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I. INTRODUCTION

A. THE CHARGES OF A FREE MASON
A Mason is obligated to obey the moral law and if he rightly understands the Art he never will be a stupid Atheist or an irreligious Libertine.

In ancient times Masons were charged in every Country to be of the Religion of that Country or Nation, whatever it was. It is now thought more expedient only to oblige them to that Religion in which all men agree, leaving their particular opinions to themselves: "That, is to be good men and true, or Men of Honor and Honesty, by whatever denomination or persuasion they may be distinguished whereby Masonry becomes the Center of Union and the Means of conciliating true Friendship among persons that must have otherwise remained at a perpetual distance".

A Mason is a peaceful Subject to the Civil Powers, wherever he resides, or works, and is never to be concerned in Plots and Conspiracies against the Peace and Welfare of the Nation.

A Lodge is a place where Masons assemble and work; hence that Assembly, or duly organized Society of Masons, is called a Lodge, and every Brother ought to belong to one and to be subject to its Bylaws and the General Regulations. It is either particular or general, and will be best understood by attending it, and by Regulations of the General or Grand Lodge. In ancient times, no Master or Fellow could be absent from it, especially when warned to appear without incurring a severe Censure unless it appeared to the Master and Wardens, that pure necessity hindered him.

The person admitted members of a Lodge must be good and true men, freeborn, and of mature age, no Bondmen, no Women, no Immoral or Scandalous men, but only those of good Report. No Master or Warden is chosen by seniority, but for their merit. It is impossible to describe these things in writing, and every Brother must attend in his place, and learn them in a way peculiar to this fraternity.

No brother can be a Warden until he has passed the part of the Fellowcraft; or a Master until he has been elected as a Warden, nor a Grand Master until he has been Master of a Lodge.

B. OF BEHAVIOR
In the Lodge while Constituted, you are not to hold private committees or separate conversation without permission from the Master, nor to talk of anything impertinent or unseemly, nor interrupt the Master, or Wardens or any Brother speaking to the Master; nor behave yourself comically or jestingly while the Lodge is engaged in what is serious and solemn; nor use any unbecoming language upon any pretense whatsoever.

C. THE LODGE
A Lodge is the room or place in which a regularly constituted body of Freemasons assembles for work and the transaction of business for the organization. The term is also used to designate the collection of Masons assembled. Just as we use the word "church" to signify the building in which a congregation of worshippers meet, as well as the congregation itself.

A Lodge is defined to be an assembly of Masons, just, perfect, and regular, who together meet to discuss on the beauties and mysteries of the Order, and to add new material to the sacred work.

It is just, because it contains the volume of Sacred Law unfolded, together with the square and compasses; perfect, having the required number of members present to transact business in a regular and constitutional manner, and regular, from its warrant of constitution in which the Lodge is held, subject to its bylaws and the general regulations.

D. FORMATION OF LODGES
No Lodge is recognized unless it has emanated from a Grand Lodge, and works in obedience to the regulations of its parent. No recognition is given to Masons irregularly made or an irregular (clandestine) Lodge. Lodges work under distinct and separate authority; the first, Under Dispensation (UD) from the Grand Master, the second, Under Warrant (Charter) from the Grand Lodge.
E. LODGE UNDER DISPENSATION
In the formation of a new Lodge, which is technically termed a Lodge under Dispensation, a petition signed by not less than seven Master Masons in good standing is presented to the Grand Master. There must be good reason for the organization of a lodge at that time and place.

The place of meeting must be designated and the names of the first three officers stated. The petition must be recommended by the District Deputy Grand Master of the area in which the Lodge would be located. The District Deputy Grand Master must certify that the officers proposed are qualified to confer the degrees, give instructions, lectures and perform all ceremonious relative to the order. UD Lodges operate until the next regular Grand Lodge Communication where the Grand Master will recommend that a Charter be granted or not as the case may be. The Grand Lodge will issue a charter if so voted by the members in regular session.

F. CHARTERED LODGES
The powers, duties and privileges of a subordinate Lodges are such as are defined by its charter, by the constitution and general regulations of the Grand Lodge, and the ancient landmarks. They are divided into:

I. Executive - In the direction and performance of its work under the control of its Master, and all others matters in sustaining the Master, who has primary executive power of the Lodge.

II. Legislative - Embracing all matters relating to its internal concerns not in derogation of the ancient landmarks, the constitutions and general regulations of the Grand Lodge, or of its own particular bylaws.

III. Judicial - Embracing the exercise of discipline and settlement of controversies between and over all its members (except the Master), and over all Masons and non-affiliated brethren within its jurisdiction, subject to an appeal to the Grand Lodge.

The powers of a chartered Lodge are divided into Inherent and Corporate. A Lodge by virtue of its inherent rights, as defined by ancient landmarks, established usages of Masonry, and when recognized by a Grand Lodge, has the power:

1. To retain its charter until lawfully surrendered, suspended, or revoked
2. To fix its time and place (If nor outside the place named in the charter) of meetings.
3. To meet and do all the work of craft Masonry.
4. To elect and initiate members, and to reject any application for membership.
5. To elect and install its officers.
6. To make laws requiring members to contribute to its funds.
7. To instruct its representatives, for their government, at all communications of the Grand Lodge.
8. To place on trial, for cause, its own members, sojourners, and unaffiliated Masons living within its jurisdiction.
9. To appeal to the Grand Master or Grand Lodge from the decision of the Master.
10. To make bylaws for its local government.

The corporate rights of a Lodge are conferred by its charter and by the powers thereof they are entitled:

1. To representation in all communications of the Grand Lodge.
2. To protection while in the lawful exercise of its inherent rights.
3. To the enjoyment of all powers conferred by the Grand Lodge upon any constituent Lodge.

G. FORFEITURE OF CHARTER
The acts for which a charter may be forfeited and the Lodge dissolved are:

1. Defiance to the authority of the Grand Master or Grand Lodge.
2. Departure from the original plan of Masonry, and a violation of the ancient landmarks.
3. Disobedience of the constitutions.
4. Ceasing to meet for one year or more.
5. Admitting clandestine Masons or initiating known immoral candidates.

H. SURRENDERING THE CHARTER
A Lodge may be dissolved by the voluntary surrender of its charter by its members, after special summons for that purpose, unless the minority opposed to such surrender consist of seven or more members, that number being the constitutional complement to initiate or receive, hence that number may retain the charter.
I. SUSPENDING THE CHARTER
The Grand Master may, for cause, arrest the charter of a Lodge, not to extend beyond the next annual communication of the Grand Lodge. Such suspensions the time, arrests the work of the Lodge and prevents its meetings, but does not affect the Masonic Standing of its members or destroy the legality of its charter.

J. DUTIES OF A LODGE
A Lodge, by its acceptance of a charter, and its officers and members by their several Masonic obligations, are inviolably bound to obey the laws of Masonry. The duties of a Lodge, therefore, are:

1. To observe and preserve the ancient usages of Masonry.
2. To obey the constitution and regulations of the Grand Lodge.
3. To render the Grand Master or his deputy all due respect and obedience.
4. Respectively to hear all official communications from the Grand Lodge, the Grand Master or any officer acting by their authority.
5. To be properly represented at the annual communications of the Grand Lodge.
6. To possess the proper jewels, clothing, paraphernalia and a suitable seal.
7. To provide for its meetings a safe and suitable Lodge room.
8. To make, through its Secretary, the annual reports of its work and condition to Grand Lodge, and punctually to pay its annual dues.

For a persistent or inexcusable neglect by a Lodge, or of its officers, of any of the duties imposed; and for any deliberate violation of its obligations to Masonry or to the authority of the Grand Lodge, or the edicts of the Grand Master, the charter thereof may be suspended or revoked.

K. AUTHORITY OVER SUSPENDED MASONS
A Master Mason having been suspended for unmasonic conduct, and while under such suspension, may upon new charges for repetition of the first offence, or for any other offence, be tried and expelled, or an additional term of suspension be inflicted if the offence so warrants, by the Lodge having personal jurisdiction over him.

L. GOVERNMENT OF THE LODGE
There is no plainer or more definite law in Masonry than that the Master must preside over his Lodge; but in case of his absence, from any cause, the Senior Warden, and in the absence of both, the Junior Warden shall summon the Lodge to order, and succeed to all the powers and privileges of the Master, as though the Master himself were present, provided the warrant shall be present. In the absence of the Master and the two Wardens, the Lodge cannot be opened except by dispensation from the Grand Master.

A Past Master can only preside when the Master or one of the Wardens is present and opens the Lodge. After which he may call such Past Master to the chair. Who ever occupies the chair, legally controls the Lodge. Even the Grand Master, if present, can exercise no authority until he has taken the chair and assumed the gavel.

M. OFFICERS OF A LODGE
The prosperity, the success, and the usefulness of a Lodge, and its ability to discharge the duties and objects of Freemasonry, depend greatly upon the character and judgment of its officers. The discipline of a Masonic Lodge, the order observed at its meetings, the obedience there exacted, and cheerfully rendered on the part of the brethren, make its government as nearly perfect as it is possible for any human institution to be. Intelligent and capable officers make good Lodges. It is the imperative duty of the officers a Lodge to be careful, prudent, and pacifying, positive in requiring obedience to the law. They must smooth down all irregularities of manner, spreading the cement of brotherly love and affection; rendering to everyone that due attention which should ever distinguish a band of brothers, and by their own example they exhibit the beauties of the craft, they admonish with kindness, and reprehend with justice. Unity is the mainspring of Freemasonry. Destroy that, and the machinery will fall in pieces.

N. PAST MASTERS
Past Masters here allude to those who have been legally elected Masters of chartered Lodges, served their term of office, and are recognized as Actual Past Masters. Their privileges are such as may be expressly given by the Constitution of the Grand Lodge, and in addition, they are qualified to install any Master elect, when requested to do so, and to be present at the qualifications of a Master elected to the chair.

Past Master is always eligible to re-election, without further service, to any office in the Lodge. He is eligible as a proxy or representative of the Grand Master to perform any duty when that officer cannot attend. As a courtesy, a Past Master is entitled to a seat in the east. Every Master Mason in good standing must respect a Past Master in matters of discipline.
O. WHY ARE WE HERE?
A Masonic Lodge meeting is called for the purpose of promoting Freemasonry and no other purpose. It is not a time for spectacular entertainment or for the dissipation of the energies of the Brethren in activities that have nothing to do with the growth of the spiritual life of the individual. A Lodge meeting is for the purpose of promoting Freemasonry and that alone.

For a Brother to pass between the Worshipful Master and the Altar, for a Secretary to converse aloud or to rattle his papers with a foolish significance of importance, for members to converse while a degree is being enacted, or for a Master to slouch in his seat with his hat on the floor, or for like reasons of impropriety, who can enjoy his attendance at a lodge where so little respect is shown to Masonry itself?

P. BALLOT
In case of secret ballot on a petition or other proposition before the Lodge is taken and the candidate rejected or the proposition lost, it is unmasonic for any brother to purposely make known his vote or to purposely seek out the nature of another's vote, or, if known to him, to reveal it to another. Each member voting is the sole judge of what his voice shall be, and he shall not be questioned concerning it. The maximum penalty for violation of this rule is expulsion from the Order.

Years of experience have taught the Craft the wisdom of this law. Masons aware of their responsibilities will never violate it. Except for the Holy Bible, the ballot is the most sacred thing in the Lodge. Every Mason owes to his Lodge the duty of protecting it against poor candidate material and every Mason owes to every petitioner a fair ballot. The upright man and Mason, true to the tradition of the Craft, will never allow personal spite to influence his behavior at the ballot box. In the case of honest doubt, Freemasonry, and not the petitioner is entitled to the benefit of the doubt.

Q. BROTHER IS A TITLE
In the customs of Freemasonry, "Brother" is a title-as much so as Worshipful, Right Worshipful, or Most Worshipful, and must always be used as such. A man does not attend a Lodge communication in his capacity as a private individual. He is not just Joe or John but is there in his capacity as a Mason. For this reason, one should never in open Lodge refer to one as "Rod H.", but always to "Brother H.", in the same literal significance as any office in the Lodge or Grand Lodge.

R. COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS
Members of Lodges and of Grand Lodges should consider appointments to a committee as a high honor and should be prompt and vigorous in carrying out the duties assumed by accepting the appointment. If unable or unwilling to serve, he should promptly decline or resign there from; the failure to do, so is a breach of Masonic etiquette.

S. MASTERS HAT
The kind of hat a Master should wear is determined by good taste. A cap or flop hat is always inappropriate. The governing principle is good taste, in homage to that, a Master will never wear any type hat that will attract attention out of oddity or degrade from the dignity of his office. The hat is an emblem of the Master's authority, a ennobling mark by which the importance of his office is distinguished. The Worshipful Master should remove his hat only, for the Grand Master in person; during prayer, when the name of the Deity is spoken, at a funeral that is held in a church or chapel, as a sign of reverence. He wears his hat at a funeral only during the time that the Masonic Rites are given. In Grand Lodge communications, only the Grand Master remains covered.

T. PREPARATION ROOM
If there is anyone place in all the confines of the Temple where a wise Worshipful Master will use every possible precaution to see that good taste, courtesy, and thoughtful kindness are displayed to the utmost; it is in the Preparation Room where all degree work begins. If a candidate finds a Preparation Room unclean, littered, full of smoke, alcohol on members breath, joking (especially off-color joking) going on, he will form an unfavorable impression of Freemasonry that may remain with him for years. The best way to teach him from the beginning that the Lodge is worthy of respect is for the Lodge brethren to show respect for him. Clothing him with ritualistic dress should be done with tact, by brethren who realize that entrance into Masonry is a serious experience. Candidates are prepared by the Stewards, and no one else should ever be present with them except the Junior Deacon, Senior Deacon or the Master or someone delegated by him.

U. DEVOTION
The Worshipful Master should call upon the Chaplain (and in his absence should arrange for a brother to act as Chaplain) to perform his office and the Chaplain should perform it with deliberateness, not with haste, but with
earnestness, sincerity and a dignified manner. Devotion and prayer is for everyone. The Master should not consult memoranda during prayer; the Secretary should discontinue his work, all should rise and keep absolute silence while it is being given.

V. DRESS
Shall a Lodge require of its officers that they wear formal dress? The wisdom of so doing depends entirely upon the circumstances and is a point which is the prerogative of each subordinate Lodge to decide. Much can be said of Masonic Dress since it is a mark of respect to the Fraternity. In any event, one thing is certain: if any of the officers are required to wear formal attire, all the officers should wear such without exception. This is especially true at funerals, Lodges of Sorrow and laying cornerstones, as these are always open to the public. The teams performing those ceremonies should always dress the same to include the type of necktie or bow tie, worn. The Worshipful Master should use a hat to correspond to the occasion; not a soft hat, straw hat or cap. The Harmony of good taste will be better served if all dress alike. There is philosophy as in dress as in so many other things, and the dress proper to Masonic occasion is no exception. Its principle is good taste; its practice is to wear such attire as shows respect to the Brotherhood and expresses the dignity of Masonry.

W. ELECTION TO OFFICE
The subject of election to Lodge office falls naturally in the field of jurisprudence, but in some aspects is so closely related to decorum and to all that seeks to preserve harmony that it will be considered briefly here. The point at issue has to do with the "advancement" of an officer at the time of the annual election or with his appointment if he is an appointed officer. In the majority of cases this custom may work to the advantage of the Lodge if fitness is manifest. However, there is neither law nor tradition which gives any officer of the Lodge a "right" to be thus advanced. There is no advancement by right. If the officer should not be advanced, neither he nor his friends should take offense. A Brother may be unqualified to hold Masonic office for any number of reasons, all of them creditable to himself; such a thing could be said of many excellent Masons. They are not cast for office holding, and will they be happier, and their Lodge be the gainer, if they use other opportunities for service. If a Lodge cannot "drop from the line" any incumbent of proved unfitness without generating ill feelings thereby, it needs to instill into its members a clearer conception of the Masonic system and a feeling of greater loyalty to its welfare.

X. EMBLEMS AND SYMBOLS
It is of utmost importance that a Lodge take great pains to see that the emblems and symbols are of correct design, are well cared for, and are placed in the correct position. The Holy Altar should be in the center of the room, its sides square with the sides of the room. The Great Lights in the proper place, the Lesser Lights placed in the Southeast, Southwest, and Northwest corners of the Altar. The Great Pillars should be of the correct height and design and placed one on each side of the Inner Door. The pillar bearing the Celestial Globe to stand at the candidate’s right as he enters, and the pillar bearing the Terrestrial Globe stands on his left. The Letter "G" should be above the Master’s chair and should be of tasteful design. The appurtenances used in the middle Chamber Lecture of the Second Degree should be adequate in size, dignified in appearance, correct in design and replaced when worn from use. The Holy Bible should be handled with care and reverence and should any of its pages become soiled or torn they should be cleaned or replaced. Some Lodges see fit to cover the appropriate passages with clear plastic. Jewels, regalia, staffs and aprons should be kept in good order, never allowed to grow shabby or be handled carelessly or in a manner showing neglect.

No individual who has theories concerning the emblems and symbols should be permitted to violate the requirements and usages of the Craft. Freemasonry is no man's private property. It lies with no man to impose his private notions upon anything pertaining to the esoteric Ritual. It is the height of vulgarism for a Lodge to permit any member’s name to be engraved on the Lodge Furniture, embroidered or painted on the dressings of the Holy Altar, stamped, embossed or written on the Holy Bible, or otherwise displayed in, or on anything belonging to the Ritual and its exemplifications.

Y. FUNERALS
At a Masonic funeral, including the procession to the cemetery, and the rites of interment, the decorum should be observed as in the Lodge room; no smoking, laughter or loud talking. Brethren should neither join nor leave the line without permission from the Worshipful Master. At the death of a Grand Lodge officer, the Grand Master may order the officers Lodge to be in mourning for thirty days. At the death of a Grand Master or Past Grand Master, all lodges are usually in mourning for 30 days. The Charter may be draped; a small band of black crepe should be tied to the head of each staff and to each of the three gavels.

The ceremonies should be given from memory. The Worshipful Master and other Brethren having parts assigned by him should assure in advance that they have the ceremonies well learned. For them to halt, stumble or mumble their
words, is painful to the bereaved and puts the Craft in an unfavorable light before the public. Every word should be correctly pronounced clearly enunciated, and the ceremony conducted with dignity and precision.

Not all Masons are gifted with the art of public speech. It is an art, not easily acquired. To read or to recite well requires time, patience, thought and practice. Therefore, the Master not so gifted would do well to choose from among his brethren, one capable of rendering the Masonic Funeral Service in such a manner which will be a source of comfort to those bereaved. If rendered in such a manner, the Masonic Funeral Service is impressive to all who hear. In the event the deceased is buried in military uniform, no apron is placed on the body. The white apron is placed on top of the coffin and the flag draped over the coffin and the apron.

The Masonic Services are always performed last; last in the church, chapel, cemetery or wherever the religious ceremony is held. The Funeral Service should be given with dignity and expression to bring out the meaning. In this world are many words difficult to pronounce and many phrases not easy of rendition. This requires thought, care and study on the part of the person who is to render the service, in order to bring out the warmth and comfort for those bereaved.

Z. THE LETTER "G"
The proper location of the Letter "G" in a Masonic Lodge has long been established. It should be placed in the most prominent and dominating position in the East, over the Master's station. No symbol or emblem of any appendant body or other organization which happens to meet in the lodge room should be permitted in the East. Under no circumstances should an emblem of such appendant body or other organization be permitted to overshadow the Letter "G", replace it, or have equal space and prominence. The Letter "G" should be the central and dominant symbol in the east, whether lighted or unlighted and whether or not the Masonic Lodge be in Communication.

AA. GENERAL RULES
The Freemason is bound by solemn oath, not to reveal the secrets of the Craft; these secrets consisting chiefly of certain signs and passwords. Apart from the obligations of his oath, a Freemason is bound by an unwritten code which regulates his behavior as a Mason, and his relations with the general public.

The first point is that a Freemason must not go about seeking to make converts. Pressure must not be put on anyone to become a Mason. Every candidate must have conceived the wish to become a Freemason without invitation, directly or indirectly, from a member of the Craft.

It is a serious breach of Masonic decorum to use Freemasonry for business purpose. For example, if a business man were to appeal to on Masonic grounds, to Freemasons on the Board or Committee, he should be reported to his Lodge and be severely reprimanded.

BB. RITUAL
Hilarity and/or roughness have no place whatever in any of the three Degrees of Masonry, particularly in the Third; with the Letter "G" in the East, the reciting of Scripture during the circumambulation of the candidates, the Holy Altar and the Holy Bible, each playing so prominent a part in the Work, surely there is no place for roughness or laughter or Applause.

To break into applause because a ritualist has performed well some part will destroy the illusion and reduce the Ritual to the level of a play; nor should applause be give when a candidate has been raised. A Brother does not take part in his own name or perform it in his proper person. His individually should be sunk out of sight, both to him and his Lodge, lest he intrude himself between the candidate and the ritual.

The Brother raised has done nothing to merit applause. Offering himself as a candidate for Masonry is done of his own free will and accord. Why applaud? If we wish to express our pleasure at seeing him as one of us brethren, congratulate him quietly by a handshake when the Lodge is called to refreshment.

Humiliation and embarrassment of candidates during the conferring of the ritual have lost to the Fraternity many potentially fine members who were thus prevented from catching and thrilling to the beauty and spirit of Masonic allegory and symbolism from an otherwise competent and credible rendition. A candidate cannot be reached effectively when he is embarrassed or humiliated, or feels the necessity of staying on guard against any form of hazing, however slight, which has no place in Masonry. We should strive to make initiation effective in the inner life of the candidate, a genuine moral and spiritual experience by which he truly enters a new kind of life. The ritualistic work is designed to be effective in the inner life of the candidate, a genuine moral and spiritual experience by which he enters a new kind of life wherein he will stand obligated to perform duties and make self sacrifices. The obligations he will take will be legally binding on him. His vows must be genuine or he will be led into harmful
hypocrisy. A Lodge that holds first to this truth will no more permit levity to ruin the effect of its work than it would permit its treasurer to falsify a check.

The Third Degree, especially, is of the highest possible seriousness, not a drama, not a play, but a genuine sacred experience. It is improper to discuss the Ritual in public, or to advertise it, or to publish pictures in it, in any way by which the secrets of Masonry may be unlawfully revealed to the profane world. It is a violation of Masonic law to use any description or key, monogram, or written work of a secret character.

**CC. SIGNS**

Signs should always be given with careful accuracy and with full decorum. Under no circumstances should the Master or any other Brother remain seated while giving a sign. It is the prerogative of the Worshipful Master to remain seated and to acknowledge salutation with a nod of the head. He may rise if he chooses to return the salutation. The Senior Warden, who will not wish to assume for the West a prerogative of the East, will always rise to return the salute.

No Brother should ever enter or leave the Lodge without saluting the East or West (if the Master has authorized the West to be Saluted). The Worshipful Master, if he so desires may announce that if any brother wishes to do so he may retire silently and without saluting. This is usually done when the attendance is large or at District or Grand Conventions. To exit without proper salute is a gross breach of Masonic decorum and etiquette.

NOTE: At open meetings and in the lodge room when non Masons are present, during recess or at refreshment, signs are never given under any circumstances.

**DD. PUNCTUALLY**

For officers or members not to be punctual is a discourtesy equally distributed among both groups. If the officers are absent there is no one present to open the Lodge and the members whose time presumably is valuable, must wait. Where both officers and members fall into the habit of unpunctuality, a vicious circle is set up. The members delay because the officers are expected to be late. The officers tend to be late because they expect the members to be late. Each group blames the other, and opportunity for friction is offered.

The Worshipful Master is charged with the responsibility of breaking the cycle by insisting that his officers be on time. He should insist that his officers notify him in advance if they expect to be absent or late, in order that he may make provisions to have their offices filled. If he will open his Lodge at the time prescribed by the Bylaws when the constitutionally required number of officers and members are present and make a practice of doing so, he will find that his members will form the habit of being on time.

If through circumstances a Brother is tardy, arriving at the Lodge after it has been opened, he must wait outside until permission to enter is received from the Worshipful Master through the Junior Deacon and Tyler. He should then enter through the Tyler's door, never through the preparation door. The latter is for candidates only. The Preparation Room Door and the key which locks or unlocks it is the ballot.

The Brother who enters the Lodge after it has been opened should advance to the Holy Altar and salute the Worshipful Master. If the Worshipful Master is engaged, he faces the West and gives his salutation to the Senior Warden. Salutations should be given accurately, not in a slipshod style, but in a manner to show respect for the office to which the salutation is made.

**EE. FLAG**

The national flag should be in a stand placed in the East to the Master's right. The Flag should be given precedence over a Lodge banner or any other banner, emblem or device used for a similar purpose in the lodge room, in public procession or when displayed on a Masonic Building. When the Flag becomes soiled or worn, it should be burned and replaced with a new one.
II. LODGE MEETINGS

A. Preparation
1. On the evening of a meeting, an attendance log must be placed in the Tyler’s care. All brothers must sign the log before entering the Lodge room. The Tyler must examine visiting brothers’ dues card before the visitor can enter the lodge (visitors from a Prince Hall Affiliated Grand Lodge jurisdictions with a current and valid dues card may be admitted). If time permits all visitors should be introduced to the W.M. prior to opening the lodge.
2. The Tyler should setup and prepare the outer room.
3. The Tyler is responsible for having a logbook for members to sign before entering the lodge.
4. The JD and Stewarts are responsible for setting up the inside of the lodge each meeting night. They place all materials needed for the lodge meeting in the proper location. (See Lodge Setup)

B. Lodge Setup
1. Altar:
   - The Altar should be placed in the center of the lodge facing the Worshipful Master in the East.
   - The Altar should be equal distance from the Worshipful Master in the East and the Senior Warden in the West and equal distance from the Junior Warden in the South and an imaginary station that would be in the North.
2. Great Lights:
   a) The Holy Bible must be place in the center of the Altar (equal distance from all edges).
   b) The Square and Compass must be placed on the Holy Bible so the passage can be seen through the center of the compass and square.
   c) These are the only objects to be placed on the alter
3. Lesser Lights: The Lesser Lights will be place about the altar as follows. If candles are used, they must be white in color.

4. The meeting room: There should be nothing on the walls of the lodge except the charter and the letter “G”. The letter “G” may be placed on the wall behind and above the WM’s head. It is preferred that the letter “G” is hung from the ceiling above the WM’s head. The lodge charters may be hung on the “North” wall only. If other Masonic bodies meet in the building their charters may be placed on the “North” wall below the charter of the host lodge.
5. The Flag is considered a part of lodge furniture and should be stationary in the lodge hall, therefore, there is no need for the flag ceremony. The flag will be in its’ resting place before commencing with the lodge meeting.
6. The SW and JW columns should be placed in upper right corner of the pedestal. When the columns are down, the base of the column should be facing the officer.
7. The officers’ staffs are placed in their stands at their left side and carried in their left hand.

C. Lodge Opening
1. Once all officers have taken their stations, the WM asks if there are visitors present. If there are, they must see the Tyler.
2. Verification of Visitors: It is the Tyler’s responsibility to check the dues card of all visitors. Visitors must be members in good standing (dues current within three months) in a Prince Hall Grand Lodge Jurisdiction to be admitted. PM must have credentials verifying them as such to be invited to the East.
3. Tyler Approaches East: When the Tyler comes to receive the implement of his office, he will come between the WM and chaplain and stop to the right of the WM station. The Tyler’s sword should be in a sheath (not mandatory). The WM presents the sword to the Tyler by holding onto the sheath while the Tyler removes the sword. The WM retains the sheath.
   Note: The Tyler will not come between the WM and the altar.
4. Taking Up the Pass: If the SW is not sure all present are MM’s, he asks the Deacons to approach the West as follows:
   a) At the sound of the SW rap, both Deacons stand.
   b) The JD steps forward until he is slightly forward of the SW station.
   c) The SD walks forward until he is even with the JD
   d) When they are even, both deacons face each other and walk forward and meet directly in front of the SW station. The JD gives the password to the SD and he to the SW.
e) The JD takes the pass in the South and the SD takes the pass in the North starting with the brother closest to the West and working forward to the East. The pass will be taken from everyone except the WM, SW, JW and PM sitting in the East unless the WM instructs otherwise.

f) After taking up the password, both Deacons should meet in the East, face each other and step forward meeting directly in front of the WM station without breaking the space between the WM and the altar.

g) The password is passed from the JD to the SD to the WM.

h) The deacons do an about face and return to the SW by “cutting corners” as they go. They report back to the West, meeting in front of the SW station. The pass is received in the West and the deacons are discharged.

i) Anyone without the pass must remain standing until the WM is satisfied.

5. **Come to Order**: When the craft is called to order, all members stand on the step and dueguard of the degree. The deacons and stewards stand, leaving their staffs in the stands.

6. **Staffs**: The following procedure is established for Deacons and Stewards movement with their staffs:
   a) Staffs and stands are placed on the left of the deacons and stewards. Whenever the deacons and stewards rise, they must take their staffs in their left hand and be ready to carry out their duties.
   b) When addressing the WM or the altar, they keep the staff in their left hand and make the signs as usual with their right hand.
   c) A stand should be placed to the left of the altar for the SD to place his staff when he is attending to the Altar.

7. **Giving the Signs**: The WM starts with the EA and go through the GHS during the opening. The reverse is followed during the closing. Everyone follows the WM. The G.H.S. is given by jerking three distinct times, stopping after the third jerk and then lowering the hands.

8. **Escorting the Chaplin**: The JD takes about three steps forward stopping just pass the SW station. The SD walks forward until he is even with the JD. He (SD) faces left and walks forward until he reaches the JD. He faces left and should be even with the JD. At this time, both deacons walk forward until they are even with the Chaplin. The Deacons about face and walk forward stopping just pass the altar. All three face right and walk forward stopping when the Chaplin is center of the altar. All three face the East. When the Chaplin is ready to start his prayer, he takes one step forward and places his hand over his heart. This is the clue for the Deacons and Stewards to lock staffs. After prayer, the Chaplin steps back and remove his hand from his heart and the deacons unlock their staffs. The deacons escort the Chaplin back to his station (following the previous procedure). The JD returns to his station and the SD returns to the altar.

9. **Checking the Lights**: When checking the Lights, the SW and JW will step down on the left side of the station and go directly to the altar, inspect the altar, turn right and go directly back to his station and step up on the opposite side.

10. **Closing the Lodge**: After all business has been completed and the WM is about to close, he must give every brother the opportunity speak before the lodge is closed. No further business should be conducted after the secretary reads the minutes.

11. **Masters closing the lodge to allow other Houses to enter the lodge is incorrect**: Certain activities that are conducted in the Grand Lodge cannot be duplicated in the local lodges. Members of other Houses are members of the Blue Lodge and must come back to the lodge clothed as Master Masons. If other Houses wish to make announcements and appeals for support to the lodge members, it must be done as Master Masons.

12. **Raising The House** refers to the Worshipful Master causing the craft to stand to give recognition to persons entering the lodge. A Master shall cause the craft to stand when a Past Master, Worshipful Master or elected Grand Lodge Officer enters the lodge. Such honor is not extended to any others.

13. **Approval of Minutes**: The secretary reads the minutes and financial reports at the end of the meeting. Once all corrections are made the minutes will be approved. At the next regular meeting, the minutes from the previous meeting are read and requires a motion to adopt them. Once adopted, the minutes become official lodge history. The Master signs the minutes after adoption and the secretary signs and affix the lodge seal. The minutes should now be stored in the archives of the lodge.

**D. Masonic Dress**

1. While Masonic dress is desirable for lodge attendance, it is not required. It is more important for the member to attend meetings than not attend because he is not able to dress Masonically.

   a) **Masonic Attire** is black suit, black socks, black shoes, black tie (string or bow) and a standard white dress shirt.

   b) The official Apron for a Master Mason in this Jurisdiction is a plain white **lambskin** apron which the WM presents to the candidate during the initiation.

   (The Grand Lodge has approved an additional apron that can be worn at lodge meetings and other events except funerals. It is a white **lambskin** apron with the Square and Compass embroidered in the center, the
All-seeing Eye on the flap, and a blue cloth border framing the apron. Aprons with fringes, frails, tassels or stencil images are improper. Officers and Past Master may wear the same style apron with the jewel of the office in place of the Square and Compass. To insure uniformity, all aprons must be purchased from the Grand Lodge Masonic Supply.

Note: A cloth apron meeting either specification listed above may be use for lodge meetings only.

c) Plain white gloves or plain white gloves with blue embroider square and compass.

d) Approved collars displaying the Jewel of office which should be purchased from Masonic Supply.

2. **Masonic Dress** is "a", "b", c, and "d". Masonic Attire is "a" only.

a) Masonic Dress must be worn during all public "Masonic" functions (except funerals): Cornerstone laying, St John Day, Masonic Anniversary Programs, etc.

b) Masonic Attire may be worn by brothers attending non-Masonic functions which the WM does not "open" the lodge such as church visits and community programs and activities.

c) **Funeral Dress** is Masonic Dress with a plain white lambskin apron and plain white gloves. The Worshipful Master or presiding officer may wear his hat and collar with the jewel of his office. The team may wear their collars with the jewel of their office.

Note: Lodges must present the candidate a plain white lambskin apron. After he is raised, he may purchase the lambskin apron with the blue border.

E. **Officers' Jewels**

1. **Jewels of subordinate Lodges** are to be silver only and worn on a blue collar. The jewels shall be as follows:

   a) MASTER - a Square

   b) SENIOR WARDEN - a level

   c) JUNIOR WARDEN - a plumb

   d) PAST MASTERS - Compass with Quadrant and Sun in center

   e) TREASURER - Crossed Keys

   f) SECRETARY - Crossed Quills or pens

   g) SENIOR DEACON - Square and Compass with Sun in the center

   h) JUNIOR DEACON - Square and Compass with Half Moon in the center

   i) SENIOR and JUNIOR STEWARDS - a Cornucopia

   j) CHAPLAIN - open Holy Bible

   k) TYLER - a Saber

   l) Marshal - Crossed Batons

   m) MUSICIAN - a Harp

   n) HISTORIAN - Quills and Scroll

2. **Grand Lodge Officers’ Jewels**

The jewels of grand Lodge Officers are Gold with wreaths on a purple collar and are the same as in the subordinate Lodges with the following exceptions:

a) GRAND MASTER - Compass, Quadrant, Wreath, and Pyramid with ALL Seeing Eye, accompanied with Radiant Beam in the center and GRAND MASTER inscribed at the top

b) PAST GRAND MASTER - Same as GRAND MASTER but PAST GRAND MASTER inscribed on top

c) DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER - Compass with Quadrant, Sun in the center, encircled by Wreath

III. **DEGREE WORK**

F. **Raising and Lowering the Lodge**

All business must be conducted in a M.M. This includes the decision to conduct an initiation. Therefore, a M.M. lodge must be opened and lowered to the E.A. or Fellowcraft degree for the purpose of initiation. After initiation, the lodge must be raised back to the M.M degree.

All lodge business is conducted in the Master mason Lodge. This includes reading and approval of minutes, reading petitions, proclamations, correspondence, etc. Once all business is finalized, the WM should lower the lodge for initiation and/or instructions. All members become clothed on the degree the lodge is opened. If initiating candidates on the first degree, all members are clothed on the first degree. When the lodge is lowered to FC, all Master Masons will be clothed as FC. Once the initiation and/or instructions are completed and the candidates are excused, the lodge is raised back to the MM degree and the minutes and financial report presented to the craft. The minutes must reflect what occurred when the lodge was lowered to include the names of the candidates.
G. Secretary’s Interview of Candidate
The secretary verifies that the candidate completed the application and the information is correct. He makes sure the candidate understands what his obligations will be and he is willing to fulfill what is expected (i.e. dues, meetings, community services, etc.).

H. Preparing Candidates for Initiation
The candidates should arrive at the lodge the night of initiation wearing black paints, white dressed shirt, black shoes and socks. In this Jurisdiction, all candidates must wear blue sweat pants, a white crewneck tee shirt, and white sock (when appropriate) during the initiation. The sweat pants and an extra large crewneck tee shirt are the kind that can be purchased at most local department stores at little cost. The candidates should be informed of this requirement when they are notified that they have been accepted. This outfit is not to be worn to or from the lodge.

Note: The tee shirt must be several times larger than the candidates normal size so he can slip arms out with little problem.

The candidate will remove all clothing except under-paints. He must remove all metallic objects from his body. The JD must make sure all metal is removed (to include earrings, tongue studs, etc.) The candidate will put on the sweat pants and crew-neck shirt:
1. FOR THE EA DEGREE:
   - He will roll the left leg of the pants above the knee.
   - He will slip his left arm out of the shirtsleeve so his left arm and breast may be naked.
   - He will put a white sock on his right foot.
   - The Junior Deacon now ties a hoodwink over his eyes and afterwards puts a cable tow loosely once round his neck, letting the candidate hold the end in his hand. Note: make sure the cable tow is very loose around the candidate’s neck. The cable tow is not to be tied as a hangman’s not.

2. FOR THE FC DEGREE:
   - He will roll the right leg of the pants above the knee.
   - He will slip his right arm out of the shirtsleeve so his right arm and breast may be naked.
   - He will put a white sock on his left foot.
   - The Junior Deacon now ties a hoodwink over his eyes and afterwards puts a cable tow loosely twice around his left shoulder, letting the candidate hold the end in his hand.

3. FOR THE MM DEGREE:
   - He will roll both pant legs above the knee
   - He will remove the tee shirt
   - Both feet are bare
   - The Junior Deacon now ties a hoodwink over his eyes and afterwards puts a cable tow loosely three times around his waist.

Reminder: It is the JD responsibility to see that the candidates are not harmed in any way. Hazing is a criminal offense and will not be tolerated.

Note: After a candidate receives a degree, he will be clothed according to that degree until he is prepared to receive the next degree. For example: a candidate received the EA degree. When he returns to the lodge to show proficiency, the lodge will be opened on the EA degree and the candidate will enter the EA lodge clothed as an EA. After the candidate has been tested, he is excused and the lodge is raised to the MM degree and a vote taken by the craft to determine if the candidate should receive the FC degree. If the vote is in favor of the candidate receiving the FC degree, the lodge is lowered to the FC and the candidate is prepared for the FC degree.
4. Conducting the Candidates: S.D takes the candidate by the right arm and proceed to travel clockwise once around the lodge room.

5. Conducts the candidate clockwise once around the lodge room as the W.M. begins to recite PSALM ONE HUNDRED THIRTY THREE. The Scripture reading is so timed as to be concluded when they have passed once around the lodge room to the J.W.’s station in the South.

6. S.M. leaves his seat, goes down to the candidate, faces him towards the East and lead him within a step of the altar, then requests him to step off with his left foot, bringing the heel of his right foot in the hollow of his left foot.

7. All assemble around the altar forming two parallel lines, one in the North and one in the South facing the altar. The Lesser Lights and letter “G” are the only lights that are on when the candidate is kneeling at the altar. All remaining lights in the lodge room are to be off, and remain off until the W.M. has raised the candidate from the altar and instructed him on the grip, and word of the degree.

8. Candidate feels for something becomes quite confused. On examination, finds himself completely destitute, not being able to contribute anything, the J.D. having been careful to take every thing from him, in the ante room, before he entered the lodge, finally he declares that he has nothing of the kind with him, but if permitted to pass out into the ante room, where his clothes are, he will contribute. This, the W.M. refuses to do, of course, which only helps confuse the candidate more and more. After the W.M. has kept the candidate in this suspense some moments, he says:

9.

10.

I. Administering the Oath

Masons accept members from many faiths. Because of the Universality of Freemasonry, we must be prepared to accept members of different faith. During the investigation, it is important to verify that the applicant is of the Christian faith. If he is of another faith, the he must take the oath on the Holy rite of his faith. (If he is Muslin, he takes the oath on the Quran.)

The Lesser Lights are the only lights that are on when the candidate is kneeling at the altar. See Section E.

Due Form for taking oath
1. First Degree: Candidate kneels on his naked left knee, his right forming the angle of a square, his left hand supporting the Holy Bible, square, and compass, his right hand resting thereon.

2. Second Degree: Candidates kneels on his naked right knee, before the altar, his left leg and left arm both forming a square. His right hand resting on the Holy Bible, square and compass.

3. Third Degree: Candidate kneels on both his naked knees, both hands resting on the Holy Bible, square, and compass.

J. Bringing Candidates to Light

1. After the WM has administered the oath, the candidates are brought to light as follows:
   - The candidates are hoodwinked and kneeling at the altar.
   - The lodge room is illuminated only by the lesser lights (the main lights of the lodge are off).
   - The main lights of the lodge will remain off after the hoodwink is removed. The candidate will see the Great Lights supported by the Lesser Lights. All brothers should be on their due guard around the altar.
   - The main lights will be turned on after the WM extends his right hand and order the candidate to rise. The brothers will return to their seats.

K. Initiation of Raising

1. Gives the candidate a brush with his right hand across the left breast, and at the same time permits the S.D. and the candidate to pass on toward the East end of the lodge where the W.M. is stationed to perform the part of the Third Ruffian, who is generally provided with a buckskin bag stuffed with hair, to represent a setting maul. As the candidate is hurried along toward the East the W.M. seizes him with both hands by the collar and swings him around, so as to place his back toward the East, with his heels a few inches from the edge of the canvas before alluded to. This canvas is usually held behind the candidate, in an inclined position by some of the brothers. Its purpose is to catch him when he is tripped up by the assumed ruffian. The Master (Third Ruffian) then exclaims:

2. Knock Candidate Dead: The W.M. gives the candidate a blow on his head with a buckskin bag (SETTING MAUL) at the same time pushing him backward, brings the candidate's heels against the edge of the canvas, trips him up, and the candidate falls upon his back, caught in the canvas unhurt, in most instances, badly frightened. As the candidate falls into the canvas the brothers lower it to the floor, when the following dialogue ensues between those who held the canvas and the W.M.:

3. The Canvas: They roll the canvas around and over the candidate where he fell which is in the East or NORTHEAST CORNER of the lodge, and, for a few moments, retire, when the lodge becomes still as the hour of midnight, not a sound is permitted to be made. All go, if at all, from place to place very
silently. The W.M. silently steps to the East, near the candidate's head and strikes the hour of low twelve (which is twelve o'clock at night) on a triangle or bell. As the last sound of twelve dies away, the three ruffians cautiously approach the body, and converse among themselves nearly as follows:

4. The Body: A sufficient number of the brothers now take up the body yet rolled up in the canvas and raising it on their shoulders, proceed to carry it around the lodge, head first, three times, in representation of ascending a hill, the last time halting in the West end of the lodge, nearly in front of the S.W.'s station, and a little to the right. Upon arriving there they commence to lower it into the grave, as they style it, but in reality only from their shoulders to the floor.

L. Proficiency of Candidates
Every candidate initiated, passed and raised in the Jurisdiction of Georgia must demonstrate minimum proficiency for each degree. A lodge cannot give more than one degree per month. There is no maximum time established for a candidate to progress from one degree to the next.

1. Entered Apprentice – the following is the minimum proficiency for this degree:
   a) The Obligation
   b) How to wear his apron – Flap turned up and tied to the left.
   c) Due guard
   d) History of Prince Hall Masonry/History of PH Masonry in this Jurisdiction / Local Lodge History
   e) The First Lecture
   f) Working tools
   g) Psalms 133
   h) The three precious Jewels
   i) From the book of Ruth he must be able answer the following questions in their own words:
      A. Who are the principal characters and how do they pertain to masonry
      B. What does Ruth teach us? *To subdue out passions, loyalty, and it relates to how we were prepared.*
      C. What is the significance in the shoe? *It sealed the deal and allowed Boaz to marry Ruth.*

The candidate must seek understanding in the questions asked in the first Lecture. Every Lodge must verify that every candidate is proficient. A lodge cannot give the next degree if the minimum standards are not met. A lodge may establish additional standards the candidate must meet. If he can read the book and answer the questions in his own words, then he is proficient.

2. Follow craft Degree
   a) The Obligation
   b) How to wear his apron (left flap tuck up in right to and tied to the left)
   c) Due guard
   d) First lecture
   e) Working tools
   f) Explanation of the winding stairs

M. Raising
With regard to the matter of closing the lodge, and asking the Wardens if they know any thing further before the lodge, previous to closing, that it is an act to deceive the candidate, as the W. M. has no intention of closing until the ceremony of raising has been concluded.)

N. Time to Administer Degrees
A lodge can give only one degree to a candidate within a 30-day period. This is to allow adequate time for the candidate to become proficient. This is the minimum time. The actual time is based on how well the candidate gasps the information he needs to show proficiency.

O. HEALING
1. Bylaws Article IV, Section 1: In order for the National Compact or York Masons so called or any other Non Prince Hall Masons to be healed in the Lodges of Georgia, he or they must pass the adopted examination and ballot. If accepted he or they must pay the regular initiation fee into the treasury of the lodge which such application is made and also two dollars for the certificate from the Masonic Relief Association.

2. Petitioner must have proof that he is a member of a Masonic body: a traveling card or other documentation as proof of his membership of the Non Prince Hall Lodge.

3. The Worshipful Master selects (3) Past Masters or two (2) Past Masters and himself or the Junior and Senior Wardens and himself to quiz the petitioner on Masonry. The quiz should be strictly on Masonry: knowledge of password, signs, five points of fellowship etc. If the petitioner cannot pass proficiency, the
lodge will work with him to learn the material just as if he were a candidate. Once the candidate meets the minimum proficiency, he can be raised. He is not initiated and passed. See Section F: Proficiency of candidates.

4. During regular Lodge meeting, a team consisting of the Worshipful Master, Senior and Junior Warden, the Stewar't's and deacons, perform the ceremony of raising from a dead level to a living perpendicular...

5. If petitioner is found not to be qualified to be healed as a Prince Hall Mason he will receive all degrees (EA, FC, MM degrees).

HEALING PROCESS:
The applicant must take the Healing Oath before he can be received in an open lodge
After the lodge accepts a petition for Healing, the secretary send notice informing him when to appear at the lodge.
On the night of the healing, the secretary exits the lodge and interviews the applicant as if he were a candidate preparing for the first degree. After the secretary makes an acceptable report to the lodge, the WM closes the lodge and have the JD bring the fully clothed applicant to the altar for the Healing Oath as follows:

**Healing Oath**
WM: Mr. Gade, you have petitioned for membership into Prince Hall Affiliated Masonry by way of “healing”. In order to be healed into Prince Hall Affiliated Masonry, you must take an oath disassociating yourself for other Masonic bodies and affirming your allegiance to PHA Masonry. Are you willing to take this oath? If the answer is yes, administer the oath.

I, ____________, of my own free will and accord, do hereby and hereon, most solemnly and sincerely, promise and swear (or affirm), before God and man, that I denounce and disassociate myself from all and any other so called “Masonic” bodies. I acknowledge that Prince Hall Affiliated Grand Lodges are formed and conforms to the ancient customs of Masonry in its origin and operation. I promise and swear that I will adhere to and abide by all rules and regulations of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge Jurisdiction of Georgia and all other Prince Hall Grand Lodges identified as “Prince Hall Affiliated”. I take this oath openly and freely as a requirement for membership by “healing” into the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Georgia, so help me God.

WM: I hereby declare you a suitable candidate for healing into Prince Hall Masonry.
WM: Brother SD, place the candidate in position to receive the EA degree. (The SD place the candidate at the altar to receive the EA obligation.)

After the WM administer the EA degree, he instructs the SD to place the candidate in position to receive the FC degree. After the WM administers the FC obligation, he instructs the SD to place the candidate in position to receive the MM obligation. After the MM obligation, the WM instruct the SD to escort the candidate to the Anti-room where he is hoodwinked and returned to the lodge as HA where is taken to the three stations and knocked dead and moved to the Southeast corner of the lodge. He is then raised on the 5 points, welcomed to PH Masonry and congratulated.
FINANCIAL STATUS
The following definitions relate to a member’s financial status only. Other requirements may be applicable if the member is suspended for reasons other than financial.

A. REINSTATEMENT
A member who has been suspended or dropped from his lodge by majority vote and wish to reactivate his membership may submit an application to reinstate.

1. REINSTATEMENT WITHOUT A BREAK IN SERVICE – A suspended member who has paid all back taxes and assessments covering the period which said dues had lapsed is said to have REINSTATED WITHOUT A BREAK IN SERVICE.

Example: James dues and assessments were current through 3/31/2002. He was dropped from the roll and suspended by majority vote on July 12, 2002, (three months in arrears). It is now June 1, 2004 and James wants to become active with the lodge and do not want to lose his time in service. What does he have to pay?

Status when dropped:
MRA paid thru date 3/31/02
GL tax $14.70 and MRA collected for 2002 and reported to GL
Bldg Fund $17 collected for 1st qtr 2002 and reported to GL.

Since James does not want to lose time in service, he must pay $272.90 which will bring him current through 12/31/2004.

Table A

<table>
<thead>
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<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>Bldg Fund</td>
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<td>$65.00</td>
<td>$65.00</td>
<td>$181.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>GL Tax</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>MRA</td>
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<td>$60.00</td>
<td>$91.70</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: This example does not include local dues and assessments.

The GL will count this member’s years in service from the original Date Joined (date he was raised in this Jurisdiction) forward. His original MRA Certificate number will remain the same.

2. REINSTATEMENT WITH A BREAK – A suspended member who choose to pay a Reinstatement Fee to reactivate his membership. A reinstated member’s time in service will be counted from the date his reinstatement application is accepted. He will lose all previous years in service and his Reinstatement Date will be the start of in time in service.

Reinstatement Fee – The amount of GL tax the lodge must collect from a member who has requested a membership reinstatement. This amount is currently set at $25.00 and is separate form any and all other GL taxes.

Drop From Roll – This term will no longer be used by the Grand Lodge. The following procedures are in effect.

- The GL will send 2005 Dues cards to lodges based on members whose MRA, Building Fund and GL taxes and assessments are current. The lodge should collect all outstanding dues, taxes, and assessments from previous years.
- If all back dues and assessments are paid, the lodge should collect the following before issuing the dues card to a member:

Table B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GL Tax*</th>
<th>Scholarship</th>
<th>Masonic Digest</th>
<th>Bldg Fund*</th>
<th>MRA*</th>
<th>Totals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular MM</td>
<td>$12.50</td>
<td>$1.20</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
<td>$17.00</td>
<td>$3.60</td>
<td>$34.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gold Card</td>
<td>$9.00</td>
<td>$1.20</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
<td>$17.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$30.70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special**</td>
<td>$12.50</td>
<td>$1.20</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>17.20**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These funds are payable from members who have not paid the building fund for three years and/or eligible for MRA benefits.
** This is the minimum amount due from a “special” member; a member who has paid the building fund in full and is not a MRA member.
B. SUSPENSION FOR NON PAYMENT

FOLLOW THESE PROCEDURES TO SUSPEND MEMBERS FOR NON PAYMENT OF DUES. THE CORRECT PROCEDURES DEPEND ON WHETHER THE LODGE ISSUED THE DUES CARD TO THE MEMBER:

LODGE ISSUED DUES CARD TO MEMBER
1. Once the lodge issues the dues card to the member, the lodge becomes responsible to the Grand Lodge for the amounts listed in Table B.
2. Once a member allows his dues to become more than three months in arrears, the lodge may drop him from the lodge roll but the lodge cannot drop him from GL and MRA reports until December 31.
3. The lodge secretary only has to send the member a letter telling him he will be dropped if he does not pay his dues before the second meeting of the third month of arrears.
4. The lodge does not have to report payments to the GL or MRA for a brother it has dropped from its roll.
5. Although the member remains on the GL and MRA records, if the lodge has dropped the member, the member is not entitled to any Masonic benefits including funerals and death payments.
6. The lodge must take actions to suspend the member if he does not bring his dues current before the end of the calendar year.
7. If the member brings his dues current before he is suspended, he does not have to pay a reinstatement fee.

LODGE HAS NOT ISSUED THE DUES CARD TO THE MEMBER
- The lodge may take actions to suspend a member at any time if it has not issued the dues card.
- Once the lodge has voted to suspend the member, the lodge secretary must notify the Grand Secretary of the date the lodge voted to suspend the member and return the current dues card.
- The lodge is responsible for GL and MRA payments if the dues card is not returned.

Suspended – A member who has been dropped for non payment of dues and the lodge has sent him a Summons asking him to show “cause” why he should not be “suspended”. The lodge can only suspend a member by majority vote after the lodge has attempted to contact the member by summons.

C. MEMBERSHIP STATUS REPORT
This is a new form that you must use to report suspended or deceased members. This form must be submitted within 10 days of the lodge suspending a member or within 10 days of a members’ death.
MEMBERSHIP STATUS REPORT

(Print all information)

The Brothers of ____________________________ LODGE,
NUMBER: ________ DISTRICT # ________, reports the following actions:

SUSPENSION – NON PAYMENT OF DUES

We have voted in open meeting by majority vote to suspend Brother(s):

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Member ID</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>MI</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Date of Suspension (mm/dd/yy)</th>
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SUSPENSION FOR OTHER REASONS:

First Name ______________________ MI ____ Last ___________________ Member ID _________________
(Explain)
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

DEATH

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<tr>
<th>Member ID</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>MI</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Date of Death (mm/dd/yy)</th>
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Note: If the deceased brother was a MRA member, you must send a copy of the MRA Certificate or a signed affidavit that the certificate is missing and a copy of the death certificate.

Lodge Secretary: First Name: _______________________ Last: ________________________________
Email: __________________________ Telephone Number (_____) __________________________
Signature: __________________________ Date: (mm/dd/yy): __________________________
The Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge F & A M, Jurisdiction of Georgia
MASONIC RELIEF ASSOCIATION (MRA)

1) Listed below is some basic information that you must know as secretary of your lodge to process the MRA Report:
   a) **Every** Master Mason who is less than 50 (21 – 49) years of age at the time they join (raised, demit in, or reinstates) your lodge must join the MRA (This is not an option)
   b) When a members joins (raised, demit in, or reinstates) your lodge, you must send notice to the Grand Lodge by submitting the original Petition and/or Demit to the MRA office within 10 days of accepting or raising him in your lodge. **You must send this notice even if the new member is not eligible for MRA benefits.**
   c) Each quarter, the MRA office will send to you a MRA Report consisting of an Abstract and Worksheet. The Abstract lists all active members in your lodge including new members you reported since the last quarter. It will not list members you have reported as “suspended or deceased”.

2) **REVIEWING THE ABSTRACT**
   a) The Abstract lists all active members in your lodge
   b) Member ID # - This column lists the identification number for all members. Every member (MRA eligible or not) will have a Member ID. You must use this number when reporting or requesting information about a member.
   c) Name – This is the member’s name. Please check the spelling to insure we have entered the name correctly.
   d) Date Joined – This is the date our records show the member joined or reinstated into your lodge. Please verify this is the correct date. This date is used to calculate the amount of MRA tax and to establish the length of continuous service (Gold Card). **It is important that this date is correct.**
   e) Age – This is the age of the member when he joined or reinstated into your lodge. This age is also used to determine if the member is eligible for MRA benefits.
   f) MRA Paid Through Data – This date reflects the payments received during the time the brother has been a member. Total Payments This Year – This is a recap of the payments your lodge has submitted during the current year. This is your receipt to verify that the payments you submitted were applied correctly
   g) Amount Due – This column will be removed from the Abstract. The correct Amount Due is stated on the Worksheet.

3) **REVIEWING THE WORKSHEET**
   The difference between the Worksheet and Abstract is minor.
   a) Amount You Are Paying – Enter the amount you are paying for the particular brother.
      i) This column cannot be left blank and should be the amount listed in the Amount Due column.
      ii) Enter “0” if you are not submitting a payment for the brother.
      iii) The total amount of this column must equal the amount you list on you lodge check (made payable to Masonic Relief Association).
   b) Amount Due – This column reflects the amount the member must pay to bring his account current for the current quarter.

4) **MRA WORKSHEET ITEMS THAT NEED SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**
   a) MRA Paid Through Date – All members on your worksheet must be current. If you have members with a “Paid Through Date” less the current quarter’s date, you must pay the amount in the “Amount Due For this Member” column to bring the member current. If you carry a member for more than a year, your lodge is responsible for the member’s MRA tax.
   b) **The “Amount Due” is the amount needed to bring the member current for the quarter which the report is printed.** The Grand Lodge does not expect you to pay taxes you did not collect. If the member pays less, that is what you should submit. A zero amount in this column means the members is current for the quarter, not the year. He may still have a balance due for the next quarter.

5) **CORRECTIONS**
   a) If you notice information on this report that is incorrect, you must provide us with the correct information.
   b) Please submit all corrections on a separate sheet of paper. List the members’ name and ID.
   c) Tell us specifically what to correct.
   d) If a member is on the report and you have suspended him or he is deceased, you must complete and submit the Membership Status Report.
   e) If you are reporting a member who is not listed on the report but he is in your lodge, you must submit a Membership Petition with all information requested on the petition. This information is needed to update our records. You must also submit all back taxes and assessments.

6) **SPECIAL INFORMATION AND CLARIFICATIONS**
   Member ID – Members who are added to your lodge before 2001 will have a six digit number. Members added after 2001 will have a twelve digit number. The first four digits indicate the year the member joined your lodge.
V. MASONIC PROTOCOL

RECEIVING THE GRAND MASTER OR PAST GRAND MASTER

A. Protocol

Grand Lodge Officers of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Georgia will always be received with due respect and invited to a seat in the East when on an official visit to any Masonic body. If the Grand Lodge Officer is representing the Most Worshipful Grand Master then he will be given the same protocol as that accorded to the Grand Master, except Grand Honors. Care must be taken when receiving a visiting Grand Lodge Officer and other Grand Lodge Officers are present. If a Grand Lodge Officer of a higher office is present then the body will not be gaveled up for the visiting Grand Lodge Officer, although he will be received, introduced to the craft and offered a position in the East. However, if the visiting Grand Lodge Officer is representing the Grand Master on an official visitation then the body will be gaveled up and the visiting Grand Lodge Officer will take precedence, although lower in position than other Grand Lodge Officers present. A representative of the Grand Master takes precedence over all other Grand Lodge Officers except the Grand Master. The Worshipful Master should not rap up the craft for Past Masters when the Grand Master or his representative is present. The Past Master is invited to the East. The Tyler will notify the Past Master that the Grand Master is present.

B. Reception of The Grand Master and Past Grand Masters by Lodges

The Tyler will immediately alarm the door and inform the JD that the Grand Master is present. The JD will close the door (the door will not be sealed at this time) and inform the WM. The W M will immediately cease all activity and notify the JD to admit the Grand Master (the password is not taken from the GM).

The WM raps the craft to their feet. The craft stands on the step of a Master Mason (heels together). The Marshall and Deacons will meet the GM at the door. The Deacons will cross rods and escort the GM. The group goes to the front of the SW’s station and face to the right. The SD is on the GM left and JD is on his right. The Marshall is in front of the GM and leads the group to the altar. The Marshall does a left turn about five paces from the altar. He goes about five paces to the left of the altar, faces right and stops even with the altar. The GM and Deacons will stop about five feet from the altar. The GW will then step forward and salute the altar. The Deacons remain in place. (He has the option to greet the master and craft at the altar or wait until he is in the East)

After the GM has saluted (dropped his dueguard), the Marshal acclaims: “Worshipful Master and Brothers of [lodge name], I present to you the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Jurisdiction of Georgia, The Honorable Willie L Williams.

The WM says: Most Worshipful Grand Master Williams, it is an honor and pleasure to have you visit our lodge. Brothers, please join me in giving the Grand Honors to GM Williams”

C. GRAND HONORS

(The WM and all members stand with heels together and arms on each side, bent at the elbow forming an angle of 90 degrees; palms up. This is the start position. The honors are given 9 times: 3 to the left, 3 to the right, and 3 to the left. Everyone must follow the Worshipful Master or the person leading the Honors. The Honors are given crisply and everyone must stay together!)

The WM begins the Grand Honors by saying:

1. Brothers, to the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Jurisdiction of Georgia, The Honorable Willie L Williams, All Hail! All Hail! All Hail!!!

   (Everyone claps three times by carrying the right hand to the left hand and saying “All Hail” as the hands clap. The left hand remains in place. On the first clap, everyone says “All Hail” softly at the same time the hands clap softly. The second clap and “All Hail” is louder than the first. The third clap and All Hail is as loud as possible. After clapping, return to the start position.)

   All Hail!

2. The Most Worshipful Grand Master, the Honorable Willie L Williams, All Hail, All Hail, All Hail!

   (Everyone claps three times by carrying the left hand to the right hand and saying “All Hail” as the hands clap. The right hand remains in place. On the first clap, everyone says “All Hail” softly at the same time the hands clap softly. The second clap and “All Hail” is louder than the first. The third clap and All Hail is as loud as possible. After clapping, return to the start position.)

3. The Honorable Willie L Williams, All Hail, All Hail, All Hail!
(Everyone claps three times by carrying the right hand to the left hand and saying “All Hail” as the hands clap. **The left hand remains in place.** On the first clap, everyone says “All Hail” softly at the same time the hands clap softly. The second clap and “All Hail” is louder than the first. The third clap and All Hail is as loud as possible. After clapping, return to the start position. Everyone will then follow the WM in slowly lowering their hands to their sides and remain standing with heels together.)

4. Brother Marshall, with the assistance of the Deacons, escort Grand Master xxxxx to the East. After the honors, the GM will step back even with the Deacons. The GM and Deacons will face left and go forward until the GM is directly behind the Marshall. The Deacons and Marshal will escort the GM to the East the same as he was escorted to the altar. When in the East, the Marshall will step to the left to allow space for the GM to sit is the East. After the GM is stationed in the East, the Deacons disconnect their rods and the Marshall leads the Deacons to the altar. The Marshall salutes and the Deacons present Arms. They then return to their stations.

The WM says “GM Williams, I present to you the hat and gavel of authority of Lodge #xx.

The GM may accept the gavel or defer to address the craft anytime before the lodge is closed. If the GM accepts the gavel, he will seat the craft. If the WM retains the gavel, he will seat the craft with the GM.

The Grand Master makes comments and performs any other acts he desires. On conclusion of the Grand Masters comments, if he is to depart the meeting the Worshipful Master or presiding officer will raise the body and all will remain standing until the Grand Master has exited the Lodge. The Grand Master will be escorted from the Lodge in the same form used to escort him into the Lodge. If the Grand Master remains and returns the gavel to the Worshipful Master the Grand Master is seated to the immediate left of the Worshipful Master.

No other person should ever be requested to or permitted to make comments after the Grand Master has made remarks. The Worshipful Master or presiding officer may proceed with any business of the order that is on the agenda but no Brother should be permitted to make comments regarding the Grand Masters comments or to open discussion on the Grand Masters comments unless specifically requested to do so by the Grand Master. In the Masonic Order, no one should be permitted to speak after the Grand Master has spoken.

**D. HONORS FOR PAST GRAND MASTERS**

PG Masters are entitled to honors by virtue of their service. The Honors for a PGM is the same as the Grand Master but ends at step #2:

The WM begins the Honors by saying:

1. **Brothers, to the Rite Worshipful Past Grand Master of the Jurisdiction of Georgia, The Honorable (Benjamin Barksdale or Neal A. McQueen), All Hail! All Hail!! All Hail!!!** (Everyone claps three times by carrying the right hand to the left hand and saying “All Hail” as the hands clap. The left hand remains in place. On the first clap, everyone says “All Hail” softly at the same time the hands clap softly. The second clap and “All Hail” is louder than the first. The third clap and All Hail is as loud as possible. After clapping, return to the start position.)

   All Hail!

2. The Rite Worshipful Past Grand Master of the Jurisdiction of Georgia, The Honorable (Benjamin Barksdale or Neal A. McQueen), All Hail, All Hail, All Hail! (Everyone claps three times by carrying the left hand to the right hand and saying “All Hail” as the hands clap. The right hand remains in place. On the first clap, everyone says “All Hail” softly at the same time the hands clap softly. The second clap and “All Hail” is louder than the first. The third clap and All Hail is as loud as possible. After clapping, return to the start position. Everyone will then follow the WM in slowly lowering their hands to their sides and remain standing with heels together.)

   **Note: Only the Grand Master receives the third honor.**

3. Past Grand Master xxxx, welcome to xxxx Loge Number 984. The PGM will salute the alter and address the craft.

4. Brother Marshall, with the assistance of the Stewarts, escort Past Grand Master xxxx to the East. *(The stewards and marshal escort the PGM to the East the same as he was escorted to the alter.)* When the PGM arrives in the East, the MW says “PGM xxx, would you like to address the craft at this time? (The worshipful Master does not relinquish his gavel or hat.) If the PGM address the craft at this time, the WM raps once to sit the craft. After the PGM speaks, the WM raps the craft to their feet, thanks the PGM by applauding and then seats the craft. If the PGM speaks later, the WM raps the craft to there feet and presents the PGM but retains his gavel. After the PGM
stands, the WM seats the craft. After the PGM speaks, the WM raps the craft to their feet, thanks the PGM by applauding and then seats the craft.
VI.  PRELUDE TO A BALLOT -- THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE

A. Introduction
The periodic appointment of committees to conduct exhaustive investigations of petitioners is an exclusive responsibility for the Master of a Lodge. The significance of choosing only members who are completely unbiased, thorough, detailed and will project a favorable image of Masonry cannot be overemphasized. A lasting impression of the Fraternity is made by the brethren who officially represent it. Moreover, the petitioner's Masonic career will be affected, in great part, by the manner in which the investigators conduct themselves and do their work. The vivid memory left with the petitioner and his family should be positive -- the behavior and decorum of the members conducting the investigation must be above reproach.

B. Duties of the Investigating Committee
The Committee is appointed by the Master to check and verify the information contained in the prospective candidate's application for membership. Members should discreetly contact the references given, and such other sources the committee may know to be relevant. These include:
- Church/Synagogue affiliations
- Neighbors
- Family members
- Friends

The applicant deserves every courteous consideration regardless of your final report. Remember-- MORAL CHARACTER, not worldly wealth is paramount. The petitioner's reputation for good or evil must be carefully considered. Do not compromise with malicious rumor or gossip but rather base your conclusions on facts and do so without fear or favor. In no case make a favorable report to the Lodge without feeling reasonably certain that the character of the applicant will warrant such a report.

C. Choosing the Investigating Team
Brothers who never attend Lodge may not realize the importance of the task or how to conduct a thorough investigation. In order to fulfill this very responsible task, it is most important that the Master, Secretary and members of the committee all do their parts with dedication.

Care should be exercised by the Worshipful Master to select a team of Masons who are not related to or a close friend of the petitioner. He should choose at least three members of the Lodge to perform this important duty, thus ensuring that he will receive good perspective from the reports on the character traits and general nature of the person being investigated. And, that they:
- Are active and support Lodge functions;
- Show a good understanding of Freemasonry (The number of years a Brother has been a member doesn't ensure Masonic awareness
- Brothers who are concerned and dedicated
- Brothers who are concerned about the craft, open minded and have no hidden agendas
- Brothers who do not know the applicant or his family
- Are able to express themselves easily and can convey a feeling of warmth and understanding to the potential new member;
- Can accurately present their personal observations;
- Are prudent in their everyday dealings with others;
- Are thorough when doing a job;
- Are likely to be present when the petitioner is elected and receives his degrees;
- Have participated in at least one training workshop session or training seminar for potential investigators.

Please note: Committee members should be well acquainted with appropriate parts of Masonic law in order to be effective. They should be able to intelligently discuss:
1. Whether a character reference on a petition can reside outside the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge.
2. When the Investigation Committee should be appointed.
3. Who appoints the committee.
4. How many compose a committee.
5. What specific information the committee is required to obtain regarding a petitioner.
6. The maximum time allowed for the Investigating Committee to conduct their task and report to the Lodge.
7. What is the significance of the references/signers on a petition, and how much effort should be exerted to obtain other specific information from them, if any? Should you attempt to contact out-of-city signers and if so, how might they go about it?
8. How far should you go in your investigation? Is there any importance in obtaining information other than that required by law?

D. Various Schools of Thought
There are at least two divergent views on the mechanics of conducting a thorough investigation. Some say that team members should work independent of each other. Even making their own appointments to meet individually at the convenience of the petitioners. Others say, that the whole process should be a group effort in all things. Many believe that there is a middle road, which should be taken. They believe that some parts of the investigation, such as making a determination of the man's earned reputation for honesty and integrity in the community could be completed independently, by individual team members working separately. They feel that the home visit probably should be conducted by at least two members working jointly, so they can simultaneously observe the reaction of both the husband and wife during the interview.

E. Groundwork for the Interview
In conducting this investigation you should be as rigid as if the applicant was seeking admission to your home, instead of your Lodge. The applicant is a petitioner; he is asking something of Masonry, therefore Masonry has a right to know all about him before extending its privileges to him.

The Recommenders (Vouchers) may not have interviewed or questioned the applicant. It is your duty to substantiate information, form your own opinion and report justly on the merits of the case.

Each member of the team should prepare for the interview by becoming familiar with the information supplied on the application. Investigators should make particular note of:
- The petitioner's occupation and place of employment;
- Marital status;
- Number and ages of children;
- Health and physical status;
- Personal history;
- Whether he stands convicted of a felony in a civil, federal, or military court trial; and,
- Personal references.

Visit preparations should be made well in advance of the desired meeting, which should be at the petitioner's home, especially if he is married and living with his spouse. You should:
- Set aside at least two dates in case the first choice cannot be met by the petitioner;
- Make the appointment at a time mutually convenient to the petitioner and his family and the Investigating Team (you should want as many family members as possible to participate in the discussions)

Members should be on their best behavior. Wear neat, freshly laundered clothes -- although a jacket and tie isn't mandatory, it is strongly recommended. Remember; you have only one chance to make a good first impression.

F. The Personal Interview
Call the night before to confirm the appointment. Make sure that you arrive on time. Being too early is just as discourteous as being late. Introduce yourself. Convey the regards and good wishes of your Worshipful Master. Please refuse an alcoholic drink, if it is offered! This is considered an official visit. You aren't making a social call.

Ask what the petitioner expects to gain by joining the Fraternity. Be attentive to the reactions of his wife and family and be ready to answer their questions. Discuss other organizations related to Masonry, which may interest others in the family, such as the Order of the Eastern Star.

Confirm that he isn't an atheist. Find out the extent of his involvement in the religion of his choice. Carefully explain that Freemasonry is not a religion with a plan of personal salvation, but a philosophy that is in keeping with religious devotion and good morals. A Mason must have an abiding faith in God, and should find his plan for salvation in his Church or Synagogue.

Emphasize that Freemasonry is not a political organization. It endorses no candidates or political party, and permits no partisan political discussions within its Lodges. It does instill patriotism and admonishes Masons to be good citizens. In all matters, it teaches men to think for themselves.
Make sure that the petitioner appreciates that Freemasonry is not a means of promoting selfish interests. Before you leave his home that day/evening, ensure that the petitioner is informed of:

- The meeting dates of the Lodge;
- The cost of yearly dues and assessments (Can he financially afford being a Mason?);
- The cost of the three degrees;
- The outfit needed for initiation (blue sweat pants and white tee shirt at least one size larger to allow for “duly and truly prepared”)
- The lodge involvement in community services, programs, church visits, etc.
- The commitment he must make when receiving the degrees; and of
- The memory work that is required.

Make the meeting as brief as possible (about 30 minutes). Don't overstay your welcome, but make sure all questions are answered satisfactorily before you leave. If you don't know the precise answer to a question, admit it. Write the question down; find the answer; and provide it to the petitioner as soon as you can.

If possible, invite the petitioner and members of his family to a suitable Lodge function in order to introduce him to the Master and other lodge members.

G. Be Resourceful
Do not be content with discussing the petitioner's Moral Character with the Recommenders alone. By your own efforts, find others who know him. Your sources of information need not be Masons; in fact, it is well to consult men who are not Masons for often they are more open in their expressions of opinion. However, do not indicate to the profane the reason for your inquiries, as there may be those who are not favorable to our Fraternity and do not appreciate our objectives. Harm might result from a prejudiced answer.

H. After the Interview
You are reminded that Masonry is great and good only to the degree that its individual members are great and good. We are a strong fraternity; we need not accept men of questionable character. While we do not expect perfect men, we do insist on men who have already laid a strong foundation upon which we may build.

Prepare (or complete) a written investigation report. Please, DO NOT take notes during the interview. It has a chilling effect on those being interviewed. Be prepared to make a verbal report in open Lodge if requested by the Master. There are no hard and fast rules on whether a verbal report is necessary. Be governed by the usual practices of your Lodge.

Report on time -- You have been given ample time for your investigation. However, if more time is required, the Master will grant it. But to request more time without justification is unfair to the applicant.

By all means, have the courage to recommend rejection, if during the investigation process you discover a major character flaw or a willing effort to deceive by providing false information on the application form. If, because of what you have learned, you are unable to favorably endorse the petitioner, give the Brethren who signed the petition as Recommenders the courtesy of a factual, private explanation.

Join the petition signers in attending the meetings when the candidate is receiving his degrees. Ensure that the candidate feels welcome by introducing him to the membership of the Lodge.

Be ready to assist the candidate in any way you can. Possibly volunteer to act as his Mentor, as he takes his Degrees and for a year after he's raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason.

I. What Petitioners Expect from Freemasonry

- A pleasant way of life, with high ideals, which if practiced, makes a person a better man in all respects.
- A splendid sense of fellowship, now and in the future: Because of the association among Masons. A warm sense of history: Because of the Masonry practiced by great Masons in the past whose heritage is an incentive to us; In the future because Masonry belongs to the ages.
- An opportunity to serve Masonry - which means service to God, country, and fellow man.
- A special kind of liberal education, which cannot be found elsewhere. Assistance in time of great need. Obviously with fees and dues so small, Lodges cannot provide an insurance program, but there are many other ways of helping those in distress.
J. What Freemasonry Expects From Petitioners

- Loyalty to the Fraternity, his family, country, and God.
- Brotherly love toward all mankind.
- Belief in freedom of thought, speech, and action so far as it is compatible with the inalienable rights of others.
- Strong feeling of opposition to ignorance, falsehood, bigotry, oppression, atheism, and all else that makes for spiritual, mental, and physical servitude.
- Active participation in the relief of the widow, the orphan, the weak, and the oppressed.
- Exemplary behavior in his private and public life, demonstrative of the high calling of Freemasonry.

During the personal interview, the petitioner (and his family) should gain a better understanding of the Fraternity. He should have begun an intensive course of instruction, which will help to make him a loyal and energetic member of the Craft. Such a man can be counted upon to actively support our Fraternity and add to its stock of greatness.

K. Qualification of a Candidate:

- Be a legal resident of GA or areas in its jurisdiction.
- Registered voter in GA or areas in its jurisdiction.
- Submit two letters of reference with the application. References must be residence of GA (or areas in its jurisdiction) and preferably the community in which the applicant resides.
- Submit an official copy of his criminal record. This can be obtained from all local police departments.
- Felons: An application from a felon maybe considered under the following conditions:
  - The felon is not: murder, treason, rape, brutality, offense against children, etc.
  - The applicant has only one felony conviction
  - At least two years has expired from the time the applicant has fulfilled all requirements of the courts.
  - The applicant has received approval to reinstate his eligibility to vote.
  - The investigation committee reports that the applicant has not engaged in any criminal or unmoral acts since the conviction.
L. INVESTIGATION WORK SHEET

Investigating tips: The committee should be on time, introduce yourself, explain the purpose of the interview and try to get the candidate as comfortable as possible before asking any questions (e.g. compliment directions he gave, compliment something in his home, the weather, etc.) The intent is to ascertain as much about the candidate in a short period of time.

Give potential candidate the petition.

1. Did anyone help you fill-out the petition? YES___ NO___
2. Did you understand all of the questions on the petition? YES___ NO___
3. Did you fill-out the petition in your own handwriting? YES___ NO___
4. Review petition with candidate to ascertain correctness.
5. Check the candidate’s voter registration card and criminal record. (At the time the interview was scheduled, the candidate should have been informed to have these items available)
6. How long have you known the brothers that recommended you? __________________________
7. Explain what you think future life after death is. _________________________________
8. Why do you want to become a Mason? _________________________________
9. Why did you select our organization to petition over others? ________________________________
10. What can you contribute to our organization? ________________________________
11. What do you expect to gain from our organization? ________________________________
12. Do you contribute to any charitable organizations? YES___ NO___
13. Have you ever had an opportunity to help your neighbors? YES___ NO___
14. What is your religious denomination? ________________________________
15. What church do you attend? ________________________________
16. Who is your Pastor? ________________________________
17. Can you attend meetings every ___ & ____ nights at __pm? YES___ NO___
18. Any problems with paying ___ annually for dues and assessments? YES___ NO___
19. Are you involved in the distribution and/or consumption of drugs? YES___ NO___
20. What if, you are accepted and find out that Masonry is not what you expected it to be would you still come to meetings and participate in Masonic activities? YES___ NO___
21. Our dress code is BLACK suit, BLACK tie, BLACK shoes, BLACK socks, and white dress shirt.
22. Do you have any questions for us? ________________________________
23. Thank you. We now have some questions for your wife.

Candidate: ________________________________ Date ________________
M. QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATE’S WIFE

1. How do you feel about your husband becoming a Mason? ______________________________

2. What do you think Masons do? _____________________________________________________

3. How do you feel about him attending two meetings every month?
   _________________________________________________________________

4. Describe your husband’s personality. ______________________________________________

5. What kind of husband is he? ______________________________________________________

6. What kind of father is he? _________________________________________________________

Mrs.  ___________________________________________________________