motive impelled him to use it.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

*See 19.28*

14.2 The ballot is not to be polluted for the purpose of petty malice, private revenge, or in a spirit of retaliation for real or fancied injuries. One who thus wields the power which Masonry gives him, and excludes from our Temple those against whom there is no other objection, has been declared by the Grand Lodge to “violate his Masonic obligations” – “to be a foe to Masonry, and false to every principle of duty and right, and unfit to belong to the Craft.”

*Lamberton, 1869; Grand Lodge, 1895.*

14.3 The Masonic ballot is sacred. He who knowingly misuses it should be promptly expelled from the Fraternity; and it is a clear misuse of it when objections are raised to a petitioner for any other than Masonic reasons. Private piques, business transactions, and personal differences, which do not relate to the character of the petitioner, have no place in Freemasonry, and the Lodge, whose members continue to abuse the ballot by such practices, deserves to lose its Warrant.

*Watres, 1917.*

*See 72.8*

14.4 Any Brother who violates the Masonic Law in disclosing his reason for casting a black ball, makes his reason the subject of Masonic charge and investigation.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

14.5 A member’s reasons for refraining from depositing a black ball and subsequently making an oral objection, are immaterial. A member has an absolute right to object to a candidate either by depositing a black ball or making an oral objection after approval. The usual, and probably the better way, is to use the black ball when the opportunity is presented; but a member is not compelled to do so, and cannot be called to account and disciplined, because he prefers to pursue the other course.

*Com. on Appeals, 1900.*

14.6 There can be no doubt of the right of every member to use the ballot as he pleases, without being questioned or intimidated in any way; but if he makes known his use of the black ball, and admits that it was from false or malicious motives, he must suffer the consequence of that admission.

*Com. on Appeals, 1902.*

14.7 No Brother has the right to demand that another Brother shall either cast a black ball for him, or interpose an oral objection. If he wishes either of these done, he must do it himself in person. He cannot accomplish this by writing a letter to the Lodge, unless the letter induces some other Brother to object. The fact that a Member is in arrears for dues to his Lodge does not disqualify him from voting on a petition, or orally objecting to a candidate.

*MacCalla, 1889.*

14.8 It is the duty of the Master of a Lodge to see that there are at least ten black balls in the ballot box before each ballot is taken. A sufficient number of white balls to accommodate the average number of members in attendance must also be present in the ballot box. 'Every member of a Lodge present, unless excused by the Master, on his own application, shall vote upon this ballot' as shown in Article 21.04 of the *Ahiman Rezon*.

*Beitler, 1922; Trate, 1980.*

14.9 It shall take a single black ball to reject a petition for initiation and membership to a Subordinate Lodge, provided, however, that any time prior to the initiation of the petitioner a Member with a legitimate Masonic objection to the petitioner may bring such objection to the attention of the District Deputy Grand Master serving the District to which the Subordinate Lodge considering the petition belongs and if such District Deputy, in his absolute discretion, determines that

(i) the objection satisfies the standards of a legitimate Masonic objection, and

(ii) there is sufficient evidence supporting the accuracy of the circumstances concerning the objection, the District Deputy shall have the authority to suspend or terminate all proceedings of the Subordinate Lodge with respect to the petition and the initiation of the petitioner.

In determining whether a Member's objection constitutes a legitimate Masonic objection, the District Deputy shall determine that the nature of the objection relates to the character of the petitioner as a member of society, and the objection is not raised to gratify personal malice, spite, revenge or any private animosity, or unkindness or for personal objections which is individual only to the petitioner and does not otherwise affect his character as a member of society and otherwise meets the criteria established by Masonic Law. A Member wishing to raise such an objection anonymously may do so by stating the basis of the objection in writing with sufficient particularity that the District Deputy may investigate the same and make a determination as set forth in this Article 14.9. In all circumstances, a District Deputy who receives an objection (whether in person or by writing) shall hold the identity of the Member raising the objection in strict confidence and, to the extent possible, endeavor to maintain in confidence the circumstances forming the basis of the objection.

For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this Article 14.9 shall preclude a Member from bringing a legitimate Masonic objection to the attention of the Committee of Inquiry.

*(Rev 2026)*

*Sturgeon, 2011; Brink 2026.*

## 15 BURIAL SERVICE

### (Funerals)

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 23.02*

15.1 Masonic burial services are to be performed only upon the request of the family, and preferably at home, chapel or mortuary. They may be performed at the graveside if such a request is made and the clergyman does not object.

The services are to be conducted in accordance with the instructions in Section 9 of the *Ahiman Rezon* and are to be performed in a dignified and impressive manner.

It is permissible for teams of brethren other than Lodge Officers to perform the services at the request of the Worshipful Master. Such a request is not to be granted if the brethren are not properly qualified.

Poems, Masonic blankets, innovations or variations from the prescribed service are not permitted.

Our services are not intended to replace a religious service nor should they be performed in such fashion as to cause offense to any of the clergy who are called upon to conduct religious services.

*(Rev. 1986)*

*Deyoe, 1966; Stenberg, 1986.*

15.2 We should never intrude upon funerals, but when requested to render our services, they should be exclusive of and not in conjunction with other associations.

*Arnold, 1894.*

15.3 On the subject of calling special meetings of a Lodge on Sunday for the purpose of holding Funeral Services, it is my firm conviction that a Lodge of Freemasons should not be opened on Sunday; and hereafter, should the family of a deceased Brother desire to have his funeral take place on that day, then, and in that event, the Brethren may assemble and proceed to the funeral of the Brother, without opening a Lodge and holding Masonic Services in the Lodge Room. If time will permit, Services may be held in the Lodge at its next stated meeting.

*Brown, 1905.*

15.4 The Masonic ceremonies must follow immediately after the religious services are performed. In case there should be no religious services at the grave, the Masonic ceremonies must take priority, and be performed first. In all funeral processions of Lodges, the left should be in front, and, as the Masonic Fraternity is by an inherent right entitled to the post of honor, all other associations and societies should precede them, consequently they are located immediately in front of the coffin containing the corpse of the deceased Brother.

*Nisbet, 1878.*

15.5 It is lawful for Lodges to deposit with Masonic ceremony, in their last resting place, the ashes of any Master Mason whose body was cremated and who at the time of his death was in good standing and affiliated.

*Sell, 1921; Deyoe, 1966.*

15.6 A person who commits suicide is not for that reason deprived of the right to a Masonic burial. A Brother who has made himself notoriously criminal, as by first murdering and robbing and then killing himself, ought not to receive any Masonic recognition.

*Arnold, 1894.*

15.7 The Masonic Burial Service makes no mention of pallbearers. They are generally selected by the family of the deceased from among their friends, without regard to their society connections. All that we insist upon is that our Services shall come next after the religious services.

*Arnold, 1894; Williamson, 1983.*

15.8 Masonic burial, funeral or memorial services may be given to an unaffiliated Mason or a member suspended for non-payment of dues, unless prohibited by the Grand Master due to extenuating circumstances of which he is made aware.

*Henderson, 1895; Gamon 2020.*

15.9 In the use of ribbon and the evergreen at Masonic funerals, it is proper to attach the ribbon to the coat lapel and carry the evergreen in the hand until the ceremony of depositing the evergreen in the grave has been reached, when the Brother should remove the ribbon, attach it to the evergreen, and drop both into the grave.

*Tennis, 1903.*

## 16 BY-LAWS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 17.15, 18.07*

16.1 The *Ahiman Rezon* and Rules and Regulations of the Craft always control the By-Laws of a Lodge, and they should not be made to seem to conflict therewith.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

16.2 Upon the adoption by any Lodge of any By-Laws or amendments, alterations, or additions thereto, it shall be the duty of the Secretary of such Lodge to forward immediately to the District Deputy Grand Master, three copies of such By-Laws, amendments, alterations or additions, certified by him under the seal of the Lodge for his review and approval. The Lodge certificate shall embody so much of the Minutes of the Lodge as relates to the proposal and adoption of such By-Laws, amendments, alterations or additions; such certificate to be made on the same paper as, or securely attached to, said copies respectively. The District Deputy Grand Master shall forward the approved By-Laws, amendments, alterations or additions to the Office of the Grand Secretary. One of said copies shall be returned to the Lodge, one to the District Deputy Grand Master by the Grand Secretary, with a statement of the action of the Grand Lodge thereon, and the other shall be filed in the Archives of the Grand Lodge.

No Lodge shall print any By-Laws or amendments, alterations or additions thereto, until the same have received the approval of the Grand Lodge; and when printed, the title page shall contain a statement of the fact of such approval, with its date.

It is enjoined upon the Lodges promptly to forward to the Grand Secretary a printed copy of its approved By-Laws, or amendments, alterations or additions thereto, when printed, to be deposited in the Archives of the Grand Lodge.

The exact words of the Amendment proposed should be given in all cases, and the exact place in the article or section to be amended, in which any proposed alteration is to be made, should be specified.

It is permissible to print a copy of the Warrant of your Lodge with your By-Laws.

*Africa, 1892; Stenberg, 1987.*

16.3 Amendments to the By-Laws of a Lodge must be acted on and adopted at a stated meeting of the Lodge.

*Day, 1884.*

16.4 A Lodge may not, by the adoption of a resolution, set aside any provision of its By-Laws.

*Guthrie, 1911.*

16.5 By-Laws or Amendments to By-Laws become effective immediately on approval by Grand Lodge, unless the Lodge specifically requests all or portions of the By-Laws or amendments to become effective at a later date or dates, and such date or dates have been approved by Grand Lodge.

*Young, 1969.*

16.6 The letter of notification from the Grand Secretary of approval, disapproval or modification by Grand Lodge of By-Laws or amendments to By-Laws shall be read in open Lodge at the next stated meeting and, to inform all the members, the fact of such approval, disapproval or modification shall be printed in the Lodge Notice as soon as possible. It is not necessary to reproduce any part of the new By-Laws as part of that Notice.

*Young, 1969.*

16.7 It is the right of a Lodge at any time to amend its By-Laws, so as to increase its fees and dues, when such increase is deemed necessary to preserve its life, or to provide funds necessary to defray its legitimate expenses. Such amendments must, however, be approved by the Grand Lodge before they become operative, and then they are binding upon all the members of the Lodge.

*Africa, 1891.*

16.8 A petitioner failed to present himself for the degrees within the required time. He presented a second petition and was approved. Meanwhile the Lodge had amended its By-Laws increasing the initiation fee. The petitioner must pay the increased fee.

*Krause, 1918.*

## 17 CERTIFICATES

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 11; Art. 17.22, .24, .26, .27*

17.1 The terms “demit” are not used in this Jurisdiction. When a member of a Lodge resigns outright in our Jurisdiction, he is given a Lodge Certificate (Form 11.04). When a member desires to transfer his membership from one Lodge in our Jurisdiction to another Lodge in our or another Jurisdiction, he is given a Transfer Certificate (Form 11.05). When a suspended member of a Lodge in our Jurisdiction has been restored to good Masonic standing, he is given a Lodge Certificate (Form 11.08) which can be used in applying for membership in any Lodge in any Jurisdiction recognized by our Grand Lodge.

*Deyoe, 1966, 1967.*

17.2 Decided that a Brother who holds a valid Certificate of withdrawal from a regular Lodge of a Jurisdiction recognized by this Grand Lodge may present his petition and be received as a member of any Lodge in Pennsylvania, even though he has not resided in this state for a period of one year. A year’s residence in this Jurisdiction is not a prerequisite for membership only, as is required in case of a petition for initiation and membership.

*Krause, 1918.*

17.3 When a member of a Lodge has resigned and receives a Lodge Certificate, which becomes lost, mislaid or destroyed, he is entitled to receive another. After the lapse of several years from the acceptance of a resignation of a member, officers of Lodges should hesitate about issuing Certificates, if anything has occurred meantime to affect the withdrawing member’s “Masonic standing.”

*Africa, 1892; Williamson, 1983.*

17.4 The officers of the Lodge should furnish a Lodge Certificate, dated as of the date of its issue (not antedated), and signed by the present officers, to a Brother who has resigned from the Lodge some years ago, and to whom a Certificate, as provided by the *Ahiman Rezon*, has not been given.

*Guthrie, 1910.*

17.5 Masons who have resigned outright from their Lodges and obtained such Certificates may be elected members of Lodges in this State or become Warrant members of new Lodges, without regard to the time which has elapsed since they resigned.

*Arnold, 1894.*

17.6 When requested in writing by a Master Mason, who is a member in good standing of a subordinate Lodge of this Jurisdiction, or by an organization whose prerequisite is Masonic affiliation, the Secretary shall certify to him, or them, a statement attesting such membership status.

*Chilcote, 1959; Deyoe, 1966.*

## 18 CHAIN LETTERS

18.1 The use of chain letters by Lodges or individual members of the Fraternity, is positively prohibited, no matter what the purpose.

*Guthrie, 1911; Watres, 1917.*

18.2 The members are again fraternally advised that the circulation of the so-called Masonic prayer chain letter, or of any other chain letter, is prohibited.

*Sell, 1920.*

## 19 CHARGES AND TRIAL

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 22 – Forms, Sec. 10*

19.1 All charges must be preferred and all trials must be held in strict accordance with Section 10 of the *Ahiman Rezon*.

If a member has been tried and convicted in a Court of Law, and charges are preferred in the Lodge against the member all the requirements of Section 10 must be complied with. The member cannot be found guilty by the Lodge without such a trial.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

19.2 Freemasonry will not take cognizance of differences which are cognizable in civil tribunals of the law, unless they are Masonic offenses, *per se*. In business matters the Civil Courts alone must try and decide them. A Lodge is not a civil tribunal to hear and determine questions of mere business transactions between Brethren. It is only Masonic offenses that can be tried by the Lodge.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

19.3 It is the Law in this Grand Lodge that disputes arising from business connections must be adjudicated by the proper legal authorities of the Land. Lodges cannot be converted into Civil Courts, nor can they be used to force settlements of such disputes.

A Lodge cannot be resorted to for the purpose of coercing, threatening or punishing a member for business transactions. Insolvency is not a Masonic offense.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

19.4 If a Brother in his business transactions has so conducted himself as to bring reproach upon the Craft, charges may be preferred against him for unmasonic conduct prejudicial to the reputation of the Fraternity.

*Nisbet, 1879.*



19.5 While it is the duty of every Mason to do his part to assist in bringing all offenders against the Laws of Freemasonry to proper punishment, it must be borne in mind that no Mason can be deprived of the rights and privileges of membership in a Lodge, except after due trial and being found guilty of the charges against him, which must be formally preferred, as prescribed in the *Ahiman Rezon*.

*Africa, 1891.*

19.6 The accused Brother is in good standing and membership until the Lodge has taken action against him; and he should therefore, if he testifies as a witness, testify on his obligation as a Mason.

*Com. on Appeals, 1906.*

19.7 A member of a Lodge against whom charges are pending, has the right to ballot on petitioners. Until he is found guilty of the charges, he has the same rights and privileges as any other member.

*Brown, 1904.*

19.8 On September 6, 1847, it was decided that a Lodge in this Jurisdiction has the right to take cognizance of the moral conduct of every Mason residing within its limits in Pennsylvania.

*Nisbet, 1879.*

19.9 No Mason or body of Masons can be permitted by their indiscreet action to bring reproach upon the Fraternity, without proper punishment.

*Africa, 1892.*

19.10 Each Lodge owes to itself and to the Fraternity in general to see that its members behave on all occasions as Masons, and to inflict proper punishment upon such of its members who may be guilty of conduct unbecoming a Mason.

*Africa, 1892.*

19.11 A Brother cannot be deprived of his rights and privileges of membership in a Lodge on mere allegation of unmasonic conduct, nor until convicted, after hearing on charges formally preferred. As soon as proper evidence is found against any offending Brother, duty to the Lodge and to the Fraternity in general demands that charges should be made.

*Africa, 1891.*

19.12 It cannot be expected that the Jurisdiction of Freemasonry over its membership, to punish offenders against Brother Masons must be limited to those members who have been convicted by the State of some infringement of the Criminal law, nor that punishment for Masonic offenses should necessarily be postponed until pending criminal proceedings have been finally disposed of.

*Com. on Appeals, 1913.*

*See 19.26*

19.13 In every trial in a Lodge, for an offense against the Laws, Regulations or Principles of Freemasonry, any Master Mason may be the accuser of another; but the profane cannot be permitted to prefer charges against a Master Mason. It is not necessary that the accuser should be a member of the same Lodge. It is sufficient if he is an affiliated Mason. It follows as a natural sequence that he who has the right to accuse, has also the right to all process necessary to sustain the accusation, including that of appeal to the Grand Lodge.

*Com. on Appeals, 1885; Grand Lodge, 1895.*

19.14 An expelled Mason cannot prefer charges against a member of a Lodge.

*Wagner, 1900.*

19.15 A Brother cannot be tried for Masonic offenses committed by him while he was a profane.

*Africa, 1891.  
See 3.10*

19.16 By direction of the Master, the Junior Warden usually prefers charges in cases which affect the Fraternity generally.

*Eichbaum, 1888.*

19.17 The only place where charges can be preferred against a Master is in the Grand Lodge. The only place where charges can be preferred against a member of a Lodge who is not the Master, is in the Lodge.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

19.18 If a Senior Warden or Junior Warden is under charges, till convicted he is presumed innocent. Pending such charges he is elected Master, the election shows that a majority of the members do not agree to the guilt. If, after election as Master, the charges are framed, then, as Master, he must be tried by the Grand Lodge. The charges, proceedings and report of Committee and action of the Lodge come up as charges by the Lodge against the Master, and the Grand Lodge appoints a Committee, and the trial proceeds *de novo*; and if proved, the Grand Lodge can expel both Mason, member and Master. As Master, he is only responsible to the Grand Lodge.

*Vaux, 1868.*

19.19 Members of Lodges in this Jurisdiction, but residing in another Jurisdiction, may be tried and punished for a Masonic offense by a Lodge nearest to which they may then be.

*Arnold, 1893; Grand Lodge, 1895.*

19.20 A Lodge after accepting a Brother's resignation cannot entertain charges and proceed against him for an offense committed before he resigned.

*Com. on Appeals, 1897.*

19.21 A Lodge has jurisdiction to try a Brother who has resigned from the Lodge and is unaffiliated, should he subsequently to his resignation be guilty of conduct which would render him liable to Masonic punishment, had his membership still continued.

*Perkins, 1873.  
See 19.8*

19.22 A member of a Lodge outside of this Jurisdiction, but residing in it, may be tried for un-masonic conduct in this Jurisdiction by the Lodge nearest to his place of residence. The manner of proceeding will be as set forth in the *Ahiman Rezon*. If found guilty and expelled or suspended, the Lodge must furnish a properly certified copy of all proceedings and the evidence to the Lodge of which the accused is a member, as well as its final action thereon.

*Nisbet, 1879.*

19.23 While it is not a matter of right to withdraw charges against a Brother, yet under special circumstances consent will be given for that purpose.

*Arnold, 1894.*

19.24 There is no way by which a Mason can be tried in a Lodge for perjury committed in a legal proceeding. Lodges have no jurisdiction to try cases of that nature. If the person accused should be tried and convicted in a Criminal Court, then he can be charged in his Lodge with conduct unbecoming a Mason, and the specification would be his conviction in Court.

*Arnold, 1893.*

19.25 In the event a Mason is charged with being convicted of a crime, the record of the Court would be evidence against him.

*(Rev. 2011)*

*Com. on Appeals, 1902; Sturgeon, 2011.*

19.26 To dismiss charges against a man who is serving a sentence for bribery, because the Mason who made the charges fails to bring in evidence to convict the convict before the Trial Committee, is to refuse to give any weight to the verdict of our Courts. As Masons and citizens, we must give effect to the judgments of our Criminal Courts, affirmed by the Appellate Courts.

*(Removed 2011)*

*Com. on Appeals, 1911.*

19.27 The general rule is that a Member who has been (i) indicted for a violation of criminal law, and (ii) tried and convicted or has pleaded guilty, has by such underlying conduct committed an offense against Freemasonry which is conduct unbecoming a Mason and/or gross un-Masonic conduct, and consequently should be suspended or expelled, depending on the severity of his conduct if charges are filed against him. However, notwithstanding such general rule, it is within the discretion of the Lodge to find special circumstances which are sufficiently compelling for the Lodge to find that such Member has not committed conduct unbecoming a Mason and/or gross un-Masonic conduct and should therefore not be suspended or expelled.

*(Rev. 2012)*

*Deyoe, 1966; Sturgeon, 2011; Smith, 2012, 2013.*

*See 97.13*

19.28 It is possible for a member to so plainly expose the entirely unmasonic character of his reason for black balling another, or others, and his purpose to take vengeance on all petitioners for initiation in a Lodge, without any regard whatever to their personal qualifications or disqualifications, and merely from motives of revenge on a Lodge for some fancied injury it has done him, as to constitute sufficient ground for a charge of unmasonic conduct by him, which might justify his suspension or expulsion.

*Arnold, 1893.*

*See 14.1*

19.29 If a member of a Committee upon a petition for initiation and membership refuses to sign a favorable report thereon to gratify personal malice, revenge or spite, charges can be preferred against him. But how are you going to prove the charge, unless he avowed his motive? Should a Brother publicly state that a Brother who had been tried for a crime and acquitted, was acquitted in consequence of his being a Mason, charges might be preferred against him. If charges are preferred for such a statement, and the Brother is tried and punished therefor, and considers himself aggrieved, he can appeal to the Grand Lodge, which will definitely determine the question.

*Nisbet, 1879.*

19.30 Withholding knowledge of the previous rejection of a petitioner is a very grave Masonic offense, for which the offender will be expelled.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

19.31 Any and all business transacted in a Masonic Lodge is not for the eye or ear of the public; and any member of a Lodge exposing Lodge transactions will be dealt with according to the Laws.

*Brown, 1904.*

19.32 Making threats is not a Masonic offense, nor is the presumption that a Brother cast a black ball.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

19.33 Masonic pledges cannot be invoked in business affairs; nor can Brethren be tried for violating such pledges.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

19.34 The Master can select any member of a Lodge to sit on a Trial Committee, notwithstanding the fact that the same Brother may have already sat on a former Committee trying the same charges.

*Wagner, 1899.*

19.35 There is no law limiting the number composing a Trial Committee, but it is not desirable to have too large a Committee, as it may be difficult to have their attendance at all the sessions. "The *Ahiman Rezon*, Section 10.01, states not less than three nor more than five."

*Brown, 1904.*

19.36 It is permissible for the Secretary of a Lodge to serve on a Trial Committee, in a case in which charges are preferred against a member of the Lodge for unmasonic conduct, and to serve as Secretary of the Committee. A Trial Committee may subpoena persons not members of the Fraternity to attend a meeting of the Committee to give testimony in the case. A person aggrieved although not a Mason, is competent to give testimony.

*Africa, 1892.*

19.37 The Lodge has no reason to employ an attorney to represent it at a trial of a Brother.

*Kendrick, 1906.*

19.38 Any member of the Lodge having knowledge personally, or by reliable and trustworthy information, of the offenses committed may prefer the charge. The accuser must not be on the Committee. The Master may be a member of the Committee, if not the accuser. The witnesses for either side must not be members of the Trial Committee. The Brother charged with the offenses has the undoubted right to have the help of Masonic counsel. After the finding of the Committee, on the question of penalty the Master has the right to vote. The accused, when the vote is taken, must not be present and has not the right to vote. The accuser and the counsel engaged on either side, must not vote. Although not usual, there is no reason why the vote should not be by ballot. If by ballot, of course, it is a secret ballot.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

19.39 The Master is perfectly competent as a witness in a case of which he may have knowledge.

*Com. on Appeals, 1906.*

19.40 Where a witness needed in a Masonic trial has removed from the Jurisdiction, his testimony may be obtained in one or the other of two ways. (1) The most satisfactory to both sides is to have him come on and be personally present; or (2) if he cannot be obtained in this way, have both sides prepare interrogatories and cross-interrogatories, after the manner adopted in civil proceedings, and send them both together on to him, and, if the witness be a Freemason, have him answer both series of questions on his honor as a Mason. An ex-parte affidavit alone should not be used, since the right of cross-examination should not be denied.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

19.41 The Committee must be the judges as to what evidence to receive or reject, and, if it err in its judgment in the opinion of either side, an appeal can be taken. A Masonic trial widely differs from a legal one. The technicalities that are permitted in the latter are not admissible in the former. A Committee appointed to try a case cannot appoint a sub-committee to perform the duty entrusted to it; but where witnesses reside beyond the reach of a summons, and for that reason their attendance cannot be enforced, a sub-committee may be appointed to take their testimony; but such testimony can have no greater force than a deposition, where the opposite side has had no opportunity to cross-examine, unless he was represented at the time the testimony was being taken. Witnesses who are Masons must testify upon their obligations as such. Others must be sworn by someone empowered to administer a judicial oath. The accuser, and the accused may testify in their own behalf, but cannot be compelled to be a witness. When a Brother has been charged with

a Masonic offense, it becomes the duty of the Lodge to fully investigate the charge, but it cannot before doing so exact or impose upon the accuser any condition or conditions prejudicial to his rights, either as a Mason or a citizen.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

19.42 The Minutes of a Committee appointed to try a Brother must contain a complete history of the proceedings before them, commencing with their first meeting and ending with the completion of their report. Everything must be entered in the order of its occurrence. Testimony of witnesses must be written out at length consecutively, and signed by the witnesses when completed. Documentary evidence must be noted when offered, and by whom offered, and identified by marks endorsed thereon, and also entered in the Minutes. The record of an appeal must be made up in the order directed by the *Ahiman Rezon* and securely fastened together so that no part of it may become mislaid or foreign matter be included.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

19.43 A stenographer (a Master Mason) may be employed in taking testimony at a trial. It is permissible for the Trial Committee to videotape, in lieu of a stenographer, to gain an accurate account of the proceedings.

*(Rev. 2012)*

*Brown, 1905; Smith, 2012.*

19.44 A summons is not waived by voluntary appearance of the accused.

*Com. on Appeals, 1888.*

19.45 The Master may direct how the vote of the Lodge shall be taken; either *vive voce*, or by placing the ballot box on the pedestal; the vote is then by balls; the balls, either black or white, are counted. A majority vote adopts or rejects the resolutions. So if a majority vote is shown by the number of balls in the box, that is sufficient.

*Vaux, 1869.*

19.46 A Fellow Craft Mason who is under charges may lawfully visit an Entered Apprentice or Fellow Craft Lodge, while said charges are pending.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

19.47 If a Brother has been guilty of a Masonic offense, which is also an offense under the laws of the land, it is not necessary to await the result of the profane trial before proceeding against him in the Lodge; but if the offense be one that is not Masonic in its nature, but only brings reproach on Freemasonry, then the Lodge should await the final determination of the profane proceedings. If a Brother against whom charges are preferred be in prison, the summons, etc., could be served upon him there. Of course, the Master should appoint some Brother to represent him, communicate with him, and see that his case is fairly and fully presented.

*Com. on Appeals, 1912.*

19.48 When a member of a Lodge is in arrears for dues, and also has committed an offense against the criminal law of the land which seriously reflects upon him as a Freemason and tends to bring the Craft into disrepute, it is optional with the Lodge whether it will take proceedings to

suspend him from membership for non-payment of dues, or to prefer charges against him for conduct unbecoming a Mason. A summons to pay dues or show cause why he should not be suspended, or a summons to answer charges, may be served upon a Brother in jail or in the penitentiary. If charges be preferred, the Master should appoint some member to represent the accused. If he does not answer the summons to pay dues, he may be suspended. The Master may direct the Junior Warden to bring charges, if they are deemed necessary, and he then does it officially and not personally.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

19.49 Naked technical objections, based upon rules of evidence in civil tribunals, are not tolerated in Masonic trials.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

19.50 In a Masonic trial of a Brother for maliciously slandering a Brother who is a member of another Lodge, no evidence is admissible, or should be considered, which relates to acts performed or words uttered before either of them was made a Mason. Such an offense, if offense it were, would not be a Masonic offense.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

19.51 An Entered Apprentice or Fellow Craft Mason may be tried upon the charge of not being under the tongue of good Masonic report.

All of the proceedings in the trial on such charges must be in a Lodge of the degree to which the accused member has attained.

*Guthrie, 1910.*

19.52 The provisions of Article 19 of the *Digest of Decisions* of the Grand Lodge and Grand Masters apply exclusively to the preferment of charges and the conduct of trials in Subordinate Lodges that operate under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge and not to the Grand Lodge and/or Grand Master. No Article of the *Digest of Decisions*, specifically including but not limited to Article 19, limits or places conditions of any kind on the constitutional and inherent power of the Grand Master to censure, suspend and/or expel summarily, unilaterally and/or otherwise any Member of the Grand Lodge and/or any Member of a Subordinate Lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge.

*Committee on Landmarks, 2001.*

**(Removed 2011)**

*Grand Lodge, 2001.*

19.53 A Lodge shall not conduct a trial in the body of an open Lodge but at a time and place fixed in accordance with the terms and subject to the conditions of Article 22 of the *Ahiman Rezon*, Section 10 of the Ancient Charges, Ceremonies and Forms and Article 19 of the *Digest of Decisions*.

*Smith, 2012.*

19.54 The general rule is that Members of a Lodge shall be entitled to attend the Masonic trial of an accused Member of such Lodge. However, the District Deputy having jurisdiction (or otherwise appointed by the Grand Master to oversee such Masonic trial) shall have the discretion to establish such rules and procedures concerning attendance of such Members as he deems advisable and in the best interests of the parties involved to (i) ensure that due process is afforded to the accused, and (ii) ensure proper decorum is maintained at all times.

*Smith, 2012.*



## 20 CHARITY

20.1 Applications for charity should be made in the Lodges, either by a committee or by personal application. When circulars are printed and sent out broadcast, they provoke complaints and criticisms, which are exceedingly unpleasant. Such circulars, when sent into other Jurisdictions, have brought forth complaints in very strong language. Experience has shown that, besides the unpleasant criticisms which the circulars provoke, no substantial benefit is derived from them.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

20.2 The custom in our Jurisdiction in granting relief to the needy or destitute, is, that the grant is an unconditional gift; that it is not expected to be returned either by the donee or any one for them, and a demand for a return of the grant that has been made without the knowledge of the Lodge in whose name the request is preferred is not understood to be binding by our Lodges.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

20.3 A Lodge in this Jurisdiction will not be permitted to repudiate its Masonic obligations, especially when the obligation is to a Lodge in another Jurisdiction.

*Africa, 1892.*

20.4 The Lodge, after a Resolution duly presented, seconded and approved, may expend monies from the income of its Charity Funds – or General Funds, if available – in support of projects that will benefit the community in which the Lodge meets to the following extents and under the following guidelines:

- 1) up to the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) per annum provided that a letter setting forth the Resolution duly adopted by the Lodge, prepared over the signature of the Worshipful Master, is presented to the District Deputy Grand Master for his approval; or
- 2) in excess of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) per annum provided that a letter setting forth the Resolution duly adopted by the Lodge, prepared over the signature of the Worshipful Master, is presented to the District Deputy Grand Master for his recommendation and forwarding to the R.W. Grand Master for his direct approval.

The District Deputy Grand Master must advise the Office of the Grand Master and the Office of the Grand Secretary of each such charitable expenditure by the Lodge so that the Grand Master and the Grand Secretary will have a full and complete record of all such requests for the approval of a charitable expenditure and the reason for its approval or disapproval.

*(Rev. 1998, 2001, 2002)*

*Williamson, 1983; Stoner, 1991;  
Ernette, 1998; Dhuge, 2000; Cunningham, 2002.*

## 21 CIRCULAR LETTERS AND APPEALS

21.1 Refused permission to allow the Lodges in this Jurisdiction to be circularized for assistance to aid a Lodge in another Jurisdiction to raise funds to rebuild their hall, which was destroyed by fire.

*Williams, 1915.*

## 22 CLANDESTINE BODIES

22.1 No member of the Masonic Fraternity under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, has the right to visit any assemblage of individuals claiming to be Masonic, if such assemblage is not sanctioned by the Grand Lodge; and any Masonic intercourse with such assemblage is a violation of the duties and obligations of the Craft.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

22.2 A Pennsylvania Mason is forbidden to have intercourse at any time and in any place with parties claiming to be Masons upon whom degrees have been conferred by any Lodge deriving its authority from the Cerneau Body, or from any Lodge working under Warrant issued from any grand body deriving its authority from any Grand Lodge or Grand Orient. Pennsylvania recognizes no authority outside itself existing anywhere which is competent to grant Warrants to Lodges to confer the first three degrees in Freemasonry in this State.

*Africa, 1891.*

22.3 A Brother visiting a Clandestine Lodge, or affiliating with clandestine Masons, must not be admitted to a Lodge in this Jurisdiction.

*Kelly, 1898.*

22.4 All Bodies of the so-called Cerneau Rite are clandestine Bodies, so far as this Grand Lodge is concerned; and every Master Mason in this Jurisdiction connected with such clandestine Body, who does not retire therefrom, thereby subjects himself to Masonic trial and punishment.

*MacCalla, 1889.*

22.5 As to visits by members of Lodges elsewhere, who are also members of the clandestine so-called Cerneau Rite, they are not permissible to our Lodge. In the test administered to applicants for admission in the Examining Room, they should state that they are not members of the Cerneau Rite, or else they cannot be admitted.

*MacCalla, 1889.*

22.6 A member of a clandestine Masonic body can petition a Lodge in this jurisdiction by renouncing his allegiance to said Body, and a copy of his letter to that effect must accompany his petition.

*Tennis, 1902.  
See 92.1 for Form*

22.7 The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, on June 4th, 1890, resolved to edict the so-called “Egyptian Masonic Rite of Memphis,” as being Masonically, a clandestine Body.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

22.8 There are so many so-called Lodges scattered all over the United States that are altogether irregular and clandestine, that it is quite a dangerous business for a Lodge to investigate the claim of one to be received as a visitor.

*Williamson, 1983.  
See 92.1*

22.9 A member of a Lodge under the Jurisdiction of this Grand Lodge may not become a member of nor hold membership in, The Universal League of the Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons.

*Young, 1969; Woodall, 1974.*

## 23 COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 18.09; Art. 20.01; Art. 21.01, .03*

23.1 In inquiring upon a petition for initiation and membership, the question of residence should receive the most careful attention, and full and searching inquiry must be made as to the standing and character of the petitioner and his fitness to be made a Mason. The inquiry, to be effectual, must be made at his home, and of those who know him. If he has changed his residence recently, inquiry should also be made where he formerly resided.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.  
See 85.2, .3, .4, .7, .12, .18*

23.2 The inquiry should be sifting and thorough. It should be made, not by novices, but by experienced Brethren. Particular care should be made to inquire as to the place of residence given by the petitioner, and the length of time he has resided there. If he has changed his residence within a short time, the inquiry should be made more searching and thorough, and should also be made at his former place of residence.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

23.3 The inquiry must be made at the actual home of the petitioner. At least one member of the Committee must visit the actual home of the petitioner. The Committee in making its report must so certify.

*Watres, 1917.*

23.4 It is the duty of the Master of a Lodge to instruct a Committee of Inquiry in its duties at the time a petition is placed in its possession, and he should in every instance know that this duty has been complied with.

*Orlady, 1908.*

23.5 Directed the Worshipful Master of \_\_\_\_\_ Lodge No. \_\_\_\_\_ to declare a petition null and void for the reason that the petitioner moved from this Jurisdiction before the Committee of Inquiry could perform its duty.

*Williams, 1914.*

23.6 It is optional with the Committee of Inquiry as to what evidence of good character and standing in society is sufficient. They must satisfy themselves. To do so, it might be necessary to write to his references. There should always be very careful inquiries made concerning strangers.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

23.7 A Brother who does not decline an appointment on a Committee of Inquiry is bound on honor to perform all the duties devolving upon him as such, and, if he refuses, he should be replaced. It is the duty of such Committee to report a petitioner worthy, or unworthy, from having the prayer of his petition granted. If the Brother who refuses to sign the report knows the petitioner to be unworthy, his duty to the Craft requires him to state the fact; and if he knows him to be worthy, his refusal is a gross injustice to the petitioner, and an attempt to wrong his Lodge by keeping out good material. The Master can discharge the Committee, and appoint a new one, to report at a subsequent stated meeting.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

23.8 In the absence of a member of the Committee of Inquiry on a petition, the Master may appoint a Brother to fill a vacancy, but not for the purpose of hastening the action of the Lodge.

The substitution shall be announced in the Lodge and entered on the Minutes. Such Committee so constituted should not report at once, but it should give the additional member time to make a full investigation of the case.

*Wagner, 1899.*

23.9 In the case where one of the Committee of Inquiry appointed by the Worshipful Master refused to meet the applicant, to meet with the other members of the Committee, or to sign a report either adverse or favorable; the Worshipful Master appointed another Brother on the Committee in the place of the Brother refusing to act, the Committee retired from the Lodge room immediately after appointment, and shortly returned to the Lodge and handed in a favorable report. The Lodge then proceeded to act upon the petition, and the petitioner was approved. This action was irregular. It was directed that the petitioner's name, age, occupation and residence be printed in the notice of the stated meeting of the Lodge, next to be held, and that a ballot then should be had upon the petition.

*Watres, 1916.*

23.10 When a petition has been referred to a Committee of Inquiry it is under the control of that Committee for a period not exceeding four months. The Committee may report unfavorably or favorably. If favorably, a ballot shall be had, or a motion to withdraw (if a first petition) may be made. If balloted for and approved, a motion to withdraw or an oral objection is in order until initiation. (A ballot is not taken on an Inquiry to the nearest Lodge.)

*(Rev. 1997)*

*Deyoe, 1967.*

*See Art. 20.01 and 21.08 of the Ahiman Rezon*

23.11 If a petitioner dies, or removes from the residence given in his petition after it has been presented to the Lodge; thereby making it impossible for the Committee of Inquiry to call on him and perform its duty, that fact should be reported to the Lodge, entered in the Minutes and reported immediately to the Grand Secretary.

*Guthrie, 1911.*

23.12 If a member of the Lodge informs the Committee of Inquiry that there is an objection to a petitioner it is his duty, as a good and worthy Brother, to state it, otherwise the Committee cannot consider the objection; and should make its report upon such information as it has been able to obtain.

*Africa, 1892.*

23.13 The Committee has no right to say what is the character of the report before it is laid on the table of the Secretary. There is no necessity to “accept” an unfavorable report. The moment it is made it works a rejection, without any action of the Lodge.

*Vaux, 1867.*

23.14 If a member of a Lodge has an objection to a petitioner for initiation and membership, he may communicate the same to the Committee of Inquiry, whose duty will require it to investigate the same. Should the Committee report favorably, any member believing that he has a Masonic objection to the petitioner may cast a black ball.

*Africa, 1892.*

23.15 A protest, if sent to the Lodge receiving the petition, should then be sent to the Committee of Inquiry on the petition. This Committee should, thus put on its guard, the more carefully perform its duty.

*Vaux, 1868.*

23.16 Where a member objects privately to the Master to a petitioner before ballot on his petition, the Master should give the name of such objector to the Committee of Inquiry having the petition of the petitioner in charge, so that the Committee may satisfy itself by seeing such objector.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

23.17 A Committee appointed to inquire into the character, etc., of a petitioner for initiation and membership, should hand in its report to the Lodge as early in the evening as possible.

*Henderson, 1895.*

23.18 The report shall be in the handwriting of the member or members who visited the petitioner at his home written on the margin of the petition, and certifying that he or they visited the home of the petitioner, and that the home conditions are such as consistently belong in the home of a Master Mason.

*Sell, 1921.*

23.19 A Committee of Inquiry has no right to communicate the results of its investigations to the petitioner or to any of his friends, or in any way except by its formal report in the Lodge. Nor can the Committee return to the petitioner his petition. It must be brought by it into the Lodge, and when the report is laid upon the Secretary's table, it is considered as made, and the petition cannot be withdrawn; unless the report be favorable.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

23.20 The unfavorable report of the Committee of Inquiry is a rejection of the petitioner. It is not a perpetual bar. It has the same effect as a black ball, no more. But the rejected petitioner must apply again to the same Lodge which rejected him, except as covered by Art. 21.16 of the *Ahiman Rezon*.

(Rev. 2003)

*Deyoe, 1966.*

23.21 The Committee of Inquiry should satisfy itself of the proficiency of a petitioner for membership before making a report.

*Kendrick, 1906.*

23.22 The names of the members of the Committee of Inquiry shall be published in the Lodge Notice immediately after the data of the candidate so as to afford the Members additional sources to contact in support of or in opposition to that candidate.

*Dluge, 2000.*

23.23 The members of the Committee of Inquiry should subscribe to a report in writing, when required, as to a thorough investigation of the character of the petitioner, this recommendation applying only to those Jurisdictions where reports in writing are required.

(Rev. 2003)

## 24 COMMITTEES

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 18.02*

24.1 A Master of a Lodge is ex-officio a member of all Committees. The report of a Committee should be made by the remaining members of the Committee, as the Master will preside when the report comes up for action of the Lodge.

The Lodge has the power to refer any question to a regular Standing Committee or to a Special Committee, as the Lodge by a majority vote may determine.

*Day, 1883.*

24.2 The Worshipful Masters shall appoint a Committee on Visitation for their Lodges consisting of no less than three nor more than fifteen Members depending upon the size of the Lodge. The name of the Committee members shall appear on the fourth page of a four-page notice and on page 5 or 6 of a six-page notice, with the name of the Chairman of the Committee followed by his telephone number.

The duties of the members of the Committee under the direction of the Chairman are as follows:

- A. To visit the sick, disabled, and needy Members of the Lodge.
- B. To visit the widows and families of deceased Members.
- C. To make personal contacts with the Members who have not attended the Lodge consistently at least twice a year (Lodge Members living at great distances from the Lodge are excepted).
- D. To make personal visits to each Member who is in danger of being suspended by the Lodge or who has indicated his intent to resign but has given no reason (Lodge Members living at great distances from the Lodge should be contacted by letter or telephone).
- E. To visit personally, or to contact by letter or telephone, those Lodge Members, their wives, or widows and mothers of deceased Members who reside in the Masonic Villages.
- F. To report to the Lodge their findings in each case, A through D, and recommend the action or actions to be taken by the Lodge.

*Trate, 1981.*



## 25 COMMUNICATIONS VS MEETINGS

25.1 The Grand Lodge holds Communications. A Lodge, meetings. These are the proper terms to be used.

*Lamberton, 1871.*

## 26 CONVENTION OF LODGES

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 12.05, .11*

26.1 District or Regional meetings may be held for any lawful Masonic purposes, provided that such meetings shall have first received approval by the respective District Deputy(s) in that area.

*(Rev. 2001)*

*Grand Lodge, 1895; Wagner, 1899; Dlugé, 2000.*

26.2 No convention of Lodges shall be held except it be called by the Grand Master, or by a District Deputy Grand Master, in his District. Should such a District Convention be called, it shall be for instruction only; all other purposes are prohibited.

*(Removed 2001)*

*Wagner, 1899.*

## 27 CORNERSTONE

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 12.03, .05, .07*

27.1 The Cornerstone should if possible be laid at the Northeast corner of the building, whether above or below the surface of the earth.

*Mitchell, 1886.*

27.2 A Lodge should not ask to lay the Cornerstone of a Church or any other public edifice. The request to have a Cornerstone laid with Masonic ceremonies should come from the properly constituted authorities of the building about to be erected.

*Day, 1884.*

27.3 A Masonic Lodge never assists any other organization inlaying a Cornerstone.

*Africa, 1892.*

27.4 A collection for the benefit of a Church may not be taken up, at the time of laying its Cornerstone by the Grand Master or his Representative.

*Guthrie, 1910.*

## 28 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

28.1 Decided to permit Lodges, meeting in cities and other localities where Daylight Saving Time is used, to call their stated meetings at the hour fixed in their By-Laws, adding thereto, on the notices to the members, the words "Daylight Saving Time"; this permission to be granted during the period of Daylight Saving Time only.

*Hamilton, 1926.*

## 29 DIGEST OF DECISIONS

29.1 A Digest and Index of the Decisions of the Grand Lodge and Grand Masters may not be issued except officially, and not by any private Brother. It should be an official and authoritative publication.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

## 30 DISPENSATIONS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 10.01; Art. 12.03, .11;  
Art. 17.10; Art. 19.03, .05*

30.1 A Dispensation to hold an election is not granted upon the application of any officer of a Lodge, but only upon a resolution of request, adopted by the Lodge itself, properly certified.

*Nisbet, 1879.*

30.2 A Dispensation to Raise or to Pass and Raise may be acted upon at any stated or extra meeting of the Lodge.

*(Rev. 1997)*

*Krause, 1918.*

30.3 Directed that a Dispensation to Pass to the Chair is to be granted by the District Deputy Grand Master, upon the petition of a Master Mason of six months' standing when recommended by the Master and Wardens of the Lodge and accompanied by the fee, without any additional requirement or restriction. Such Dispensations, and those to Raise, or to Pass and Raise, may be acted upon at any stated, special, or extra meeting of the Lodge.

*(Removed 1997)*

*Krause, 1918.*

30.4 An application for a Dispensation to Pass to the Chair does not require the seal of the Lodge to be attached. Such application is not the act of the Lodge, but of the Brother making it, whose statements are verified by the Master, Senior Warden, and Junior Warden.

*(Removed 1997)*

*Africa, 1892.*

30.5 A Dispensation to Pass to the Chair will only be granted upon the recommendation of the Master and Wardens of the Lodge; and as they, in their recommendation for same, are required to certify that the petitioner is a "worthy Brother deserving of the favor," they can refuse to sign a recommendation, unless entirely satisfied, and the Lodge cannot by a vote compel them to do so.

*Wagner, 1889.*

*(Removed 1997)*

*See 82.2*

30.6 A Dispensation is granted to a Lodge and not to its officers.

*(Rev. 2001)*

*Brown, 1904; Dlugie, 2000.*

### 31 DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTERS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 12.10-.12; Art. 16.02; Art. 18.09*

31.1 A District Deputy Grand Master is the Representative of the Grand Master, and has the right, and it is his duty, to visit any Lodge in his District for the purpose of conferring degrees or giving instructions. He may take the station of the Master, and fill the other stations with competent Brethren.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

31.2 As to the appointment of a District Deputy Grand Master, it is not made by the Grand Lodge, nor does it come before the Grand Lodge until after the appointment is made. The District Deputy Grand Master is the personal appointee of the Grand Master and his Representative, and he alone is responsible for his appointment, he alone can make it.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

31.3 A direction by a District Deputy Grand Master is a command that is to be obeyed without question and without demur. He is supreme in his District, although amenable to the Grand Lodge and the Grand Master. If any Lodge considers itself aggrieved by him, it can appeal to the Grand Master; but I do not intend to permit any Lodge to sit in judgment upon him, or set at defiance his authority. When right, the District Deputy Grand Master must be maintained.

*Nisbet, 1879.*

31.4 A District Deputy Grand Master has a perfect right to request the Minute Book of a Lodge to be sent to him, to enable him to properly examine it; of course, he should be careful to return it before the next meeting of the Lodge, so that the Minutes can be read from it.

*MacCalla, 1889.*

*See 78.4*

31.5 It is the duty of the District Deputy Grand Master to see that the meeting rooms of Lodges conform to the requirements of the *Ahiman Rezon*; that they are properly protected from eavesdroppers; and that they are so tyled as to preserve absolute secrecy.

*Orlady, 1908.*

31.6 It is the duty of the District Deputy Grand Master to refuse to permit the installation of any elected Lodge officer who is not qualified and competent to perform the duties and work of the office to which he has been elected.

*McKinley, 1963.*

## 32 DUES AND FEES

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 10.01; Art. 17.19, .20, .22, .29;  
Art. 18.09; Art. 19.01, .02, .06*

32.1 Dues owing by Lodges shall bear interest at the rate of six percent per annum, after the first day of March following the date when the same should have been paid; and rents overdue shall bear interest at the same rate from thirty days after the same should have been paid.

*Com. on Finance, 1912.*

32.2 The whole amount of fees for conferring the three degrees is due and payable before initiation. If, after initiation, a Brother does not see fit to receive the Fellow Craft and Master Mason's degrees in the Lodge in which he was initiated, he will have to pay an extra charge to the Lodge which confers said degree on him subsequently.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

32.3 The fee paid once for initiation and membership, entitles the petitioner, if approved, to receive the three degrees. The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania does not permit a fee for each degree.

*Perkins, 1873.*

32.4 It is unlawful for a Lodge to refund any portion of the initiation fee to a Petitioner after he has received the First Degree, and if such a refund is made it will be followed by the suspension of the Warrant.

*(Rev. 1994)*

*Lamberton, 1871; Hohenschildt, 1994.*

32.5 A Lodge has no right to remit the dues of elected or appointed officers of the Lodge, by reason of such election or appointment, nor pay them for their services except as follows. The Secretary, Treasurer and Tyler can be compensated for their services only as stated in the By-Laws of the Lodge.

*Deyoe, 1967; Stenberg, 1987.*

32.6 Dues are chargeable to Members as soon as they become such and prorated monthly. When a petitioner receives his first degree, he becomes a Member and chargeable with dues. When a petitioner is elected to membership, he is chargeable from that time with dues. If, after suspension for non-payment of dues, it is shown that there was good cause for the failure to pay dues, such delinquent dues may be remitted and the suspension withdrawn by action of the Lodge at any Stated Meeting.

*(Rev. 2001)*

*Kendrick, 1907; Dlugie 2000.*

32.7 Where the By-Laws provide for a fee for membership, a member, who has heretofore resigned and desires to return to the Lodge as a member, must pay the fee prescribed.

*Kelly, 1897.*

32.8 A Lodge cannot charge dues to a Brother after accepting his resignation as a member.

*Mitchell, 1886.*

32.9 Decided that a member delinquent and summoned is required to pay the full amount owing. If he makes a partial payment he is still liable to the penalty of suspension. A man is not suspended for owing dues, but for refusing to pay the same.

*Beitler, 1922.*  
*See 94.4*

32.10 All monies paid into a Lodge, whether for dues or initiation fees, must be paid over to the Treasurer; and, in the latter case, if there is a rejection, an order should be drawn on the Treasurer for the amount to be returned. The Treasurer alone is the custodian of all funds paid into the Lodge.

*Potter, 1874.*

32.11 In an effort to enhance the finances of the Lodges in Pennsylvania, it is my decision that half dues, partial dues, or reduced dues, or the elimination of dues as compensation or part of compensation are, as of this date (March 6, 1985), no longer permissible.

This decision shall not apply to officers and members of Lodges presently excused from the payment of dues or presently paying reduced dues. Further, this decision shall not apply to 50-year Members whose dues are by action of the Lodge remitted.

The By-Laws of Lodges which are in conflict with the foregoing are hereby annulled.  
(*Rev. 1986*)

*Carpenter, 1985.*

32.12 The following must be issued annually upon payment of dues. The dues card to be printed with the name, number and location of the Lodge inserted in the blank spaces; but dues cards are not to be signed in blank, nor have the seal of the Lodge attached, until payment is made by whom it is to be issued. The seal must not be printed on the dues card.

**FORM OF DUES CARD WITH SEAL ATTACHED,  
TO BE ISSUED BY LODGES IN PENNSYLVANIA**

	_____ Lodge No. _____, F. & A.M.
	an extra _____
At	meeting of _____ Lodge, No. _____
a stated	
	F. & A.M. held at _____, Pennsylvania,
	on the _____ day of _____, A.D. _____, A.L. _____
	dues were received from Brother _____
	amounting to _____ dollars, in full to December 31, _____.
Signature of Member	
	Extract from the Minutes
[Seal]	Attest: _____ Secretary

NOTE: Members paying dues in advance are to be issued a receipt, (not a dues card) for the total amount and the date received. The receipt is to be signed by the Lodge Secretary, but the Lodge seal is not to be imprinted.

*Guthrie, 1910; Stenberg, 1987.*  
*See 43.2; 51.5*

32.12 A In conjunction with Article 32.12, Lodges may participate in the electronic program established by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania for issuing dues cards to Members paying their dues. On these electronically prepared dues cards, the Seal may be reproduced as a watermark on the card.

**FORM OF DUES CARD WITH SEAL REPRODUCED ON THE CARD,  
TO BE ISSUED BY LODGES IN PENNSYLVANIA**

Signature of Member	At a Stated Meeting of
	_____ Lodge, No. _____
	F. & A.M. of Pennsylvania
	held at _____, Pennsylvania on
	the _____ day of _____, A.D. 20____, A.L. 60____,
	dues were received from:
	Brother _____
	amounting to \$_____
	in full to December 31, 20____.
Attest:	Extract from the minutes.
	_____ Secretary

NOTE: Members paying dues in advance are to be issued a receipt (not a dues card) for the total amount and the date received. The receipt is to be signed by the Lodge Secretary, but the Lodge seal is not to be imprinted.

*Dluge, 2001.*

32.13 Prior to suspending a Member who is delinquent in paying his dues, the Member must be personally contacted by an Officer, or a Past Master or other Member of the Lodge designated by the Master, to determine whether or not there is good cause for the failure to pay dues and, if such exists, whether or not remission of dues is appropriate. If good cause does not exist, the Lodge Secretary must send to that Member a final notice which is required to be sent at least one (1) month prior to the Lodge taking action on the Member's suspension.

*(Rev. 1993, 2001, 2003)*

*(See Article 19.01 of the Ahiman Rezon)*

*Fowler, 1992; Dluge, 2000; Cunningham, 2003.*

32.13 A Good cause for failure to pay dues includes being called to active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States during military engagements or other emergencies. Whereas, the Member may not receive due and timely notice, remission of dues is appropriate.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

32.14 A newly-Raised Mason must receive his dues card within ten days of his Raising. In that period of time, he must also receive instruction on the examination of a Visitor, which will enable him to visit Lodges other than his own.

*Weisser, 1996.*

32.15 All forms of dues cards issued to Past Masters by service shall have the abbreviated title "P.M." or the full title "Past Master" appended to their name.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

32.16 Any Member who has attained the age of sixty (60) or more years and during the Masonic Years 2010 and 2011 is the first line signer on two (2) or more petitions for **initiation and membership** of petitioners aged thirty (30) years or younger shall be excused from the payment of Subordinate Lodge and Grand Lodge dues for life, provided that at least two (2) of such petitioners are initiated, passed and raised in (or otherwise become affiliated as Master Masons with) a Subordinate Lodge under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. In the case of a plural member, such member shall only be excused from Subordinate Lodge dues in one Subordinate Lodge, as determined by the Grand Master.

*(Removed 2012)*

*Sturgeon, 2011.*

32.17 At the December 2010 Quarterly Communication, the Grand Lodge adopted amendments to the *Ahiman Rezon* which, among other things, increased Grand Lodge dues, and provided for future automatic adjustments to Grand Lodge dues and certain Grand Lodge fees based upon changes to the consumer price index. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this *Digest of Decisions*, including, without limitation, Article 16.7, each Subordinate Lodge may adopt a By-Law which provides for the automatic adjustment in such Subordinate Lodge's dues and fees by an amount equal to any increase or decrease in Grand Lodge dues and fees (whether by further amendments to the *Ahiman Rezon* or by the provisions related to automatic adjustments based upon the consumer price index). The By-Law may provide that any adjustment made pursuant to such a By-Law be effective, proactively or retroactively, to cover any Grand Lodge increase in dues or fees, it being the intent of this Article that Subordinate Lodges may have the authority to pass through any and all increases to Grand Lodge dues and fees to its Members or petitioners, as the case may be.

*Sturgeon, 2011.*

32.18 Subordinate Lodges must remit to Grand Lodge the full amount of dues payable for a Masonic Year on or before December 27 of such year. Except by dispensation of the Grand Master, if the full amount of such dues are not received by the Grand Lodge by January 31 of the succeeding month, the Subordinate Lodge shall suspend all work forthwith except that it may open for the sole and limited purpose of approving the payment of its fixed obligations.

*Brink 2026*



### 33 FEMALE ORGANIZATIONS

33.1 The Grand Lodge recognizes there are female organizations that require Masonic affiliation as a prerequisite for membership; however, the degrees or ceremonies of these organizations are not a part of Pennsylvania Freemasonry. There are no degrees in a Symbolic Masonic Lodge under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania except the three; Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft and Master Mason.

*Stoner, 1991.*

33.2 I now direct that a Member of a Lodge under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania may attend meetings, banquets, entertainments, installations or other occasions of the Order of Rainbow for Girls or Job's Daughters, whether the function is closed or open to the general public. Members may also serve on their advisory boards, councils or committees at the local, state or international level.

*(Rev. 1991)*

*Kimmel, 1973; Stoner, 1991.*

33.3 Members of Lodges under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania are hereby permitted to attend meetings, dinners, banquets, entertainments, installations and similar occasions held or sponsored by female adult organizations, membership in which is based on Masonic affiliation, whether such occasions are closed or open to the general public.

*(Rev. 1991)*

*Herold, 1964; Carpenter, 1985; Stoner, 1991.*

33.4 Members of Lodges in this Jurisdiction may take part in the work, either ritualistic or otherwise, and in the proceedings of the Order of the Rainbow for Girls, or the International Order of Job's Daughters.

*Williamson, 1983.*

### 34 EDICTS

34.1 Cases are continually arising where men are being made Masons in violation of the Masonic Law of Pennsylvania. It has been the practice of our Grand Masters, from time to time, to issue edicts on printed sheets containing the names of the persons who have been edicted. The effect of such edicts is to prohibit the persons edicted from admission as visitors to any Pennsylvania Lodge, and to deny them any Masonic recognition. As these edicts were sent out on printed sheets, it was found that in many cases they were not preserved for use, or at least not preserved in a form which made them readily accessible for use. I therefore thought it advisable to prepare a loose-leaf book, containing the names of those edicted. At my request such a book was prepared by our Grand Secretary, Brother JOHN A. PERRY, and a copy has been sent to the Secretary of every symbolic Lodge in the State. It is to be in the custody of the Secretary and on his desk at all stated, extra and special meetings.

In the book the names of all persons edicted are arranged in alphabetical order, and sufficient information is given to readily identify any person who may ask the privilege of visiting one of our Lodges, if such person has been edicted. The Secretary is directed to refer to this book every time an unknown visitor, asks the privilege of visiting the Lodge.

It will be the duty of the District Deputy Grand Master to make an examination of the book of edicts at least once a year, for the purpose of ascertaining whether it is kept up to date.

*Snyder, 1930.*

34.2 Whenever the Grand Master effects a censure, suspension and/or expulsion of any Member of the Fraternity, the censure, suspension and/or expulsion shall constitute an Edict. An Edict of the Grand Master has the force of Masonic Law and there cannot be an appeal from the decision of a Grand Master, except to the Grand Master himself. Censures, suspensions and expulsions are recorded in the *Book of Edicts*.

*Committee on Landmarks, 2001.  
Grand Lodge, 2001.*

### 35 ELECTIONS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 5, Art. 17.07-.11, .14, .17*

35.1 Decided that the ballot boxes used by Lodges for conducting the annual and special elections of officers must have a lid with a slit large enough for the insertion of ballots only, and that the tellers shall not commence to count ballots until the election has been declared closed by the Master, and directed the Grand Secretary to so notify all Lodges.

*Page, 1933.*

35.2 No Brother not a member of the Lodge may act as Teller of an election.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

35.3 Every Master Mason in good standing, member of a Lodge, has a right to vote at any election for officers, provided he has complied with the By-Laws.

*Wagner, 1901.*

35.4 It is usual for Lodges to have prepared a number of ballots, omitting names of candidates for stations which are to become vacant. As to officers who are usually advanced, if deserving, their names may be printed, as for the advancement of a warden.

*Arnold, 1894.*

35.5 The Lodge officers, however, should not print tickets for contested offices, as Junior Warden.

*Arnold, 1894.*

35.6 Tickets, as for instance, for Treasurer, Trustees, Representative, etc., dropped in the box used for the election of a Secretary, should be discarded by the tellers and not counted as a vote for anybody or anything. Also that three tickets folded together for one candidate should be thrown out as an attempted fraud.

*Williams, 1914.*

35.7 A member of a Lodge who was not present in person requested in writing a member to vote for him, which was done. This is an error; no such vote could be received, and as it was unlawful, it affected the whole ballot.

*Vaux, 1868.*

35.8 Decided that an illegible, unintelligible or blank ballot may not be considered in computing the total number of votes cast in an election for Lodge officers.

*Hamilton, 1926.*

35.9 At the stated meeting of a Lodge, at the time prescribed by the *Ahiman Rezon*, if a Brother is elected as an officer, but declines to serve, the Lodge may at once proceed to elect another. No dispensation is necessary.

*Wagner, 1900.*

35.10 A dispensation to a Lodge to hold a special election to fill a vacancy will not be granted unless and until the Lodge by its action requests the same.

*Kendrick, 1906.*

35.11 It is imperative to send to all the members of the Lodge due and timely notice of special elections.

*Wagner, 1901.*

35.12 No dispensation is necessary to hold an election to fill a vacancy for representative or substitute representative in the Grand Lodge or trustee, but the members must have due and timely notice that such an election is to be held.

*(Rev. 1986)*

*Wagner, 1900.*

*See 76.2*

35.13 At a Lodge's Stated Meeting next preceding St. John the Evangelist's Day, the election of officers shall be the first order of business after reading of the Minutes, reports of committees of inquiry, balloting on petitions and presentation of petitions.

Lodges are not required to wait until a time certain for the election of officers. Accordingly, a Lodge may act to strike this requirement from its By-Laws at a Stated Meeting, after proper notice of such change is provided to the Members in the Lodge Notice.

*Smith, 2012.*

## 36 ELECTIONEERING

36.1 Caucusing, nominating, or electioneering for Masonic stations is unmasonic. The right of the Brethren to stand as candidates, and of their friends to recommend them, cannot be gainsaid; but the methods of public politics would be destructive to the welfare of the Fraternity. The spectacle of Brethren standing in the anteroom of a Lodge, or even inside, electioneering and soliciting votes for themselves cannot be too severely reprimanded. It exhibits a want of delicacy and refinement, which should not be shown in a Fraternity like a Masonic Body.

Friends of candidates may write letters to persons known to them, recommending Brethren for preferment; but the wholesale issue of printed circulars to persons, unknown as well as known to the sender, is highly improper, and will, if not checked, tend to degrade the Fraternity.

Printed tickets for candidates are not improper. They save much time at the meetings, in the preparation of tickets; but they should be distributed by friends of candidates and not by candidates themselves. They should be distributed in the Lodge room, during the time when the Lodge is called off preparatory to going into an election. The Lodges may prepare ballots for those officers who are usually advanced without contests, leaving blanks for those who are not.

Printed circular instructions to a Representative from a Past Master to vote for a Brother therein named are not binding on the Representative.

It is not permissible to open headquarters outside of the Masonic Temple in Philadelphia, in the interest of any candidate for Masonic office.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

36.2 For many years Grand Masters have called attention to the evils that sometimes creep into our midst through what is termed (but really misnamed) “political methods” in our elections. The timely admonition of a year ago brought the proper result in the elections of this Grand Lodge and also in the Subordinate Lodges. My direction was cheerfully acquiesced in and Brethren were not compelled to run the gauntlet of ballots to reach the Lodge room.

The use, however, of printed cards, letters and papers, and the opening of headquarters for this or that Brother who aspires, as he has the inherent right to do, for the approval of his Brethren in his desire for office, has been so often condemned that it seems incredible that those who run cannot or will not read.

*Williams, 1915.*

36.3 The preparation and mailing of a formal announcement by a Committee of Past Masters of any Lodge setting forth the qualifications of one of its members for office and recommending him for preferment, but without reference to any other possible candidate, is hereby authorized, provided that before the proposed announcement is mailed or distributed, the same has been submitted to the Grand Master and approved by him, and provided further, that such distribution shall be only to the following: The Elective Officers of the Grand Lodge, the Right Worshipful Past Grand Masters of the Grand Lodge, the District Deputy Grand Masters, the Past District Deputy Grand Masters, and the Representatives in the Grand Lodge.

The principle that, in Masonic elections, the office should always seek the man and not the man the office is reiterated.

*Yeager, 1951; Chilcote, 1959.*

### 37 ENTERTAINMENT

37.1 Lodges have nothing to do with Masonic excursions, Masonic balls or the like. The Grand Lodge, by organic Law, forbids any public Masonic gathering unless permission be first obtained.

*(Removed 2001)*

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

37.2 Lodges may sponsor dinners or entertainments to which ladies and families of Masons may be invited, provided, that such dinners and entertainments have the prior approval of the District Deputy Grand Master. Announcements of such dinners and entertainments may be included in Lodge Notices.

If approved by the Lodge and the District Deputy Grand Master, Lodge funds may be used to defray the costs.

*McKinley, 1963; Williamson, 1983.*

37.3 It is permissible to open a new Masonic Hall or Temple to public inspection at any time that you may see proper, providing a Lodge meeting is not in session.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

37.4 Lodges in this Jurisdiction are encouraged to sponsor activities to which ladies and families of Masons are invited. Such activities may be held before, during, or after Stated, Special or Extra Meetings provided (1) they are confined to the social room and (2) the Lodge Room is duly tyled if such activities are held during a meeting of the Lodge.

*(Rev. 1986)*

*Kimmel, 1972; Williamson, 1982.*

37.5 Picnics and other social activities conducted by a Lodge with Masons and/or non-Masons present may be held on Sunday after 2:00 p.m. provided a Masonic Temple, Hall or Lodge Room is not used and further provided that no alcoholic beverages are served at or in conjunction with such a picnic or other social event.

*McCain, 1976.*

### 38 EXPULSION

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 17.17; Art. 18.07; Art. 20.03*

38.1 Unless it is otherwise expressly prescribed by the By-Laws of a Lodge, a vote of expulsion may be adopted by a majority.

*Lamberton, 1871.*

38.2 A resolution of expulsion cannot be reconsidered at a meeting after that at which it was adopted. It is even denied in a case of suspension.

*Lamberton, 1871.*

### 39 FOREIGN AND OTHER JURISDICTIONS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 12.09*

39.1 All inter-jurisdictional communications should be sent through the offices of the Grand Masters or the Grand Secretaries.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

39.2 Members of Lodges in this Jurisdiction cannot hold Masonic relations with Lodges of other Jurisdictions or members thereof, with which this Grand Lodge is not in Fraternal relations.

*Wagner, 1901.*

39.3 Our rule is that all matters between the Craft in our own Jurisdiction and another Jurisdiction must be carried on through their respective Grand Masters or Grand Secretaries, unless it is upon a subject that can be settled only by the act of their respective Grand Lodges. For this reason, no Lodge here can grant permission to a Lodge in another Jurisdiction to act upon the petition of one of our residents temporarily residing in its vicinity, nor can it act under a like permission in a similar case. Neither can one of our Lodges grant permission to a Lodge within our Jurisdiction to act upon one of its rejected petitioners. The Lodge in which a petitioner is rejected must first show that the objection has been removed, before he can apply elsewhere.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

39.4 Masonic recognition must be refused to one who, while a resident of this Jurisdiction, petitions a Lodge in another Jurisdiction, was received and initiated, without permission having been granted by us.

*Tennis, 1902.*

39.5 A subject that requires notice is that of residents of Pennsylvania who go to foreign countries, and are there made Masons and expect to be recognized as such on their return. Some of them do this unwittingly, acting under the bad advice of friends; others do it understandingly, and because the degrees cost less there than here. No persons, except those men who are making the U.S. Armed Forces their career, so made can be recognized by our Lodges. If they desire to enjoy the privileges of Freemasonry in Pennsylvania, they must resign from their foreign Lodge, surrendering all allegiance to it and to the Grand Lodge under which it holds, and apply in regular course for initiation and membership, paying the fees required by the By-Laws of the Lodge to which they apply.

*Deyoe, 1966.*



## 40 GAMBLING

40.1 No member of the Masonic Fraternity in this Jurisdiction shall alone or with others, promote, assist in, or be a party to, any lottery, game, device of chance, or other activity, whereby or wherein any individual participating may be able, through the element of luck or chance, to win, be awarded or receive a greater value than any other like participant, arranged, devised or intended to raise money which shall, either directly or indirectly, inure to the benefit of any Masonic Lodge, body, association or organization, or to any body, club, committee, or other organization in Pennsylvania whose members are required to have membership in the Masonic Fraternity.

*Lewis, 1939.*

40.2 The prohibition set forth in 40.1 shall not apply when any appropriate government body (local, state and federal) has issued a valid license for “Small Games of Chance”. Permission to obtain a “Small Games of Chance” license by a Lodge must be approved in advance by the District Deputy Grand Master and the R.W. Grand Master. Small games of chance are to be used **only** for Masonic related purposes, i.e., fundraising for Masonic charities, to raise operating funds for the Lodge, upkeep of the Temple, Hall or Lodge building, etc. Approval will not be granted for non-Masonic purposes.

*(Rev. 2023) Hohenschildt, 1994; Weisser, 1996; Aungst, 2006; Bateman, 2014; Wonderling, 2023*

40.3 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein or otherwise in Masonic Law, no Lodge, or group of Members identified as Masons or under the auspices of Freemasonry shall, directly or indirectly, sponsor or otherwise participate in or benefit from a “gun bash” or similar event, except if such Lodge or group obtains reasonably sufficient insurance for the event and the prior written approval of the District Deputy Grand Master. For purposes of this Decision, a “gun bash” means an event where attendees may purchase chances to win guns or other prizes.

*(Rev. 2023) Smith, 2012; Wonderling, 2023*

## 41 GRAND HONORS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Sec. 4*

41.1 The grand honors are only given to the Grand Master of Pennsylvania, when, accompanied by the Grand Officers, he pays a formal Grand Visitation to a Lodge.

*Day, 1884.*

## 42 GRAND MASTER AND GRAND OFFICERS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 2.01; Art. 3.01; Art. 4.02;  
Art. 9.14; Art. 12.02; Art. 16.01-.04*

42.1 In the Jurisdiction of Pennsylvania, there cannot be an appeal from a decision of a Grand Master. This is established Masonic Law. If a Lodge, with full cognizance of this, should attempt to controvert it, it would become the duty of a Grand Master to sequester the Warrant of the Lodge.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

42.2 The Grand Master of Pennsylvania is more than a presiding officer, and there is no appeal from any of his acts.

*Henderson, 1896.*

42.3 An Edict of a Grand Master emanates from the inherent powers of his office, as well as those conferred by the *Ahiman Rezon*, and has the authority of Masonic Law.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

42.4 The Grand Master's summons you are bound to obey, unless prevented by sickness or some unavoidable occurrence of which you should have notified him. A failure to comply with such summons will cause the suspension of the officer so neglecting to comply without a reasonable excuse.

*Dick, 1881.*

42.5 The Grand Master has full and complete authority in reference to the surrender of Jurisdiction by the Grand Lodge over residents of this Jurisdiction, who may reside nearer a Lodge in an adjoining Jurisdiction than in this.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

42.6 The members of the Grand Lodge should rise at the entrance of a Past Grand Master. The members of Lodges should rise at the entrance of the Grand Officers, of Past Grand Masters, of Past Deputy Grand Masters, of District Deputy Grand Masters, and of Masters of Lodges.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

42.7 The *Ahiman Rezon* vests in the Grand Master the power to censure, suspend and/or expel summarily, unilaterally and/or otherwise any Member of the Grand Lodge and/or any Member of a Subordinate Lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania. This authority is not limited by Article 12.03 of the *Ahiman Rezon*, or any other provision of the *Ahiman Rezon*, the Ancient Charges, Ceremonies and Forms or the *Digest of Decisions*.

*Committee on Landmarks, 2001.*

*Grand Lodge, 2001.*

*(See also Articles 19.52, 34.2, 38.2, 42.3 and 97.13)*

*(Removed 2011)*

42.8 The authority of the Grand Master to censure, suspend and/or expel summarily, unilaterally and/or otherwise any Member of the Grand Lodge or any Member of a Subordinate Lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania is consistent with the principle that in Freemasonry what is not permitted is prohibited, since the Grand Master is inherently and expressly permitted to exercise his authority to censure, suspend and/or expel summarily, unilaterally and/or otherwise any Member of a Subordinate Lodge under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania.

*Committee on Landmarks, 2001.*

*(Removed 2011)*

*Grand Lodge, 2001.*

42.9 Open installations of newly elected Grand Officers and the Brethren appointed by the Right Worshipful Grand Master-Elect, in full regalia, may be conducted at the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge. The Right Worshipful Grand Master has full and complete authority to permit such installations as well as to limit attendance by invitation only. Open installations of Grand Officers and appointed Brethren, when held, shall take place in the presence of the members, families and friends of the Brethren being presented.

*Aungst, 2006.*

## 43 HONORARY MEMBERS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 17.04*

43.1 Lodges shall not confer honorary membership upon Brethren not members thereof.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

43.2 To comply with Article 17.04 of the *Ahiman Rezon*, the following must be issued annually upon payment of Grand Lodge dues. The dues card to be printed with the name, number and location of the Lodge inserted in the blank spaces; but dues cards are not to be signed in blank, nor have the seal of the Lodge attached until payment is made by whom it is to be issued. The seal must not be printed on the dues card.

OFFICIAL FORM OF DUES CARD TO BE ISSUED  
TO HONORARY MEMBERS FOR GRAND LODGE DUES WITH SEAL ATTACHED

Signature of Member

\_\_\_\_\_ Lodge No. \_\_\_\_\_, F. & A.M.

At a Stated Meeting of \_\_\_\_\_

Lodge No. \_\_\_\_\_, F. & A.M., held at \_\_\_\_\_,

Pennsylvania, on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_,

A.D. 20\_\_\_\_, A.L. 60\_\_\_\_, Brother \_\_\_\_\_

having complied with Article \_\_\_\_\_, Section \_\_\_\_\_,

of the By-Laws was constituted an Honorary Member and thereby exempt from

all dues except Grand Lodge dues, and is in Good Masonic Standing for

the year ending December 31, .

Extract from the Minutes

SEAL Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary

Honorary Members paying Grand Lodge dues in advance are to be issued a receipt, (not a dues card) for the total amount and showing the date received. The receipt is to be signed by the Lodge Secretary, but the Lodge seal is not to be imprinted.

*Lehr, 1955; Stenberg, 1987.*

43.3 One of the incidents attaching to honorary membership is the payment of dues. If a life member voluntarily changes that relation to honorary membership, and refuses to pay dues, he may be suspended.

*Com. on Appeals, 1880.*

43.4 The dues of a member who, in accordance with the By-Laws of his Lodge, has been duly created an Honorary Member may not be increased thereafter, except to the extent of any subsequent increase in Grand Lodge dues. While the dues of an Honorary Member may never be less than an amount equivalent to Grand Lodge dues, a Lodge may provide in its By-Laws that Honorary Members, created subsequent to the effective date of such By-Law, shall pay dues in a specified amount greater than Grand Lodge dues if approval of such amount is recommended to Grand Lodge and approved by it.

*Ball, 1971.*

43.5 All dues cards issued to Honorary Members who are Past Masters by service shall have the abbreviated title “P.M.” or the full title “Past Master” appended to their name.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

43.6 Commencing December 27, 2011, no Lodge shall confer, permit or otherwise grant Honorary Membership to any Member under any circumstances. Members who obtained Honorary Memberships in a Lodge prior to December 27, 2011 shall be grandfathered as such pursuant to the terms of Article 43 of this *Digest of Decisions* and the By-Laws of such Lodge as of December 27, 2011. Lodges that have By-Laws which provide for Honorary Memberships shall amend such By-Laws accordingly.

*Smith, 2012.*

## 44 INCORPORATION

44.1 The Grand Lodge is not incorporated.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

44.2 A Lodge must not be incorporated.

*Perkins, 1872.*

44.3 All Securities of the Lodge must be held in the name of the Trustees of the Lodge.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

## 45 INITIATION

45.1 After being duly prepared to receive the first degree in Freemasonry, a candidate refused to conform with and obey certain Landmarks of the Craft. This refusal disqualifies him from initiation in any Lodge in this Jurisdiction, and you will direct your Secretary to make proper record thereof, and to make report to the Grand Secretary accordingly. Freemasonry does not proselyte. Those who desire its privileges must seek them of their own free will, and must accept and obey, without condition or reservation, all of its Ancient Usages, Customs, and Landmarks.

*Africa, 1892.*

45.2 Decided that where an approved petitioner for initiation and membership is unable to present himself for initiation within the period prescribed by the *Ahiman Rezon*, by reason of absence in the service of the United States Armed Forces or because of illness, the time thus actually spent shall be non-existent for Masonic purposes, and shall not be counted in case of failure of approved petitioner to present himself for the degrees within six months, or in case of failure of Committee of Inquiry to report within four months.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

## 46 INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 4.04; Art. 17.08*

46.1 When St. John the Evangelist's Day falls on Sunday, the Master-elect of a Lodge should be installed on a date prior thereto.

*Williams, 1914.*

46.2 A District Deputy Grand Master cannot convene for installation purposes the officers of the various Lodges in his District, at some central place. The installation of the officers of a Lodge is a distinctive act to take place if practicable in the presence of those over whom they are to rule, and at the accustomed place of meeting.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

46.3 It is not permissible to install the officers of one Lodge at the place of meeting of another, or for a Lodge to be opened elsewhere than at that designated in its Warrant, except as provided in the *Ahiman Rezon*.

*Lamberton, 1871.*

46.4 It is not in the power of a Lodge to open a Grand Lodge, nor is a Grand Lodge to be opened to install the officers of a Lodge, nor are any but elected officers to be installed.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

46.5 Masters can be installed in the presence of all Members present or in a public ceremony conducted in accordance with the protocols established by the Grand Lodge. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Word of the Chair shall only be given to the new Master after the closing of the Lodge or the conclusion of the public ceremony, as the case may be, in a private ceremony in the presence of Past Masters and those Brethren having the Word of the Chair.

*(Rev. 2011)*

*Nisbet, 1880; Weisser, 1996; Sturgeon, 2011.*

46.6 A District Deputy Grand Master is under no obligation to install the officers of any Lodge in the District, unless he chooses to do so. It is the duty of the Master to install his successor, or authorize it to be done by a competent Past Master, or a member of this Grand Lodge, if your Master is not competent to do it.

*Day, 1883.*

46.7 Neither the *Ahiman Rezon*, nor Customs, nor Usage of the Grand Lodge, warrant the installation after St. John the Evangelist's Day. The Master and Wardens should be installed the night that they are elected; then all difficulty about meeting on St. John the Evangelist's Day is avoided, and the Regulations of the Grand Lodge are complied with.

*Day, 1884.*

46.8 The presence of three Past Masters at the installation of the Master of the Lodge is sufficient. In this ceremony, it is not necessary to have seven offices filled.

*Africa, 1891.*

46.9 The Summary of the Ancient Charges, as found in Section 3.02 of the *Ahiman Rezon*, should be read at the installation of a Master.

*Kendrick, 1906.*

46.10 The Installation of a Master shall be conducted in a dignified manner and the ceremony shall not be distorted by any unMasonic actions. However, an explanation should be provided to clarify the importance of this installation as well as the responsibilities and duties of the Office of Worshipful Master.

(Rev. 2014)

*Deyoe, 1966; Dluge, 2000; Bateman, 2014.*

46.11 We have no such degrees as “Past Master’s Degree” or “Passing to the Chair”. Nor do we make a Past Master by Dispensation.

*Brown, 1904; Dluge, 2000.*

46.12 Open installations of newly elected Officers and the Brethren appointed by the Worshipful Master-Elect, in full regalia, may be conducted in addition to the installation ceremonies held on the night of election in an open Lodge with the permission of the District Deputy Grand Master, according to the procedures approved by Grand Lodge for that purpose. Open installations of Lodge Officers and appointed Brethren, when held, shall usually take place in the presence of the members over whom they are to rule and the families and friends of the Brethren being presented. The Worshipful Master-Elect has the authority to limit attendance by invitation only.

Ceremonies for the presentation of the Worshipful Master and Wardens must be held in compliance with the provisions of Articles 46.1 and 46.7 of the *Digest of Decisions*. Any change in, or deviation from, the prescribed ritual for installations shall have first received approval from the Director of Ritualistic Work and the Right Worshipful Grand Master. Before entering upon his duties, the Worshipful Master-Elect must receive the Word of the Chair in a private ceremony held in the presence of Past Masters and those Brethren having the Word of the Chair and conducted in accordance with the protocols established by the Grand Lodge and taught by the Schools of Instruction.

(Rev. 2011)

*Aungst, 2006; Sturgeon, 2011.*

46.13 Subject to compliance with the protocols established pursuant to Article 46.12, the open installation of Subordinate Lodge Officers is encouraged.

*Sturgeon, 2011.*



## 47 INTOXICATING LIQUORS

47.1 The use of alcoholic beverages at Masonic banquets, or other Masonic occasions, is permitted **subject to all the following conditions:**

- A. Such use of alcoholic beverages shall not take place within a Lodge Room, Hall or building owned or controlled by a Lodge or a Masonic Temple or Hall Association, unless approved by (i) such controlling Lodge or Masonic Temple or Hall Association and then by (ii) the District Deputy Grand Master.
- B. The serving of alcoholic beverages shall not be controlled by a Lodge or Masonic Temple or Hall Association, but by a responsible outside caterer, except in connection with (1) the use of wine at a Table Lodge, or (2) the Lodge or Masonic Temple or Hall Association operates events as a BYOB, provided that it first (i) procures commercially reasonable insurance, complies with all applicable laws, rules and regulations, and obtains the prior written approval of the District Deputy Grand Master.
- C. The alcoholic beverages shall not be purchased (1) purchased using the funds of a Lodge or Masonic Temple or Hall Association, or (2) stored within a Lodge Room, Hall or building owned or controlled by a Lodge or Masonic Temple or Hall Association, except in a secure location in compliance with all applicable laws, rules and regulations and the prior written approval of the District Deputy Grand Master.

*(Rev. 2023)*

*Fowler, 1993; Slater, 2005; Wonderling, 2023*

47.2 A Lodge or Masonic Temple or Hall Association may rent its facilities, other than a Lodge Room, to the public where alcoholic beverages are to be served, subject to the following conditions:

- A. The serving of alcoholic beverages shall not be controlled by a Lodge or Masonic Temple or Hall Association, but by a responsible outside caterer.
- B. Alcoholic beverages shall not be purchased using the funds of a Lodge or Masonic Temple or Hall Association, or stored within a Lodge Room, Hall or building owned or controlled by a Lodge or Masonic Temple or Hall Association.

*Williamson, 1982; Slater, 2005.*

## 48 JEWELS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 16.04*

48.1 A Dispensation to wear a Past Master's jewel of gold, or part gold, will not be issued. Collars of Officers shall not have any stars on them.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

48.2 The Master must not permit a Past Master to attend meetings of the Lodge wearing other than the regulation jewel, as prescribed in the *Ahiman Rezon*.

*Tennis, 1903.*

48.3 A few of the Lodges have grown into the habit of presenting to retiring Masters very costly jewels, adorning them with diamonds and other precious stones. In quite a number of our Lodges it has been the custom for some years to present a jewel partly of silver and partly of gold. This has had the acquiescence of many of us. But the *Ahiman Rezon* prescribes the form and size and the material of the jewel. There seemed to me to be no way to curb the excessive expenditure of some of the Lodges except to say to all that the Past Master's jewel must be such as the *Ahiman Rezon* prescribes. I have pointed out to many of the Brethren who have complained of this ruling that the way to escape it is to amend the *Ahiman Rezon* to permit the Lodges some leeway in determining the kind of jewel to present.

*Beitler, 1922.*

48.4 The Past Master's jewel may be worn in visiting any Lodge in this Jurisdiction.

*Williamson, 1982.*

48.5 The Past Master's jewel may be worn as part of the uniform dress approved as Decision 60.3.

*Hohenschildt, 1995.*

## 49 JURISDICTION OVER PETITIONER

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 21.08*

49.1 A petitioner for initiation and membership who has been rejected in a Lodge in this Jurisdiction, cannot petition any other Lodge, but must petition the Lodge in which he was rejected, as long as he resides in Pennsylvania, except as covered by Art. 21.16 of the *Ahiman Rezon*.  
*Deyoe, 1966.*

49.2 The Lodge that rejects a petitioner for initiation and membership retains Jurisdiction over him; consequently he only can apply to that Lodge; but it does not follow that, if approved on second petition, he must be initiated therein. If approved on subsequent petition, the objection against him will then be removed; when, if he prefers joining another Lodge, he can withdraw his petition.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

49.3 A Lodge in this Jurisdiction cannot receive and act upon a petition for initiation and membership from a resident of another State or Country, who is in this Country temporarily as a student and intends to return to his home on completion of his studies, without obtaining a surrender of Jurisdiction from the proper Masonic authorities at his place of residence.

*Guthrie, 1911.*

49.4 A petitioner, being a resident of this Jurisdiction, presented his petition to a Lodge in Maryland; upon inquiry, the Lodge nearest his place of residence replied that there was Masonic objection, and his petition was therefore rejected; held: that, if he desired to present a second petition, he must do so to the Lodge in Maryland to which his first petition was presented.

*Guthrie, 1911.*

49.5 Lodges receiving inquiries from Lodges in other Jurisdictions requesting consent to their receiving and acting upon petitions for initiation and membership from residents of this Jurisdiction, must send them immediately to the Grand Secretary.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

49.6 No Lodge in this Jurisdiction may receive a petition for initiation and membership or for membership from one who has a petition pending in another Jurisdiction.

*Brown, 1905.*

49.7 We do not claim Masonic Jurisdiction over a petitioner who, although calling himself a Pennsylvanian, resides and votes in another Jurisdiction. We claim perpetual Jurisdiction over all our rejected petitioners, our practice being, when other Jurisdictions accept our rejected petitioners and confer the degrees upon them, to issue an Edict forbidding Masonic intercourse with such.

*Kelly, 1897.*

49.8 The principle involved, that of perpetual Jurisdiction, is of the greatest importance in this age when railroads have brought and almost bound the citizens of the country into one family, with relations so intimate and business so extensive that men are constantly changing their residence, but not so permanently or far removed as to be unable to return to their old homes in a short time, or to be entirely forgotten. We never take rejected material without the consent of the Jurisdiction which rejected it, and if we are deceived, as we have been, we at once reject it.

*Arnold, 1893.*

49.9 Pennsylvania adheres to the Ancient Regulation, which prohibits one Lodge from interfering with the work of another, and hence holds that a petitioner for initiation and membership, once rejected by a Lodge, is forever debarred from applying elsewhere without the consent of the Lodge that rejected him. If a petitioner rejected in a foreign Lodge afterwards becomes a resident of this Jurisdiction and petitions for initiation and membership here, he must disclose the fact of the rejection, and inquiry is at once made of the rejecting Lodge (through the respective Grand Masters), if it has any Masonic objection to Lodge No. \_\_\_\_\_ receiving and acting upon the petition of \_\_\_\_\_. No action can be taken upon the petition until the consent asked for has been officially transmitted. If the fact of the rejection is concealed, and the petitioner should be initiated, as soon as the truth is ascertained he is at once edicted from all the rights of Freemasonry. Such is regarded as our duty under the Ancient Regulations.

*Africa, 1892.*

49.10 The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania will not allow anyone rejected in another Jurisdiction to be made a Mason in this Jurisdiction, until that rejection has been removed. The only one who can remove that rejection (according to our Law) is the authority under whose Jurisdiction he was rejected.

*Clark, 1877.*

49.11 The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania recognizes and claims exclusive Jurisdiction over material within territorial limits of a Lodge. It is not all with her a question of money as respects fees and dues. It is a question of the proper precautions being taken against the admission of those who may be unworthy, and of courtesy towards those who must naturally be supposed to have the fullest knowledge as to the party petitioning.

*Perkins, 1872.*

49.12 The intention of a resident of another Jurisdiction to remove into this, does not entitle him to the privilege of petitioning for initiation and membership here. He must have proven his intention by giving up his old residence, and taken up a new one in this Jurisdiction. Voting is considered a positive act of citizenship, which is controlling in the question of residence, persons violating this Law will be stricken from the rolls, and Brethren willfully recommending them will be suspended or expelled.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

49.13 Where an Entered Apprentice Mason has been suspended from one of our Lodges for non-payment of dues, and is afterwards, upon payment of his dues, restored to good Masonic standing, he is competent to apply for membership in the same Lodge again, although he has since removed to another Jurisdiction. The Lodge may obtain Jurisdiction over such an Entered Apprentice Mason, and it can, in due form, proceed to act on his petition for membership, without inquiring of the Masonic Jurisdiction of which he is now resident.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

*See 49.9; 86.1-.3*

## 50 LANDMARKS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 7; Art. 12.01; Art. 13.06-.09; Art. 22.01*

50.1 Landmarks are unalterable, unimpairable, and irrevocable. This is our faith. A Landmark is superior to any Law that we can now enact, or any regulation that can now be made. So that if a Law or Regulation should tilt against a Landmark they would fall invalid, inefficacious, and powerless.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

## 51 LIFE MEMBERS

*Created prior to Dec. 7, 1955 and Dec. 27, 2011*

51.1 Life membership is a vested Masonic right. A Lodge cannot change the relation.

*Com. on Appeals, 1880.*

51.2 Brethren who have been made life members and exempted from further payment of dues cannot be suspended for noncompliance with a subsequent By-Law subjecting them to the payment of dues. It is sometimes said that Masonry is a law unto itself, and so it is; but, it is a just and reasonable law. Injustice and Masonry do not go together. The obligation of a contract is as binding on a Lodge as on an individual. The contract of a Lodge with its members is a Masonic obligation of the greatest import and is inviolable. If the Lodge is in danger of becoming extinct for want of means, it will then become a matter of pride, and perhaps of interest, for its members to say whether they will refuse to contribute to preserve its existence, or suffer it to surrender its Warrant, whereupon they would immediately become unaffiliated and liable to the payment of dues in any other Lodge which they might join. If any of the life members of your Lodge have paid their dues under protest, they are entitled to a return thereof.

*Wagner, 1900.*

51.3 When the privileges of life membership are changed by the member's own positive consent and with his full knowledge, payment of dues becomes one of the incidents of the change, and he may be suspended for non-payment of dues thereof. But he cannot be charged with dues without his consent.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

51.4 Warrant members of a Lodge who were constituted life members upon the payment of \$50.00 each, and accepted a donation of \$25.00 voted to each of them by the Lodge, were required to refund the \$25.00 so voted to and accepted by them, and the Secretary of the Lodge was directed to debit upon his books the amount due by each of such members; such debit to be in the nature of dues unpaid, for non-payment of which the offending members should be suspended from membership as for non-payment of dues.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

51.5 Effective at once, each Lodge shall issue a dues card annually to each of its Life Members.

Following is the official Life Membership card to be issued annually to each of its Life Members.

	_____ Lodge No. _____, F. & A.M.
	_____, Pennsylvania
	This is to certify that
Signature of	Brother _____,
	having complied with the provisions of the By-Laws, has been constituted a
	Life Member and is in good standing for the year ending December 31,
	_____.
	Extract from the Minutes
SEAL	Attest: _____
	<i>Secretary</i>

The following is to appear on the back of the membership card: This card is to be issued to each Life Member annually. It must be signed immediately by the Brother to whom it is issued to prevent its use by any other person.

*Lehr, 1955; Stenberg, 1987.*

51.6 In the case of a life member of a Lodge who has no known place of residence, and has not been heard of for seven years, there is a presumption that he is dead, on which presumption the Lodge can mark him among deceased members; but before doing so, the Lodge should make diligent inquiry for the member.

*Arnold, 1893.*

*See 97.5*

51.7 All dues cards issued to Life Members who are Past Masters by service shall have the abbreviated title "P.M." or the full title "Past Master" appended to their name.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

51.8 Commencing December 27, 2011, it shall be impermissible for any Lodge to confer or otherwise grant Life Membership to any Member under any circumstances. Members who obtained Life Memberships in a Lodge prior to December 27, 2011 shall be grandfathered as such pursuant to Article 51 of this Digest of Decisions and the By-Laws of such Lodge as of December 27, 2011. Lodges that have By-Laws which provide for Life Memberships shall amend such By-Laws accordingly.

*(Removed 2026)*

*Smith, 2012*

51.8 In accordance with Section 17.04A of The Ahiman Rezon, Subordinate Lodges may adopt a change to their Bylaws in the form prescribed by the Office of the Grand Secretary that permits members to become life members.

*Brink 2026*

## 52 LODGE BUSINESS

52.1 The business of the Lodge room is entirely in the hands of the Master; and if, for any reason, he desires to change the order of business, he alone has the power so to do, and his actions should not be questioned by the Brethren.

*Tennis, 1902.*

52.2 The Master of a Lodge controls the order of business in his Lodge. When a Lodge agrees to act under a Dispensation to Pass a Brother to the Chair, the Master can proceed at once to that work; or defer it until the ordinary business of the Lodge has been gone through with, as he may deem best.

*(Removed 1997)*

*Africa, 1892.*

52.3 As to those members who come after the hour for closing the door and opening the Lodge, there is no one to blame but themselves. I would suggest, however, that it is always better, because it is free from criticism, to give the Brethren who are in waiting an opportunity to be admitted immediately when the Pursuivant informs the Tyler that the Lodge is open. Then read your Minutes and take a ballot.

*Arnold, 1893.*

52.4 The Master can permit a Brother to retire from the Lodge room at any time when the Lodge is at labor. When a Lodge is called off from labor to refreshment, it is then under the charge of the Junior Warden, who can permit any Brother to retire but none to enter. When closed in the short way, with the intention of opening in another degree, any one can retire of his own motion. When a Lodge is so closed, the Master should announce that Brethren who desire to retire can now have the opportunity of passing out, or make some similar announcement.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

52.5 The Worshipful Master may declare a motion unlawful and refuse to put it.

If, however, he should entertain a motion which is unlawful and it is carried and entered in the Minutes, he may, at a subsequent stated meeting, entertain a motion to rescind it; or, he may declare the adoption of the original motion null and void because contrary to Law.

*Arnold, 1894.*

52.6 Every motion made and adopted must go on the Minutes, with the result of the Lodge's action on the motion.

*Vaux, 1868.*

52.7 A motion to reconsider any action of the Lodge, when such a motion is allowable, must be made at the same meeting at which such action was taken, and cannot be made at a subsequent meeting.

*Africa, 1891.*



52.8 The usual method of taking a vote in a Lodge is by voice vote; although, a Master may, at his option, require a showing of hands when in doubt as to the result. Balloting on petitioners shall follow the procedures established in the *Ahiman Rezon* and the *Digest of Decisions* for that purpose.

(Rev. 2001, 2003)

*Nisbet, 1879; Dlugie 2000; Cunningham, 2003.*

52.9 It is not lawful for any but members of a Lodge to vote therein.

*Wagner, 1900.*

52.10 A Lodge does not adjourn, it closes.

*Eichbaum, 1888.*

### 53 LODGE FUNDS

*See also Decision 20.4 for Charity Funds*

53.1 Lodge Funds shall not be used for non-Masonic purposes, except upon the specific approval of the Grand Master.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

53.2 Lodge Funds should not be expended extravagantly or needlessly. Lodges should have a prepared budget at the beginning of each Masonic year, and the proposed expenditure should be well below anticipated income. The Lodge's District Deputy Grand Master should be given a copy of the proposed budget.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

53.3 Moneys belonging to the Lodge should be kept by the Treasurer separate and apart from other funds; and, if the Lodge designates a particular banking institution in which the funds of the Lodge shall be deposited, the Lodge and not the Treasurer or his bondsman, is responsible for the safety of the funds while in the banking institution designated by the Lodge.

*Tennis, 1903.*

53.4 The funds of a Lodge in the hands of the Treasurer, and the uninvested cash held by the Trustees, must be deposited in a banking institution approved by the Lodge, in the name of the Lodge.

*Kendrick, 1906.*

53.5 The Secretary is not the proper custodian of Lodge Funds. He should receive moneys and forthwith pay them over to the Treasurer.

*Com. on Appeals, 1904.*

53.6 Calls for assistance from Masonic Bodies in other Jurisdictions should not be responded to, unless recommended by the Grand Master. Lodge funds can be used for Lodge purposes only, except expenditures specifically approved by the Grand Master.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

53.7 The Lodge should not loan money to its members on their judgment notes. The Grand Lodge refuses to approve a By-Law of a Lodge conferring upon them that power, and upon a reflection I am sure the members will see that such action may prove disastrous to the harmony of the Lodge.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

53.8 The Masonic youth organizations require our financial support as well as guidance and encouragement. I have decided that any subordinate Lodge or group of Lodges working under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania may sponsor a chapter of the International Order of DeMolay, a bethel of the International Order of Job's Daughters, or an assembly of the International Order of Rainbow for Girls.

Such Lodge or group of Lodges sponsoring a chapter, bethel or assembly is authorized to expend, with the approval of the Lodge membership, such sums as are reasonably necessary for proper support by use of current Lodge funds. The Lodge or group of Lodges is authorized to receive contributions from individual members who wish to create a fund to be used for the above purpose.

*Williamson, 1982.*

53.9 A practice appears to be prevalent among the Lodges of giving a banquet to the Auditing Committee usually composed of three Brethren. Invitations to attend the banquet are extended by the Worshipful Master and in many instances the affairs have been quite costly. If the work of auditing the accounts of the Secretary and Treasurer and of the Trustees of a Lodge make it proper that the Committee and the officers whose books, vouchers and accounts are being examined should be given a supper, there can be no objection to such an expenditure of the funds of the Lodge, but to spend the money of the Lodge to defray the expenses of a banquet at which only a selected group of the members of the Lodge are privileged to attend is not a Masonic use of Lodge funds, and such banquets, and such use of Lodge funds are forbidden.

*Bietler, 1922.*

53.10 The Lodge, after a Resolution duly presented, seconded and approved, may expend up to the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) per annum from the income of its Charity Funds or General Funds, or a fund-raising project in support of those undertakings which will benefit the community in which the Lodge meets, providing that a request for approval of the charitable cause is prepared over the signatures of the Worshipful Master and the Secretary and presented to the Masonic Matching Charity Grants Committee for its approval on a form prepared by the aforesaid Committee.

In the event the Masonic Matching Charity Grants Committee either approves or disapproves the Resolution of the Lodge, the Committee must advise the Office of the Grand Master and the Office of the Grand Secretary of such approval or disapproval so that the Grand Master and the Grand Secretary will have a full and complete record of all such requests for the approval of a charitable cause and the reason for the Committee's approval or disapproval.

In the event of the approval of the Lodge's request, the Grand Lodge will then forward to the Lodge a matching charity grant which is to be deposited in the Lodge funds so that one check will be issued by the Lodge to the person or group to receive the charitable contribution.

*Williamson, 1983; Stoner, 1991; Ernette, 1998.*

**(Removed 2001) (See Decision 20.4)**

53.11 The Permanent Fund and the Permanent Charity Fund of the Lodge shall be invested by their respective Trustees and the principal of the Funds thus created shall not be impaired, diminished or expended except as follows.

With regards to Permanent Funds, the principal may be expended in the event of financial emergency after an announcement in the Lodge Notice, approval by a majority of the Lodge Members present at a subsequent Stated Meeting of the Lodge, approval by the Right Worshipful Grand Master, and a reasonable provision made for subsequent restoration to the Permanent Fund of the sum expended.

With regard to Permanent Charity Funds, the principal may be expended for such charitable purposes only as may be recommended by the Lodge to the Right Worshipful Grand Master and approved by him, after which an announcement of the expenditure shall be placed in the Lodge Notice and approved by a majority of the Members present at a subsequent Stated Meeting of the Lodge.

The income of the Permanent Fund shall first be applied to Grand Lodge dues and the remainder may be used as the Lodge directs. Any surplus income shall be placed in the Reserve Fund, invested by the Trustees, and the same may be drawn upon from time to time as the Lodge may direct by vote of the majority of the Members present at a Stated Meeting of the Lodge.

The income from the Permanent Charity Fund may be expended for charitable purposes only, either by action of the Committee on Charity or by action of the Lodge, and any surplus income shall be placed in a "Permanent Charity Fund - Income Account" and invested by the Trustees. The Permanent Charity Fund - Income Account may be drawn upon from time to time either by action of the Committee on Charity or by action of the Lodge by a vote of the majority of the Members present at a Stated Meeting of the Lodge but the expenditure of funds from the Permanent Charity Fund - Income Account shall be for charitable purposes only.

*Trate, 1980; Stenberg, 1987.*

53.12 I direct that any Lodge which does not have a Permanent Charity Fund at present, shall, prior to January 1, 1997, adopt as a part of its By-Laws the following:

#### PERMANENT CHARITY FUND

Section 1. In order to assure stability to the Lodge and permit it to perform acts of charity, there shall be established a Permanent Charity Fund, which shall be invested by the Trustees, as provided in Article III, Section 5, of these By-Laws, for this purpose and shall be kept by them separate and apart from all other funds and accounts.

Section 2. There shall be set aside for this purpose

- (a) The amount of this Fund now in the hands of the Trustees.
- (b) All moneys or property which may accrue to the Lodge by donation, gift, devise or otherwise for this purpose.
- (c) All such sums as the Lodge may by Resolution apply to this purpose.

Section 3. The Fund thus created shall not be impaired nor diminished; but shall be increased from time to time by adding the income to the principal and as the finances of the Lodge may permit until the principal amounts to \$\_\_\_\_\_, after which so much of the income, current or accumulated, as may be necessary may be expended by the Committee on Charity, for charitable purposes only.

*Weisser, 1996.*

53.13 Each Lodge shall establish procedures that require three signatures on every check drawn on all accounts of such Lodge, to wit, the signature of each of the Treasurer, Secretary and Worshipful Master of such Lodge. The Worshipful Master shall be the last of the three officers to sign a check issued by a Lodge. All checks shall be completed by the Treasurer prior to the signatures.

A Lodge that uses online services for paying bills shall establish a procedure acceptable to the District Deputy that requires the approval of the Secretary, Treasurer and Worshipful Master of such Lodge to approve each payment. Such approvals may be by electronic or other means so long as it is possible to maintain a record of such approvals for each such online payment.

The failure to comply with the requirements of this Decision shall be grounds for removal from office.

*Smith, 2012.*

53.14 On an annual basis, the aggregate amount of charitable contributions to Masonic related charities and charitable activities must be at least equal to the aggregate amount of approved charitable contributions to non-Masonic related charitable organizations. For purposes of compliance with this provision “Masonic related charities and charitable activities” shall be interpreted broadly and shall include, but not be limited to, Masonic charitable organizations whether or not affiliated with the Grand Lodge, fraternal assistance to members, and community activities in which the Subordinate Lodge or its members actively participate in or sponsor in the name of the Subordinate Lodge or Pennsylvania Freemasonry. This decision shall not be deemed to remove or limit the requirement to obtain approvals for contributions from Lodge funds pursuant to any other applicable decision or provision of Masonic Law then in effect.

*Bateman, 2015.*

*(See Decision 20.4)*

53.15 Grand Lodge encourages its Subordinate Lodges and their members to support and participate in “Masonic related charities and charitable activities” and to renew their commitment to traditional concepts of Masonic charity and relief.

To further this objective, the Worshipful Master of each Subordinate Lodge must appoint an Almoner who will assist the Officers and Trustees of the Subordinate Lodge in developing and administering a program designed to provide financial assistance and other forms of direct relief to distressed Pennsylvania Masons and their widows and dependents. Each Subordinate Lodge’s relief program must be administered in accordance with applicable Masonic and civil law requirements, including rules applicable to the use of Subordinate Lodge funds. While each Subordinate Lodge is encouraged to design a relief program that makes sense in light of its particular circumstances, each Subordinate Lodge relief program should contain the following elements:

- (1) Subordinate Lodge dues notices must provide members with the opportunity to make voluntary contributions to the Subordinate Lodge’s “Almoner’s Fund.; and

(2) Each Subordinate Lodge should endeavor to make direct grants of assistance from the Almoner's Fund to or for the benefit of Pennsylvania Masons, or widows and dependents of Pennsylvania Masons, totaling at least one-half of all funds contributed by members to the Almoner's Fund during each Masonic year. For the avoidance of doubt, "direct" grants of assistance do not include gifts to charitable or other organizations, even if the purpose of such organizations is the relief of persons in need.

(3) Whenever practicable, Subordinate Lodges are strongly encouraged to apply direct grants of assistance for the benefit of an intended recipients rather than make cash payments to the intended recipient.

The Grand Lodge will appoint a Grand Lodge Almoner who, in conjunction with the District Deputy Grand Masters, will be available to assist the Officers and Almoners of Subordinate Lodges in the development and administration of Subordinate Lodge relief programs.

(Rev. 2023)

*Dietz, 2016; Gamon 2020; Wonderling, 2023*

53.16 The officers and trustees of Subordinate Lodges must ensure that investments held by or for the benefit of their Subordinate Lodges satisfy the investment and fiduciary guidelines published by the Grand Lodge from time to time. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Grand Lodge prohibits investments for which regular statements of value and performance are not available or are made available in a manner that would inhibit the timely and accurate completion of the audit and trustee reporting obligations of Subordinate Lodges.

*Brink 2026*

## 54 LODGE HISTORY

54.1 Before publishing the history of a Lodge, the manuscript must be submitted to the Grand Master for examination and approval.

*Day, 1883.*

## 55 LODGE MEETINGS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 15.01; Art. 17.12, .13*

55.1 The Master should open his Lodge promptly at the hour of meeting, and close it as soon as the work and business of the Lodge is completed.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

55.2 No Lodge in this Jurisdiction shall be permitted to continue proceedings in any manner whatsoever after the midnight hour, without a Dispensation from the Grand Master.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

55.3 The By-Laws of a Lodge must fix a definite hour for its stated meetings and meetings must begin at that hour; the hour so named cannot be anticipated by an earlier opening of the Lodge. Any meeting held prior to such an hour is a special or extra meeting, and the Lodge must be closed in time to be again opened for its stated meeting at the hour named by the By-Laws. One meeting cannot lap over into the other, nor can the business required to be done at the stated meeting be anticipated at the special meeting.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

55.4 It has come to my attention that the usual hour for Lodges to meet in large cities and towns is 7 or 7:30 o'clock, P.M., throughout the year. The Form of By-Laws approved by my predecessors, however, contains a footnote which reads as follows:

"If preferred the By-Laws may provide that the stated meeting for election of Officers shall be held at an earlier hour."

*(Rev. 1986)*

*Deyoe, 1966.*

55.5 Refused permission to the Worshipful Master of a Lodge to open the Lodge one hour earlier than provided for in the By-Laws, in order that a prepared program for the observance of its Fiftieth Anniversary might be carried out.

*Krause, 1919.*

55.6 We do not pay any attention to the hour of the day when the moon fulls; hence, if it is full early in the morning of the day of meeting of a Lodge, whose meetings are held on Saturday on or before full moon, as your Lodge meets, its meetings must be held on the Saturday on or before full moon; and if the moon fulls on Saturday, although it is 2 o'clock and 17 minutes in the morning, as it does on April 1st next, the meeting of the Lodge must be held on April 1st.

*Arnold, 1893.*

55.7 Art. 17.12 of the *Ahiman Rezon* does not authorize a Master to omit the July and August meetings of a Lodge; that can only be done by a vote of the Lodge. The Master may call extra or special meetings at his will and pleasure, but he cannot omit stated meetings provided for in the By-Laws.

*MacCalla, 1890.*



55.8 Your Lodge having agreed to omit its stated meetings in July and August, any meeting of it held between now and the time of the regular stated meeting in September next, will be an extra or a special meeting, and must be governed by the Rules and Regulations of the Grand Lodge applicable to such meetings.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

55.9 A Lodge having voted to omit the stated meetings in July and August, the Worshipful Master cannot hold a regular stated meeting in either of those months. He can call a special or extra meeting, but cannot receive or act on any petition for membership or initiation and membership, at any special or extra meeting.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

55.10 If a Stated Meeting of a Lodge falls on the eve or day of a religious or national holiday or on the day of a Communication of the Grand Lodge or of a District Meeting, such Stated Meeting may be changed without the amendment of the By-Laws of the Lodge to a different time on the day in question or to a day within seven days before or seven days after the date of the religious or national holiday or eve thereof or of the Communication of the Grand Lodge or of the District Meeting and if a Stated Meeting is held at a changed hour or on a changed date and notice thereof is properly given to the members of the Lodge, such Stated Meeting shall be a valid meeting for all purposes.

If a Lodge meeting is canceled or postponed due to local or weather emergencies, such meeting may be held within seven days after such cancellation or postponement without requesting a dispensation. Members must be given due and timely notice for the rescheduled meeting. Any ballots scheduled cannot take place at the rescheduled meeting; they must be laid over to the next Stated Meeting.

*(Rev. 2008)*

*Kimmel, 1972; Gardner, 2008.*

55.11 The Master alone can call a special meeting of his Lodge, and he has the right to close it at any time he may deem proper, whether the business of the evening is complete or not. He is not bound to call a meeting at the request of any number of the members, and a By-Law to that effect is unlawful, and will not be approved.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

55.12 Meetings of Lodges on a Sunday must be dispensed with altogether.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

55.13 Extra meetings are called for conferring Degrees and Installation of Officers.

Special meetings are called for special purposes, such as performing Masonic Burial Service and acting on a resolution to change the place of meeting of the Lodge.

Notices for stated meetings are sent in accordance with the *Ahiman Rezon*. Extra and Special Meetings are called "By order of the Worshipful Master." (Excerpt from Letter of Instructions to Secretaries by Grand Master Williams, October 5, 1914.)

No business shall be transacted at a special meeting except the business for which such meeting is specially called.

*(Rev. 1997)*

*Lamberton, 1871.*

55.14 A special meeting may be held on the same day, but one hour earlier than the stated meeting, for the purpose of considering a resolution to change the stated place of meeting of a Lodge.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

55.15 In many of our Lodges throughout the Jurisdiction, I find a growing custom to set apart one meeting night each year, when the Worshipful Master acting for the Lodge, seeks to honor the Past Masters by filling both the elective and appointive offices with those who in years past have served as Master of their Lodge. This beautiful custom is not only a well merited tribute to those who in the past have rendered faithful and efficient service in the Lodge, but one which will contribute much toward keeping in closer touch with the Lodge those who, by reason of their years of experience, should be a valuable asset to every Lodge. I see no objection to this custom, nor to a proper notice of the same appearing in the notice for the meeting, providing nothing is done which is not in keeping with the dignity of the Fraternity.

*Goodyear, 1924.*

55.16 A Lodge can only be opened in regular course by the Master or the Senior Warden or the Junior Warden, whichever of them is present with the Warrant. No one of them can authorize a Past Master to open the Lodge. This can only be done by the Grand Master.

The Warrant does not of itself authorize the opening of the Lodge, but only in connection with the Master or Senior Warden or Junior Warden, who must open the Lodge himself. He cannot authorize any one else to do it, even in his presence. All work and business transacted under such circumstances would be irregular and unlawful.

When a Lodge cannot be opened for any reason the District Deputy Grand Master must be notified.

*Grand Lodge, 1867; Weissner, 1997.*

55.17 Applause, within reason, is permissible in the body of the open Lodge and at Communications of the Grand Lodge when, in the opinion of the Brethren assembled, they are so inclined to applaud.

*(Rev. 1986)*

*Carpenter, 1984.*

55.18 In the discretion of the Master, Extra, Special and Stated Meetings of a Subordinate Lodge may be opened and closed “in the short way”.

*Sturgeon, 2011.*

## 56 LODGE MINUTES

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 18.07*

56.1 The Master of a Lodge is responsible for the recording of the Minutes in accordance with the prescribed Form, set forth by the Grand Master. It is his duty to see that the Secretary has a copy of this Form, and strictly follows it.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

56.2 In recording the proceedings of a Lodge, the record must conform strictly to the facts as they occur. Once made, they must remain as made, neither the Master nor the Secretary nor any one else having the right to change or alter them. The right or power to do this remains with the Lodge alone. When the Minutes, as recorded, come to be submitted for its approval, even then, although a majority vote of the Lodge might have the power to change the Minutes, the right to alter them from the fact does not even then exist with the majority; the Minutes must tell the truth, and are to be held sacred for that objective alone. To tamper with or alter them is a fraud upon the Lodge, and such an offense should be promptly condemned and punished.

*Com. on Appeals, 1863.*

56.3 Even where Minutes are improperly entered, it is not proper to erase or expunge them, but they should be corrected by an entry in the body of the succeeding Minutes, when action respecting them is taken, and a reference to such action should be made by an entry in the margin of the Minutes corrected thus: "See page—."

*MacCalla, 1889.*

56.4 The general rule to be observed by the Secretary of a Lodge is to insert on the Minutes the action of the Lodge in every case before it, but not what is said in connection therewith.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

56.5 All communications to Lodges from the Grand Master, the Grand Secretary and the Grand Lodge, must be written in full in the Minutes, unless otherwise directed, after having been read in open Lodge, not pasted therein.

*Brown, 1904.*

56.6 All reports of Committees other than those of Inquiry on petitioners must be copied in the Minutes; it is only necessary to record the Receipts and Expenditures shown on the Report of the Auditing Committee in the Minute Book, provided a copy of the complete Report for each year be filed in a hard-cover Binder, with substantial metal posts, and retained as a permanent Lodge record.

*McKinley, 1962.*

56.7 The proceedings of the Grand Lodge show how officers temporarily filling stations should be described in the Minutes. Where the officer is taking the place of his superior by virtue of his office and of Masonic Law, he is "Acting," thus, "Acting Worshipful Master," "Acting Senior

Warden.” But where a Brother holding no office by election is temporarily appointed from the floor, he is (protem) recorded “As,” thus, “As Pursuivant.”

*Mitchell, 1886.*

56.8 Lodge Minutes and other reports required to be maintained by the Lodge as a part of its proceedings may be prepared and stored electronically. However, a “hard copy”, as defined in *The Secretary’s Manual*, must be maintained in the Lodge’s permanent records.  
(Rev. 2001)

*Deyoe, 1966; Dluge, 2000.*

56.8 A If the Lodge minutes are to be typed, they must be placed on paper capable of being inserted in a loose-leaf binder (56.8) and the pages must be numbered consecutively.

The minutes may not be typed on paper which is to be pasted or otherwise fastened in a bound minute book. If a bound minute book is used, the Lodge minutes must be handwritten.

*Weisser, 1997.*

56.9 The use of a permanently bound Visitor’s Register is hereby permitted. The use of a 4 x 6 or 5 x 8 card system to record the attendance of Members is also hereby permitted. These cards must be retained as a permanent Lodge record. It is permissible, but not mandatory, to adopt either or both of the above systems instead of recording names in the Minute Book. In any case, all Members and Visitors must fill in the usual Member’s or Visitor’s tickets or slips and present them to the Tyler before admission to the Lodge Room.

*McKinley, 1962.*

56.10 The Worshipful Master at his discretion may cause a summary of the Lodge Minutes to be read by the Secretary rather than having the Minutes read in full, provided that the full copy of the Minutes will be available for any member to inspect after the close of the meeting. He may also cause a summary of the Audit Report to be read provided the full report is made available for any member to inspect after the meeting. The reading of the General Return of the Lodge maybe omitted.

*Williamson, 1982.*

56.11 In recording the proceedings of the Lodge, the names of Past Masters by service shall have the abbreviated title “P.M.” or the full title “Past Master” appended thereto. This title shall appear prior to the title of their current office, if any.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

## 57 LODGE NOTICES

57.1 The character of notice for a meeting, to be issued by the Secretary of a Lodge, to the Members, is clearly defined in the *Ahiman Rezon*, Art. 18.09, and in *The Secretary's Manual*, which should be on the desk of every Secretary. The forms in the Manual have been arranged after full consideration of the subject, and must be strictly followed.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

57.2 Notices of Lodge Stated Meetings must be sent to each Member in a sealed envelope. Cancellations or revisions of Lodge meeting dates can be sent on postal cards providing there are no names of petitioners or candidates thereon.

Computer prepared or scanned notices of Lodge Stated Meetings, cancellations or revisions may be sent to a Member's personal email address but only if he prefers.

When a Lodge uses a four-page folder as a Lodge Notice, the second and third pages must be set apart exclusively for Lodge business required in the notice, and not for the names of officers and Past Masters which are not required.

(Rev. 2007)

*Beitler, 1923; Stoner, 1990; Aungst, 2007.*

57.3 Notices for Stated Meetings of the Lodge are to be sent by postal service or electronic mail by the Secretary at least one full week before the meeting to the Members, the Grand Secretary, the District Deputy Grand Master and the Librarian.

(Rev. 2007)

*Yeager, 1951; Kurtz, 1988; Ernette, 1998; Aungst, 2007.*

57.4 A Secretary is required to send notices of all stated and special meetings of his Lodge to each of the Members, except to a Member who has become mentally unbalanced and committed to an institution and whose mail is opened by those in charge.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

57.5 Lodge notices shall contain the names of all petitioners as described in the *Ahiman Rezon*, Art. 18.09. The names should not be printed on a separate slip, but must be part of the notice itself. A separate slip may be lost, mislaid or omitted from the enclosure, and Members may, because thereof, fail to receive notice of the proposed ballot.

*Wagner, 1900.*

57.6 The names of petitioners for membership or initiation and membership, in the notices of meetings, must not be written, but printed or stamped; because in that way we can secure greater assurance that the correct names go to each Member.

*Guthrie, 1910.*

57.7 Under the Regulations of the Grand Lodge, every Member is entitled to know who seek membership in his Lodge. If a Secretary neglects to give the required notice, and a ballot should be taken upon a petition, it would be irregular and unlawful.

*Africa, 1891.*

57.8 Notices of Lodge meetings may be printed in a printing office which is not connected with, and by printers who are not Members of, the Fraternity.

*Arnold, 1894.*

57.9 There cannot be two forms of notices of a Lodge meeting. Every notice for a particular meeting must contain the same information.

*Kendrick, 1905.*

57.10 Notice of reception to be given by and under the auspices of another Body cannot be enclosed with the Lodge notice.

*Krause, 1918.*

57.11 Lodges within this Jurisdiction are permitted to attend religious services as a body, and announcement of such services may be included in Lodge Notices.

*Williamson, 1983.*

57.12 No items may be printed on or enclosed with Lodge Notices except the following:

- A. Notices provided for by the *Ahiman Rezon*, by direction of the Grand Lodge, the Grand Master or the Grand Secretary.
- B. Notices relating to the Employment Center and Business Directory.
- C. Reports of the Audit Committee of the Lodge.
- D. Notices of speakers and their subjects, including those illustrated by moving pictures, and slides, after approval by the District Deputy Grand Master.
- E. Matters relating to the Masonic Villages of the Right Worshipful Grand Lodge of F. & A.M. of Pennsylvania.
- F. Matters relating to the establishment of a Masonic Blood Bank.
- G. Notices relating to Past Master's Night; also such other programs as outlined in "Facing the East".
- H. Matters relating to the Committee on Masonic Education.
- I. Refreshments.
- J. Matters relating to a chapter of International Order of DeMolay, a Bethel of the International Order of Job's Daughters, or an assembly of the International Order of Rainbow for Girls, particularly time and place for meetings.
- K. Matters relating to dinners and entertainments sponsored by the Lodge to which ladies and families of Members are invited. These dinners, entertainments and items to be included in Lodge Notices must have prior approval of the District Deputy Grand Master.
- L. Degree work to be done at Lodge Meetings and the Candidates on whom Degrees will be conferred.
- M. Announcements of religious services.
- N. Matters relating to Schools of Instruction.
- O. Lodges are permitted to use inserts in Lodge notices, not a part of the notice, for information on families, friends, Lodge and district social functions and other similar items

of interest to the members, providing such inserts have the approval of the District Deputy Grand Master.

P. Matters relating to the Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation.

Q. Important special events of Appendant Bodies as approved by the District Deputy Grand Master.

(Rev. 2010)

*Williamson, 1982; Stenberg, 1986; Sturgeon, 2010.*

57.13 The **full** name, age, and occupation of a petitioner as it appears on the Lodge Notice must be identical to that which appears on the Monthly Return.

57.14 To comply with Article 21.07 of the *Ahiman Rezon*, the full name and date for the conferral of the Entered Apprentice Mason Degree must be printed in the Lodge Notice. The listing of the subsequent Degrees may be listed at the option of the Lodge. The members must have due and timely notice of any revision of the date on which the Entered Apprentice Mason Degree is to be conferred.

(Rev. 1997)

*Stoner, 1990; Weissner, 1996.*

57.15 When Lodges print on their Notices the names of officers and committees, the names of Past Masters by service shall have the abbreviated title “P.M.” or the full title “Past Master” appended thereto. This title shall appear prior to the title of their current office, if any.

This Decision does not apply when their names are listed en masse under the heading “Past Masters” or “Living Past Masters” on page four of a Four-Page Notice or on page six of a Six Page Notice.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

57.16 Secretaries of Subordinate Lodges are encouraged to email Lodge Notices rather than sending them by regular mail, provided, however, that Lodge Notices should be sent by regular mail to those Members who do not have access to email or who otherwise specifically request to receive Lodge Notices by regular mail.

*Sturgeon, 2011.*



## 58 LODGE ROOMS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 17.13  
also see Floor Form after Section 2.07*

58.1 I see no impropriety in placing on the ceiling of your Lodge room a representation of the Bible with the Square and Compasses.

*Africa, 1892.*

58.2 It is not mandatory that the “East” of a Lodge Room should conform precisely to the corresponding point of the compass. Where the situation admits of it, the length of the room should be from East to West and the Master’s station placed at the Eastern end.

*Africa, 1891.*

58.3 A Lodge must meet in a place free from all fear of eavesdropping. A proper place must be obtained.

*Vaux, 1868.*

58.4 Charters, certificates, banners and other like insignia relating to York Rite and Scottish Rite masonry, or any other order or organization whatsoever, cannot appear on the walls or elsewhere in a Lodge room while the Lodge is meeting whether the Lodge room has been dedicated to Freemasonry or not. Such insignia must be removed from the Lodge room before the Lodge meets. If it cannot be removed, the Lodge cannot meet there. No exception has ever been taken to the existence, curtained back, or the veils of the Royal Arch Chapters in Lodge rooms, where they exist. This is the only exception which proves the rule, and the exception cannot be extended. The Grand Lodge is supreme in all that pertains to ancient Freemasonry and its Lodges and members must all conform to its usages and customs.

This regulation is not meant to discourage the Lodge from adorning its walls with framed paintings, portraits and the like, providing the display has been approved by resolution of the Lodge. The practice of displaying grouped photographs of Past Masters, memorials to deceased Past Masters, etc. in the anterooms of the Lodge room, rather than in the Lodge room itself, is encouraged.

*MacCalla, 1890; Williamson, 1982.*

58.5 Three flags may be displayed in our Lodge rooms; the flag of our country, the Grand Master’s flag, and the Pennsylvania Masonic flag, and no others.

*(Rev. 1990)*

*Krause, 1919; Stoner, 1990.*

58.6 Idle or attempted humorous practices in a Lodge room are unmasonic, and are prohibited.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

58.7 A Master should not permit the indulgence in any practice in his Lodge room calculated to bring disgrace upon the Fraternity.

*Africa, 1891.*



58.8 Smoking is not permitted in a Lodge Room.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

58.9 In communities in which the lack of available meeting rooms is a hardship on local organizations of non-Masonic membership, such organizations may be permitted to meet in Masonic Halls, whether the building be dedicated to Masonic uses or not, provided the District Deputy Grand Master first certifies in writing to the Grand Master that the need does exist and that such certification is approved by the Grand Master. Every request received by the District Deputy Grand Master must be submitted to the Grand Master.

*Ball, 1971.*

58.10 Where the hall in which a Lodge meets is owned by the Craft, but has not been dedicated to Masonic use, it is permissible, after communicating with the Grand Master and ascertaining that he has no Masonic objection thereto, to rent it to another society not Masonic, to be used for any laudable purpose; but it would not be proper to statedly rent such hall for use on Sunday for a purpose that is secular and not religious.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

58.11 Masonic Lodges are not permitted to hold their meetings in buildings in which intoxicating liquor is sold or dispensed; unless no other suitable place of meeting can be secured, and then, only when a separate and exclusive entrance from the street to the Lodge rooms is provided, except upon the specific approval of the Grand Master.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

58.12 No Subordinate Lodge should meet in any hall which is occupied at other times by a clandestine or irregular Masonic body; provided, however, that with the dispensation of the Grand Master, and subject to the conditions attached thereto, (1) a Subordinate Lodge or Masonic Temple or Hall Association may rent its facilities to a clandestine or irregular Masonic body, and (2) a Subordinate Lodge may rent for its meetings suitable facilities from a third party that also rents to a clandestine or irregular Masonic body.

*(Rev. 2026)*

*MacCalla, 1889; Brink 2026.*

58.13 There is no objection to a Masonic Lodge occupying a room used also as an Odd Fellows' Hall, but when the Lodge meets, all decorations, etc., pertaining to another organization must be removed. The occupation of lower floor for a dwelling is not an objection, if you are assured that the Lodge can have absolute privacy at its meetings.

*Africa, 1891.*

58.14 Ladies' Auxiliaries of the Constituent Commanderies, Knights Templar of Pennsylvania, may meet in the same building as Subordinate Lodges.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

58.15 In the *Ahiman Rezon*, Art. 17.13, you will find that it is within your power to convene your Lodge at any place within the limits named in your Warrant. This is, however, not authority to appoint another regular place of meeting. The Lodge must do this in the manner prescribed in same Section.

*Mitchell, 1885.*

58.16 In communities in which there is a definite need for a meeting place by ladies' organizations that require Masonic relationship as a prerequisite for membership, and youth organizations sponsored by them, such organizations may meet in a Masonic Hall (Temple) or in a Lodge Room even though the Lodge Room is dedicated to Masonic uses; provided the District Deputy Grand Master first certifies in writing to the Grand Master that the need does exist and that such certification is approved by the Grand Master. Every request received by the District Deputy Grand Master must be submitted to the Grand Master.

*Ball, 1971.*

58.17 Lodges are encouraged to invite the Order of DeMolay, Order of Rainbow for Girls and Job's Daughters to provide programs at the conclusion of any meetings of the Lodge.

*Williamson, 1982.*

## 59 LOOSE LEAF LEDGER AND BOUND CASH BOOK

59.1 The Cash Book, an important, permanent and lasting record of the Lodge receipts, is to be a well-bound book, paged, and not loose-leaf, but of original handwritten entries, and must show from whom and from what source each amount contained therein is received at each Stated and Extra Meeting, and it must be audited annually by checking back from the Ledger.

Lodges that participate in the electronic program established by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania for recording cash book receipts and disbursements must maintain a hard copy of all transactions, including those voided, on paper capable of being inserted in a lockable loose-leaf binder and the pages must be numbered consecutively.

The Lodge Secretary must provide a hard copy of the cash book that lists all transactions for the Gregorian calendar year to the Lodge Audit Committee, when convened. The computerized cash book must be audited annually.

(Rev. 1993, 2003)

*The Secretary's Manual, Note 2, Form 297.*

59.2 The use of a loose-leaf ledger is permitted. If a bound cash book is used, all entries therein must be handwritten. Lodge receipts, therefore, may not be typed on paper that is to be pasted or otherwise fastened in a bound cash book. Bound cash books shall be well and securely bound, and paged, so as not to permit the removal or insertion of any page in any manner.

(Rev. 2003)

*McKinley, 1962; Cunningham, 2003.*

59.3 The electronic preparation and storage of Lodge minutes, receipts and records is permitted. However, a "hard copy," as defined in *The Secretary's Manual*, must be maintained in the Lodge's permanent records.

(Rev. 2003)

*Dluge, 2000; Cunningham, 2003.*

## 60 MASONIC CLOTHING AND DRESS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 15.01-.04; Art. 16.03, .04; Section 9*

60.1 The Masonic Dress of Lodge Officers, with the exception of the Worshipful Master (or Acting Worshipful Master), can be tuxedo coat, black vest, black bow tie, black socks, black shoes and white gloves; or it can be tail coat, black vest, black bow tie, black socks, black shoes and white gloves. The dress of Grand Lodge Elected Officers, Past Grand Masters, Grand Lodge Appointed Officers (other than Grand Chaplains), District Deputy Grand Masters, Past District Deputy Grand Masters and Worshipful Masters (or Acting Worshipful Masters), will be tail coat, black vest, black bow tie, black socks, black shoes and white gloves. Shirts which are to be worn with Masonic dress must be white in color, plain collar (not wing style) and may have a pleated bosom, but it is not to be ruffled either at bosom or cuffs. The Grand Master and Worshipful Masters (or Acting Worshipful Masters) will wear the high black hat. The gloves are to contain no emblem of any type.

Grand Chaplains may wear a black clerical shirt with a white clerical collar in place of the white shirt and black bow tie. A black tuxedo in place of the black tails or a combination of the above is acceptable.

Banquet or dinner attire will be the same as indicated above (in accordance with your office or appointment). A black tuxedo should be worn with your identification pocket insert, in place of the black tails, and should not include the plain white gloves, Grand Lodge Masonic Apron and Collar. A black cummerbund may be worn in lieu of the black vest.

*(Rev. 1998, 2002, 2020)*

*Woodall, 1974; Weisser, 1997; Cunningham, 2002; Gamon 2020.*

60.2 The normal dress for Masonic funerals shall be dark clothes, dark necktie, black shoes, white gloves, apron and collar and jewel for participating Lodge Officers, or those serving in their stead. It is recommended that attending Brethren wear dark clothes, aprons and white gloves, if possible. This is in accordance with that part of the *Ahiman Rezon* dealing with charges, ceremonies and forms. However, if a Lodge elects to have a Lodge service, Masonic dress shall be worn by Lodge Officers, if available. If a visit to the funeral home, church or cemetery follows the Lodge room service or Lodge meeting, Masonic dress (including collars and aprons) may be worn by Lodge Officers.

*(Rev. 1986)*

*Williamson, 1982.*

60.3 I have approved the formation of a particular unit within the Shriners International to be composed of members of the Shrine in good Masonic standing, who have achieved the rank of Past Master of a Symbolic Lodge, provided, and only after the following criteria has been established:

1. A uniform dress for said unit shall consist of a particular tuxedo, Past Master's apron and jewel and a Shrine fez.
2. The uniform dress can be worn by approved members of said unit only at Shrine meetings and festivities held within the confines of the meeting place, or banquet hall.

3. The uniform dress can be worn by approved members of said unit outside the meeting place, or banquet hall for specific purposes, e.g., parades and approved public ceremonies, or at any other time or place, only after approval granted by the R.W. Grand Master in each instance. There can be no so-called “blanket approval” of this stipulation.

(Rev. 1997)

*Hohenschildt, 1995.*

60.4 Any Masonic Regalia purchased by a Subordinate Lodge must have the approval of its District Deputy Grand Master and be in compliance with the *Ahiman Rezon*.

*Weisser, 1997.*

60.5 Military dress uniforms may be worn by Members and visitors at Communications of the Grand Lodge and Meetings of Subordinate Lodges provided they are on active duty in the military service of our country. Appropriate civilian dress is suit jacket, long pants and necktie/bowtie. Dark clothing is preferred.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

60.6 Uniforms, other than military, may not be worn without approval of the District Deputy Grand Master. Working military or civilian business uniforms are not permitted.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

60.7 Except during the months of June, July, and August, Members (other than officers) are required to wear jackets and ties to Stated and Special Meetings of a Lodge. If a Brother comes to a Lodge Meeting and is not properly attired, he is not to be turned away but rather admitted to the Lodge and reminded in the most tender manner of this dress policy. During the months of June, July, and August, members (other than officers) shall be permitted to attend Stated and Special Subordinate Lodge meetings, wherever held, in business casual dress, as more particularly communicated by the Office of the Grand Secretary. The provisions of the *Ahiman Rezon* and the Digest of Decisions relating to the proper Masonic dress for Lodge Officers and for Members attending public ceremonies, funeral services and Lodge functions other than Stated, Special and Extra Meetings remain in effect and are not modified by this Decision. For the avoidance of doubt, Members must be in traditional Masonic dress for all Extra Meetings at which there will be the conferral of degrees.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a properly constituted and warranted “Day Lodge” may be permitted to have a “business casual” dress code for its regular, stated and extra meetings by virtue of a dispensation recommended by the District Deputy Grand Master and granted by the Grand Master; provided, however, that (1) the dress code shall be set forth in the bylaws of the Day Lodge, and (2) for any degree work, the officers of the Lodge shall be in proper Masonic dress as otherwise set forth in Masonic Law.

(Rev. 2026)

*Sturgeon, 2011; Bateman, 2014; Wonderling, 2023; Brink 2026*

## 61 MASONIC EMBLEMS, NAMES AND SIGNS

61.1 Painting or placing emblems on sign-boards, business cards, or circulars, or the use of Masonic devices to obtain customers is prohibited.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

61.2 All schemes in business affairs to attract patronage or support by the use of Masonic emblems, are contrary to the teachings of Freemasonry.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

61.3 The use of Masonic emblems and symbols, or representations of anything pertaining to Freemasonry in business advertisements, is forbidden.

*Brown, 1904.*

61.4 The letter “G”, signifying “God” or “Geometry,” is restored to its proper place as a Masonic symbol. In connection with the Compasses and the Square, emblematical of the Great Lights in Freemasonry, it has been the most common symbol of Freemasonry known. It is recognized by all other Jurisdictions in this country, and was always embroidered on the apron of the Grand Master until after the decision affecting it was made.

*Brown, 1904.*

61.5 With the approval of the Grand Master, the names of the Lodges and their places of meeting may be made a part of those signs posted along highways and streets at the entrance to communities to denote the existence of service clubs and other organizations.

The only Masonic symbol that may appear on the signs is the Square and Compasses in a form approved by the Grand Master. A copy of the design to be used can be obtained from the office of the Grand Master.

*Williamson, 1982.*

61.6 Members are permitted to use Masonic emblems, including the names and numbers of the Lodges, on appropriate items of clothing such as windbreakers, jackets, caps, etc.

*Williamson, 1982.*

61.7 Articles of varying type and design have been created for or by order of the Grand Lodge and/or its several subsidiaries for many purposes. Such Articles may not be reproduced nor loaned outside the jurisdiction without the written permission of the governing body of the particular subsidiary organization and only then with the approval of the Right Worshipful Grand Master. Non-compliance with this Decision may result in suspension or expulsion.

*Weisser, 1997.*

## 62 MASONIC HALLS OR TEMPLES

*See Ahiman Rezon, Sec. 6*

62.1 Masonic Buildings that house a Lodge Room (or Rooms), with associated quarters which may be utilized as authorized, can be designated “Masonic Temples”. Masonic Buildings which include stores, offices or other commercial space may be designated “Masonic Halls”.

*Herold, 1965.*

62.2 A newly constructed Masonic Hall or Temple may be opened to the public, if desired, but there must be no Masonic Ceremonies thereat, nor must any expense therefor be put upon the Lodge.

*Orlady, 1908.*

62.3 A Masonic Hall or Temple, to be dedicated, must be owned by the Craft. A Lodge room in a building not owned by the Craft will not be dedicated.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

62.4 A Masonic Hall must be dedicated by the Grand Master, or by some Brother duly authorized by a Dispensation granted by him to perform that ceremony.

*Nisbet, 1879.*

62.5 If a Lodge rents a room, even if it is occupied exclusively by it, in a building owned by profanes, or meets in a room which is used by profanes, it cannot, that is, the part used by the Lodge, be dedicated by Masonic Ceremonies. If the Lodge owns the building in which it holds its meetings, that building may be dedicated to Masonic purposes, although it may rent out such portions of the building as are not occupied by the Lodge.

*Nisbet, 1879.*

62.6 The purchase of real estate or buildings to be used for Masonic purposes by the Lodge or Temple or Hall Association must be recommended by the District Deputy Grand Master, the Committee on Masonic Temples, Halls and Lodge Rooms, and approved by the Grand Master.

*Stoner, 1990.*

62.7 Before the building of new Masonic Temples or Halls or the renovation of buildings purchased for use as Masonic Temples or Halls, the financial statements for construction and operation and the plans of the building must be recommended by the District Deputy Grand Master, the Committee on Masonic Temples, Halls and Lodge Rooms, and approved by the Grand Master before any contracts are made or any work is begun.

*Stoner, 1990.*

62.8 The specifications for Masonic Lodge Rooms approved by the Grand Master pertain to new construction only. In the remodeling of existing structures for the use as Masonic Temples, all revisions to the specifications must be resolved between the Committee on Masonic Temples,



Halls and Lodge Rooms, and the Director of Ritualistic Work. The final approval and recommendations to the Grand Master will be made by the Chairman of the Committee on Masonic Temples, Halls and Lodge Rooms.

*Stoner, 1990.*

62.9 The sale or abandonment of real estate or buildings which have been used for Masonic purposes by a Lodge or a Temple or Hall Association must be recommended by the District Deputy Grand Master and approved by the Grand Master.

The sale of a Masonic building must be approved by the Grand Master both when the building is put on the market *and* before the specific Agreement of Sale is executed (prior to settlement and transfer of title).

The request for the approval prior to placing the building on the market, or discontinuing Masonic use, must include a statement as to the existence of any Masonic emblems and signage displayed therein, affixed thereto or engraved thereon. If there are no Masonic Emblems which cannot be easily removed, that fact must be included in this statement. The statement must be counter- signed by the District Deputy Grand Master in whose District the building is located.

If there are Masonic Emblems to be removed in their entirety, or eradicated, the following must be accomplished:

- 1) Photograph(s) of all Masonic symbols, signage, and/or other information in any way referring to the Masonic fraternity displayed therein or thereon and a written plan on how these materials are to be removed must be submitted to the Chairman of the Committee on Masonic Temples, Halls and Lodge Rooms prior to requesting the Grand Master's approval to place the building on the market or to vacate the building.
- 2) The Chairman of the Committee on Masonic Temples, Halls and Lodge Rooms will review the photographs and removal plans and, if appropriate, recommend to the Grand Master their approval; if deficient, the owner shall work with the Committee on Masonic Temples, Halls and Lodge Rooms to develop a satisfactory plan.
- 3) The request for the Grand Master's approval of the execution of the Agreement of Sale must include a certification that the emblems have been removed pursuant to the approved removal plan. This certification must be countersigned by the District Deputy Grand Master in whose District the building is located or a member of the Committee on Masonic Temples, Halls and Lodge Rooms and accepted by the Chairman of that Committee.

The Grand Lodge, through its Committee on Masonic Temples, Halls and Lodge Rooms, published *Selling a Masonic Temple or Masonic Hall in Pennsylvania*, which is hereby incorporated in this Decision, and Lodges and Masonic Temple and Hall Associations shall comply with the provisions thereof in connection with the listing and sale of real estate.

*(Rev. 2007)*

*Dluge, 2001; Aungst, 2007.*

62.10 Masonic Temple and Hall Associations ("Hall Associations") own legal title to real estate for the benefit and at the behest of interested Lodges and appendant Masonic bodies ("Interested Masonic Bodies"), and their respective members.

As a matter of civil law, most Hall Associations are exempt from federal income tax as title holding companies under Section 501(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, and their activities are



limited as set forth therein and the regulations promulgated thereunder. In order to assist Hall Associations in connection with their responsibility to comply with civil law, the Grand Lodge has published the Checklist for Hall Associations Exempt under Section 501(c)(2), which is incorporated herein by reference, and will assist Hall Associations on a case-by-case basis as situations arise.

As a matter of Masonic Law, the relationship between a Hall Association, the Interested Masonic Bodies and the members of the Interested Masonic Bodies is set forth in the By-Laws of the Hall Association. The Grand Lodge has published instructions for changes to the By-Laws of Hall Associations, and a Model Code of By-Laws for Hall Associations. The Model Code of By-Laws contains provisions intended to preserve important governance rights for the Interested Masonic Bodies, and, in particular, for interested Lodges and their members. Hall Associations are required to operate under By-Laws that generally conform to the Model Code of By-Laws and that are approved by the Grand Lodge Committee on By-Laws.

Even if a Hall Association purports to operate under non-conforming By-Laws, or By-Laws that pre-date the Model Code, the Grand Lodge has real and legitimate control over the governance and operations of Hall Associations through its authority over the Lodges and their members. Accordingly, the Grand Lodge has the right to intervene in the operations of Hall Associations to protect and preserve the rights and interests of Lodges and members of Lodges. For example, without limitation, the Grand Lodge has the right, and in some cases the responsibility, to (i) require Hall Associations to submit their By-Laws to the Grand Lodge Committee on By-Laws for approval and to insist that such By-Laws contain certain provisions, (ii) inspect the operations of Hall Associations to ensure compliance with applicable Masonic and civil law and (iii) to insist upon approval of certain transactions, including the sale of real estate owned by the Hall Association for use by Interested Masonic Bodies. In addition to any rights explicitly set forth in a Hall Association's By-Laws, the District Deputy Grand Masters overseeing Lodges and members of Lodges with an interest in Hall Associations have the authority to exercise the rights and responsibilities of the Grand Lodge in accordance with Masonic Law.

*Aungst, 2007*

### 63 MASONIC MONTH

63.1 A Masonic Month is the interval from one stated meeting to the stated meeting on the corresponding day in the next ensuing month, or from an extra meeting any given number of days after a stated meeting to the same number of days after the next stated meeting. Therefore, a candidate who receives a degree at a stated meeting may not be advanced until the next stated meeting; and a candidate who receives a degree at an extra meeting any given number of days after a stated meeting may not be advanced until the same number of days after the next stated meeting (except by virtue of a Dispensation).

If the July and August stated meetings are omitted by action of the Lodge, the Masonic Month is then the interval from the stated meeting in June to the stated meeting in September. If a candidate received a degree at the June stated meeting, he therefore cannot be advanced until the September stated meeting; or a candidate who received a degree at an extra meeting a given number of days after the June stated meeting may not be advanced until the same number of days after the September stated meeting (except by virtue of a Dispensation).

*Kimmel, 1972.*

### 64 MASONIC RECOGNITION

64.1 The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania has been very emphatic in refusing recognition of any society or organization not purely Masonic and acknowledging allegiance to some Grand Lodge, with which it is in correspondence.

*Africa, 1892.*

64.2 The attitude of this Grand Lodge in regard to such matters (side degrees) is so well understood that it does not need reassertion. The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania recognizes nothing but Ancient Freemasonry. It does not countenance side degrees, nor will it permit organizations not Masonic to use titles having a Masonic reference. Ancient Craft Masonry is our property, and we cannot allow attachments to be made to it which destroy its symmetry and pervert it from its original purpose.

*Henderson, 1895.*

*See 22.1-.9*

## 65 MASONIC YEAR

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 4.04*

65.1 The Masonic year begins and ends at twelve o'clock noon, on St. John the Evangelist's Day, December 27th.

*Africa, 1892.*

## 66 MASONRY—BUSINESS AND POLITICS

66.1 While we do not take cognizance of business disputes we do not permit our members to use their Masonic connection in their business.

*Arnold, 1893.*

66.2 All schemes in business affairs to attract patronage, or support by the use of Masonic emblems or the parading of Masonic names, are contrary to the teachings of the Craft in this Jurisdiction.

*Africa, 1892.*

66.3 It is not permissible for a Mason to use his Masonic membership to promote his personal interests either in business or in politics.

*Guthrie, 1911.*

## 67 MEMBERS

### (Dual, List of, Change of Address)

67.1 It is not permissible for a Brother to be a member of two Lodges at the same time, either in this Jurisdiction, or in this and another Jurisdiction. Dual membership was prohibited as long as the year 1804.

(Rev. 1994, 2003)

*Grand Lodge, 1895; Hohenschildt, 1994;*

*(Removed 1994 - See Article 86.8)*

*Cummingham, 2003.*

67.2 It is not permitted to print lists of Lodge members, except in connection with and as part of the bound copies of the By-Laws, or to give any person copies of the list of members, unless authorized by the Grand Master or required by the Grand Lodge.

*Guthrie, 1910.*

67.3 The names of officers and members of Lodges must not be furnished to canvassers, lecturers, solicitors, etc.

*Orlady, 1908.*

67.4 The change of the name of a member on the records of his Lodge and of Grand Lodge will only be considered when a certified copy of a decree of a court having proper jurisdiction and authorizing such change is presented to the Lodge together with a petition for the change of name. The petition must state the reason for the requested change and it, with the certified copy of the decree, shall be presented at a stated meeting of the Lodge. If approved by a majority vote, the change will be made.

*McKinley, 1963.*

## 68 MEMBERS OF THE GRAND LODGE

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 3.01-.04; Art. 18.08*

68.1 A mere change of residence will not affect the standing of a member of the Grand Lodge, but a resignation of membership will; as a member of the Grand Lodge, except as provided for in Art. 3.02 of the *Ahiman Rezon*, must be a member of a Lodge. The moment a member of the Grand Lodge, except as noted, resigns from his Lodge, he ceases to be a member of the Grand Lodge. A member of the Grand Lodge resigning from his Lodge, to join another in this Jurisdiction, regains his membership in the Grand Lodge as soon as he becomes a member of the other Lodge.

*Nisbet, 1879.*

## 69 MUSIC

69.1 Permission will be granted for the introduction of music into Lodges; provided, however, that the music be so used as not to contravene the Customs, Usages and Landmarks of Freemasonry.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

69.2 A Lodge may use instrumental music during the conferring of degrees provided that it does not delay or interfere with the Work, has been approved by the Director of Ritualistic Work and the District Deputy Grand Master of that Lodge's Masonic District. Choral or vocal music is not permitted during the conferral of a degree except by approval by the Director of Ritualistic Work and the District Deputy Grand Master of that Lodge's Masonic District.

*(Rev. 2001)*

*Wagner, 1899; Kendrick, 1906; Dluze, 2000.*

69.3 It is not permitted to have a choir chant the Lord's prayer in a Lodge during the conferring of a degree. All work must be as authorized, without addition or amendment.

*(Removed 2001)*

*Wagner, 1899.*

## 70 NEW ORGANIZATIONS

70.1 It shall be unlawful for the members of the Lodges in this Jurisdiction to be associated, or in any way identified, with organizations hereafter to be established, which require Masonic affiliation as a condition necessary to membership therein; unless and until authority from this Grand Lodge, for the creation of such organizations, shall first have been obtained. This includes Square Clubs or any organization which requires Masonic affiliation as a prerequisite.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

70.2 The solicitation of a petitioner for initiation and membership in an organization which has as a prerequisite, membership in the Masonic Fraternity, is forbidden before he has received the Degree of a Master Mason, or upon the same night. This is considered as conduct unbecoming a Mason. This decision must be published annually in the Lodge notice.

*Balcom, 1961; Williamson, 1983.*

## 71 NON-AFFILIATED MASONS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 24.02*

71.1 Has a Masonic Lodge any control over a member who has resigned from the said Lodge, and is not a member of any Lodge? The answer, Yes. An unaffiliated Mason who commits a Masonic offense may be tried and disciplined by the Lodge nearest to which he may be residing, or by the Grand Lodge. See *Ahiman Rezon*, Art. 7.01.

*Day, 1884.*

## 72 OBJECTIONS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 21.07*

72.1 Oral objection to a petitioner for initiation and membership must be made by a member of the Lodge in person in the open Lodge after approval and the fact of objection having been made must be entered upon the Minutes. Such objection cannot be withdrawn, and the petitioner must be forthwith reported to the Grand Secretary, as having been rejected by an oral objection. Further proceedings in such cases must be by a second petition, after the expiration of six months. Under no circumstances must the name of the objector be mentioned outside the Fraternity, or entered upon the Minutes.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

72.2 It is and has been the Law of this Grand Lodge, that an oral objection cannot be made until after the petitioner has been balloted for and approved.

*Henderson, 1895.*

72.3 A member of a Lodge, after a petitioner has been approved, outside of the Lodge requests the Master to hold the petitioner over. It is entirely a matter of courtesy on the part of the Master, if he sees proper, to heed the request. It is not such an objection as he is bound to recognize to prevent him from going on with the work. The place in which the objection should be made is in the Lodge itself, the Secretary must make a Minute of the fact, and notify the Grand Secretary.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

72.4 A Brother, who makes an objection to the initiation of a candidate after he has been balloted for and approved, and who states the reason of his objection, and acknowledges that such reason "is nothing against the candidate, but that his brother-in-law has got to make some concessions in regard to an old quarrel before he will withdraw his objection to the petitioner," renders

himself subject to charges and discipline for a Masonic offense. The Master need not pay any regard to an objection founded on a reason acknowledged to be such as above stated.

*Perkins, 1873.*

72.5 Any member of a Lodge has an unquestionable right to interpose an oral objection to a candidate, after his approval at any time before his initiation; as perfect a right to do so as to cast a black ball; and no Brother has a right to asperse his motives therefor, nor can he rightly ground a charge against him thereon.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

72.6 An oral objection following a favorable ballot may be made to a candidate up to his entrance into the Lodge Room. Once the objection is made, the matter must be referred to the Committee of Inquiry which reported favorably. The objector must advise the Committee of the nature of his objection, and the Committee of Inquiry shall then determine whether the objection is in fact a valid Masonic objection. If the objection is truly Masonic, then the action set forth in Decision

72.14 shall take place.

*(Rev. 1997)*

*Kendrick, 1907; Weissner, 1997.*

72.7 Objection made privately to a Master, or by letter addressed to him, is not sufficient to prevent the initiation of an approved petitioner, unless the Master is willing to make the objection his own, makes it open to the Lodge, and causes it to be entered upon the Minutes.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

72.8 The Master has no right to question the Brother who made the objection, but should have directed the Secretary to note it on the Minutes, as is required by the *Ahiman Rezon*, Article 21.12. If a Brother avows that he cast a black ball (or objects to the initiation of a candidate), and gives proof by his voluntary admission that he has done so for petty malice, revenge, or the like, he violates his obligation, and may be punished by expulsion. But his reasons cannot be demanded or extorted from him, bad though they may be.

*Arnold, 1894.*

72.9 A Brother having objections to a petitioner should not attempt to get another to act for him. If he believes a petitioner to be unworthy, it is his duty to attend the meeting and exercise his prerogative.

*Kendrick, 1906.*

72.10 A Master Mason in good standing may lodge in writing in the office of the Grand Secretary, objections to one who, he thinks, has already petitioned, or will do so. This does not prevent favorable action by the Lodge; it is merely information for investigation by the Committee of Inquiry.

*Orlady, 1908.*

72.11 A member of one Lodge cannot absolutely stop a petitioner for initiation and membership in another Lodge, but he may and should communicate to the Master, or to a member thereof, information of the unworthiness of any petitioner of whom he has knowledge, and the grounds of

such objection. There are no means by which a Brother in one Lodge can discover the names of petitioners in other Lodges. Every petitioner has the right to apply to a Lodge of his choice, and it only informs its own members of such petitioner.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

72.12 All we can do is to give information when any person obtains admission into a Lodge by false representation, and await the action of the Lodge; and on its failure to act, as it should, we issue an Edict preventing the rejected petitioner from visiting any Lodge in this State. This is always effective, especially when the person affected resides here, or comes here claiming to be a Mason. The question involved is the doctrine of perpetual objection, which we adhere to strictly so that if a petitioner, who has been rejected elsewhere, deceives us by suppressing that fact, when he signs his petition, we require the Lodge to charge, try, and expel him; and if it will not, we take up the Warrant of the Lodge.

The whole matter resolves itself down to this: He had been rejected by a regularly warranted and duly constituted Lodge, which under our Law debars him from being initiated in any other Lodge, until the objection is removed by the Lodge which made it.

*Arnold, 1893.*

72.13 Each Lodge is the judge of the qualifications of its petitioners for initiation and membership. If a member of another Lodge, or another Lodge itself, objects to the approval or initiation of a petitioner, a protest may be entered, and it will be the duty of the Lodge receiving it to give the protesting member or Lodge opportunity to be heard.

*Africa, 1892.*

72.14 In the case of a petitioner for initiation and membership his residence being nearer Lodge No.\_\_\_\_\_, inquiry was made of that Lodge. At the next stated meeting of the Lodge inquired of (members having been duly notified), the Committee of Inquiry reported favorably. After the result had been announced, a member of the Lodge who had arrived late and was not present at the time the report was made, asked to have the case reopened stating that he had a Masonic objection to the petitioner being made a Mason and that he believed him to be unworthy, and that he had come to the Lodge for the purpose of objecting to him.

The Master directed the Committee of Inquiry to meet promptly with the objector and determine if in its opinion the objector has a valid Masonic objection; also that final action on the Inquiry be deferred until a decision is reached. If the Committee or a member thereof now feels the objector has a valid Masonic objection, it should withdraw its original favorable report and present an unfavorable report.

*Deyoe, 1967.*

72.15 Under no circumstances should an intoxicated man be initiated, and the fact of a petitioner presenting himself in that condition is a good cause for objection against him.

*Day, 1883.*



### 73 OFFICERS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 16.03-.04; Art. 17.06-.11; Art. 18*

73.1 Any Master Mason, not in arrears for his dues, is eligible to fill any office of a Lodge of which he is a member, elective or appointive, provided he is competent and is in good standing, except that of Master who is required to be a Past Warden.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

73.2 An officer of a Lodge is not required to reside in the city or town in which the Lodge is located.

*Herold, 1965.*

73.3 Our rule is that an accident received after initiation does not prevent a Brother's advancement; and, upon the same principle, should not prevent a promotion when in the line of it.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

73.4 Nominations of candidates for office are unmasonic, and under no circumstances is such action to be permitted.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

73.5 The Masonic year begins and ends at twelve o'clock noon, on St. John the Evangelist's Day. The elective officers are chosen for the Masonic year, and should be installed whenever practicable, before St. John the Evangelist's Day.

*Africa, 1892.*

73.6 Officers-elect of a Lodge can assume their stations only on and after St. John the Evangelist's Day.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

73.7 It is not obligatory to install on or before St. John the Evangelist's Day, but it has been decided that, unless the installation takes place on or before such day, the Master will not be a member of the Grand Lodge. The mean or solar day is the period of twenty-four hours commencing and terminating at midnight. This is a day in civil law, and is the ordinary acceptance of the term. St. John the Evangelist's Day, therefore, commences at midnight, December 26, and terminates at midnight, December 27. It is decided that officers installed at any time within that period are installed on St. John the Evangelist's Day.

*Henderson, 1896.*

*See 46.1-.9*

73.8 The officers of a Lodge elected and installed at the stated meeting in November (being the next preceding St. John the Evangelist's Day), the meeting in December falling on St. John the Evangelist's Day, are to occupy the stations in the Lodge at the December meeting.

*Kelly, 1898.*

73.9 An officer of a Lodge retains his station therein until his successor has been duly qualified.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

73.10 An elected Officer cannot resign his office during the term for which he was installed unless, after showing “good cause”, the Lodge has received permission to accept the resignation from the District Deputy Grand Master of that Lodge’s Masonic District and the R.W. Grand Master who shall, also, then direct the method of replacement of that Officer.

*(Rev. 1986, 2001)*

*Wagner, 1901; Carpenter, 1984; Dluge, 2000.*

73.11 The officers of a Lodge which the Master is authorized to appoint, must be selected from the membership of the Lodge, except in the case of Tyler, who may be a member of another Lodge.

*Africa, 1891.*

73.12 A Master is not authorized to announce his appointment of officers and Committees before the year for which he is chosen shall have begun. It is permissible to list in the January Lodge Notice the appointments of the incoming Worshipful Master prior to his installation.

*(Rev. 2008)*

*Africa, 1892; Gardner, 2008.*

73.13 There is no such officer as a guide, and no such appointment is to be made.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

73.14 The officers elected at a special election under and by virtue of a Dispensation granted by the Grand Master, must be installed; otherwise the previous officers hold over.

*Wagner, 1900.*

73.15 The term of an elected officer, chosen to fill a vacancy begins when he is installed.

*Wagner, 1901.*

73.16 When any subordinate place is vacant at a meeting of a Lodge, the Master may direct any competent Brother to fill the vacancy. If a Brother so called upon (being a member of the Lodge) asks to be excused, the Master should grant his request if the reason given appears to be sufficient; but, if he absolutely refuses to serve, the Brother subjects himself to discipline.

*Africa, 1891.*

73.17 A Lodge cannot suspend an officer for dereliction of duty, but it is the duty of a Master to do so.

*Wagner, 1901.*

73.18 No officer of a Lodge should permit the title of his office to be joined with his name, and so printed on advertising matter for any purpose.

*Orlady, 1909.*

73.19 An officer of a Lodge subordinate to this Grand Lodge has no right to correspond with the Grand Lodge of another Jurisdiction on Masonic subjects, without the authority of the Grand Master.

*Guthrie, 1911.*

73.20 Notwithstanding any decision or precedent to the contrary, no Member shall be elected to or otherwise serve in more than one elective office in a Lodge at any time.

Notwithstanding any decision or precedent to the contrary, no Member shall be elected to or otherwise serve in any elective office in more than one Lodge at any time.

*(Rev. 2012)*

*Gardner, 2009; Smith, 2012.*

## 74 MASTER

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 3.01-.04; Art. 9.18-.22; Art. 16.03-.04;  
Art. 17.06, .10, .19; Art. 18.01-.03; Art. 24.01-.02*

74.1 No Brother should be elevated to the station of Master who cannot perform all the duties thereof, but the right to choose elective officers rests with the members of the Lodge, and it is very rare that a Grand Master exercises his prerogative to stop the installation of an elective officer; and then only when the necessity therefor is made very clear.

*Africa, 1892.*

74.2 It is not necessary that the Master be a citizen of the United States.

*Orlady, 1908.*

74.3 Three Past Masters must be present at the installation of a Master.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

74.4 A Master is much more than a presiding officer. His power, except when limited by the *Ahiman Rezon*, or By-Laws of his Lodge is absolute. There can be no appeal from his decision, save to the Grand Master.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

74.5 The Master of the Lodge is the one to construe the Law. Should he err, there is an appeal to the Grand Master.

*Brown, 1905.*

74.6 The Master cannot dispense with a By-Law or any part of one. He must see the By-Laws enforced.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

74.7 The Master is held responsible to the Grand Lodge for the manner in which his Lodge is governed, and the various degrees are conferred, and he will be held accountable for the work being done in accordance with the requirements of the Grand Master.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

74.8 The action of a Master of a Lodge is not a question for discussion in open Lodge. The Brethren have an appeal from his action to the Grand Master.

*Tennis, 1902.*

74.9 The proper person in a Lodge to construe the Law is the Master.

*Wagner, 1899.*

74.10 Where a Master has a doubt as to whether any proposed action of his Lodge is in violation of any Law, Rule or Regulation of the Grand Lodge, he has full power to suspend or defer such action until he can consult or be advised in the premises.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

74.11 Upon the Master in the discharge of his duty, obedient to Ancient Usages, Customs and Landmarks, rests the responsibility of seeing that no candidate is introduced into his Lodge who is disqualified. This responsibility is direct and immediate.

*Lamberton, 1871.*

74.12 The Master has no power or authority to direct the Secretary to enclose a circular of any kind – more particularly one relating to business enterprise – in the notices of the meetings of a Lodge; neither has the Secretary a right to do so, or to furnish the names of members of a Lodge by which another may do so.

*Brown, 1905.*

*See 67.3*

74.13 A Brother having been elected and installed Master, must be carried on the roll of Past Masters of a Lodge, although not a member of the Grand Lodge for the reason of not having served a full Masonic year.

*Tennis, 1902.*

74.14 A Master, whose term expires the next St. John the Evangelist's Day, is eligible at the time of the annual election to any office in the Lodge.

*Wagner, 1899.*

74.15 The Brother filling the station of Master of a Lodge, in the absence of the Master, is responsible for the proper conduct in the Lodge while occupying the Chair, and should rule its deliberations in accordance with his best judgment, and in conformity to the Constitution, Rules, Regulations and Edicts of the Grand Lodge, and the By-Laws of his Lodge. He need not follow the instructions of the absent Master. His first duty is to the Lodge over which he is temporarily presiding.

*Tennis, 1902.*

74.16 Unless otherwise provided by the Grand Master, if the office of the Master has become vacant, the Senior Warden becomes the Acting Master of the Lodge.

*(Rev. 2008)*

*Day, 1883; Gardner, 2008.*

74.17 Where the Senior Warden is deceased, the Junior Warden becomes Acting Senior Warden, and the Master appoints from night to night an Acting Junior Warden.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

74.18 The Master of a Lodge has the power to fill the vacancy in the office of Treasurer of a Lodge, by appointing an Acting Treasurer until one be elected.

*Mitchell, 1885.*

74.19 On a vacancy occurring in the office of Secretary, the Master fills the vacancy by a temporary appointment, until a Dispensation can be procured to enable the Lodge to hold a special election.

*Lamberton, 1871.*

74.20 In a few of the Lodges the practice seems to prevail to make a present to the retiring Worshipful Master, and in a few cases this present has been quite expensive. The office of Worshipful Master is one of honor. No salary, direct or indirect, attaches to it. No Brother is compelled to take the office if he does not want to do so, but when assumes the office he has no right to any compensation. I, therefore, directed that no money of the Lodge should be given, either as money, or in the shape of a present paid for by the Lodge's money, to a Past Master.

*Beitler, 1922.*

74.21 It is not permissible and neither is it lawful to create and/or constitute a retiring Worshipful Master an Honorary Member by reason of his service as Worshipful Master. Similarly, Past Masters may not be accorded any reduction in dues based on whole or in part upon that status.

*Ball, 1971.*

74.22 Decided that a Worshipful Master of a Lodge removed by a Grand Master is not entitled to any recognition or privileges as a Past Master by service, and that his name must not be included as such in any record of the Lodge.

*Lehr, 1954.*

## 75 WARDENS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 3.01; Art. 9.18, .22; Art. 16.03, .04;  
Art. 17.06-.11; Art. 18.04, .05*

75.1 A Brother who had been elected a Warden, but never installed, is not eligible to be elected Master.

*Africa, 1891.*

75.2 There is no reason why a Brother who has served as Warden of his Lodge should not be elected its Master. If the Senior Warden declines advancement, it is optional with the Lodge to elect the Junior Warden, or a Brother who has served as Warden.

*Arnold, 1894.*

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 17.11*

75.3 A Brother who has been a Warden, or a Master of a Lodge under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania is eligible to the office of Master in any Lodge in this Jurisdiction with which he may be affiliated.

*Africa, 1891.*

75.4 It is not only the right, but the duty, of the Senior Warden, to take the station of the Master in the absence of the latter.

*Kelly, 1897.*

75.5 In the absence of the Master and Senior Warden, the Junior Warden must preside at the meeting of a Lodge.

*Tennis, 1902.*

75.6 The Junior Warden of a Lodge is eligible for election as Master; the stations of Senior and Junior Wardens can be filled by election from the floor.

*Tennis, 1902.*

75.7 Charges made against a Senior Warden and not tried, but pending at his election as Master, do not prevent or prohibit his being installed as Master.

*Vaux, 1868.*

75.8 The Master may appoint an Acting Junior Warden from meeting to meeting until an election is held, for which, in such case, a Dispensation to hold a special election must be requested of and granted by the proper Masonic authority.

*Kelly, 1897.*

75.9 Where the Senior Warden and Junior Warden were installed at one and the same time, such installation was unlawful. They must be installed separately.

*Henderson, 1896.*

75.10 Dual office holding in a Lodge is objectionable, hence, it has been decided that where the By-Laws of the Lodge do not otherwise provide, that the office of Trustee is incompatible with the office of Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Treasurer or Secretary.

*(Rev. 1995)*

*Williams, 1914; Hohenschildt, 1995.*



## 76 REPRESENTATIVE

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 3.03, .04; Art. 9.17-.19, .22; Art. 10.03*

76.1 The Master, after his term of service has begun, or any Past Master in good standing may be the Representative of the Lodge in the Grand Lodge. The fact that a Past Master serves his Lodge either in an elective or appointed office, does not impair his membership in the Grand Lodge, or render him ineligible to be the Representative of his Lodge therein.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

76.2 It is not necessary to issue a Dispensation to elect a Representative or Substitute Representative in the Grand Lodge.

*(Rev. 1986)*

*Arnold, 1893.*

*See 35.12*

76.3 No Lodge can pass a resolution instructing the Representative of the Lodge in the Grand Lodge to cast the representative vote for any particular candidate. The Representative of a Lodge in the matter of annual elections is what his name implies, a representative of the absent Past Masters. It is his duty to follow instructions given by the aforesaid Past Masters. In the absence of instructions from them, he is privileged to use his own judgment.

*Tennis, 1902.*

76.4 It is no longer possible to convene in one Body all those who are entitled to participate in our elections and Communications. It is, however, just as important as ever that every Member entitled to vote on any subject should be here (i.e., in the Grand Lodge) in person, or be duly represented. In order to protect this right, a Member unavoidably absent, has the undoubted privilege of advising the Representative of his Lodge, who should know and desire to know the wish of the absent Member, in regard to the business to be transacted. The representative may be advised either by oral or written directions; the means employed to carry the information are not material, being only matters of form. The all important question is What is the actual request of the Member? If a Representative is in doubt as to the genuineness of a signature, or the clear meaning of a doubtful request from a member, his Masonic duty requires him to make prompt inquiry so as to ascertain the exact truth. To disregard arbitrarily a request of such a character is a wrong to the member as well as to the Grand Lodge, and in the case of an election, to the candidates for election, in fraudulently taking a vote from one and giving it to another.

“Printed circular instructions to a Representative from a Past Master to vote for a member therein named, is not binding upon the Representative.” This has been announced in various forms by several Grand Masters, in a number of decisions.

The term “printed and circular instructions” should be interpreted in strict accord with its dictionary sense. An unsigned or printed circular letter of instructions, or one with a printed signature, does not impose any duty on any one, but whatever its form may be, if the genuine signature of a member of the Grand Lodge be attached to it, it becomes a fraternal obligation that is satisfied only by the absolute performance of the requests therein contained.

*Orlady, 1908.*

## 77 TREASURER

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 16.03, .04; Art. 17.10; Art. 18.06*

77.1 When the By-Laws of a Lodge require its Treasurer to give a bond for the faithful performance of the duties of his office, it is essential that that bond should be given and approved before he assumes office. If the Master of a Lodge permits a Brother to be installed as Treasurer without furnishing an official bond, when such is required by the By-Laws of his Lodge, he is guilty of gross violation of the very By-Laws he is bound to enforce.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

77.2 A Treasurer must honor an order of the Lodge drawn upon him for charity, it being his duty to honor all orders when lawfully drawn, and not to interpret the motive of the members.

*Brown, 1904.*

77.3 If a Treasurer will not obey, and persistently refuses to obey, the By-Laws of a Lodge, it is the duty of the Master to declare the office vacant, and appoint a Brother to serve from meeting to meeting, until an election is held to elect a successor.

*Kelly, 1898.*

77.4 When the office of Treasurer becomes vacant by the death of the incumbent, it is the right and duty of the Master to appoint an Acting Treasurer to demand and receive from the Secretary the current receipts of the Lodge during such vacancy.

*Africa, 1892.*

77.5 The former Treasurer of your Lodge having failed to pay over to his successor the balance in his hands due the Lodge, the proper course to pursue is to prefer charges against him, as provided in the *Ahiman Rezon* (Section 10), the specification being his neglect to pay the amount due. As to the money, the Lodge will have to be content with a dividend, unless the money is specially deposited, so that it can be traced as Lodge money.

*Arnold, 1894.*

77.6 The Worshipful Master may appoint an Assistant Treasurer to assist the Lodge Treasurer in the performance of his duties as set forth in Article 18.06 of the *Ahiman Rezon*. Such appointment shall not relieve the Treasurer of his responsibilities under said Article or the By-Laws of his Lodge.

*Aungst, 2006.*

77.7 At each Stated Meeting, the Treasurer, or his designee, shall give a report concerning the Lodge's financial condition. The report may be a brief summary, but it should cover information pertaining to funds managed by the Trustees and information concerning the operating, management and maintenance of real property, whether owned or leased, including any information relating to any Hall Association in which the Lodge has an interest.

*Smith, 2012.*

## 78 SECRETARY

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 12.09; Art. 16.03, .04; Art. 17.10, .22;  
Art. 18.07-.09; Art. 21.03, .13, .14*

78.1 It is the duty of a Master to enforce the observance of the By-Laws of his Lodge and of the Rules and Regulations of the Grand Lodge, and see that the property and funds of the Lodge be justly managed and dispensed. The Secretary's duty is prescribed by Art. 18.07-.09. In all things he must remember that the Master has charge of the Lodge, and is responsible for all that is done by it in its name. He must perform his duties to the Master's satisfaction, and observe his will and pleasure.

*Deyoe, 1966.  
See 57.1-.12*

78.2 A Master is responsible for the right performance by the Secretary of the duties of his office, and if the Secretary should refuse to perform them, or persist in neglecting to perform them, after repeated notice, a Master is justified in suspending the Secretary from his office, and should report his action to the Grand Master.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

78.3 Directed the Master to suspend the Secretary of the Lodge for having appropriated the funds of the Lodge, this wrongdoing having been verified by the Auditing Committee and acknowledged by the Secretary.

*Krause, 1918.  
See 97.10*

78.4 It is the duty of a Secretary of a Lodge to furnish his Minute Book for examination by the District Deputy Grand Master of the District in which it is located, when requested by him.

*Wagner, 1901.  
See 31.4*

78.5 A Master can appoint an Acting Secretary from month to month. A special election need not be held unless the same is desired.

*Tennis, 1902.*

78.6 Refused to grant Dispensation to hold special election for Secretary, and informed the Worshipful Master that the Secretary cannot be removed from office owing to ill-health, nor can he resign from office; and it is the duty of the Worshipful Master to appoint from meeting to meeting an Acting Secretary, until the end of the present Masonic year, when the present Secretary may decline re-election.

*(Removed 2001)*

*Williams, 1915.*

78.7 The Junior Warden cannot act as Secretary at any time, when another Brother can be appointed to take the place of the Secretary in his absence.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

78.8 The fact has been brought to my knowledge that the General Return of your Lodge was falsified by giving an incorrect date to the certificate of the election of officers and the suspension of four Brethren. This is an offense of grave character, and deserves severe condemnation. Therefore, you are directed to suspend the Secretary from performing the duties of his office, debar him from being a candidate for re-election, and appoint a Brother to perform the duties of the office, until such time as it may be filled by an election.

*Eichbaum, 1888.*

78.9 There is no Rule or Regulation of the Grand Lodge which requires the Secretary of a Lodge to be a Past Master.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

78.10 The Master of a Lodge must suspend the Secretary from performing the duties of that office, pending the trial of charges preferred against him for violation of his duties as Secretary, and the trial must be commenced as soon as practicable, and pushed to a final conclusion; and, if the accused should be found not guilty of said charges, he is to be reinstated in his office as Secretary.

*Brown, 1904.*

78.11 A communication discloses the fact that the Minutes have been tampered with, the Minute Book scratched, and certain alterations made. If the Secretary is guilty of this alteration, the Master shall suspend the Secretary from his office, and prefer charges against him.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

78.12 An oral motion to change the salary of a Secretary which is fixed by the By-Laws is unlawful.

*Kelly, 1897.*

78.13 The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania does not recognize such a thing as Masonic life insurance. The Secretary of a Lodge, in his official capacity as Secretary, has nothing to do with making proof of death for the purpose of collecting life insurance. The Seal of the Lodge is not to be used in attesting the death of a member holding a life insurance policy in a so-called Masonic Life Insurance Company.

*Snyder, 1931.*

78.14 A Secretary shall be entitled to a salary of at least Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) per annum.

A Secretary is entitled to be reimbursed from Lodge funds for expenses incurred in the performance of the duties of his office. Such expenses, however, must be itemized and recorded in accordance with the regulations of the Internal Revenue Service pertaining to expense accounts. (Rev. 1990)

*Carpenter, 1985; Stoner, 1990.*

78.15 The Worshipful Master may appoint an Assistant Secretary to assist the Lodge Secretary in the performance of his duties as set forth in Articles 18.07 through 18.09 of the *Ahiman Rezon*. Such appointment shall not relieve the Secretary of his responsibilities under said Articles or the By-Laws of his Lodge.

*Dluge, 2000.*

78.16 All correspondence and documents issued by the Secretary of the Lodge that have the names of Past Masters by service therein shall have abbreviated title “P.M.” or the full title “Past Master” appended thereto. This title shall appear prior to the title of their current office, if any.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

## 79 TRUSTEES

79.1 The Trustees of a Lodge, elected by the Lodge, under a By-Law, must act as a body. No single Trustee has the right to invest money or do any other business requiring discretion; every such act must be authorized either by all the Trustees, or by a majority, at a meeting called for the purpose, of which each Trustee had sufficient notice.

*Guthrie, 1911.*

79.2 The office of Trustee being one provided for in the By-Laws of Lodges, the Grand Master does not issue a Dispensation for an election to fill a vacancy.

*Africa, 1891.*

79.3 A Lodge may adopt and insert a section in its By-Laws requiring the bonding of its Trustees.

*Guthrie, 1910.*

79.4 Trustees of a Lodge can resign their positions at any stated meeting, and a Lodge can hold an election for their successors at any stated meeting, due notice of which must be given to all members of the Lodge. No Dispensation is required for an election for Trustees.

*Tennis, 1902.*

79.5 When the report of the Trustees is made a part of, and filed with, the report of the Auditing Committee, it need not be copied in the minutes, but should be compared by the Secretary to ascertain that nothing has been omitted and a notation made by him in the minutes that this has been done.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

## 80 CHAPLAIN

80.1 Any competent Brother (Master Mason) may be appointed Chaplain.

*Brown, 1905.*

80.2 The Chaplain of a Lodge must be a member of a Lodge within this Jurisdiction.

*Deike, 1948.*

## 81 TYLER

81.1 The Tyler, being a member of the Lodge and desiring to be admitted to the Lodge to cast his ballot on a petition, has the same right in that respect as any other member of the Lodge, and should be admitted by the Master. When the other members of the Lodge have voted, and the Tyler desires to vote, the Master should send out the Pursuivant, or some other Brother, to occupy temporarily the place of the Tyler.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

81.2 The Worshipful Master may, at his discretion, invite the Tyler into the Lodge room so that he may be present for the Lodge meeting, except meetings that include conferral of degrees.

Immediately following the opening of the Lodge, when notified by the Pursuivant, the Tyler may accompany the Pursuivant when he returns to the Lodge room. During the Lodge meeting, the Tyler shall accompany the Pursuivant in response to knocks at the outer door and may return after completion of his responsibilities. The Tyler shall retire when directed by the Worshipful Master, but no later than immediately following the closing charge.

*Aungst, 2006.*

## 82 PASSING TO THE CHAIR

By an Amendment to the *Ahiman Rezon*, adopted December 6, 1995, Dispensations to Pass to the Chair were eliminated.

82.1 Passing to the Chair shall be conducted in a dignified manner and the ceremony shall not be distorted by any humorous or un-masonic actions.

*(Removed 1997)*

*Deyoe, 1966.*

82.2 By the Regulation in force since 1859 a Dispensation has not been granted to Pass to the Chair except to a Master Mason of six months' standing.

*(Removed 1997)*

*Lamberton, 1871.*

82.3 A Dispensation to Pass to the Chair must be acted upon in the Lodge to which the Brother in whose favor it was granted belongs.

*(Removed 1997)*

*Lamberton, 1871.*

82.4 One who is a member of a Lodge in another Jurisdiction cannot be Passed to the Chair in this Jurisdiction.

*(Removed 1997)*

*Kelly, 1897.*

82.5 No one can be Passed to the Chair in a Lodge without the consent of the Lodge, on motion duly made and adopted by a voice vote, before those who are not Past Masters are requested to retire.

*(Removed 1997)*

*Mitchell, 1886.*

82.6 A Dispensation to Pass to the Chair is not "mandatory," but is an "authority" or "permission"; therefore the Lodge must decide, by a vote, whether it will act.

*(Removed 1997)*

*Wagner, 1900.*

82.7 A Dispensation to Pass to the Chair is acted upon in the presence of all brethren; notwithstanding it is addressed to the Master and Past Masters or those brethren having the Word of the Chair.

*(Rev. 1986)*

*(Removed 1997)*

*Tennis, 1902; Stenberg, 1986.*

82.8 A Dispensation to Raise, or to Pass and Raise, may be acted upon at any stated or extra meeting of the Lodge.

*(Rev. 1997)*

*(Removed 2001)*

*Krause, 1918.*

*See 30.2; 55.13*

82.9 A Dispensation is granted to a Lodge and not to its officers.

*(Removed 2001) (Renumbered as 30.6)*

*Brown, 1904.*



82.10 A Lodge has no right to ask for a Dispensation for a Brother to Pass to the Chair. This is a personal matter, and the application must be made by the Brother in person, who desires to advance.

*(Removed 1997)*

*Day, 1884.*

82.11 We have no such degree as “Past Master’s Degree.” We term it “Passing to the Chair.”

*(Removed 2001)*

*Brown, 1904.*

82.12 A Past Master by Dispensation acquires no rights or privileges except to be present at the conferring of a like privilege on an elected Master.

*(Rev. 1997)*

*(Removed 2001) (Renumbered as 83.5)*

*Vaux, 1867.*

82.13 Approved the action of a District Deputy Grand Master in refusing to issue a Dispensation to Pass to the Chair, one whom investigation disclosed was not worthy of that privilege.

*(Removed 1997)*

*Krause, 1919.*

82.14 Any member who has received the Word of the Chair in a recognized Masonic Body is eligible to be present at the installation of a Worshipful Master.

*(Rev. 1997)*

*(Removed 2001) (See 83.5)*

*Williamson, 1982.*

### 83 PAST MASTER

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 3.01, .02; Art. 9.22; Art. 16.03, .04*

83.1 A Brother who has been regularly installed and served any length of time as Master of a Lodge becomes, at the end of this term, a Past Master. But, to qualify him for membership in the Grand Lodge, he must have served a full Masonic year, i.e., from one St. John the Evangelist's Day (December 27th) until the next St. John the Evangelist's Day.

*Africa, 1892.*

83.2 If a Past Master by Service resigns from a Lodge in this Jurisdiction and affiliates himself with another Lodge in this Jurisdiction, he becomes a Past Master of said Lodge, and consequently is entitled to membership in the Grand Lodge, and would most certainly vote for the Lodge of which he is a member.

*Porter, 1878.*

83.3 When a Brother, who was a Past Master by service in another Masonic Jurisdiction, affiliates with one of our Lodges, he is entitled to recognition as a Past Master in the Lodge of which he has become a member. Of course, he is not a member of the Grand Lodge, since he does not possess the requisite qualifications prescribed by our *Ahiman Rezon*.

*MacCalla, 1889.*

83.4 Where a Brother (Past Master by service) withdraws from a Lodge and affiliates with any Lodge outside this Jurisdiction, and again withdraws therefrom and connects himself with a Lodge in this Jurisdiction, he would be entitled to all the privileges and position he enjoyed previous to his withdrawal.

*Clark, 1876.*

83.5 A Member who received the Word of the Chair by Dispensation prior to December 6, 1995 has no privileges except to be present at any ceremony restricted to Members who have received the Word of the Chair including the installation of a Worshipful Master.

*(Rev. 2001)*

*Vaux, 1867; Williamson, 1982; Dluge, 2000.*

83.6 The names of Past Masters by service shall have the abbreviated title "P.M." or the full title "Past Master" appended thereto on all correspondence issued by the Lodge. This title shall appear prior to the title of their current office, if any.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

## 84 PAYMENTS TO THE GRAND LODGE

84.1 All checks for payments to the Grand Lodge should be drawn in favor of the Grand Lodge, F. & A.M. of Pennsylvania.

(Rev. 2001)

*Orlady, 1908; Dluge, 2000.*

*See 32.1*

## 85 PETITIONS FOR INITIATION AND MEMBERSHIP

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 21.01-.16; Sec. 11*

85.1 Freemasonry does not proselyte. Those who desire its privileges must seek them of their own free will and accord, and must accept and obey, without condition or reservation, all of its Ancient Usages, Customs and Landmarks. Notwithstanding the foregoing, or anything to the contrary herein, a Member may invite such persons who he knows to be of good character and fit for membership to petition a Lodge for membership and initiation, provided that such petition shall conform in all respects to applicable Masonic Law.

(Rev. 2011)

*Brown, 1904; Sturgeon, 2011.*

85.2 Each recommender on a petition for initiation and membership must be either a regular Member or a secondary (dual) Member of a Lodge in this Jurisdiction, one of whom must be a Member of the Lodge being petitioned. They shall affix their signatures to the petition after it has been completed and signed by the petitioner, and only after having thoroughly examined the petition and found it to be true, based on their knowledge of the petitioner. If a recommender is not a Member of the Lodge petitioned, he shall add his Lodge Number following his signature.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

A The name of the petitioner should be given in full in the petition.

B The date and place of birth of the petitioner should be given in the petition.

C The occupation of the petitioner should be designated in the petition specifically and in detail, both with relation to himself and his employer, if any, and may also set forth the petitioner's Social Security Number if received from the petitioner.

(Rev. 1997)

*Weisser, 1997.*

D Where the petitioner resides in a city having streets that are named and houses that are numbered, he should state in his petition the name of the street and the number of his house.

E A petition to be made a Mason should state that the petitioner has never before petitioned a Lodge of Masons to be made a Mason; or, in cases where the petitioner has before petitioned to be made a Mason, he should state the name, number, location, and Jurisdiction of the Lodge, previously petitioned, and the date, as near as may be, of such petition.

F A petitioner must live in Pennsylvania one year immediately prior to the presentation of a petition and not live one year of his life in this State.

(Rev. 2003)

*Brehm, 1941.*

85.3 The correct residence of a petitioner is the place where he resides at the time his petition is read in the Lodge. If he petitions for initiation and membership, and removes after it is signed and before it is presented to the Lodge, inquiry must be made of the Lodge nearest his place of new residence, if within this Jurisdiction. Temporary or unstable domicile in this Jurisdiction cannot be accepted as residence.

*Guthrie, 1910.*

85.4 The petition for initiation and membership of one who states therein that he has “no particular place of residence,” must not be received by the Lodge.

*Brehm, 1941.*

85.5 A petitioner must be a permanent resident of this state for at least one year immediately prior to the presentation of a petition and his recommenders must know him for a sufficient time; not merely the chance acquaintance or being introduced simply for the purpose of recommending. The Lodge places faith, as it has the right to do, upon the recommendation, but it also has the right to have the recommender certify to the truth—that he actually does know the petitioner.

(Rev. 1995)

*Deyoe, 1966.*

85.6 A student attending school in Pennsylvania, whose parents reside without the Jurisdiction, and who has just attained his majority, cannot present a petition for initiation and membership to a Lodge here, he not having been a resident for one year.

(Rev. 1997)

*Williams, 1915.*

85.7 Voting is considered such a positive assertion of residence, that no consideration of another place as a residence or intention to return or remove thereto, will overcome the fact of residence proved by voting.

*Arnold, 1894.*

85.8 A petitioner to Freemasonry who has an assumed name can only be known by his proper name. He has no other under the law.

*Brown, 1904.*

85.9 The acceptance of a petition for initiation and membership without the customary fee is unlawful. The Secretary of a Lodge cannot accept a petition unless the name is legibly written.

*Kelly, 1897.*

85.10 Nothing is more important than a correct spelling of names of petitioners. Carelessness in matters of this kind cannot go unnoticed. A Lodge which suffers such things to be done in its name by its Secretary, will, if it does not put a stop to them, imperil its own existence.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

85.11 A man who cannot write cannot be made a Mason. An applicant must, with his own hand, sign his name in full to the petition. A mark (X) cannot be accepted. A man who in this age of free schools has arrived at years of maturity without one of the rudiments of the most ordinary education, does not manifest intelligence and ambition enough to be a useful member of our Fraternity. We cannot condone or tolerate that degree of ignorance.

*Henderson, 1895.*

85.12 It is not essential that a petitioner should be a citizen of the State under the statute law of the land. His eligibility is to be determined by his Masonic residence or domicile, of at least one year within the Jurisdiction of this Grand Lodge (State of Pennsylvania), and the well-known mental, and moral requirements, as well as being under the tongue of good Masonic report.

*Orlady, 1909.*

85.13 In order that there may be no misunderstanding among the Craft on this subject, we have decided that it is not required of a petitioner, that he be a native born American or a naturalized citizen.

*Sell, 1920.*

85.14 The general rule is that a Lodge may only consider a petition for initiation and membership or membership if the petitioner has attained the age of twenty-one years at the time his petition is presented to the Lodge or by Dispensation from the Grand Master. By virtue of this Decision and in accordance with Article 19, Section 19.05 of *The Ahiman Rezon*, any Lodge working under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania may consider the petitions for initiation and membership or membership of qualified men who have attained the age of eighteen years at the time his petition is presented to the Lodge. In addition, a Lodge may consider a petition of a petitioner who will not have attained the age of eighteen years at the time his petition is presented to the Lodge if it receives a specific Dispensation from the Grand Master.

If the petitions received pursuant to this Decision are acted upon favorably by the Lodge, this decision authorizes Lodges working under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania to make Freemasons of these duly approved candidates without requesting a specific Dispensation from the Grand Master.

*(Rev. 2002)*

*Deyoe, 1966; Cunningham, 2002.*

*(Removed 2011)*

85.15 Old age does not disqualify a petitioner for initiation and membership, but great care must be exercised by the Committee of Inquiry as to the mental qualifications of a petitioner of great age.

*Wagner, 1900.*

85.16 It is not proper that a man against whom an indictment is pending in the Criminal Court should be made a Mason. He is not to be treated as guilty until convicted, but it is enough to make us wait until the case is finally disposed of.

*Mitchell, 1886.*

85.17 No Lodge in this Jurisdiction has the authority to grant to a Lodge in another Jurisdiction the permission to act upon the petition of any one. All matters pertaining to the Craft in another Jurisdiction must be conducted through the respective Grand Secretaries. Nor can a Lodge give to another Lodge in our own Jurisdiction permission to receive and act upon a petition from one of its rejected petitioners. It must first be shown that the objection has been removed in the Lodge in which it occurred, before the petitioner can go elsewhere, and the only method by which it can be ascertained that the objection has been removed, is by the presentation of another petition in accordance with the *Ahiman Rezon*, and the unanimous approval of the petitioner.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

85.18 Inquiry as to non-resident petitioners is only to be made when the petition is for initiation and membership. The Law in this Jurisdiction is, that Masonry is universal and that a man has a right to petition wherever he pleases; but it is your duty to guard the Fraternity against the admission of unworthy material.

When the petitioner is a resident of the Jurisdiction of another Grand Lodge, the Lodge receiving the petition must obtain the approval of our Grand Secretary to act upon the petition.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

85.19 Directed that another ballot should be taken on a petition for initiation and membership, because the Secretary stated in his notices that “the petitioner had been heretofore rejected” which was unlawful.

*Deyoe, 1967.*

85.20 A second ballot can only be taken in accordance with Art. 21.06 of the *Ahiman Rezon*, upon a first petition and then only in the Lodge to which the petition has been presented.

*Deyoe, 1967.*

85.21 A petition for initiation and membership presented and referred to a Committee of Inquiry was lost, and therefore the Committee could not report thereon. The Lodge is therefore authorized to receive a new petition, to be treated in all respects as if the same was an original petition.

*Africa, 1891.*

85.22 If a petitioner for initiation and membership is balloted for and approved, his petition may be withdrawn by a *viva voce* majority vote for the members present.

*Orlady, 1908.*

85.23 If a petition for initiation and membership is withdrawn the petition is not to be handed to the petitioner. It is the original document upon which the Lodge bases its action. It is signed by the petitioner; it is the best evidence of the fact that he did so petition the Lodge; and it should be filed among the papers of the Lodge.

*Williams, 1915.*

85.24 The only person who can withdraw a petition is the petitioner himself, or the recommenders, or some Brother having especial authority from the petitioner.

*Wagner, 1901.*

85.25 When a petition for initiation and membership has been withdrawn, the petitioner stands in the same position as if he had never made the petition to the Lodge. He can make petition to the same, or any other Lodge that he chooses.

*Day, 1884.*

85.26 Decided that the proceedings relative to asking permission to present a third petition and the presentation of the same is a continuous procedure, and that the rule of four months shall apply to the same, that is to say, when permission has been granted to present a third petition, the petition must be presented within four months thereafter.

*Heiligman, 1935.*

85.27 It is consistent with Article 21.01 of the *Ahiman Rezon* to read a summary of the information contained in a petition for membership and initiation rather than the entire petition verbatim. For example, in presenting a petition for initiation and membership to a Lodge, the Secretary may say, "I have a petition for initiation and membership, in due form, from (state complete name of petitioner). The petitioner is\_ years of age. He is employed by\_\_\_\_\_ and his occupation is\_. He resides at\_\_\_\_\_. He lists former residences at\_\_\_\_\_. His place of birth was\_\_\_\_\_. His recommenders are\_, first, and\_\_\_\_\_, second.

When there are multiple petitions for initiation and membership, the Secretary shall refer to them as being presented in "like form" and then provide the information as set forth above for each such petition.

*Smith, 2012.*

## 86 PETITION FOR MEMBERSHIP

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 21.10*

86.1 An unaffiliated Mason has the right to petition any Lodge in this Jurisdiction for membership, and the Lodge may act on his petition after communicating with the Grand Secretary, as is always required, without inquiring of the Lodge nearest the place of residence of the petitioner. If a petitioner for membership only is rejected, he has the right to petition again the same Lodge, the same evening, if he pleases, or at any subsequent stated meeting; and the petition takes the same course as his former petition. There is no limit to the number of petitions a petitioner for membership only can present to a Lodge, and he can petition any Lodge, and one after another Lodge in succession, if he is rejected. Of course, if a Lodge should grow weary of receiving repeated petitions of this nature, it may decline to receive and act on one.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

86.2 A petitioner for membership must establish his standing as a Mason before the Lodge can take action on the petition. Any Mason eligible for membership can make application wherever he chooses to do so.

*Day, 1884.*

86.3 No Brother has the right to recommend one for membership in a Lodge, unless he knows him to be what he claims, either by examination or proper voucher.

*Kendrick, 1906.*

86.4 A Brother who holds a valid certificate of withdrawal or Transfer Certificate from a regular Lodge of a Jurisdiction recognized by this Grand Lodge may present his petition and be received as a member of any Lodge in Pennsylvania, notwithstanding he has not resided in this State for a period of one year.

*Deyoe, 1967.*

86.5 One who has been rejected in a Lodge in this Jurisdiction, and then joins a Lodge in a foreign Jurisdiction, cannot be received as a visitor in any of our Lodges, nor can a petition be received from him for membership. He must petition our Lodge, which rejected him, for initiation and membership.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

86.6 A Brother Mason, elected to membership in a Lodge, cannot be admitted to the Lodge, unless he is duly vouched for, or has passed a satisfactory examination.

*Africa, 1891.*

86.7 A petition for membership presented by a Member in good standing of a regular Lodge in this Jurisdiction (Pennsylvania) need not be referred to a Committee of Inquiry and may be balloted upon, following proper notification thereof and in accordance with the other procedures approved by Grand Lodge for a ballot upon petitioners for membership only, without the necessity of a report from said Committee.



A petition for membership presented by a Member in good standing of a regular Lodge of a Jurisdiction (other than Pennsylvania) recognized by this Grand Lodge must be referred to a Committee of Inquiry and reported favorably thereon before it may be balloted upon.

*(Rev. 2003)*

*Dluge, 2001; Cunningham, 2003.*

86.8 A Member in good standing of a Subordinate Lodge may request to transfer his membership or may petition one or more other Subordinate Lodges for plural membership. The Subordinate Lodge receiving a transfer certificate or a petition for plural membership shall set forth the name of the petitioner for transfer or plural membership in a Stated Meeting Notice, and the petition shall be read at the Stated Meeting identified in such Notice. If there is no oral objection raised at or before such Stated Meeting, the petitioner shall automatically be admitted as a Member of that Subordinate Lodge upon the reading of the petition. If there is an objection, the petition shall be put in the form of a motion for the admission of the petitioner as a transfer or plural Member of such Subordinate Lodge. An oral vote shall be utilized whereby an affirmative vote of a majority of the Members present shall be required for the approval of such motion.

A petition for transfer or plural membership presented by a Member in good standing of a regular Lodge of a Jurisdiction (other than Pennsylvania) recognized by this Grand Lodge must be referred to a Committee of Inquiry and reported favorably thereon before it may be balloted upon. *(Rev. 2012)*

*Cunningham, 2003; Aungst, 2007; Smith, 2012.*

86.9 A Brother who is a Member in good standing of a regular Lodge in this Jurisdiction (Pennsylvania) may present his petition for secondary (dual) membership to any Lodge in Pennsylvania and be received as a secondary Member thereof, notwithstanding his residence being in another state.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

86.10 Each recommender on a petition for membership must be either a regular Member or a secondary (dual) Member of a Lodge in this Jurisdiction, one of whom must be a Member of the Lodge being petitioned. They shall affix their signatures to the petition after it has been completed and signed by the petitioner and only after having thoroughly examined the petition and found it to be true based on their knowledge of the petitioner. If a recommender is not a Member of the Lodge petitioned, he shall add his Lodge Number following his signature.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

86.11 It is consistent with Masonic Law to read a summary of the information contained in a petition for membership rather than the entire petition verbatim. For example, in presenting a petition for membership to a Lodge, the Secretary may say, "I have a petition for membership, in due form, from (state complete name of petitioner). The petitioner is \_ years of age. He is employed by \_\_\_\_\_ and his occupation is \_\_\_\_\_. He resides at \_\_\_\_\_. He lists former residences at \_\_\_\_\_. His place of birth was \_\_\_\_\_. His recommenders are \_\_\_\_\_, first, and \_\_\_\_\_, second.

When there are multiple petitions for membership, it is acceptable for the Secretary to refer to them as being presented in "like form" and then to provide the information as set forth above for each such petition.

*Smith, 2012.*

## 87 PETITION FOR MEMBERSHIP AND ADVANCEMENT

87.1 An Entered Apprentice or Fellow Craft Mason, made in another Jurisdiction, who desires to join a Lodge in this Jurisdiction, must first resign outright or conditionally from the Lodge to which he is attached. He can then present a petition. He must send a Certificate from the Lodge of which he was last a member, that he has withdrawn outright or conditionally therefrom in good Masonic standing. He must also prove himself by an examination to be of the degree he claims. His petition must take the same course as all others. The fee for conferring the two degrees upon an Entered Apprentice should be specified in the By-Laws of the Lodge.

*Deyoe, 1967.*

*See 3.1-.13*

87.2 Each recommender on a petition for membership and advancement must be either a regular Member or a secondary (dual) Member of a Lodge in this Jurisdiction, one of whom must be a Member of the Lodge being petitioned. They shall affix their signatures to the petition after it has been completed and signed by the petitioner and only after having thoroughly examined the petition and found it to be true based on their knowledge of the petitioner. If a recommender is not a Member of the Lodge petitioned, he shall add his Lodge Number following his signature.

*Cunningham, 2003.*

## 88 PRINTED RITUALS, MONITORS AND CIPHERS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 17.25*

88.1 The Grand Lodge has determined to print the ritual of the three Masonic degrees under its jurisdiction. The ritual manuals published pursuant to this Article will be made available in limited quantities solely for the purpose of assisting members to learn the work. The following conditions will be strictly enforced:

- Only the official ritual manuals published by the Grand Lodge may be used by Members in learning the work. No Member shall copy, electronically or otherwise, the ritual manuals published by the Grand Lodge.

- Ritual manuals may not be used in an open meeting of a Subordinate Lodge, either by those participating in a degree or by others in order to prompt participants. The Grand Lodge will sequester the Warrant of any Subordinate Lodge found to have made improper use of a ritual manual.

- No Member shall knowingly permit a non-Member to read a ritual manual and each Member in possession of a ritual manual shall take reasonable precautions to safeguard the same in confidence.

- A limited number of ritual manuals will be provided to Subordinate Lodges and Schools of Instruction. District Deputies will maintain an accurate list of the number of ritual manuals provided to Subordinate Lodges and Schools of Instruction under their direction and will audit the usage and placement of the ritual manuals on a regular basis.

Members found to have violated the provisions of this Article 88.1 will be subject to Masonic discipline.

*(Rev. 2011)*

*Grand Lodge, 1895; Sturgeon, 2011.*

## 89 PRINTING, PUBLISHING AND PRESS RELEASES

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 17.25*

89.1 Printing or publishing the details of the votes at an election in a Lodge is prohibited, and printing or publishing in newspapers any part of the proceedings of a Lodge is also prohibited.  
*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

89.2 The regular course is to submit a proposed publication for the inspection of the Grand Master.

*Africa, 1892.*

89.3 Advertisements and notices in newspapers, publications, radio and television stations of the time and place of meetings of the Lodges is permitted so long as the advertisements and notices have the prior approval of the District Deputy Grand Master.

*Williamson, 1982.*

89.4 Lodges are permitted to provide news releases, pictures, or information to publications, radio and television stations concerning programs such as the presentation of 50-Year Service Emblems, new officers of the Lodge, banquet speakers, Cornerstone laying Ceremonies, Lodge Room Dedications, anniversary banquets, and other such programs, provided the news releases, pictures, or information are consistent with other Decisions and have the approval of the District Deputy Grand Master. District Deputies or Lodges can obtain assistance from the Grand Master's Office in the preparation and distribution of the above material.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

## 90 RELIGIOUS FAITH AND SERVICES

90.1 Freemasonry neither prescribes nor permits “denominational” tests.

*Africa, 1892.*

90.2 The Brethren are admonished to attend religious services at their several places of worship, on all convenient occasions, but a Lodge, as such, has no power or authority to assume the charge of any such service.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

90.3 Freemasonry recognizes no religious or political organizations, but requires that every initiate shall yield undivided and unequivocal allegiance and support to all its Laws, Rules, Regulations and Edicts.

*Africa, 1892.*

## 91 REMISSION OF DUES

91.1 When remission of dues of members is considered, Blanket Resolutions are permitted provided the names of the members are incorporated as part of the Resolution. If the Blanket Resolution is not adopted, then each case must be acted on separately.

*(Rev. 2006)*

*Leiby, 1944; Aungst, 2006.*

*See 32.6*

## 92 RENUNCIATION

92.1 This Grand Lodge approves the form of Renunciation now required in this Jurisdiction from petitioners who have been identified with clandestine bodies, the same being in form as follows:—

## RENUNCIATION

No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS; That I, \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_, a citizen of Pennsylvania, age \_\_\_\_\_ years,  
 occupation \_\_\_\_\_, residence \_\_\_\_\_,  
 Pennsylvania, aver and declare on my personal honor, that on the \_\_\_\_\_  
 day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_, I became identified with an association of alleged Freemasons, known  
 as \_\_\_\_\_  
 under a misunderstanding as to its constitution and authority in this Commonwealth; and a  
 subsequent investigation has convinced me that it is a clandestine body without lawful authority to  
 confer any of the degrees of Free and Accepted or Ancient York Masonry in Pennsylvania.  
 Therefore, I hereby, of my own free will and accord, and with full knowledge of the consequences  
 of my act, freely, solemnly and sincerely renounce all obligation and allegiance to said unlawful  
 and clandestine association, and I further avow and declare that I will not in any manner, directly  
 or indirectly, have or hold any intercourse or affiliation of any character with said clandestine  
 association.

On the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_, I gave notice, in  
 writing, to the officers of said association that I have permanently severed all relation and affiliation  
 therewith and allegiance thereunto.

(Name in full) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signed in the presence of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

P.S.—The original should be forwarded to the office of the Right Worshipful Grand Secretary,  
 and a duplicate thereof accompany the petition presented to the Lodge.

See 22.4, .6

### 93 RESIGNATION FROM MEMBERSHIP (Outright or Conditionally)

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 17.02; Art. 18.07, .08;  
Art. 19.06; Art. 20.02*

93.1 Resignations, whether with or without prejudice, must be in writing and cannot be acted upon by the Lodge until his dues have been paid or remitted by Grand Lodge, or while charges are pending against him.

*Deyoe, 1966; Gamon 2020.*

93.2 Separate votes must be taken on every question of resignation or restoration to membership.

*(Rev. 1997)*

*Grand Lodge, 1895; Weissner, 1996.*

93.3 When a member's resignation has been accepted he is entitled to a certificate without cost.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

93.4 The member's resignation from a Subordinate Lodge under this Article, whether with or without prejudice, is effective upon receipt by the Subordinate Lodge and may not thereafter be withdrawn; however, no such resignation shall be effective while charges are pending against him, except with the written direction of the Grand Master.

*Africa, 1891; Gamon 2020.*

93.5 Our Regulations differ from those of most other Grand Lodges; here, with us, initiation confers membership, and an Entered Apprentice or Fellow Craft Mason, if not indebted to his Lodge, may resign as a Master Mason can, and receive a Certificate of his standing in his Lodge.

*Clark, 1876.*

*See 17.1, .3, .4, .5*

93.6 A Life or Honorary Member who resigns to affiliate with another Lodge forfeits his Life or Honorary membership.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

93.7 If a Member desires to change his membership from one Lodge in our Jurisdiction to another Lodge in our or another Jurisdiction, there are three procedures that may be followed: First, he may resign outright and then present a petition for membership to the other Lodge. Second, he may conditionally resign from his Lodge and receive a Transfer Certificate (Form No. 11.05). In order to pursue this procedure, his dues to the Lodge issuing the Transfer Certificate must be paid in full for the Masonic Year in which the Transfer Certificate is issued. Such Transfer Certificate will thereafter terminate automatically and immediately, and be of no further effect, on the sooner of (x) the rejection of his petition for membership in another Lodge, or (y) the date that is six months from the date on which the Transfer Certificate is issued. However, notwithstanding the termination of the Transfer Certificate, he will remain a Member of the Lodge that issued the Transfer Certificate so long as he pays any and all dues that became payable since the issuance of the Transfer Certificate. Third, he may petition another Lodge for dual or plural membership as the

case may be, and once admitted as a dual or plural member, he may resign from membership from the other Lodge or Lodges to which he belongs.

If a Member desires to terminate his membership outright, he may resign from the Lodge in one of two ways: First, he may resign his Lodge without prejudice. Second, he may resign his Lodge with prejudice. A resignation without prejudice will permit a Member to again seek membership in a Lodge, provided that all appropriate procedures are followed as if a new petition for membership, and will not affect his membership in any other Lodges. A resignation with prejudice will prevent a Member from again seeking membership in any Lodge (unless otherwise permitted by the R.W. Grand Master) and will automatically and immediately cause his resignation with prejudice from all Lodges to which he belongs.

(Rev. 2014)

*Deyoe, 1967; Dhuge, 2000; Sturgeon, 2011; Bateman, 2014.*

*See 17.1, .3, .4, .5*

93.8 A dual or plural member of a Lodge may resign his membership in one or more Lodges to which he belongs without affecting his membership in the other Lodge or Lodges to which he belongs. Where a dual member resigns from his primary Lodge, the other Lodge to which he belongs shall automatically and immediately become such Member's primary Lodge. Where a plural member resigns from his primary Lodge, the Lodge to which he has been a Member for the longest period of time shall automatically and immediately become his primary Lodge, unless otherwise approved by the Grand Secretary. For the avoidance of doubt, a Member of a regular Lodge or Lodges and a Traditional Observance Lodge or the Lehigh Valley Day Lodge No. 813 may resign from all Lodges except the Traditional Observance Lodge or Lehigh Valley Day Lodge No. 813, thereby making the Traditional Observance Lodge or Lehigh Valley Day Lodge No. 813, as the case may be, his primary Lodge. For the avoidance of doubt, this Article does not apply to the Pennsylvania Lodge of Research.

*Sturgeon, 2011.*



## 94 RESTORATION

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 19.02*

**94.1 A Lodge cannot restore an expelled Brother. The Grand Lodge alone can do that.**  
*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

94.2 All arrearages of dues must be paid in order to warrant a restoration either to good Masonic standing or to membership.

*Wagner, 1901.*

94.3 A Brother suspended for non-payment of dues may be restored to good Masonic standing in any stated meeting, without previous notice to the members; provided he has paid to the Lodge, the amount he owed at the time of suspension, but you cannot set aside the proceedings which can only be done by the Grand Master or by his direction, if error has occurred.

*Dick, 1882.*

94.4 A Brother suspended for non-payment of dues cannot be permitted to make a conditional payment, and be restored to membership.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

94.5 A Lodge cannot remit the dues of a Brother who has been suspended for non-payment thereof, and then restore him to membership; neither can the Lodge remit his dues, and restore him to good Masonic standing.

*Wagner, 1901.*

94.6 No change in a member's standing on the books of the Lodge can be made after his death, unless an error has been made. After the death of a regularly suspended member, he cannot be restored to good Masonic standing or membership. All proceedings attempting such a result are void.

*Orlady, 1908.*

94.7 Where a member has been suspended for non-payment of dues, and subsequently restored to good Masonic standing, the fee for the admission of a Master Mason, if one is required by the By-Laws of the Lodge, should not be charged, inasmuch as the petitioner is not strictly an applicant for admission, but rather an applicant for re-admission to the membership he formerly enjoyed.

*Lewis, 1939.*

94.8 A newly made Mason who was suspended for non-proficiency prior to 1996, and is now desirous of being restored to membership, must apply in writing to the Lodge in which he was suspended requesting the suspension be removed. A resolution to restore to membership must be presented at a Stated Meeting of the Lodge. The resolution must be laid over until the next Stated Meeting, notice of which must appear in the Lodge Notice, in accordance with prescribed

form, when action upon it shall be taken. A vote of a majority of the Members present is required for adoption. If elected to membership, he is chargeable from that time with dues. A committee of active and knowledgeable Master Masons shall be appointed by the Worshipful Master to instruct and guide the restored Member in his Masonic education.

(Rev. 2002)

*Stenberg, 1987; Cunningham, 2002.*

94.9 If a suspended Member desires to re-affiliate with the Lodge from which he stands suspended, or to affiliate with another Lodge, the following procedure must be followed:

- a. The suspended Member must request the Lodge from which he stands suspended to be restored to (i) membership or (ii) good Masonic standing, as the case may be.
- b. The suspended Member must pay to the Lodge the entire amount of dues for the then current Masonic Year.
- c. The request of the suspended Member to be restored to membership or good Masonic standing, as the case may be, must be published in the Lodge Notice in accordance with the prescribed form, which form shall include the Stated Meeting of the Lodge at which the suspended Member will be restored to membership or good Masonic standing, as the case may be.
- d. The Secretary will present the request of the Member to be restored to membership or good Masonic standing, as the case may be, at the Stated Meeting identified in the Lodge Notice. Provided the conditions of this Decision are satisfied, and unless there is any Member who shall object, such request shall be automatically approved without the need to conduct a vote. In the event of any objection at such Stated Meeting, such request shall be put in the form of a motion for the restoration of such Member to membership or good Masonic standing, as the case may be. The affirmative vote of a majority of the Members present shall be required for the approval of such motion.
- e. If any Member shall raise an objection to such Member's request for restoration to membership or good Masonic standing, as the case may be, prior to the Stated Meeting identified in the Lodge Notice, the Worshipful Master shall table any action on such request and appoint a special committee to investigate the objection and determine whether or not it satisfies the standards of a legitimate Masonic objection. If such special committee shall determine that a legitimate Masonic objection exists with respect to such Member's restoration, then the objection shall stand and there shall be no further action taken on such request.
- f. Restoration to membership automatically carries with it restoration to good Masonic standing. Restoration to good Masonic standing does not carry with it membership in the Lodge, but allows a Member so restored to receive a Certificate of Good Masonic Standing and thereby petition another Lodge for membership.

(Rev. 2012)

*Stenberg, 1987; Gardner, 2008; Sturgeon, 2011; Smith, 2012.*

*See Ahiman Rezon, Section 11.08*

94.10 If a Member who has resigned without prejudice under Article 93.7 desires to re-affiliate with the Lodge from which he stands resigned, or to affiliate with another Lodge, the following procedure must be used.

- a. The resigned Member must request the Lodge from which he stands resigned to be restored to (i) membership or (ii) good Masonic standing.
- b. The resigned Member must pay to such Lodge the full amount of dues for the Masonic Year in which he will be restored to (i) membership or (ii) good Masonic standing.
- c. The request of the resigned Member to be restored to membership or good Masonic standing, as the case may be, must be published in the Lodge Notice in accordance with the prescribed form, which form shall include the Stated Meeting of the Lodge at which a resolution to restore the resigned Member to membership or good Masonic standing, as the case may be, will be considered.
- d. Such resolution will be presented at the Stated Meeting identified in the Lodge Notice and will require the affirmative vote of a majority of the Members present for approval.
- e. Restoration to membership automatically carries with it restoration to good Masonic standing. Restoration to good Masonic standing does not carry with it membership in the Lodge but allows a Member so restored to receive a Certificate of Good Masonic Standing and thereby petition another Lodge for membership.

For the avoidance of doubt, a Lodge cannot restore a Member who has resigned with prejudice under Article 93.7. The Grand Lodge alone can do that.

*Sturgeon, 2011.*

## 95 SEAL

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 12.09; Art. 17.24; Art. 26, Sec. 12*

95.1 All communications sent by the Grand Lodge to a Lodge has its seal attached, but the ordinary correspondence of the Grand Secretary does not. The Grand Secretary has no more right to attach the seal of the Grand Lodge to communications not sent by its direct order than the Secretary of a Lodge has to attach the seal of his Lodge to any notice he may send to any of its members. The seal of a Lodge cannot be used even to summon a member, unless the summons is ordered by the Lodge, and then the seal is attached to show that it is the action of the Lodge. So it is the custom in the Grand Lodge that its seal is only used to authenticate its action, and it was never intended to be attached in the performance of the clerical duties devolving upon its Grand Secretary.

*Nisbet, 1879.*

95.2 The seal of the Lodge is not to be used on unofficial documents.

*Kelly, 1897.*

## 96 SUMMONS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 12.09; Art. 17.13; Art. 19.01, Sec. 10*

96.1 Summons to attend and show cause why a member should not be suspended for nonpayment of dues must be printed on separate sheets of paper from the notices of stated meetings; should be signed by the Master, and have the seal of the Lodge attached, attested by the Secretary and sent by certified mail. Summonses should not be printed on the notices of meetings.

*Williamson, 1983.*

96.2 A resolution of the Lodge to summon is not a summons, nor is a notice with the seal of the Lodge attached a summons. There must be a regular form of summons, with the seal of the Lodge attached.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

## 97 SUSPENSION OF MEMBERS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 18.07, .09; Art. 19.01, .02; Art. 20.03*

97.1 Subordinate Lodges must invoice members for dues on or before the end of the second week of September. Dues are payable by the January Stated Meeting of the Subordinate Lodge. A Lodge may proceed against a member for non-payment of dues after having given him due notice of the same. Those owing dues will be suspended at the January Stated Meeting after having been given due notice. The Lodge may at its discretion postpone suspension to the February Stated Meeting, but no longer. Fifty-year members and those members who are unable to pay their dues by reason of financial hardship determined after an investigation by the Subordinate Lodge shall not be suspended but may have their dues remitted.

*(Rev. 2026)*

*Stenberg, 1986; Brink 2026.*

97.2 The Master cannot declare members suspended for non-payment of dues. This must be done by a vote of the Lodge.

*(Rev. 1989)*

*(Removed 1994)*

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

*Hohenschildt, 1994.*

97.3 A suspension for non-payment of dues does not become operative until the Lodge has closed.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

97.4 A Lodge cannot rescind a vote of suspension at a meeting subsequent to that at which it was adopted.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

97.5 A Brother missing only two years – the legal presumption of his death has not yet arisen and he must be considered alive. Seven years' absence without being heard from, is the rule of civil law in such cases. The Brother must be considered a member, and may be suspended for nonpayment of dues. If any reasonable rumor of his death occurs, then the Lodge can act on the rumor, and report him dead.

*(Rev. 1986)*

*Arnold, 1894.*

97.6 A member who has been suspended can only be required to pay the amount charged against him at the time he was suspended. A Lodge cannot charge dues against any one not a member, consequently no additional indebtedness can accrue between the date of suspension and the time of payment except in cases of restoration to membership within a year, when dues are charged continuously.

*Nisbet, 1878.*

97.7 A member of a Lodge suspended for non-payment of dues is, during the continuance of that suspension, deprived of all his rights as a Master Mason. He is not permitted to visit any Lodge, or hold Masonic communication with his Brethren. He is not entitled to Masonic relief, or, in case of death, to a Masonic burial.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

97.8 A suspended member is “suspended not merely from the Lodge but from all the privileges of Freemasonry, and is excluded from all Masonic communication.” It is a Masonic offense to give him information as to the doings of the Lodge.

*Com. on Appeals, 1896.*

97.9 A printed notice of suspension of certain Members for non-payment of dues, is not only improper but unmasonic. While such a notice is permissible in case of an expulsion for unmasonic conduct, the suspension for non-payment of dues is entirely different. In the former case, it is for a violation of an obligation, and membership can only be regained by action of the Grand Lodge; while in the latter case, it may arise from an inability beyond a Brother’s control, who may at any time, within one year from the date of suspension, on payment of the arrearages for which he was suspended, by a two-thirds vote of the Lodge, be restored to membership therein. (See *Ahiman Rezon*, Art. 19.02)

*Deyoe, 1966.*

97.10 A Lodge cannot suspend an Officer for dereliction of duty, but it is the duty of the Master to do so.

*Wagner, 1901.*

97.11 If the Lodge inflicts suspension as a penalty, it must be indefinite, without limit, condition or qualification. Whenever the Lodge thinks a Brother suspended for any other cause than non-payment of dues has been sufficiently punished, application can be made by vote of the Lodge to Grand Lodge, to remove the suspension.

*(Rev. 1997)*

*Perkins, 1872.*

97.12 Before a Member is suspended for non-payment of dues, a thorough investigation should be made to determine the cause of the delinquency. An effort should be made through a personal letter, visit or telephone call to ascertain if the Brother is financially able to pay his dues. Unless he has lost all interest in Freemasonry, every effort should be made to avert his suspension.

No 50-Year Member shall be suspended until the necessary facts have been submitted to the Grand Master for his review and decision.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

*See 51.1-.6; 93.2; 96.1-.2*

97.13 The general rule is that a Member who has been (i) indicted for a violation of criminal law, and (ii) tried and convicted or has pleaded guilty, has by such underlying conduct committed an offense against Freemasonry which is conduct unbecoming a Mason and/or gross un-Masonic conduct, and consequently should be suspended or expelled, depending on the severity of his conduct, if charges are filed against him. However, notwithstanding such general rule, it is within the discretion of the Lodge to find special circumstances which are sufficiently compelling for the Lodge to find that such Member has not committed conduct unbecoming a Mason and/or gross un-Masonic conduct and should therefore not be suspended or expelled. It is to be noted that those suspended may petition a Grand Master at some future time to be reinstated, whereas expulsion will prevent reinstatement.

*(Rev. 2013)*

*Carpenter, 1984; Gardner, 2008; Sturgeon, 2011; Smith, 2012, 2013.*

*See 19.27*

97.14 Subject to the exceptions set forth in the following paragraphs, the general rule is that a Grand Master does not have the authority to unilaterally and summarily suspend or expel a Member of a Lodge. Members are entitled to the rights set forth in Article 22 of the Ahiman Rezon, Section 10 of Ancient Charges, Ceremonies and Forms of the Grand Lodge and the provisions of the Digest of Decisions, including but not limited to Article 19 thereof. An accused Member may appeal the final decision of a Lodge with respect to his suspension or expulsion to the Grand Lodge Committee on Appeals and the provisions of Articles 13.10 through 13.19 (or any successor provisions) of the Ahiman Rezon shall govern the proceedings of such appeal.

There are two exceptions to the general rule set forth in the preceding paragraph:

First, in the event a Member (including any Member who may then be suspended for non-payment of dues) has been (i) indicted for violation of criminal law, and (ii) been tried and convicted or has pleaded guilty to such offense, then a Lodge shall not be required to hold a full Masonic trial. Alternatively, in such event, the Lodge shall be permitted to submit charges incorporating the record of the criminal proceedings to a Trial Committee appointed in accordance with Article 22 of the Ahiman Rezon and Section 10 of the Ancient Charges, Ceremonies and Forms of the Grand Lodge. The Trial Committee may then, solely on the basis of such charges and records of the criminal proceedings, report its findings and recommendations to the Lodge at a Stated Meeting. The Lodge may consider and act upon the Trial Committee's report at such Stated Meeting without special formal notice to such Member or the opportunity of such Member, or his designee, to be heard.

Second, a Grand Master may unilaterally and summarily suspend or expel a Member if such Member is alleged to have committed a criminal act or an act of moral turpitude that would constitute conduct unbecoming a Mason or gross un-Masonic conduct and, in the reasonable determination of the Grand Master, the continued membership of such Member could foreseeably adversely affect the reputation of Grand Lodge, its Subordinate Lodges or its members.

For the avoidance of doubt, consistent with Masonic Law, such a suspension or expulsion shall be deemed an edict with the full force and effect of Masonic Law and there shall be no appeal from such edict of a Grand Master. For the further avoidance of doubt, nothing in this Section 97.14 shall be deemed to limit or restrict the authority of the Grand Master to edict a censure concerning the conduct of a Member or to suspend a Member pending the outcome of any criminal proceeding. (See Section 34.2.)

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, and without limiting any other remedy or right set forth herein, in the event that (i) a Lodge refuses to take action on Masonic charges brought against a Member, (ii) the Grand Master reasonably believes that a Lodge will be unable or unwilling to conduct the Masonic trial or other proceedings as contemplated by Masonic Law, or (iii) the Grand Master reasonably believes that a Lodge acted arbitrarily and capriciously in connection with a Masonic trial or other proceedings or the consideration of the Trial Committee's recommendation pursuant to a Masonic trial or other proceedings, the Grand Master may submit the case together with all relevant papers in connection with the case to a special committee consisting of at least seven members to conduct a Masonic trial de novo and make a determination as to whether or not the accused Member is guilty or not guilty as to the charge of conduct unbecoming a Mason and/or gross un-Masonic conduct. An accused Member may appeal the final decision of such special committee with respect to his suspension or expulsion to the Grand Lodge Committee on Appeals and the provisions of Articles 13.10 through 13.19 (or any successor provisions) shall govern the proceedings of such appeal.

(Rev. 2026)

*Sturgeon, 2011; Smith, 2012; Derr, 2024; Brink 2026.*



**98 TAXES**

98.1 I am glad to report that a decision has been obtained from the United States Internal Revenue Service that donors of gifts to the Masonic Villages or Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation may claim credit as contributions to charity in connection with their income tax returns.

It is also to be noted that legacies for the purposes of the Masonic Villages and Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation are not subject to Federal Estate Taxes.

It is suggested to the Brethren that any tax claims relating to their Lodges should be referred to the Grand Master's Office for information.

*Williamson, 1983.*

**98A TRADITIONAL OBSERVANCE LODGES**

98A.1 The Grand Lodge has previously warranted two so called "Traditional Observance Lodges". The purpose of this Article is to clarify that any Traditional Observance Lodge operating under the Grand Lodge's jurisdiction, whether previously formed or hereafter formed, may hold the "entrance processional" and "chain of union" ceremonies before the opening or after the closing of the Lodge, as the case may be. Any other ceremonies or proceedings that depart from those of a regular Subordinate Lodge must be approved by the Grand Master.

*(Rev. 2011)*

*Gardner, 2008; Sturgeon, 2011.*

98A.2 See Article 93.8 concerning primary membership in a Traditional Observance Lodge.

*(Rev. 2011)*

*Gardner, 2008; Sturgeon, 2011.*

98A.3 For the avoidance of doubt, Articles 86.7 and 86.8 relating to plural membership shall apply to Traditional Observance Lodges operating under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge.

*(Rev. 2011)*

*Gardner, 2008; Sturgeon, 2011.*

98A.4 The above Articles do not apply to any candidate who receives his three degrees in a Traditional Observance Lodge.

*(Removed 2011)*

*Gardner, 2008.*



## 99 WARRANTS

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 10.01;  
Art. 17.01, .02, .07, .17 thru .23; Art. 18.02, .03, Sec. 11*

99.1 It is the established custom of the Grand Lodge to refer all petitions for Warrants for new Lodges to the Grand Officers, with power to act. The *Ahiman Rezon* prescribes the absolute prerequisites in all cases. In every case in which the prayer of the petitioner is granted, it is required:

1st. That the officers named in the Warrant shall be men of good moral character, of intelligence, and qualified to do the work of the Lodge, as prescribed by the Grand Master.

2nd. That the building in which the Lodge is to be held shall be a suitable one, and the Lodge room with the rooms adjacent adapted for Masonic uses and purposes.

3rd. That the place in which the Lodge is to be located shall be one which in all probability will support a flourishing and vigorous Lodge.

4th. That the prosperity of no existing Lodge shall be impaired by the granting of the Warrant.

Of these facts it is necessary that assurance be given either by certificate in writing, or other satisfactory evidence.

*Grand Lodge, 1895.*

99.2 Any Master Mason who has resigned outright from his Lodge and has a Lodge Certificate, or has conditionally resigned from another Lodge in this Jurisdiction and has a Transfer Certificate, can sign the petition for a Warrant for a new Lodge.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

99.3 A Warrant may be granted for a Lodge that will perform degree work and/or programs in a language other than English. All business of the Lodge shall, however, be conducted in English.

*Brown, 1905; Dlugie 2000.*

99.4 By resolution of the Grand Lodge, no Lodge can be named after a living person, and this Regulation cannot be evaded.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

99.5 On printed or other matter of the Lodge, F. and A.M., and not A. Y. M., should be used.

*MacCalla, 1889.*

99.6 The Warrant of the Lodge is in the custody of the Master. In his absence, it is in charge of the Senior Warden, and in the absence of both the Master and Senior Warden, it is in charge of the Junior Warden. Its possession by another is forbidden unless so authorized by the Grand Master. They have no power to put the custody of it in another. The charge or custody of the Warrant is imposed upon them and limited to them. The Grand Lodge has given it to them and their successors, and no power exists in them to usurp the Sovereign Authority of the Grand Lodge, which creates Lodges by granting Warrants, and duly constitutes them.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

99.7 If they have no Warrant, they cannot hold a Lodge, and all work done by them without their Warrant must be declared null and void and of no effect whatever.

*Day, 1883.*

99.8 The authority to open and hold a Lodge is contained in its Warrant. If not openly displayed from the pedestal of the Master, it is the right and duty of any member present to object to the transacting of any business.

*Africa, 1891.*

99.9 I am asked whether the Master should call off from labor, that the Warrant might be sent out to be inspected by a visitor, who demanded it on his examination by a Committee. The Master ought not to do so, or permit the Warrant to go out.

*Lamberton, 1871.*

99.10 Warrant of Lodge was sequestered, the Lodge having initiated a candidate after having been prohibited by the Grand Master from so doing.

*Eichbaum, 1887.*

99.11 Warrant of Lodge was sequestered for failure to comply with the requirements of the *Ahiman Rezon* and obey the Edict of the Grand Master to expel two members, guilty of joining the Cerneau Rite.

*Com. on Appeals, 1895.*

99.12 When a Warrant of a Lodge has been sequestered, the Lodge and its members during such sequestration, are deprived of the privileges of representation in the Grand Lodge.

*Africa, 1891.*

*See 72.12*

99.13 During the suspension of its Warrant, a Lodge has no power or right to receive and act upon petitions. Any such action by the Lodge is unlawful and invalid.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

99.14 A Lodge cannot work while under the penalty of suspension, nor can any of its members visit, for they, like their Lodge, are under suspension.

*Vaux, 1868.*

99.15 Your Lodge cannot surrender its Warrant, as long as five members are willing to retain it and sustain the Lodge. Nor would it be just if you have non-resident members, whose signatures could not be obtained for an application for a new Warrant, as they, without any choice in the case, would be left as unaffiliated Masons.

*Nisbet, 1880.*

99.16 A Lodge surrendering its Warrant, its members are non-affiliated Masons.

*Lamberton, 1870.*

99.17 The Warrant for Lodge having been regularly surrendered, it may, on petition to the Grand Lodge, be restored to those who were members thereof, in good standing at the time of the surrender.

*Africa, 1892.*

99.18 The *Ahiman Rezon* provides for the surrender to the Grand Lodge of the Warrant, books, furniture, funds, etc., of a Lodge in case of its dissolution. As long as a Lodge is active it retains possession and control of all its property. A vote of the majority of the members present would be sufficient to authorize a sale and conveyance of real estate held by the Lodge, but such action must be taken at a meeting of which the members shall be notified of such proposed action.

*Africa, 1891.*

99.19 Grand Lodge will not consider a petition for the transfer of the warrant of a Subordinate Lodge unless and until the Subordinate Lodge demonstrates the following:

(a) The Subordinate Lodge has carefully studied the matter and has made a reasoned and informed decision to petition the Grand Lodge for the transfer of its Warrant to a different location.

(b) The officers of the Subordinate Lodge have used commercially reasonable efforts to notify the members of the Subordinate Lodge of its review and consideration of the issue, including by publication in the Lodge Notice.

(c) Definitive arrangements acceptable to the Grand Lodge have been made by the Subordinate Lodge for a different meeting location.

(d) The Subordinate Lodge, through the District Deputy, has obtained the consent of each other Subordinate Lodge that meets within 5 miles of the proposed meeting location.

(e) To the extent that the Subordinate Lodge has a fractional interest in the real estate where it presently meets (whether or not directly or indirectly through a Masonic Temple or Hall Association), and such real estate is not being sold, arrangements acceptable to Grand Lodge for the continued ownership or transfer of such interest have been made.

(f) The Subordinate Lodge is in compliance with all other provisions of Masonic Law, including, to the extent applicable, those provisions relating to the purchase or sale of real estate.

(g) A resolution for the approval of the petition was printed in the Lodge Notice and thereafter approved by the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the members present at a Special Meeting of the Subordinate Lodge.

(h) The petition submitted to the Grand Master through the District Deputy sets forth the foregoing in reasonable detail.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, for the avoidance of doubt, Grand Lodge may, in its sole discretion, deny such petition or provide such further conditions as it deems advisable or in the best interest of the Subordinate Lodge or the Fraternity under its jurisdiction.

*Dietz,*

## 100 WORK

*See Ahiman Rezon, Art. 17.14*

100.1 None but the authorized work as approved by the Grand Master is permitted in this Jurisdiction.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

**100.2 Only the work as authorized by the Grand Master may be exemplified, rehearsed or performed in Pennsylvania.**

Except as provided by Article 17.30 of the *Ahiman Rezon* relating to Meetings and to Work in the Symbolic Lodge rooms of the George Washington Masonic Memorial Building at Alexandria, Virginia, Pennsylvania Work cannot be conferred in other Jurisdictions.

The work of other Jurisdictions cannot be exemplified, rehearsed or performed in Pennsylvania except by dispensation of the Grand Master.

Pennsylvania Work may be exemplified in other Jurisdictions only with permission of the Jurisdiction where the work is to be exemplified and a dispensation from the Grand Master of Pennsylvania.

*(Rev. 1988)*

*McCain, 1976; Kurtz, 1988.*

100.3 A “School of Instruction” is permitted to operate within the Jurisdiction of Pennsylvania with the prior approval of the Grand Master.

*(Rev. 2008)*

*Mitchell, 1885; Gardner, 2008.*

100.4 In the matter of giving Masonic instruction, two things are of primary importance: First, that the instructor is in possession of the authorized work of the Craft, and imparts instruction by the authorization of either the Grand Master or District Deputy Grand Master; and second, that such instruction is given, if possible, in a Lodge room, or if he be a number of miles distant, then in some secure place, retired from observation, every precaution being taken to exclude eavesdroppers from proximity to the place.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

100.5 There can be no objection to members of the Fraternity meeting together periodically or at their convenience, at the meeting place of the Lodge, and discussing Masonic subjects or rehearsing the work, but such an assemblage or organization cannot receive official recognition; but such meeting must be behind tyled doors.

*Africa, 1892.*

100.6 Five Master Masons are competent to open and do the work of a Lodge. They need not all be members of the Lodge.

*(Rev. 1983)*

*Nisbet, 1878.*

100.7 The Master may at any time place any Brother who is a Master Mason in the East to do the work, but is responsible for any errors that may occur, or any violation of the Landmarks of the Craft or Rules and Regulations of the Grand Lodge.

*Tennis, 1902.*

100.8 It is not necessary that a motion should be made to proceed to initiate a petitioner who has been approved. The work is done at the will and pleasure of the Master.

*MacCalla, 1890.*

100.9 Where there are several candidates for either the Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft or Master Masons degree, it is permissible for the Master, at his pleasure, to omit the main portion of the lecture, when initiating or passing the first candidate, stating to him at the time that he will receive the lecture later in the evening, with the remaining candidates; and then he should give the entire lecture to all the candidates together.

*Deyoe, 1966.*

100.10 While only five Freemasons can be made on any one day, any number of Brethren who may be entitled to the privilege can be passed or raised.

*Africa, 1892.*

100.11 So-called degree teams are authorized to confer degrees on duly qualified candidates in our Masonic Lodges, providing that only the approved Pennsylvania Masonic work is done as set forth in 100.2, that all those participating are Members in good standing, that permission is obtained from the Worshipful Master well in advance of the meeting, that the proficiency of every member of the degree team is satisfactorily demonstrated to the Worshipful Master or certified to him by proper Masonic authority, and that those participating are in Masonic dress. Degree teams comprised of Members within a specific profession or organization such as PIN Clubs, Emergency Services (firefighters, EMTs, etc.) are permitted to confer degrees in the uniform appropriate for their profession up to and including any special aprons made but without firearms and hats, with the exception of the Worshipful Master who is permitted to wear the hat appropriate with the uniform. Pennsylvania ritual is to be performed appropriately and with the District Deputy Grand Master's permission to confer the degree in their appropriate attire.

*Deyoe, 1966; Sturgeon, 2010.*

100.12 The procedure for conferring degrees on handicapped candidates must be approved by the District Deputy Grand Master with the assistance of the Regional Instructor of the Ritualistic Work.

*Kurtz, 1989.*

100.13 Physical infirmities are no longer a prohibition to initiation and membership in the Craft. Accordingly, I have decided that a man who cannot see without corrective lenses may wear them while the Degrees are being conferred upon him and a man who cannot hear without a hearing aid may wear one while the Degrees are being conferred upon him.

*Kurtz, 1988.*

100.14 Lodges have the option of modifying the lighting in the Lodge room during the conferring of degrees and other ceremonies only with the approval of the District Deputy Grand Master. The most important criteria in any revisions to lighting is the maintenance of the solemnity and dignity of our ritual.

*Kurtz, 1989; Weissner, 1997; Ernette, 1998.*

100.15 A Member of a Pennsylvania Blue Lodge wishing to serve his Lodge by being elected and installed as the Worshipful Master must be proficient in meeting the Statewide Ritualistic Minimum Standard. The Minimum Standard requirements by the Grand Lodge are that the incoming Worshipful Master must be proficient in conferring at least two degrees as well as the business of the Lodge. The Senior and Junior Wardens must be proficient in the business of the Lodge. All must be certified as such at the District School of Instruction by November 1 of the current Masonic Year.

The District Deputy Grand Master is responsible for establishing ritualistic standards in his District. If these standards are greater than the Minimum Standard required by Grand Lodge, the District standards will supersede those of Grand Lodge.

By virtue of having served as Worshipful Master prior to the issuance of this Decision, a Past Master may again serve as Master and need not be certified. This is to allow the current officers time to become proficient and be certified as such prior to serving as Worshipful Master.

*(Rev. 2014)*

*Gardner, 2008; Bateman, 2014.*

## 101 YOUTH

101.1 The Worshipful Master is authorized to appoint a worthy member, not necessarily a Past Master, as a representative to the Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation.

*Williamson, 1982.*

101.2 The name of the Lodge Representative to the Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation may be listed on the back page of the Lodge notice, if possible, or in any other convenient space in the notice.

*Williamson, 1982.*

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