


The Grand Lodge
Of Free and Accepted Masons for the State Of Georgia

Johnie M. Garmon
Grand Master
2019-2020

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**THE GRAND LODGE OF GEORGIA FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
FOR THE STATE OF GEORGIA**

Johnie M. Garmon, Grand Master

RULING NO. 2020- 5

CRITERIA FOR LODGE MEETINGS

As Lodges prepare to reopen each Worshipful Master should be familiar with and comply with all applicable CDC, federal, state, or local directives on group meetings, non-profits, and food service.

Based on this, the following include, but are not limited to, items applicable to our fraternity. It shall be the sole responsibility of each Worshipful Master to encourage the support and adherence to these guidelines.

1. Conduct only such business necessary to maintain stability and keep meetings as short as possible.
2. There should no physical contact – no handshakes or grips.
3. Social distancing. Always stay 6 feet apart.
4. Hand sanitizer should be available, and all members encouraged to use it.
5. Brethren who are not feeling well must stay home. Worshipful Master should not allow sick Brethren to attend.
6. Masks should be worn at all times
7. There shall be no cooking or food preparation at the Lodge. It is recommended that there be no meals or food. However, if food is to be served it shall be prepared offsite and delivered in individually wrapped plates or packaging. There shall be no buffets or serving lines. Plates or packages are to be placed on the table where the brethren are to eat before they arrive. Hand sanitizer should be available on or near each table.
8. It is recommended that infrared forehead thermometers be used for all of those entering the building (temperature of 100 or more should not be allowed to enter).

In addition, the following must be complied with:

9. The substitute for the secret word must be passed symbolically as ordered by the Grand Master by ruling. While the Senior Deacon is displaying or closing the Three Great Lights the

Stewards must remain at their stations. There will be no coping.

10. No degrees or ritual can be conducted other than opening and closing. All meeting shall be conducted on the Masters Degree only.

11. Lodge Secretaries must report, to the Grand Secretary, any suspected cases of COVID-19 infection among Brethren who may have attended meetings via email to gsec@glofga.org

12. There is to be no balloting using the ballot box, because of the risk of spreading the virus on the balls and cubes and the lack of social distancing during the ballot. Paper ballots may be used to ballot on Demits, Transfers or Affiliations. The secretary shall use caution in protecting his health and wellbeing by using gloves (Latex or Nitrile) and wearing a mask. Paper Ballots should be placed at the Holy Alter, each member having an opportunity, staying social distancing of six feet. Ballots shall be returned to the Holy Alter and the secretary shall collect and count the ballots. Unanimous ballots are still required.

13. Votes on matters requiring a vote by show of hands, including examination on the Master Mason degree, can be held.

14. Time for any Master Mason to stand examination on Master's Degree is extended to October 28, 2020.

15. Lodges may not conduct examinations other than for the Master's degree.

16. Limited space should be reserved for members and preference given the same and limiting visitors should be considered for the time being.

17. Steps should be taken to safeguard all Volumes of Sacred Law anytime they are handled including, but not limited to, the use of vinyl or nitrile gloves.

18. Worshipful Masters should exercise their discretion, pursuant to MC §23-109, to postpone or reschedule a meeting if local conditions could present a threat to the health of the brethren. The requirement of one meeting a month is suspended until October 28, 2020.

19. Flat surfaces, entry and exit doorknobs, push plates or handles should be disinfected (wipes) before each meeting.

20. The Grand Master visitations should be held without meals unless the meeting can be held outside and following CDC guidelines. The meeting will be kept short in length and every Mason should respect social distancing. All involved in the reception of the Grand Master must stay at least six feet from him and each other. Any presentations to the Grand Master should be placed on a surface where he can pick them up after they are sanitized.

21. Family Nights should be cancelled, unless held outdoors and social distancing can be maintained.

22. Fifty Year and other aprons, pins, and awards shall be presented without getting within six feet of the recipient and placed on a surface where he can pick them up after they are sanitized.

SO ORDERED this 5th Day of June 2020

Fraternally and respectfully,

Van S. McGee
Grand Secretary



Johnie M. Garmon
Grand Master