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INTRODUCTION

Dear Brother Secretary;

Congratulations on accepting the most important office in your lodge. Your station in the lodge is one of great responsibility. Your continuous contact with the officers and members of your lodge makes you more vital to the success of your lodge than any other officer. This calls for your utmost efforts to uphold the traditions of your lodge and indeed the entire Masonic fraternity.

Three major qualifications are particularly essential to the success of a Masonic Lodge Secretary. They are **ACCURACY**, with its implied neatness and promptness, **ADAPTABILITY**, with its necessary courtesy and firmness, and **ATTENTION TO DETAIL**.

Your duties are continuous, day-in and day-out. However, if you tackle them as they arise your task will prove lighter and less complicated.

Criticism there will be, but do not let it worry you. If the criticism is just, let it guide you to proper action; if it is unjust, do not dwell on it. Your duty is to your lodge, not to the fault-finder if his criticism is unjust.

As your years of service to your brethren lengthen, you will become like one of those hollow pillars of old -- a receptacle or safe repository of many brotherly confidences and secrets, which the ear may have heard or the eyes seen, but which the tongue withholds.

This manual is designed to assist you the Secretary, as the Chief Operating Officer of your lodge, in performing your duties more effectively and efficiently.

It is now required that all lodges use the new interactive web-based “Masonic Online Registry Interface” or “MORI” program in keeping the records of your lodge. The office of the Grand Secretary is available to assist any lodge in the use of this program.

This manual is divided into five parts: the actual requirements and regulations of being a lodge secretary; sample forms used by secretaries; sample letters used in communicating with Grand Lodge, brethren, and candidates; frequently asked questions (FAQ's); and the revised manual of operation of the “MORI” computer program.
As the length of your service to your lodge increases, you may develop short cuts and other methods of streamlining your job. If so, we’d like to hear from you! This manual is in loose-leaf form purposely to allow for periodic updates as occasions require. If you submit an idea for consideration, we may include it in a future update. Any comments would be greatly appreciated.

Good luck and we wish you much success in your lodge.

Sincerely and fraternally,

Grand Secretary’s Office
Secretary’s Handbook Committee

We greatly acknowledge the hard work and efforts of those who contributed greatly to the previous editions

2012 Edition
R.W. Jeffrey L. Gardiner, PSGW, Grand Secretary
R.W. Stephen C. Cohn, Chairman
M.W. Albert T. Ames, PGM
R.W. James C. Holmes
R.W. Russell Lowe
Wor. Frank Kautz
Ms. Patricia Latham
Ms. Lisa Hastings
I: GENERAL INFORMATION

A. The Secretary must familiarize himself with the bylaws of his lodge and also the Constitutions and Regulations of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

B. The Secretary must make certain he has at all times an accurate list of the members of his lodge and their current address. This is available through the new on-line MORI system or from the office of the Grand Secretary.

C. The Secretary must be particularly prompt in replying to all communications of the Grand Lodge which require an answer.

   1. To ignore or delay replying to the communications of the Grand Lodge will make their job of maintaining an accurate database difficult. The Grand Secretary will rely on the District Deputy Grand Masters to obtain any reports or documents that are late. Please save both yourself and your lodge the embarrassment of hearing from the District Deputy Grand Master on such matters.

D. Correspondence with a Grand Lodge, or a lodge outside the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, whether to obtain information or to reply to a request for information, must be conducted through the Office of the Grand Secretary except as the Grand Master may otherwise order.¹

E. Correspondence with the Grand Master shall be considered as private and no copies are to be sent to, or otherwise shared with, any other party.

F. The Grand Master has ruled that each lodge must have an Assistant Secretary and an Assistant Treasurer.

II: LODGE REGULATIONS

A. No lodge in the absence of the Master and both Wardens shall transact any business or do any work, unless the Grand Master be present or he is represented by his District Grand Master, District Deputy Grand Master, or a Special Deputy.²

1. Parliamentary rules (e.g. “Robert’s Rules of Order”) have no legal standing in a Masonic Lodge. The Master must be fair in conducting the Lodge meeting. He rules, subject to an appeal to the Grand Master. The Master should endeavor to rule and govern his Lodge with fairness to all members.

   a) A “privileged motion” such as a motion for the “previous question” cannot be entertained.

2. Any Stated Communication of a particular lodge duly convened (with due notice) may transact such business as may properly be brought before the lodge (but, no balloting or other lodge business at a Special Communication, unless a dispensation therefor shall have been obtained), or to do ritual work if three or more members are present, provided one of them is entitled under Masonic law to preside thereover.³

3. All committees of the lodge are subject to appointment by the Master, unless otherwise provided for in the bylaws of the lodge.

4. If for any reason business or work is suspended, (e.g., a call for dinner) the lodge should be called “from labor to refreshment,” otherwise, the lodge will be in session wherever the brethren are assembled and only Masons can be present. For a brief recess, the lodge may be called to recess “until the second sound of the gavel.”

5. Stated business meetings cannot be conducted before the published time in the monthly Notice of Communication, nor can they be held at a time previous to that which may be stated in the lodge’s bylaws without first obtaining a dispensation to do so.

² ibid. - Section 318.
³ ibid. - Sections 408, 708
B. Rules for Meetings

1. No lodge, unless authorized by the Grand Master by dispensation, shall hold a meeting except to attend or conduct the funeral of a Mason, in any municipality other than the one designated in the Charter under penalty of forfeiture thereof.\(^4\)

2. A lodge may meet anywhere within the municipality named in its Charter, at the discretion of the Master.

3. Two separate meetings of the lodge may not be held in one day, except for the purpose of conducting Masonic burial or funeral services.\(^5\)

4. An “*In Memoriam*” (prayer during a business meeting for a recently departed brother) should not be conducted in the lodge prior to the notification of the membership in the monthly lodge Notice of Communication. Information about a departed brother in a lodge notice should be entitled “*Necrology*” which is a listing of the departed.

5. A lodge cannot hold over matters to a subsequent date; but matters under discussion may be tabled for further consideration at a later date.

6. No lodge shall suspend the operation of a bylaw; nor at a *Special* meeting alter or amend any part of the proceedings of a *Stated* (regular) meeting.\(^6\)

7. No lodge, officer, or member of a lodge shall give to a pauper a certificate or recommendation to proceed from lodge to lodge, or in an itinerant manner to apply to lodges or brethren for relief.\(^7\)

8. Any discussions conducted within a lodge business meeting are considered private and privileged information and the content of which should remain with the brethren of the lodge.\(^8\)

9. Please see rules pertaining to the use of social media, page 1-67

10. Each Lodge is to read the Grand Master’s edict on “roughhousing” prior to any second section of the Master Mason Degree, and its reading shall be so noted in the minutes of the lodge.

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\(^{4}\) *ibid.* - Section 320.

\(^{5}\) *ibid.* - Section 313.

\(^{6}\) *ibid.* - Section 315.

\(^{7}\) *ibid.* - Section 704.

III: DUTIES OF THE LODGE SECRETARY

“To carefully observe the proceedings of the lodge, keep a true and perfect record of the same, receive all monies from the hands of the brethren and pay them to the Treasurer, taking his receipt therefor.”

A. Business Meetings.

1. Record the minutes of the lodge in the form or styles suggested in Section 2, Exhibits.9

   a) It is essential that detailed notes be taken, especially in the order in which the happenings occur, to properly “keep a true and perfect record of the same.”

   b) The more promptly the record is transcribed following the meeting, the more accurate the record will be, especially if it depends on memory.

2. Read minutes of last Regular and Special Communications unless waived by the Master and the consent of the lodge to save time.

   a) The Secretary should read his records slowly, in a clear and distinct voice, so that everyone in the room can hear and understand the report. His remarks should be confined to comments necessary to clarify the reading of his records.

   b) Corrections due to errors in the records as read, if necessary for their approval should be made at the time; otherwise, they should be carefully noted for subsequent change.

3. Read applications for membership (degrees and/or affiliation).

   a) Send the proper forms to members of the Investigation Committee appointed by the Worshipful Master.10 Include instructions for investigating committee members, if necessary, to ensure the investigation is properly done. The members of the committee are to be known only by the Master, Secretary, and the committee. The identities of the members of the Investigation Committee are NOT to be made public to the lodge.

   b) Send notification to the candidate informing him of the Investigating Committee, its purpose and who the members are.

---

9 See Exhibit 1 -- Sample Forms of Minutes of a Lodge.
10 While appointing the committee is the responsibility of the Master, it may be done by the Secretary for expediency.
4. Read applications for ballot:

   a) The Master and Secretary must be familiar with § 409, 410 & 411 of the Grand Constitutions referencing total ballot of all members present is required.

5. Upon election (or rejection):

   a) A Masonic Record is created in MORI upon election.

   b) Candidate kits are required to be purchased for each candidate and are available through the Grand Lodge Supply Office. Each kit contains the candidate’s apron, the Member’s Handbook “Freemasonry in Massachusetts,” the series of Carl Claudy books, a Masonic passport, and other promotional materials.

   c) Notify the candidate of his election (or rejection) to receive the degrees of Freemasonry. ¹¹, ¹²

   d) Rejection of applicant: Read lodge bylaws and Grand Constitutions, Sections 415 - 417 to ascertain any special procedures. (Be advised of the opportunity for any member to object to the advancement of any candidate prior to the taking of any degree and for one year after taking his Third Degree.) ¹³

6. Receive all money (e.g., dues payments, dinner money, etc.), record in a Secretary’s ledger, pay to Treasurer and secure his receipt for it (usually by depositing it in the proper bank account). All checks drawn from lodge funds shall have two signatures on them. ¹⁴

   a) Secretaries may not keep photocopies of checks, credit cards, or anything that has a name and/or account number or social security number of any candidate or member. (MGL Sec 93c)

   b) Hard copies (printouts) of all membership entries stored in non-MORI computer programs MUST be maintained.

7. Assist the Master in preparing the next month’s lodge notice (calendar) or do it yourself, if necessary.

   a) The lodge notice (particularly the schedule of work and the Master’s message) IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MASTER -- not the

¹¹ See Exhibit 3 - Copy of sample letter of notification to candidate for the degrees.
¹² “Constitutions and Regulations” - Sections 413, 414.
¹³ ibid. - Section 417.
Secretary, except in cases when the Master can’t be reached or is indisposed, and undue delay would prevent the publication and distribution of the notice in ample time.

B. The following form of record (minutes) of the meetings is recommended (See Exhibit 1):

1. Name of the lodge.
2. Place of the meeting.
3. Day of the meeting.
4. Date of the meeting.
5. Regular or Special Communication, as the case may be.
6. Time of the meeting.
7. Names of the officers present or their substitutes, with their respective stations.

   a) In case a station is filled by a substitute, the name of the station so filled should be preceded by the words “Acting” or “As” or followed by the words “Pro-Tem.”

8. The degree on which the lodge was opened, and whether opened in “Form” or “Due Form” in accordance with the Official Cipher.

   a) IN DUE FORM - When all the offices to which active parts are assigned in the ritualistic opening or closing of a lodge are filled and the respective officers make a response to the ritualistic requirements.

   b) IN FORM - When the opening or closing ceremonies of the lodge are shortened by omitting the responses of one or more of the stations in the line of officers.

9. If the degree work is to be done in another degree than the one in which the lodge is open, be sure the records show the change from that degree to the degree to be conferred.

   a) The record of the degree conferred should be given with the candidate’s name appearing in full. In the First Degree his name is given without title; but in the Second and Third Degrees the title “Brother” should precede the candidate’s name.

   b) The Masonic Diploma should be presented, if possible, to the candidate at the meeting at which he receives his Third Degree.\footnote{See Exhibit 5 -The “Order For Grand Lodge Diplomas” (page 2-18) should be filed with the Grand Lodge Supply Department immediately after the candidate has received the Second [Fellow Craft] Degree.}
He may sign the bylaws the night he is raised\textsuperscript{16} but may not receive a dues card until the Master certifies he is qualified to do so (i.e., after demonstrating his proficiency in his candidate’s lectures and attending any other non-ritualistic instruction (Lodge of Instruction) as may be required)\textsuperscript{17} (See also pages 1-53 and 1-56). Make sure the proper officers have signed the diploma and the lodge seal is affixed or embossed to it. Use caution in pre-dating diplomas, especially during winter months.

10. All general business of the lodge, such as the election and installation of officers or the discussion of questions relating to the general interests of the fraternity or the local affairs of the lodge, may be transacted while open on any degree, of which due notice shall be given.\textsuperscript{18} \textsuperscript{19}

11. “New Business” refers to any business legally brought before the lodge for the first time at a stated communication. “Old Business” refers to the discussion of any business that has been previously brought before the lodge at a stated communication. Business may only be conducted at a regular stated communication unless a dispensation has been obtained to move the stated communication or to hold an extra business meeting, such as to elect last minute applicants for a one-day class.

\textsuperscript{16} He may sign the bylaws the day he is raised, and presented with a temporary dues card if during a one-day class and the Grand Master has issued a dispensation for it.

\textsuperscript{17} “Constitutions and Regulations” – Section 343

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{ibid.} - Sections 316 and 312.

\textsuperscript{19} Ruling of M.W. Donald G. Hicks, Jr., Grand Master, September-11, 2002:

"Section 316 of the Grand Constitutions as amended September 12, 2001, states in part, “all general business of the Lodge … may be transacted while open on any degree at a Stated Meeting”. In accordance with this amendment, it is the opinion of this Grand Master that a Lodge should be opened on whichever degree will permit all Brethren present to be seated within the tyed Lodge, including the Official Visit of a District Deputy."
C: Secretary’s Tasks:

1. Monthly
   a) Order monthly envelopes (may also be on an annual basis).
   b) Update lodge membership files.
   c) Print monthly lodge notice envelopes or labels.
   d) Prepare minutes from last meeting.
   e) Close the monthly report in MORI and print copy for your file.
   f) Prepare bank deposit (done by the Treasurer in some lodges).
   g) Assist the Master in preparation of monthly lodge notice.
   h) Have candidate supplies ready:
      Booklets and pamphlets
      Aprons
      Diplomas
   i) Set up investigation committees as requested by Master.

2. Annually
   a) Order Past Master’s jewel.
   b) Order Past Master’s apron.
   c) Order Past Master’s lapel pin, if it is the custom of your lodge.
   d) Order dues bills and envelopes.
   e) Prepare, mail, and process dues bills and issue dues cards.
   g) Prepare lodge’s Annual Report.
   h) Letters and mailings for life membership.
   i) Letters and mailings for 25 year pins.
   j) Letters and mailings for other service awards.
   k) Verify the Age 88 / Life Membership list as provided by the Grand Secretary’s Office.
   l) Annual recapitulation of the membership.
   m) Assist in the preparation of the lodge budget.
IV: APPLICATIONS AND BALLOTHING ON CANDIDATES

A. An application for initiation (page 2-43) must not be given to an applicant for the degrees until he shall have appeared before a Membership Committee, of which the Master or a Warden shall be one.\(^\text{20}\)

1. No application should be read in lodge until it is full and accurate.
2. Once an application is read in lodge, it is considered accepted and must be processed.
3. All candidates must submit to and provide a background check (NM-5) to the members of the lodge’s investigating committee. No notes may be copied from it, and it remains the personal property of the applicant.

B. No candidate shall be balloted for at any but a Regular Monthly Communication in any lodge, and shall stand proposed from one regular monthly meeting to another, unless a dispensation therefor shall have been obtained and then, only when written or printed notifications of the meeting, bearing the full name and residential address of the candidate to be balloted for, shall have been sent to all of the members.\(^\text{21}\)

1. If the report of an investigating committee is full and complete (all three reports), the record should read -- “full and favorable” or “full and unfavorable,” as the case may be.

   a) If a divided report is made (e.g., two favorable and one unfavorable, or the reverse), then the detailed division should be recorded, followed by the record of the result of the balloting. An unfavorable report does not mean an applicant cannot be elected. (See page 1-17)

   b) In case a majority report is made, the lodge may proceed to vote at the discretion of the Master.

2. Should the Master be informed by the Secretary of an unfavorable report of the committee prior to the calling of the report of the committee, he may decline to call for the report of the Investigating Committee for a short period of time for his own personal investigation, notwithstanding notification to the membership of the ballot.

   a) If the Master declines to bring an application to ballot, he shall announce his intentions at the beginning of the business of balloting at the Communication at which the ballot is scheduled and the report of the committee must not be read.\(^\text{22}\)

\(^\text{20}\) “Constitutions and Regulations” – Section 401.
\(^\text{21}\) ibid. - Sections 407 and 408.
\(^\text{22}\) ibid. - Section 408.
b) Once the report of the committee has been read in open lodge, the Master must immediately proceed to ballot thereon.\textsuperscript{23}

c) When balloting on candidates has commenced, the ballot must proceed \textit{without interruption}, either by the introduction of new business or by adjournment. During the report of an investigating committee, casting of the ballot, and announcement of its result, the lodge should be “tyled” and no one is to be permitted to enter or leave the lodge room, except in the most extra-ordinary circumstances.\textsuperscript{24} The Tyler does not vote.

d) Multiple candidates may be balloted upon by a single ballot. If a black cube is present, then each candidate must be balloted upon individually.

e) The method of balloting is not governed by any particular provision of the Grand Constitutions. Refer to the latest edition of the “Master’s Agenda” booklet for additional information.

f) No vote shall be taken by mail.\textsuperscript{25}

3. The application then goes to ballot on the report as rendered, and the result -- “elected” or “rejected” -- is recorded; the candidate should be notified \textit{at once} of said result, using either a form supplied by Grand Lodge (pages 2-15, or 2-16) or a letter from the Secretary which conforms to the constitutional requirements, covering the Grand Lodge Constitutions, Sections 413 & 414, peculiar to either result.

a) Casting a “black ball” (cube) factiously and without just cause is a Masonic offense for which a member is subject to Masonic punishment.\textsuperscript{26}

b) Any member may, after the initial unanimous election, object in writing or in open lodge, to the initiation, passing, or raising of a candidate, at any time before the degree is conferred and for one year after the Third Degree is conferred; and the Lodge shall investigate such objection and decide by a majority vote of those members present before proceeding further with the candidate. Should the objection be sustained, all fees paid by the candidate shall be returned and the candidate shall have the status of a rejected candidate.\textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{ibid.} - Section 408.
\textsuperscript{24} \textit{ibid.} - Section 411.
\textsuperscript{25} \textit{ibid.} - Section 316.
\textsuperscript{26} \textit{ibid.} - Section 412.
\textsuperscript{27} \textit{ibid.} - Section 417.
4. In balloting, either for degrees, affiliation, or for honorary membership of a brother who is not an active member of the lodge, the ballot must be clear and unanimously favorable.\textsuperscript{28}

5. A unanimous ballot shall not be deemed necessary for honorary membership when the candidate is an active member of the lodge, unless the lodge by its bylaws shall so provide.\textsuperscript{29}

6. In balloting for degrees for membership the Worshipful Master \textbf{may} allow three ballots, at his discretion, but no more.

   a) If the Worshipful Master decides to take additional ballots he \textbf{SHALL NOT} declare the results of the proceeding ballot. (See also section 411, ¶3)

\textsuperscript{28} ibid. - Section 409.
\textsuperscript{29} ibid. - Rules as to Bylaws, XI.
V: APPLICATIONS FOR THE DEGREES

A. Applications may be received and proposed only at a Regular (Stated) Monthly Communication, and when once read in open lodge, the application is considered duly received and cannot be withdrawn or otherwise disposed of, except by being balloted upon at a subsequent Regular Monthly Communication.\(^{30}\) (See also page 1-32, section 5.a.1. for additional information)

1. If an application for the degrees has been acted upon favorably, it can be withdrawn upon the request of the candidate or of the Master with the majority consent of the lodge.\(^{31}\)

2. The Secretary should be certain upon receipt of any applications for the degrees or for affiliation, that the candidate’s name is correctly spelled and is given in full;\(^{32}\) with his birth date,\(^{33}\) birth place, and all other required information. An applicant (or Brother) without a middle name should be listed as John Doe, or John (NMI) Doe (No Middle Initial) with the NMI being entered on any line specifically requesting a middle name. If the person only uses a letter as a middle name, he should be listed as John A Doe, with no period after the letter, or John “A” Doe with quotation marks to indicate the letter is the name. Also, the Secretary should ascertain that the candidate personally filled out the pre-application form in the presence of the Application or Membership Committee and signed his name in full.

3. For any prospective candidate whose residential address is not within Massachusetts, a “Release (or Waiver) of Jurisdiction” must be obtained through the Grand Secretary’s Office. An application for the degrees, subject to a Release of Jurisdiction, should never be balloted on in open lodge, until said permission or release has been granted,\(^{34}\) nor should it appear on the lodge notice in advance of the permission or release, even with a footnote reading “Subject to permission or release of jurisdiction.” The candidate should be informed of the time element for this process.

\(^{30}\) ibid. - Section 407.

\(^{31}\) ibid. - Section 407.

\(^{32}\) Failure to do so will constitute the particular person an irregularly-made Mason. See Sections 421 and 709(l).

\(^{33}\) Ruling of M.W. Donald G. Hicks, Jr., Grand Master, March 12, 2003: “Therefore … effective immediately, in accordance with the law and custom of this time and place, at eighteen years of age, a man is a “male adult” and is of “full age” to become a Mason in this Grand Jurisdiction.”

\(^{34}\) “Constitutions and Regulations” - Section 404.
a) In cases where permission has been granted, the lodge notice bearing the candidates name should carry the footnote reading - “By permission of the Grand Master,” whereas, if a Release of Jurisdiction has been granted, the footnote should read, “By permission and recommendation of _______________Lodge, Number ________, of ___________ (State),” if that information has been supplied. The Secretary should also announce such permission or release has been received.

b) Upon election, it is the duty of the Secretary to notify the candidate of the time and place to appear for the degrees. The letter should specify certain provisions for the time limits for receiving the degrees and the resulting forfeiture of fees.35

c) See also page 1-56, C, Special Grand Lodge Facts.

B. Investigating Committee

1. The Master will appoint a committee of three to investigate the applicant and verify the data contained within his application and make a judgement about him. While this is the Master’s responsibility, it is carried out by the Secretary in many lodges. Committee members selected should be as diligent as they would be if the applicant were seeking admission into their homes instead of their lodges. The applicant is a petitioner asking something of Masonry. The lodge has a right to know about him before extending those privileges.36 The prospective candidate must submit to and provide a background check (NM-5) to the members of the investigating committee, and they are to note that they have seen it in their report. Investigations must be conducted in person. Telephone interviews are not acceptable. See also page 1-13, IV (A)(3).

C. Healing.

1. If, assuming the candidate has not misrepresented himself on his application, his information is improperly presented for ballot in the lodge’s monthly notice to the brethren through no fault of his own, whether as a result of a printer’s typographical error or an improper reading of the information on the candidate’s application due to his handwriting, his election must be “healed” by the Grand Master, upon application, when the discovery of such error is uncovered. Failure to do so will constitute the candidate being made an irregular Mason.37

35 ibid. - Section 413.
36 “Master’s Agenda” - G.L. of Massachusetts, 2005, page 29.
37 “Constitutions and Regulations” - Section 421, 709(l).
2. Occasionally, a lodge will be called upon to conduct a Masonic funeral Service for a brother who has been suspended for non-payment of dues. The lodge should **ALWAYS** perform the service as the family may not be aware of any financial issues the brother had with the lodge. This service will be healed by the Grand Master upon written notification.
VI: APPLICATION FOR AFFILIATION, RE-AFFILIATION, AND REINSTATEMENT

A. The procedure for affiliation is the same as for the degrees, except an application for affiliation may be withdrawn without ballot.\(^\text{38}\)

1. The fees for affiliation are governed by the bylaws of the lodge and by Sections 606 and 608 of the Grand Constitutions.

B. Upon receipt of an application for affiliation and the required fees, the lodge Secretary must request the applicant’s certified Masonic record from the Office of the Grand Secretary.\(^\text{39}\)

1. Note: Obtaining a member’s Member Status via the MORI system using the “Add Affiliate” function is considered acceptable as a certified copy.

C. Understand the difference between “Dual” versus “Plural” membership. **Dual** membership refers to a member belonging to lodges in two or more jurisdictions. **Plural** membership refers to a member who belongs to two or more lodges within the same jurisdiction. (Consult the latest issue of “List of Lodges, Masonic” published by Pantograph Publishing Co. or the Grand Secretary’s Office for the rules of other jurisdictions when an out of state Mason applies to your lodge)

D. Any Mason who is a member of a Prince Hall Lodge recognized by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, presently Massachusetts, Connecticut, North Carolina and Wisconsin, (Consult the latest issue of “List of Lodges, Masonic” published by Pantograph Publishing Co. or the Grand Secretary’s Office) may affiliate with any Massachusetts Lodge upon submission of the regular affiliation application and the presentation of a certified Demit from his Prince Hall Grand Lodge. All other regular affiliation procedures apply. No Prince Hall Grand Lodges permit dual memberships. (This is the same procedure that should be followed with any other jurisdiction that does not allow dual membership.) Prince Hall Masons from jurisdictions recognized by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts may visit any Massachusetts Lodge by complying with the usual procedures concerning visiting as outlined in Section 501 of the Constitutions and Regulations.

E. Applicants elected to membership by affiliation are not members of the lodge until they sign the bylaws, and they must sign the bylaws within six months from the date of election; otherwise the election is void.\(^\text{40}\)

\(^\text{38}\) *ibid.* - Sections 422 and 407- 412.

\(^\text{39}\) Ruling of M.W. Whitfield W. Johnson, Grand Master, September 15, 1955:

“No application for affiliation under the provisions of Section 422 of the Grand Constitutions shall hereafter be balloted upon until the Lodge shall have secured a certified copy of the Masonic record of the applicant over the signature of the Grand Secretary (of Massachusetts), which certified copy shall be retained with the application and report of the Investigating Committee in the files of the Lodge.”

\(^\text{40}\) “Constitutions and Regulations” - Section 422(7).
F. An applicant for Reinstatement with the lodge from which he demitted or was otherwise suspended, if made within five years from the date of his demit or suspension, may be accepted by majority ballot. Otherwise, a unanimous ballot is required. 41

1. An applicant for Reinstatement, following demit or suspension, if elected, should re-sign the bylaws of the lodge if, during his period of absence from membership, the bylaws were changed, or if the period of absence has exceeded five years.

2. Applicants rejected for affiliation are reported in part VII of the Secretary’s monthly report forms (page 2-25).

G. An application by a Brother for reinstatement, after suspension for non-payment of lodge dues, must be accompanied by the amount due at the time of suspension unless the same has been remitted by the Master or other arrangements have been made.

1. The ballot is subject to the same requirements as an applicant for Reinstatement. (see Section VI-D, preceding.)

2. A rejected applicant for reinstatement should be furnished with a “Certificate of Prior Membership.” (see Section XI, following.) 42

3. See also page 1-56, C, Special Grand Lodge Facts.

41 *ibid.* - Section 507.
42 *ibid.* - Section 507.
VII: CONDITIONS FOR HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

A. Any Mason in good standing may be nominated and elected an “Honorary Member” of a lodge, if so allowed for in the lodge’s bylaws.

1. The procedure for honorary membership in a lodge is the same as for any other candidate for affiliation or membership, but must be received without fees.  

2. Unless he has been elected as an affiliated member, or is already a member, and having signed the bylaws in the normal manner, he is not eligible to be elected a Warden, Master, or Proxy of your lodge.

3. The Proxy for a lodge established beyond the territorial limits of Massachusetts may be represented in Grand Lodge by an honorary member, elected by that lodge in accordance with Section 326.

43 ibid. - Rules as to bylaws, Section XI.

44 Ruling of M.W. Edgar W. Darling, Grand Master, October 1991: “...Unless he is an elected Member of your Lodge, either by affiliation or already a Member, and for doing something outstanding or out of the ordinary and having already been elected to Membership in your Lodge and has signed the bylaws of your Lodge, he is not eligible to be elected a Warden, Master, or Proxy of your Lodge. He will not have any voting rights in Grand Lodge unless he has signed your bylaws either by Affiliation or Membership.”
VIII: AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

A. Amendments to the bylaws of a lodge are governed by the amending procedure set forth in the lodge bylaws. The specified amending procedure must be followed without exception or the new amendments will not be valid.

1. Amendments to lodge bylaws do not become effective until approved by the Grand Lodge Committee on Charters and Bylaws and the lodge has been officially advised of the same.45

B. A review process has been put into place with the Committee on Charters and Bylaws to expedite the approval process. A lodge may propose an amendment and immediately submit it for review by the Committee. If approved, the lodge may then publish it in their notice of communication to the brethren exactly as pre-approved. Should the lodge change any wording, the new proposal has to be resubmitted for another pre-approval. If the lodge passes it in accordance with its bylaws, the certification as outlined in paragraph C below may be submitted and formally approved by the Committee and then certified by the Grand Secretary. 46 The modified bylaw becomes effective upon receipt by the Secretary of the certified copy of the change.

C. The certification must be submitted in duplicate on lodge stationery, signed by the lodge Secretary, and sealed with the lodge seal. [Please include two copies of the lodge notice that announced the vote on the bylaw change.] Only the wording of the proposed amendment is required and more than one amendment may be submitted on the certification. The exact changes (deletions, additions, modifications) must be clearly identified. However, it is requested that at least two inches of space at the bottom of each page be left clear for the certification by the Grand Secretary.

D. Notice must be given to the Lodge membership that proposed By-Laws changes will be discussed at a Regular Meeting of the Lodge. The Notice should include the original and the proposed new wording of the By-Law. This wording should be clear as to what is the old wording and what the new wording will be, either by italicizing, underlining, strikethrough, or bolding the words of one and not the other, so there should no confusion. Please refer to additional procedures in section XXIX, page 1-60.

1. Following approval, a certified copy of the approved bylaws amendments will be returned to the lodge Secretary for the lodge records and should be inserted into the bylaws as amended.

45 “Constitutions and Regulations” - Section 710.
46 See Exhibit 6 - Sample Form of Bylaws Certification.
IX: DEMITS

A. Definition.

1. A Demit (page 2-37) is the withdrawal from membership of a Master Mason from a Massachusetts lodge of which he is a member.47

B. Procedure.

1. The request for a demit MUST be made over the signature of the Brother to the lodge Secretary, a copy of which or original must be sent to the Grand Secretary’s office.

2. A Demit cannot be issued unless the dues of the Brother are paid for the current Masonic year, or in special cases, remitted by the Master to date.

3. If the Brother is “clear on the books” of the lodge at the time of the request, the Demit is dated the day of receipt of the request by the lodge Secretary.

4. If the Brother is not “clear on the books” of the lodge at the time of the request, the Demit is dated the day on which he clears his record.

5. The Demit must be prepared by the Secretary, signed by both the Secretary and the Master, sealed with the lodge seal, and then submitted to the Office of the Grand Secretary for certification.

A DEMIT IS NOT VALID UNLESS IT IS CERTIFIED BY THE GRAND SECRETARY.

6. If the Secretary so requests, the Demit will be mailed directly to the Brother by the Grand Secretary, if it is correctly completed when submitted for certification.

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47 “Constitutions and Regulations” Sections 505 and 507.
7. If a Brother cannot be located, **and all attempts to locate him have failed**, a “Demit -- Address Unknown” may be requested from Grand Lodge. This will allow the member to be removed from the records, but a special note will be made on this member’s Masonic history indicating the Demit was issued because his address was unknown and he could not be reached. If he is later found, he would be eligible for a Masonic funeral or reinstatement. To make use of this procedure, a certified letter with a **Return Receipt Requested** must have been sent to his last known address, and advertise for his whereabouts in the lodge notice.

C. Reporting of Demits.

1. The Demits of members of the lodge are to be reported to the lodge at the next succeeding Regular Communication of the lodge and recorded in the lodge minutes and in part IV of the monthly report for that month *(page 2-24)*.  

2. The demitting Brother should be advised that the Grand Constitutions provide that:

   “A Brother who holds a Demit is entitled to visit lodges, subject to the constitutional provisions for visiting [in Massachusetts], for one year from the date of issue and no more. If he remains for more than one year without being affiliated with some regular lodge, he shall not of right be entitled to any of the benefits or privileges of Masonry, except that he may at any time petition for affiliation.” *(ibid.– Section 506)*

**NOTE: See section XX, page 1-42, of this manual, SUSPENDED MEMBERS PAID BUT NOT RESUMING MEMBERSHIP.**

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48 **ibid.** - Section 505.
49 **ibid.** - Section 506.
X: CERTIFICATE OF CLEARANCE

A. Definition.

1. A Certificate of Clearance (page 2-38) is issued to a Massachusetts Mason who belongs to two or more Massachusetts Lodges and wishes to terminate his membership in his secondary Lodge. His primary Lodge is considered the one in which his Grand Lodge dues are paid through.

B. Procedures.

1. The requirements for and procedure of issuing a Certificate of Clearance are the same as those for a Demit.

A CERTIFICATE OF CLEARANCE IS NOT VALID UNLESS IT IS CERTIFIED BY THE GRAND SECRETARY.

C. Reporting of Certificate of Clearance.

1. Members of the lodge receiving a Certificate of Clearance are to be reported to the Lodge at the next succeeding Regular Communication of the lodge and recorded in the lodge minutes and in part IV of the monthly report for that particular month (page 2-24).

   a). A Certificate of Clearance may not be used for purpose of affiliation nor does it confer visiting privileges.

50 ibid. - Sections 505 and 507.
XI: CERTIFICATE OF PRIOR MEMBERSHIP

A. Definition.

1. A Certificate of Prior Membership *(page 2-39)* is issued to a suspended member of a lodge whose petition for reinstatement has been rejected by the lodge.51

   a) The date of the Certificate of Prior Membership is the date of the Regular Communication of the lodge at which the ballot was taken and the petition was rejected.

B. Procedure

1. The Certificate of Prior Membership must be filled out by the lodge Secretary, signed by the Secretary and the Master, sealed with the lodge seal, and submitted to the Office of the Grand Secretary for certification.

A CERTIFICATE OF PRIOR MEMBERSHIP IS NOT VALID UNLESS IT IS CERTIFIED BY THE GRAND SECRETARY.

C. Reporting of Certificate of Prior Membership.

1. The Certificate of Prior Membership is to be reported to the lodge at the next succeeding Regular Communication of the lodge, and recorded in the lodge minutes and in part IV of the monthly report for that particular month *(page 2-24).*

   a) A Certificate of Prior Membership may be used for purposes of affiliation, but not for visiting purposes.

51 *ibid.* - Section 507.
XII: CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING

A. Although no official or constitutional authority exists for the issuance of a Certificate of Good Standing, the following is a sample of a letter which may be used as a “Certificate of Good Standing” for a member of a lodge who wishes to affiliate with a lodge in another jurisdiction or with a Masonic-related organization. It does not take the place of an official Masonic record from the Grand Lodge, nor does it replace a current dues card or demit. See Section 501(2).

1. It may also be adapted for use in certifying the good standing of a deceased member of your lodge by substituting the words in parentheses.

2. This certificate may only be sent to the member.

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Blazing Star Lodge, A.F. & A.M.
Farmington, Massachusetts
(Date of Certification)

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that (John Paul Jones) is at this time (was at the time of his death) a member in good standing of (Blazing Star) Lodge of (Farmington,) Massachusetts. His Masonic record is as follows:

Born:  
Initiated:  
Passed:  
Raised:  
Suspended:  (Use the categories applicable, deleting the others.)
Reinstated:
Demitted:
Re-affiliated:
Affiliated:
(Deceased):

(Name of Lodge Secretary)
Blazing Star Lodge

( Lodge Seal )
XIII: COURTESY DEGREES, INSTRUCTION AND EXAMINATION

A. Degree work and any required instruction and examination for candidates elected to receive the degrees in a lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, who are unable to receive or complete the same in the lodge, may have courtesy work done by:

1. Another lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, or,

2. A lodge under another jurisdiction recognized by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

B. Courtesy work by another lodge under the jurisdiction of Massachusetts:

1. The lodge requesting the work and the lodge requested to do the work may make arrangements for the courtesy work without prior approval by the Grand Secretary’s Office.\(^{52}\)

C. Courtesy work by a lodge under another jurisdiction recognized by the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts:

1. A written request for courtesy work must be submitted to the Office of the Grand Secretary of Massachusetts by the lodge secretary. The following information is required:
   a) Full name, address and telephone number of the candidate.
   b) Statement that degree fees have been paid in full.
   c) Name of the lodge to confer the work, if known.
   d) Degrees to be conferred.
   e) Any required instruction and examination in degrees.

2. No courtesy work may be requested unless the candidate’s degree fees have been paid in full to the lodge to which he was elected.

3. Upon receipt of the above information, the Grand Secretary of Massachusetts will make arrangements through the office of the grand secretary of the other jurisdiction for the courtesy work. Please allow ample time for correspondence.

4. The lodge Secretary will be notified by the Office of the Grand Secretary of Massachusetts of the dates on which the degrees were conferred and attainment of proficiency on the same. The candidate’s signature for the bylaws will also be furnished if needed.

\(^{52}\) See Exhibit 7 - “Secretary’s Monthly Report,” Part I. Instructions, Courtesy Work.
XIV: DISPENSATIONS

A. Definition.

1. A Dispensation is written permission granted by the Grand Master for lodge action not allowed by the Grand Constitutions and/or the lodge bylaws. It must be attached to the Secretary’s minutes of the meeting. Please allow 45 days for processing.

B. Dispensations Required.

1. Dispensations MUST be obtained for the following reasons.

   a) Election of officers at a Regular Communication other than that specified in the lodge bylaws.\(^{53}\)
   b) Change in meeting date of the Regular Communication.\(^{54}\)
   c) Omission of the Regular Communication.\(^{55}\)
   d) Shortening of time between degrees, currently 14 days.\(^{56}\)
   e) Meeting outside of the chartered municipality.\(^{57}\)
   f) Visiting another jurisdiction.\(^{58}\)
   g) Visits by lodges from another jurisdiction.\(^{59}\)

   (continued next page)
h) Visits by all degree teams.\textsuperscript{60}

i) Public procession.\textsuperscript{61}

j) Wearing of Masonic regalia in public.\textsuperscript{62}

k) Table Lodge Celebration

l) Flyers to be inserted in lodge notice mailings (see page 1-33)

m) Conferring degrees on more than 5 candidates \textsuperscript{63}

n) Conducting a “One-day Class”

2. The notation “By Permission of the Grand Master” or “Pending Dispensation” must appear in the lodge notice for any action requiring a dispensation and in the lodge monthly reports where applicable.

\textsuperscript{60} \textit{ibid.} - Section 503.

\textsuperscript{61} \textit{ibid.} - Section 338.

\textsuperscript{62} \textit{ibid.} - Section 818.

\textsuperscript{63} \textit{ibid.} - Section 335.
XV: LODGE NOTICES

A. Information for All Notices:
   1. Required
      b. Lodge of Instruction information.
      c. Roster of officers of the lodge, including addresses and phone numbers of the Master, Wardens, Secretary, and Treasurer.
      d. Overlook InfoSource contact information

   2. Other Useful Information:
      a. Bloodmobile visits sponsored by the lodge or district.
      b. Listing of past masters and affiliated past masters of the lodge.\(^{65}\)
      c. Listing of standing committees of the lodge, including:
         1) Finance committee.
         2) Trustees of permanent funds.
         3) Ritualists.
         4) Service Committee

   3. Optional Information
      a. Names and phone numbers of the Blood Committee Chairman, DeMolay/Rainbow Chairman, Grand Lodge Proxy, Masonic Awareness Chairman, Education Officer, District Representative to the Masonic Home, and the names, addresses, and phone numbers of District Awareness Officer and District Service Officer.

B. Regular Communications:
   1. Date, Time and Place.

   2. Masonic work for the meeting.

   3. Any anticipated action to suspend delinquent members. Names of delinquent members ARE NOT to be printed in the Notice

   4. Any lodge action and/or vote of the lodge required by the lodge bylaws; e.g., transfer of funds, amendments to the lodge bylaws, honorary membership.

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\(^{64}\) “Constitutions and Regulations” - Sections 709(m), (n); Section 711; Rules as to Bylaws, Item III.

\(^{65}\) Only where space is at a premium due to multiple lodge mergers etc, will a listing of all living past masters suffice.
5. Balloting on:

a) Applicants for the degrees.

1) Full names and residential addresses of applicants for the degrees, including street and number if any, must be borne upon the notification of the meeting at which they are to be balloted for. Actual street addresses should be listed for the investigation committee. Post office box numbers should not be listed.

b) Applications for Affiliation.

1) Information with reference to full names and residential addresses, applying to applicants for the degrees, also applies to applicants for membership by affiliation.

c) Reinstatement.

1) Full names and addresses of suspended members petitioning for reinstatement must be borne upon the notice of the meeting at which they are to be balloted for. Please see XIX-1, page 1-41

C. Special Communications.

1. Date, Time, Place and Purpose.

2. Except for Special Communications for Masonic services for departed Brethren, the lodge membership must be **timely** notified of all Communications of the lodge, both Regular and Special. A notice received after the Communication is of **no value**! The Grand Lodge considers Due Notice to be at least one week prior to the meeting.

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66 “Constitutions and Regulations” - Section 407.
67 *ibid.* - Sections 407 and 422.
68 *ibid.* - Section 507.
D. Prohibited Enclosures.

1. All inserts included with lodge notices pertaining to social events, trips, and other matters not related to lodge business, must be approved by the Grand Master PRIOR to mailing.\(^69\) Please allow a 45-day lead time. The only exceptions are: Past Masters’ Night program, an extra page of your regular notice, necrologies, bloodmobile announcements, announcements from Grand Lodge, and inserts from Rainbow Girls or DeMolay if they meet Grand Lodge criteria. Failure to have the enclosure(s) approved may lead to cancellation of the event.

2. No written or pictorial mention of “happy hour,” “BYOB,” drinks, drawings, door prizes, references to gambling or casinos, or any reference, either written or graphical, to an event or activity that may cast an improper or unfavorable image of Masonry, etc., can appear in the notice or in any inserted flyers.

   a) Proper uses of wordings would be “awards” in place of “prizes;” an “Indian Resort” in place of an “Indian Casino,” “opportunities” in place of “chances,” or “social hour” in place of “cocktails.”

   b) Raffles or other bazaars may be considered if in conformity with the requirements of the Code of Massachusetts Regulations Title 940, Chapters 12 & 13 and all other laws, rules and regulations, of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Raffle Guidelines established by Grand Lodge. It is further provided that no raffle, bazaar or other such activity shall be permitted by any Masonic Lodge under the Jurisdiction of this Grand Lodge without the written permission of the Grand Master.\(^70\)

\(^69\) *ibid.* - Section 705.

\(^70\) Resolution of June 11, 2003 Quarterly Communication
E. Privacy

1. A lodge Notice of Communication is considered *private information* and not for public consumption or knowledge. It is for *members only* and not to be sent to non-Masons or non-members, outside of the required Grand Lodge exceptions. Grand Lodge does not approve the sending of lodge notices to widows.

2. All notices containing information beyond meeting time, date and place are to be *sent in sealed envelopes*. This is a Constitutional requirement\(^{71}\) and protects the privacy of candidate data. A three-folded and sealed notice may be sent without an envelope as long as no lodge information or business is visible on the exterior of the folded notice. (See also page 1-35)

3. See also sending of lodge notices via electronic means, page 1-36.

\(^{71}\) *ibid.* - Section 711.
F. Electronic Media

1. Lodges may create and maintain internet web sites as long as they are in accordance with the current Grand Lodge regulations. Acceptable uses of a Masonic internet web page or computer bulletin boards are:

a) Publicizing meeting dates, times and locations.

1) The lodge’s monthly notice of a communication may be posted to the lodge’s web site, complete with confidential information, only if it is password protected and the membership is provided the means (logon ID and password) to access it. The Grand Secretary’s Office must also be provided with the means to access those features of the web site. Written notices must still be sent in sealed envelopes to those members who do not have access to the Internet or who want to receive a printed copy. A notice emailed to a brother’s specific personal email box is considered the same as sending it in a sealed envelope.

2) A Brother may request to receive only an electronic version of the lodge’s notice, although it is still the requirement of the Grand Lodge for all members to receive a printed notice. However, the Grand Secretary will permit a Brother to “opt out” of receiving a printed notice by written request to the Lodge Secretary. The request must be kept on file by the Secretary and made available for review by the District Deputy Grand Master at his annual inspection of the records of the Lodge.

b) Listing of lodge officers and contact listings, using e-mail addresses only.

c) Publicizing lodge social or civic activities.

d) Masonic blood drive dates and locations.

e) Cyber-links to other Masonic-related web sites or pages.

1) Use EXTREME CAUTION! Many links seem innocent but may have links to sites of questionable content. Links can be a problem, particularly since they cannot be controlled. Investigate any links on pages you may link to.

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72 ibid. - Section 711.
2. Unacceptable uses of a Masonic internet web site or computer bulletin boards:
   a) Since an internet web page or computer bulletin board can be designed or used as an electronic lodge notice available for anyone to read, the publicizing of any information concerning candidates, candidate investigations, elections, jokes, or any other sensitive or questionable matter is **not permitted**.\(^73\)
   b) Posting of personal addresses and telephone numbers of officers and/or members. *(Please see page 1-64, “Confidentiality”)*
   c) Any web site “home page” is owned by and is the responsibility of the lodge, regardless of where it is hosted or by whom. This also pertains to any “Facebook” pages or “Twitter” postings. The Master must request Grand Lodge to establish a link to the local lodge’s page. Grand Lodge will monitor the site and if the content is questionable, will request the lodge to correct it or close the site. The Grand Master can revoke the charter of a lodge refusing to do so. Please see the social media regulations on page 1-67.
   d) Advertising is **not permitted**, but may be necessary only if the lodge receives free internet access in exchange for the advertisement. This should be subtle and tasteful. This is not the place for commercial advertising: no used cars or even lodge or banquet hall for rent. This could pose serious problems in liability, tax, or insurance issues. Lodges are encouraged to utilize free space on the Grand Lodge’s server to host their own web sites. Please contact the Grand Secretary’s Office for current details and availability. *(Please see page 1-64 for additional regulations and guidelines)*

3. Electronic Mail (e-mail):
   a) An expedient method of communicating and disseminating information to lodge members.
   b) More private than internet or computer bulletin boards.
   c) Integrity of e-mail contents cannot be guaranteed. Use caution in sending sensitive data, especially candidate or member information. Lodge notices may be sent to members via email as long as it is password protected and no mass email addresses are shown in the header of the email (use the “bcc” function of your email).
   d) The sending of a lodge notice to a brother’s private email is considered sending it in an enclosed envelope.

\(^73\) *Ibid.* - Section 711.
XVI: LIFE MEMBERSHIP, PREPAYMENT OF DUES FOR GRAND LODGE, AND LODGE DUES

A. A card schedule of fees available (page 2-36).

1. A card schedule for prepayment of Grand Lodge dues for life, from ages 18 through 88, with an application blank on the reverse, is available from the Grand Treasurer’s Office at Grand Lodge. In lieu of the schedule, the sum to be paid for Grand Lodge life membership shall be determined by multiplying the current annual Grand Lodge dues by 34 minus one-half of the current Grand Lodge dues multiplied by the difference between the current attained age of the member and twenty-one.74

2. The completed application and a check for the amount due should be forwarded to the Grand Treasurer’s Office.

3. The Grand Treasurer will return to the lodge Secretary a two-part certificate; one part, the stub or smaller part, for the lodge records for G.L.D. form reporting, and the other, the larger “certificate” half, to be forwarded to the member by the lodge Secretary.

4. The amount of annual Grand Lodge dues shall be designated and voted by the Grand Lodge in accordance with Section 330 of the Grand Constitutions.

B. Lodge Dues and Fee for Initiation.

1. No lodge in this jurisdiction shall demand less than fifty dollars as the fee for initiating crafting and raising a Mason, including the fee to Grand Lodge.75

2. No degree may be conferred without the receipt of the designated fee, or return any fee after the three degrees have been conferred.76

3. All dues bills and dues cards, if mailed, shall be sent via first class mail.

4. The final payment of the Grand Lodge assessment for dues is due and payable before August 31st of any fiscal year.

5. Lodges are responsible for payment of the grand lodge dues portion for each member regardless whether he has paid his dues or not unless they have been remitted per the Master for a valid reason with the Grand Treasurer’s approval for said reason.

74 Ibid. - Section 331.
75 Ibid. - Section 400.
76 Ibid. - Section 400.
XVII: PROXY TO GRAND LODGE

A. Every lodge is required to elect annually, as prescribed by the Grand Lodge Constitutions and the lodge bylaws, a Proxy to Grand Lodge to represent the lodge in Grand Lodge and to vote in the absence of the Master and Wardens of the lodge he represents.  

1. The term of office of the Proxy begins each year at the Installation of the officers of the lodge and ends at the installation of officers on the following year, irrespective of the date of election by the lodge.

2. At the beginning of each Masonic year, the lodge Secretary will file the name of the designated Proxy in the “Return of Officers” form which is required to be completed and returned to the Grand Secretary’s Office following the election of officers for the ensuing year.

3. Upon receipt of the “Return of Officers” form from the lodge Secretary, a proxy card will be issued and mailed to the designated proxy by the Grand Secretary’s Office. *A proxy card is mandatory for admission to the Grand Lodge Quarterly Communications.* Please ensure your Lodge Officers and/or Proxy sign in at every Quarterly Communication of Grand Lodge in order to prove representation of your lodge.

4. The Grand Secretary’s Office should be immediately notified of any change of address of the lodge Proxy.

5. If the Proxy is unable to complete his term, the Master should appoint a new Proxy to serve until the next election of lodge officers and immediately notify the Grand Secretary’s Office in writing.

6. A Proxy can only serve one Lodge.

7. See also Page 1-21, VII.A.2

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77 *ibid.* - Sections 325-327.
78 *ibid.* – Section 327.
XVIII: SUSPENSION FROM MEMBERSHIP

A. Suspension from membership for non-payment of dues deprives a brother of his rights as a member of his lodge(s) but not from the rights of Masonry. Although he is no longer a member in good standing, the lodge retains jurisdiction over him.79

1. A vote of the lodge is required to suspend a member and suspending action must be taken at a Regular Communication of the lodge or the suspension is not valid. Names of delinquent members should not be published in your Lodge notice.
   a) The procedure for suspension must be followed exactly or the suspension is not valid.80
   b) A list of members suspended by the lodge, their initiation date and effective date of suspension is to be submitted to the Grand Secretary’s Office as soon as the suspending action is voted upon and becomes effective after an affidavit is provided for each suspendee, attested to by the Master and Wardens, and is verified by the Grand Secretary’s Office. See appendix for additional information.

B. If the suspended member belongs to more than one lodge, suspension in one lodge will automatically suspend him in the other Massachusetts lodges. However, until such time as he clears his record in the suspending lodge, the other lodge or lodges of which he is a member must collect his lodge dues, (and Grand Lodge dues if directed to by Grand Secretary’s Office) giving receipt therefor, but may not issue him a dues card. A member’s current status with all his lodges is listed in “MORI.”

C. On rare occasions a lodge will be faced with initiating action to request the Grand Master suspend a Brother for conduct unbecoming a Mason. Specific procedures must be followed per Section 512. Contact the Grand Secretary’s Office for specific assistance.

A suspended member does not have the right to visit any lodge until his suspension is cleared. 81

1. Any member holding dual or plural membership with a Massachusetts lodge and/or a lodge in another jurisdiction must pay dues to his Massachusetts Lodge(s) and Grand Lodge. The Secretary is to give a receipt therefor, but may not issue a dues card until notified by the Grand Secretary’s Office that he has cleared his record in the other lodge, nor shall he have the right to attend the meetings of any Lodge until the amount due the suspending lodge has been paid or remitted.82

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79 “Constitutions and Regulations” - Section 517; also Lodge bylaws; also ruling issued by M.W. David W. Lovering, Grand Master, April 21, 1994. (See page 1-40)
80 “Constitutions and Regulations” - Section 518.
81 ibid. - Section 504.
82 ibid. - Section 504.
C. Procedure for Suspension for Non-Payment of Dues.\textsuperscript{83}

1. No one expects a lodge to carry a brother who has the ability to pay his dues but chooses not to do so. It goes without saying that the suspension of a brother for non-payment of dues should be a last resort, and only when all possibilities of keeping the brother as a member have failed.

   a) On March 1\textsuperscript{st} of each year, the Secretary will provide a list in two parts to the Master of all members in arrears for dues. The first part to contain the names and addresses of those whose last known address was within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The second part of those members residing out of state.

   b) Prior to March 15\textsuperscript{th}, the Master will write a personal letter to each member listed in part 2 to ascertain the welfare of the brother; is he well or having financial difficulty, does he go to lodge in the community where he lives, is he satisfied with the fraternity, would he consider a demit so he might become active in a local lodge? If the brother does not respond or has unfavorable feelings toward the fraternity, then the lodge may proceed according to its bylaws with the steps delineated for suspension from membership in the lodge.

   c) The Master will appoint a committee to personally contact each brother residing within Massachusetts. This contact \textit{shall not} be made by telephone or letter. This first contact, again, is to determine the welfare of the brother, and not to dun him for past dues. The committee will contact each brother and report the results of their contact to the Master before April 15\textsuperscript{th}.

   d) Following the determination that the brother is able to pay, a second contact should be made, preferably by person, but it may be done by letter. Arrangements should be made for the payment of some of his lodge dues and pay his Grand Lodge dues (which are the only real out-of-pocket expenses to the lodge). A sincere effort should be made to keep him as a member without creating a financial burden on the lodge.

   e) Once all previous attempts to keep the member in the lodge have been exhausted, a certified letter should be sent to the brother, Return Receipt Requested, outlining the procedures for remaining in good standing in the lodge, and the consequences of the loss of Masonic membership. This letter should also indicate a response deadline to prevent his name from being read in open lodge at a regular monthly meeting for the purpose of causing him to be suspended for non-payment of his dues. This letter should also indicate the provisions for reinstatement once suspended.

   f) Once the brother has been notified of his suspension by regular mail, he may be removed from the active file and no further correspondence with this brother would be necessary.

\textit{ED. NOTE: Suspensions should take place PRIOR to August 1\textsuperscript{st} (preferably by July 15\textsuperscript{th}) of every year rather than being effective as of August 31\textsuperscript{st}. This provides for the suspension report to be submitted to Grand Lodge by August and in time for the annual reconciliation of the membership.}

\textsuperscript{83} Ruling of M.W. David W. Lovering, Grand Master, April 21, 1994
XIX: REINSTATEMENT OF SUSPENDED MEMBERS.

A. The request for reinstatement must be made over the signature of the suspended member and the amount of lodge dues and Grand Lodge dues owed to the lodge as of the date of suspension must be paid, or some other suitable arrangements are agreed to, together with current lodge dues if required by the lodge bylaws.  

1. After the request for reinstatement and monies owed are received by the lodge Secretary, the request for reinstatement must be read at a Regular Communication of the lodge and the full name and address of the suspended member must be listed in the notice for the subsequent Regular Communication at which the ballot is to be taken, not at the same meeting in which the request is to be read.

2. Investigation of a suspended member requesting reinstatement is at the discretion of the Master.

3. The vote for reinstatement is a secret ballot. If the request for reinstatement is made within five years of the suspension, a majority vote is required. If more than five years have elapsed since the suspension, a unanimously favorable ballot is required.

4. A reinstated member should re-sign the bylaws if, during his period of absence from membership, the bylaws were changed, or if the period of absence exceeded five years. Although he was not a member in good standing while under suspension, he was still under the jurisdiction of the suspending lodge.

5. If the suspended member is rejected for reinstatement, the lodge Secretary shall issue him a Certificate of Prior Membership.

6. Reinstatement of a suspended member should be reported in part III of the monthly report (page 2-23) for the month in which the ballot for reinstatement is taken.

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84 “Constitutions and Regulations” - Section 507.
85 ibid. - Section 507.
XX: SUSPENDED MEMBERS PAID BUT NOT RESUMING MEMBERSHIP

A. A suspended member may request a *Demit* without being reinstated by vote of the Lodge.\(^86\)

1. The request for the Demit must be made over the signature of the brother to the lodge Secretary and the dues owed to the lodge at the date of suspension must be paid *before* the Demit can be issued.

2. The Demit is dated the day he clears his record.

3. The current year’s dues are not collected since the suspended member is not resuming membership.

4. No vote of the lodge is required to issue a Demit to a suspended member who has paid all dues outstanding to the lodge at the time of suspension, but who is not resuming membership in the lodge.

5. The Demit is to be reported to the lodge at the next succeeding Regular Communication of the lodge and recorded in the lodge minutes and in part IV of the Secretary’s monthly report form (*page 2-24*).\(^87\)

**A DEMIT IS NOT VALID UNLESS IT IS CERTIFIED BY THE GRAND SECRETARY.**

6. If the Secretary so requests, the Demit will be mailed directly to the brother, if it is correctly completed when submitted for certification.

7. See also section IX, page 1-23, Demits.

\(^{86}\) *ibid.* - Section 507.

\(^{87}\) *ibid.* - Section 507.
XXI: REQUIRED REPORTS TO GRAND LODGE

A. Return of Officers. (Page 2-32)

1. This report lists the name, title, address, and office of each member of the lodge. It is to be submitted by the Secretary with the monthly report following the annual election of officers.

B. Monthly Report to Grand Lodge. (Pages 2-21 - 2-26)

1. This report must be submitted by the Secretary (done in MORI by “closing out” the previous month’s activities), and received by the Grand Secretary, not later than five business days following the end of the calendar month. It will consist of a running total of the membership of the lodge, the number of members and visitors present, and the following parts, where necessary, for the time period since the last lodge meeting up to and including the current month’s lodge meeting.

Part 1 -- Candidates
Part 2 -- Affiliates
Part 3 -- Reinstatements
Part 4 -- Demits
Part 5 -- Suspended members demitting without resuming membership
Part 6 -- Deaths
Part 7 -- Rejections
Part 8 -- Suspensions
Part 9 -- Address Changes, and the source of them

4. A monthly report must be filed for each month (12), even for months in which the lodge does not meet. A copy must be kept for the lodge’s record. This report is generated by MORI and the mailing of the report is not necessary. The number of attendees listed is for all meetings within the calendar month.

3. Please fill in ALL requested information on the report forms.

4. Together with the monthly report following the election of officers send a listing of the date of election and the name and address of the Master-elect.
C. **IRS Form 990.**

1. This report must be submitted by the Treasurer to the Internal Revenue Service within 4-1/2 months (January 15\(^{th}\)) of the end of the lodge’s fiscal year, August 31\(^{st}\). The Treasurer **must** file this report regardless of the amount of *gross* (total) income. Lodges and/or building associations with gross incomes of less than $50,000 are also required to file, but may file electronically, using the form 990N, or the postcard. Copies must be filed with the Grand Treasurer’s Office to ensure compliance with IRS and Massachusetts DOR requirements. Start-up money for a special event is considered an *expense* and is **not** to be deducted from the proceeds. The Grand Treasurer will assist with this task. The Secretary should confirm the Treasurer has copies of every deposit made to the lodge’s bank account.

D. **Age 88 Report.**

1. This report is generated by the Grand Secretary’s Office two months prior to the end of the current fiscal year, August 31\(^{st}\). It contains a listing of those members attaining the age of 88, after which time they receive Grand Lodge life membership as of age 89. The Secretary should verify this against his own records.

E. **G.L.D. Form.** *(Page 2-33)*

1. The Grand Lodge Deductions Form is due to be filed with the Grand Treasurer by July 15\(^{th}\) of every year. As a part of the third installment of the Grand Lodge Assessment form, lodges make a deduction of the current amount of the Grand Lodge dues per member who has:

   a) Grand Lodge life membership

   b) Dual memberships paying Grand Lodge dues to another lodge

   c) Remits, if reason approved by the Grand Treasurer.

   d) Members who have deceased prior to paying their Grand Lodge dues.
F. **Annual Returns.** *(Page 2-34)*

1. Each lodge will deliver to the District Deputy Grand Master an Annual Return of their officers and members, of all candidates initiated, crafted, and raised, and of such other information as the Grand Lodge may require. This report will be on a form supplied by the Grand Lodge and will cover the period from September first to August thirty-first, inclusive, which shall constitute the fiscal year of the lodge.  

G. **Recapitulation**

1. On an annual basis, the Secretary should carefully compare the data in his files to uncover and correct any discrepancies or inaccuracies. This process should be completed prior to August 31st of every year as this data is used to compile the Abstract of Returns for the Annual Proceedings of the Grand Lodge.

H. **Budgets**

1. Each lodge should have a budget and it should be approved by its finance committee. This can be an arduous process and involves the input of the Secretary, Treasurer, and Master in its creation. M.W. Bro. Jeffrey B. Hodgdon stated that a lodge cannot spend money if it does not have an approved budget, otherwise *every* expense item must be voted on by the membership. The budget process should take place over the summer recess to ensure that expenses for the ensuing year will be met. A copy of the approved budget should be made available to the District Deputy Grand Master to ensure compliance with Grand Lodge regulations.

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88 “Constitutions and Regulations” - Section 351.
XXII: VETERAN'S MEDALS AND OTHER SERVICE AWARDS

A. A Veteran’s Medal will be awarded to an eligible brother any time during the calendar year of the 50th anniversary of his raising in this jurisdiction, whether a regular or affiliated member of the lodge, regardless of any interruptions in service.

B. Requirements for award of the Veteran’s Medal:

1. Current membership in good standing in a Massachusetts lodge.

C. Procedure:

1. Sometime in October or November, the Grand Secretary’s Office will send to the individual lodges a list of those members eligible for a Veteran’s Medal in the next calendar year.

2. Review the list and contact the Grand Secretary’s Office if you believe any listed brother is not eligible, or if you believe a brother not on the list should be eligible. Use the Request for Veteran’s Medal (page 2-31) for any additions to the list.

3. The Grand Secretary’s Office will order the necessary medals and convey them to the District Deputy Grand Master.

4. It is not advisable to publish names of recipient(s) of Veteran’s Medals until after you have been notified by the District Deputy Grand Master that he has received the medal(s) from the Grand Lodge.

5. Veteran’s Medals for members living in other states will be forwarded by the Grand Lodge directly to the Brother with a letter informing him of the options available to him for a formal presentation, should he desire.

   a) Those options are: no formal presentation, a formal presentation in his “Mother Lodge,” or a formal presentation in a lodge in the jurisdiction where he resides. These are all arranged by the Massachusetts Grand Secretary’s Office and the Grand Secretary’s Office of the other Grand Lodge. The local lodge Secretary will be informed of the Brother’s desires and status of the presentation of the medal. Personal contact by the Massachusetts Lodge Secretary should be made after receiving the notification by Grand Lodge.

89 ibid. - Section 809.
90 Ruling of M.W. Donald G. Hicks, Jr., Grand Master, 2004
91 See Exhibit 8 -- “Request for Veteran’s Medal” in Appendix of Forms.
92 The above procedure will not disclose affiliated members, who became eligible while members of your lodge. These should be researched separately for original date of raising.
D. 25-Year or Other Service Awards -- *Lodge Specific*

1. Sometime in October or November, the membership list should be reviewed to determine the names of those brethren eligible to receive 25-year awards or any other service awards as may be customary in the lodge. This should be reported to the Master so he may plan for an appropriate mode of presentation of these awards. Note: Grand Lodge does not make any service awards below the 50-year Veterans Medal, but does have a supply of generic 25-year pins available for purchase through the Supply Office.

E. Other Service Awards -- *Grand Lodge Specific*

1. Grand Lodge service awards, besides the 50-year Veteran’s Medal, are available as pins, for 60, 65, 70 and 75 years of membership, etc., upon request.

2. Grand Lodge also recognizes all Past Masters, who have been such for 50 years, with a special 50-Year Past Master’s Certificate, upon request.

3. The *Joseph Warren Distinguished Service Award* is awarded by the Grand Master to a brother who, in his opinion, has served his Lodge and community in an exemplary manner over a long period of time. This award is requested by the Master of the Lodge in a personal and confidential letter to the Grand Master. Once submitted, it is not appropriate for anyone to inquire as to its status. For additional information, please refer to pages 60 and 61 of the Officers Manual, “*Duties and Responsibilities of Lodge Officers and Committee Chairmen.*” This award is usually presented by the District Deputy Grand Master.

4. The *Henry Price Medal* is the highest award which can be bestowed upon any Mason in Massachusetts. It is presented only by the Grand Master himself at his sole discretion to a brother who has served the Grand Lodge or Freemasonry with extraordinary service and commitment.
XXIII: OFFICIAL VISITS BY THE DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTER

A. Each lodge is required to make available to the District Deputy Grand Master and/or District Deputy Grand Secretary, when so requested, the following for inspection. How they are organized is up to the individual secretary. Some have them organized by report, others have everything by month.

1. The copies of the monthly reports required for the fiscal year ending August 31, -- twelve reports beginning with the previous September and ending with the just past August.
2. All lodge notices for the previous fiscal year.
3. The minutes of all meetings.
4. The lodge bylaws and signatures to them.
5. Copies of all correspondence from the Grand Secretary’s Office with reference to lodge membership as of August 31 of the just completed year.
6. Hard copies (printouts) of any computerized membership records.
7. Grand Lodge Return, in triplicate, embossed with the lodge seal, along with all moneys due the Grand Lodge.
   a) One signed copy to be returned to the Secretary, the other two to be sent to Grand Lodge by the District Deputy Grand Master with his report.
8. Other items to be inspected during an Official Visit include the Charter (original and/or certified copy), the bylaws of the lodge, visitors register, records and returns, the Masonic Awareness resource Guide and video, and any other pertinent items or information as may be requested.

B. The September monthly report is due as soon as possible after the September meeting to allow for the preparation by Grand Lodge of the lodge’s Annual Report.

C. The lodge should provide place cards for the head table(s) to avoid confusion, and so the brethren may know who the visitors are. If women are to sit at a head table, the lodge must apply a “modesty skirt” tablecloth on the tables.

D. The Secretary should remind the Master that the lodge is expected to provide a convenient parking place for the District Deputy Grand Master when he is scheduled to visit.

E. Please note the correct terminology, in conforming to the 2007 edition of the “Masonic Trestle-board” is Official Visit and Fraternal Visit. “Visitation” is no longer the preferred title. Both Officials and Fraternals are VISITS.
XXIV: SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVES AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

A. *Trowel* Representative.

1. Each lodge should appoint a brother to serve as a representative to *Trowel* Magazine.

   a) It will be the responsibility of the representative to report to the News Editor of the *Trowel* on all special events of the lodge.

B. Representative to the Masonic Home.\(^{93}\)

1. Each lodge, at its Annual Communication or annual election of officers, shall elect a Representative to the Masonic Home. He shall attend periodic informational meetings at the Masonic Home in Charlton and shall serve as a liaison for members, widows of members, and relatives of members of the lodge, who are residents or wish to become residents of the Home.

   2. In the failure of the lodge to *elect* a representative, the Master of the lodge shall *appoint* a lodge representative, who shall hold office during the year of his appointment.

   3. Each Masonic district shall annually elect or appoint a District Representative to the Masonic Home.

C. Masonic Service Representative.

1. Each lodge shall appoint a Masonic Service Representative to serve as a liaison between the lodge and the District Service Officer. It shall be his responsibility to coordinate the Blood Donor Program and the CPR Program in the lodge as well as to assist in securing relief and hospital appliances to the home or institution-bound brother and his family.\(^{94}\)

   2. Each Masonic District shall annually elect or appoint a District Service Officer to coordinate activities within the district and report to the Service Committee.

D. Nominating Committee / Election of Officers

1. The Nominating Committee should only nominate a Brother to an elected office who is a member in good standing in their lodge and in Grand Lodge. No Brother may be elected to an office who is not a member in good standing, and officers must remain in good standing throughout their term.

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\(^{93}\) “Constitutions and Regulations” - Section 601.

\(^{94}\) *ibid.* - Section 603, but applied to local Lodges.
A. Immediately following the successful ballot of a candidate for the degrees, the Secretary shall request of the Supply Department of Grand Lodge the candidate’s kit. The Secretary should have a supply of candidate’s ritual ciphers for each degree, with which the candidate must demonstrate his proficiency previous to his receiving the next succeeding degree.

B. Three copies of the Lodge Notice of Communication must be sent to the Grand Lodge each month. These should be sent separately to the Grand Master’s Office, Grand Secretary’s Office, the Service Department, at 186 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02111-1095, and M.W. Bro. Albert T. Ames, PGM, 110-R Bacon St., Natick, MA 01760-2905.

C. Candidates will be required to attend non-ritualistic instructional and informational sessions conducted through the various District Lodges of Instruction. Each candidate is to receive a copy of the new Members Handbook “Freemasonry in Massachusetts” published by the Grand Lodge upon completion of his Third [First?] Degree, and a Claudy book following each degree. The Candidate will be issued a Candidate Record Card to be certified by the lodge secretary upon completion of each degree, and by the instructor of LOI secretary upon completion of the necessary class of instruction for the degree. The candidate will not be able to receive a dues card until he has completed all the required classes of instruction.

D. Chief Instructor

1. Each lodge should appoint a brother to serve as the Chief Instructor of the lodge. He shall be a “qualified instructor” as defined by the Education Department and participate in an instructor training session.

   a) The Chief Instructor shall serve to assist the Master in the instruction of the candidates in both ritualistic and non-ritualistic instruction, and/or oversee those who serve as such.

   b) The Chief Instructor shall be provided with a copy of the new Members Handbook “Freemasonry in Massachusetts” published by the Education Department of the Grand Lodge, and assist the Master in the provision of programs of an instructive nature for the Craft as well as for the candidates.

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95 See Exhibit 2 - Education Department Form E-15 - "Request for Educational Pamphlets for Candidates."
c) The Chief Instructor shall be aware of sources of speakers, films, film-strips, slides, audio and videotapes on Masonic topics provided by the Grand Lodge, collateral bodies, the Masonic Service Association, the various lodges of research, or other commercial enterprises.

d) The Chief Instructor shall be the direct contact of the Grand Lodge Education Department for the lodge.
XXVI: MEMBERSHIP RECORDS

A. Introduction

1. The Individual Masonic record will be kept by the Secretary the “MORI” computer programs, approved “Masonic Membership Record Cards,” or in a Members’ Record Book.

   a.) If the records are maintained in a separate off-line computer database, it is required to also keep a hard copy (printout) of each member's record.

2. A membership record must be on file for each candidate who has ever submitted an application for degrees, affiliation, or reinstatement. Active records should be separated from inactive. A secretary must maintain the membership data as displayed in the pull-down tabs. This included personal data as requested, degree data, education data, military service, employment, contact information and the like. All this information is used to generate the monthly reports and serves as the history of your lodge. It is therefore necessary that all information be as accurate and timely as possible. A secretary is not required to utilize MORI for dues billing or mailing list management.

3. A membership record for a candidate is not generated until after he has been elected, not when his application has been accepted.

4. Lodge membership and mailing lists are for the exclusive use of the local lodge and Grand Lodge, for Masonic use ONLY. Grand Lodge strictly prohibits the business or non-Masonic use of lodge membership and mailing lists.

B. Candidates

1. Information on the membership record must correspond with the information on the original applications; with the information contained in the lodge notices (See Section XV, page 1-31); and in the “monthly report” to Grand Lodge (See Section XXI, page 1-43).

2. If an elected candidate does not present himself for his degrees within one year of his election or within one year of the preceding degree he must be considered as dropped and any fees paid are forfeited. The membership record and the monthly report should contain the notation “Dropped, lack of interest” or “Dropped, lost contact.” The record should then be placed in the inactive file.96

96 “Constitutions and Regulations” - Section 413.
3. There is no time limit between degrees as long as there is interest from the candidate and external circumstances prohibit him from advancing. A candidate, who for whatever reason does not sign the Bylaws on the night of his raising, has one year to do so. Otherwise he may be dropped from the rolls of the lodge and placed in inactive status.

4. The requirements of Section 420 of the Grand Constitutions notwithstanding, a candidate has 90 days from the date of his raising to satisfy the proficiency requirements to the Master’s satisfaction, and be presented with a dues card. Any candidate, who fails to demonstrate proficiency and attend the required Lodges of Instruction, will have his dues card returned to the Grand Secretary’s Office and will be considered to be in a suspended status until reaching one year of his Third Degree. Within that time, the Grand Secretary’s Office will make every effort to contact him and encourage him to complete his requirements pursuant to Section 420. (See also pages 1-55 and 1-56)

5. All names and dates must agree with those in the lodge minutes and correspondingly with members’ records and the monthly reports of the Secretary to the Grand Lodge.

6. The notice of the Regular Communication of the lodge at which the applicant is to be balloted on must contain the correctly spelled full name and the residential address. This is a constitutional requirement.

7. It is permissible for guests, male or female, to be escorted to the East of a lodge, on the level, to make presentations or be present during a presentation. However, only Masons may be seated in the East of a lodge.

8. Photographs are permitted within a tyed lodge, but not during a degree or part of one. Please see page 1-58 (16).

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98 “Constitutions and Regulations” - Section 407.
99 Ruling of M.W. Donald G. Hicks, Jr., Grand Master, September 11, 2002.
C. Visitors, Visiting, Traveling

1. Being able to visit a lodge in another jurisdiction recognized by our Grand Lodge is one of the many pleasures and benefits of Freemasonry. Every lodge is required to keep and preserve a record of visitors in the form prescribed by Grand Lodge. Please remember, every visitor is required to sign the lodge’s Visitors Register and every visitor must be vouched for, in writing, either by examination by a committee or by a brother who has sat with him in a Master Mason’s (3rd degree) Lodge. Every visitor being vouched for must have a vouching signature. Ditto marks are not acceptable. This is a key area of inspection by the District Deputy Grand Marshal. See also Sections 500, 501, and 502 of the Grand Constitutions and Regulations for additional information on visiting.

2. Per Section 501 of the Grand Constitutions, “except on a duly authorized public occasion, no visitor shall be admitted into a tyled Lodge unless he produces a duly authorized uniform card [dues card] showing the payment … of this Grand Lodge and particular Lodge dues for the current fiscal year, or for the next preceding year if the card be presented within six months [only in this jurisdiction] after the expiration date thereof.”

3. A candidate may visit another lodge provided the lodge is open upon a degree which has been conferred upon the candidate and the candidate is accompanied by and vouched for by a Master Mason who was present at the conferring of such a degree upon the candidate. Please be aware that some lodges are “by invitation only.”

4. The presence of visiting Brethren in a lodge during a business meeting, unless specifically excluded in the bylaws of the lodge, is at the discretion of the Worshipful Master.

5. While input and comments from visiting Brethren may be acknowledged or requested by the Master, only those Brethren who are members of the specific lodge doing business may vote or cast a ballot on any issue. A visitor is not allowed to vote, and should affiliate if he desires to participate in the lodge’s internal affairs. Further, should a visiting Brother, by chance or otherwise, cast a ballot on any matter before the lodge, especially on the election of a candidate or bylaws issue, the ballot becomes void or otherwise irregular. Depending on the specific circumstances involved, the election, adoption, or rejection of the issue may have to be healed by the Grand Master.

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100 *ibid.* - Section 500.
101 *ibid.* - Section 500.
102 *ibid.* - Section 410.
XXVII: MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

A. Masonic Titles.

1. Masonic titles are NOT to be used in public settings. They are meant to be used in the lodge, and then, only when the Lodge is opened. First, and foremost, we are all Brothers. When we became Masons, we became Brothers, and when we leave this mortal world we will be Brothers. All else is transitory.

2. While in lodge, any brother serving as an officer is to be addressed as “Brother <name of office>.” If the brother is a Past Master, he is still addressed according to his station. When the brother is duly installed as Master of his lodge, he is addressed as “Worshipful Master” and after his retirement, simply “Worshipful.” The correct and proper address is “Worshipful Brother <last name>.” The term “Brother” should be used whenever just the last name is used. “Worshipful <last name>” is not an acceptable Masonic title or of proper protocol. Regardless of one’s rank or title, “Brother” is always an acceptable title.

3. Occasionally, a Past Master is called upon by the Grand Master to be his representative or emissary. This may take the form of serving as a District Deputy Grand Master or as a Grand Representative. These Brethren are addressed as “Right Worshipful.” The District Deputy keeps this title for life, while the Grand Representative, if not a past District Deputy, keeps his title only during his tenure. The Grand Secretary, Grand Treasurer, Grand Wardens, Deputy Grand Master, District Grand Master, and members of the Board of Directors are also styled and addressed as Right Worshipful.

B. Written Correspondence Guidelines.

1. Use of proper format is an understanding of protocol. When addressing letters, write the abbreviated title of the person to whom the letter is being written, i.e. Bro., Wor., R.W. or Rt. Wor., M.W., followed by his name, and then the full name of the title. The salutation is always “Dear Brother <surname>.” Envelopes should always be addressed as “Mr.” Masonic titles should NOT be used in the address on the envelopes. Note: The Grand Master is never “cc’d.” He is always corresponded to and addressed directly.

For Example -- Letter to the Grand Master:

M.W. Tubal Cain, Grand Master
Masonic Building
186 Tremont Street
Boston, MA 02111-1095
Dear Brother Cain;

Envelope for letter to Grand Master:

Mr. Tubal Cain
Masonic Building
186 Tremont Street
Boston, MA 02111-1095

103 ibid. - Sections 208, 224.
C. Dues

1. The lodge collects two forms of dues from its members, their own local lodge dues, and Grand Lodge dues. Your local lodge dues should be structured so that your expenses are covered for each member, plus a reserve. Grand Lodge dues are the responsibility of the lodge. As secretary, you will bill and collect Grand Lodge dues, and pay the Grand Lodge portion upon request, usually by a regular mailed statement from the Grand Treasurer’s Office with three installments per year.

D. Special Grand Lodge Facts

1. Before a lodge may ballot on a prospective candidate living out of state it is necessary to receive a “Release of Jurisdiction” (see Section V, page 1-16) from the Grand Lodge of the state in which the man resides. This can be done by completing a Release of Jurisdiction form available from the Grand Secretary's Office, and returning it to the Grand Secretary's Office. The Grand Lodge will then request the release on behalf of your lodge, and we will notify your lodge when the release is approved and your lodge may proceed with a ballot. This process may take 2-3 months to receive a Release of Jurisdiction. Please inform the potential candidate of this waiting period.

2. An elected candidate must complete his Entered Apprentice Degree within one year of the date of his election. If he does not, the election is void and any fees paid are forfeited to the lodge.

3. There must be at least two weeks between degrees. There is no maximum amount of time between degrees, but a candidate may be placed in the “inactive file” after one year should he fail to advance due to lack of interest.

4. Once a candidate has completed his Master Mason Degree he may sign the bylaws at the time of his Third degree, and must sign the lodge's bylaws within one year. If he does not, due to his own fault or neglect, he is considered a "Mason-at-large." If he wishes to be a member of any lodge after the one-year period has expired he must affiliate with his degree lodge, and may request a Demit without resuming his membership. A candidate, who has not complied with the requirements of “suitable proficiency” per the Master, or has not completed his Lodge of Instruction obligations with one year, shall not be issued a dues card and may be considered dropped.

104 ibid. - Section 336
5. A member is to be counted as a full member of the lodge as of his Third degree, and reported immediately as doing so, not as of when he signs the bylaws.  

6. A suspended member must be reinstated to become an active member in good standing.

7. A demitted member must affiliate to become an active member once again.

8. Before a member is allowed to affiliate, his official Masonic record must be requested from the Grand Secretary’s Office to ensure he has not been suspended by any other lodge and is a member in good standing.

9. If a potential affiliate belongs to an out of state lodge, check the “LIST OF LODGES -- MASONIC” book, published each year by Pantograph Publishing, to make sure the other state allows dual or plural membership outside their state.

10. An affiliated member may sign the lodge's bylaws on the same night he is elected. He must sign them within 6 months of his election.

11. A Certificate of Clearance serves the same purpose as a Demit, but should be issued to a Mason belonging to more than one Massachusetts lodge and leaving his secondary lodge, whereas a Demit is issued to a Mason belonging to only one Massachusetts lodge and wishing to leave that lodge. (See page 1-25) When a Mason belongs to two lodges and terminates his membership in his primary lodge, his Grand Lodge dues assessment is then transferred and attached to his secondary lodge which then becomes his primary lodge.

12. The monthly reports are the vehicles that change the addresses on members’ records for the dues cards and the “Trowel” magazine. The June report triggers the dues cards to be printed for the ensuing year and sent to the Secretary. The September report generates the recapitulation for Grand Lodge purposes. The Return of Officers must be completed within seven days of the lodge’s installation and is used for the notification of the lodge’s proxy, who cannot vote unless and until Grand Lodge receives this report.

13. Requests for dispensations will likely be declined if the lodge is late in filing its monthly reports or in arrears in its Grand Lodge dues payments.

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105 Ruling of M.W. Donald G. Hicks, Jr., Grand Master, 2004
14. Dues cards are not valid unless they have been certified with the signature of the lodge Secretary, have the seal of the lodge embossed upon them, and are signed by the brother.

15. Lodge Notices or monthly bulletins should be sent to the Grand Secretary’s Office at the same time the general membership is notified. This is to ensure Due Notice of at least one week to the membership, and must be identical as the notice which is sent to members electronically.

16. It is permissible for photographs to be taken within a tyled lodge, with the permission of the Master. However, no photographs are to be taken during degree work.\textsuperscript{106} Please ensure you have the permission of the Brother before placing the image into any public forum.

17. Due to privacy concerns, secretaries may not keep photocopies of checks, credit cards, or anything that has a name and/or account number or social security number of any candidate or member. (MGL Sec 93c).

18. Each lodge is to read the Grand Master’s edict (blue card) on “roughhousing” prior to any second section of the Master Mason Degree, and its reading shall be so noted in the minutes of the lodge.

19. A “Lewis Jewel” in Massachusetts is authorized for only two bars, one for the father and one for the son.

\textsuperscript{106} Ruling of M.W. Donald G. Hicks, Jr., Grand Master, September 11, 2002
XXIX:
GRAND LODGE OF MASONS IN MASSACHUSETTS
Changing Lodge By-Laws

Process

Due attention to the following process will enable Grand Lodge consideration and approval of By-Law changes:

- Remember that By-Law changes cannot be put in effect until you receive the official response from Committee on Charters and By-Laws certified by the Grand Secretary
- Review the “Rules as to the By-Laws” (Pages 71-72) in the Grand Constitutions before drafting By-Law language
- Make sure the proposed By-Law provision is not already covered by the Grand Constitution (see section “Rules as to the By-Laws” of the Grand Constitutions)

1. Notice must be given to the Lodge membership that proposed By-Laws changes will be discussed at a Regular Meeting of the Lodge. The Notice should include the original and the proposed new wording of the By-Law. This wording should be clear as to what is the old wording and what the new wording will be, either by italicizing, underlining, strikethrough, or **bolding** the words of one and not the other, so there should no confusion.

2. After the discussion, final proposed wording of the change(s) should be composed that will be included in the Lodge Notice (see Step 3 below) The format should be as above and must include the original and the proposed new wording of the By-Law.

   *NOTE: PRIOR to the vote of the Lodge the Lodge may wish to have the Committee on Charters and By-Laws review the proposed By-Law(s) for correct wording and/or structure. The Lodge may submit the proposed change(s) to the Office of the Grand Secretary who will instruct the Committee on Charters and By-Laws to review the proposal and provide feedback to the Lodge if the proposal will be approved as submitted. If there are some changes to be made to the proposal, the Committee on Charters and By-Laws will provide that information to the Lodge through the office of the Grand Secretary. The Committee may also make a “Provisional Pre-Approval” of the By-Law Change(s) pending the vote of the Lodge based upon above actions.*

3. The Lodge Notice with the Proposed By-Law changes in the format as described above must be sent to all members of the Lodge announcing the Meeting at which the changes will to be balloted.

   *NOTE: After publishing the proposed changes, there can be no further changes made after the discussion. If changes are proposed at the meeting for ballot, the vote cannot be taken, and the newly proposed By-Laws with the additional changes must be sent to all members again, with notice to ballot a future regular meeting.*

4. After the favorable ballot of the Lodge, the Lodge Secretary must submit a certification on lodge letterhead signed and dated by the Secretary, affixed with the Lodge seal, attesting that the changes were adopted by the Lodge members by the required vote shown in the Lodge Bylaws.
   - Include both the old and new language in its entirety for each By-Law provision submitted specifying the Article No. and Section No. for each change
   - Meeting notice (2 copies) that includes the above mentioned notice of By-Law changes that was mailed to the members for consideration.
5. The Committee on Charters and By-Laws regularly considers By-Law changes throughout the year. Each proposal will be discussed on a first-come-first-served basis. The Lodge Secretary will receive the Certified Approval from the Grand Secretary as soon as agreement has been returned to the Grand Secretary from the Committee on Charters and By-Laws.

NOTE: If the By-Law changes were given “Provisional Pre-Approval” by the Committee on Charters and By-Laws, the Grand Secretary will confirm that the voted change conforms to the recommendations of the Committee and will return the Certification of the By-Law change immediately.

Substance

✓ Consider Dues increases early in the Lodge year. Increases in Lodge Dues MUST be approved by the Committee on Charters and By-Laws prior to any billing by a Lodge using the proposed rates.

✓ Lodge Dues can only be stated in an amount easily calculated for each Dues classification: (Lodges may charge Dues at various rates based upon membership classification – age, distance from Lodge, student status, etc.)

  o A fixed dollar amount
  o An amount equal to the annual Grand Lodge Dues plus a specified amount.
  o A multiple of Grand Lodge Dues. (Lodges might consider providing for the rounding to the calculated amount to the next full dollar to avoid charging fractional dollars.)

The latter two approaches allow for annual Dues to increase according to the Greater Boston cost-of-living increase.

Lodge use of a Consumer Price Index factor is not allowed.

✓ Lodge requests for the removal of By-Law provisions relative to the administration of fund accounts established by bequests governed by the terms of a Will or Trust must be accompanied by documentation of a legally effective release from the terms of the Will or Trust.

✓ Lodges should change any By-Law references to “Representative to the Board of Masonic Relief” to “Representative to the Masonic Home”. The Board of Masonic Relief no longer exists.

✓ Lodge By-Laws cannot alter officer duties set by ritual.

✓ Lodge By-Laws should provide reasonable and appropriate administrative checks and balances in the control, reporting, audit and disbursement authorization of Lodge funds.

✓ Lodge By-Law provisions covering the suspension of members for nonpayment of Dues must be consistent with the Grand Lodge guidance issued by letter of 2005.
Outline of Information for Lodges Considering Merger

1. Following preliminary consideration by the officers of a lodge considering merger, and discussion with officers of the other lodge, the Master of each lodge should appoint a committee to look into the feasibility of the same.

2. If it appears that a merger would be beneficial and the key past masters of the respective lodges are in agreement, it is recommended that the Worshipful Masters of the lodges arrange for a meeting to discuss tentative plans with the Grand Master and Grand Secretary.

3. The membership of each lodge must be advised in the lodge notice that the proposed merger will be discussed at the regular communication and that the committee will report on their findings to the respective lodges.

4. The committees should be prepared to recommend to their respective lodges which lodge is to be the continuing lodge. Ordinarily, it is recommended that the older lodge be the continuing lodge because of earlier precedence.

5. If the older lodge is not to be the remaining lodge, precedence can be preserved by consolidating under the charter of the older lodge and then amending its charter to change the name of the lodge to the name of the junior lodge, or to any other name agreed upon. A change in name of the consolidated lodge can be accomplished by amending the charter under which the lodges merge, after the merger has been consummated.

6. If it appears that the membership of both lodges is in favor of proceeding, a Joint Petition for the Merger should be drawn up by the officers of the lodge, signed by the Master and Wardens and attested to by each lodge Secretary. (See sample enclosed on page 1-62.)

7. A vote to present this petition to the Grand Lodge must then be taken at the regular communication of each lodge, notification of such vote to be included in the notice for the regular communication at which the vote is to be taken. The prevailing affirmative vote by each lodge should be at least that required for the amendment of the bylaws of the respective lodges, i.e., majority, two-thirds, or three-fourths, as specified in each of the lodge bylaws.

8. The bylaws of the continuing lodge will remain in force. Any required amendments with reference to the name of the lodge, funds, etc., should be agreed upon before the merger and acted upon by the consolidated lodge after the merger has taken place.

9. Upon favorable action by both lodges, the petition should be forwarded to the Office of the Grand Secretary, together with appropriate certification of the action by the respective lodges, so that the petition and certifications can be brought before the Grand Lodge at the next Quarterly Communication. (See sample certification, page 1-63.)

10. Upon approval by the Grand Lodge, the two lodges will be so notified, and arrangements then can be made for the formal merger ceremony to be conducted by the Grand Lodge. (For merger ceremony, see Grand Lodge Proceedings.)
11. In the consolidation of two lodges, all property of the discontinuing lodge becomes the property of the merged lodge (except the lodge charter and seal, which are returned to the Grand Lodge). The Grand Master declares all members of the discontinuing lodge, members of the continuing lodge, at the merger and, therefore, it is not necessary for them to sign the bylaws of the continuing lodge.

12. Arrangements should be made for an audit of the books of the Trustees, Secretary, Treasurer, etc., of the discontinuing lodge well in advance of the formal merger.

13. The final monthly report of the discontinuing lodge will be dated as of the date of the merger ceremony. An alphabetical listing of all active members of the discontinuing lodge will be prepared by the lodge secretary, and forwarded to this office with the final report after the merger ceremony. Membership listing forms will be furnished by this office for this purpose.

14. The monthly reports of the continuing lodge will be filed in the normal manner. This office will furnish to the lodge secretary a listing of the names of the membership of the discontinuing lodge, who became members of the consolidated lodge upon the merger. The listing of members of the discontinuing lodge, less any dual members of the two lodges, will be incorporated in Part II of the monthly report of the continuing lodge by reference.

15. Well in advance of the merger ceremony, the secretary of the lodge to be discontinued should notify those members whose lodge dues are not currently paid that final action to suspend will be taken at a particular regular communication of the lodge if payment of their dues has not been received on or before that date.

(Revised June, 2009)
SAMPLE OF JOINT PETITION FOR LODGE MERGER

Joint Petition to
The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge
of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons
of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
by_____________________Lodge
and____________________Lodge
for the Right to Merge

Whereas the…...(reason for merger)

Now, therefore, said ____________ and __________ Lodges respectfully and
jointly petition the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts for the
authority to unite and work as a single Lodge under the charter of (continuing Lodge), to
be situate in the Town of _______________________, under such terms and conditions as
said Grand Lodge shall prescribe, it being the desire of both Lodges that on the completion
of such union all members of both Lodges shall have, in the united Lodge, all the rights
and privileges now enjoyed by them in their respective Lodges, and that the united Lodge
shall own all the property and have all the rights and privileges now separately owned and
enjoyed by said Lodges. The united Lodges shall be known now as

_____________________________Lodge.

_____________________________Lodge  _____________________________Lodge

________________________________________

W.M.                                          W.M.

________________________________________

S.W.                                          S.W.

________________________________________

J.W.                                          J.W.

Attest:                                          Attest:

________________________________________

Sec.                                             Sec.

(Seal)                                       (Seal)
SAMPLE CERTIFICATION FOR LODGE MERGER

[On Lodge Letterhead]

To The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

This is to certify that at a Regular Communication of (your Lodge) Lodge held at (meeting place) on (full date), it was voted according to our bylaws to petition the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts, as per the attached joint petition.

Attest:

____________________________________
(Lodge Secretary)

(Seal)

(Both Lodges are to send certifications as such.)
XXXI:

Guidelines for the development of Lodge Web-pages within the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts

The following guidelines have been adopted for use by all lodges, committees and other Masonic entities within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. (Please see page 1-35 for additional information.)

All efforts to communicate the image of Freemasonry in Massachusetts should reflect the goals of the Fraternity, and its principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth. The Internet is such a broad means of communication, and its parameters change almost daily. It is essential, therefore, that the image of Freemasonry be preserved in all that is communicated in this public venue. It is not the intent of the Grand Lodge to restrict the creativity of our members, or to ignore the many positive features of the Internet, but these must not conflict with the Ancient Landmarks, the Grand Constitutions, or the customs of the Craft.

CONTENT

When considering the content for a Masonic website, there is a wide range of material available. It is important that a positive image of Freemasonry be presented, as this is a window through which the entire world can inspect our workings. The inclusion of high-quality graphics, photos, music and animations can add variety to a website. However, whether or not a website represents the latest in cyberspace technology, it is the message of Masonic benevolence, fraternal care, and rich history that must be displayed on every page. Always keep in mind that what you include on your website is visited by persons who may know absolutely nothing about the Craft. Your website is a prime opportunity for potential candidates for Freemasonry to obtain a favorable impression of our ancient and honorable institution. Include only those materials (text, photos, videos, music) that you believe send a positive message about the Fraternity, such as information on parades, lodge locations and directions, fairs, and charitable events, etc.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Since its inception, the Grand Lodge has protected the confidentiality of its members by not revealing their names or involvement without their consent. Selling of mailing lists has never been condoned, and the use of such lists requires approval by the Grand Master.

The Grand Lodge website, and the sites of subordinate lodges, may not be used for marketing purposes, except in conjunction with the Grand Lodge Supply Department. It is not permissible to publish personal addresses and phone numbers of members and officers of the Craft. Lodge addresses and phone numbers are permitted.

All contacts for information about the Fraternity, and the Craft, should be made via an e-mail address. However, personal e-mail addresses should not be listed on websites unless written consent has been given by the holder of that e-mail address. These referrals should be sent to grandsec@glmasons-mass.org
HOME PAGE
The home page is the first page of a website. It should include, but not be restricted to, the following information:

- The Lodge originating the site,
- The e-mail address of the site's webmaster for response to any technical or operational questions,
- The e-mail address of Grand Lodge to answer public questions and concerns.

ADVERTISING and SPONSORSHIP
Some lodges may choose to use commercial web-hosting services that flash advertisements to the viewers. The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts does not sanction these advertisements. It is recognized that these advertisements are not within the control of the individual lodge; however, if they are inappropriate, the lodge must seek another hosting service. This also includes any additional services, such as guest books, or links to other sites. As with your lodge notice, your lodge website is subject to Grand Lodge review. (See Ownership, page 1-68).

DUPLICATE INFORMATION
Each lodge is responsible for the content presented on their respective website; however, duplicated material should be kept to a minimum. If the content already exists on the Grand Lodge website, the lodge should provide a link to that content, instead of duplicating the information. This will provide a single source of input, revision, and ownership.

CREDIT
All material (written or recorded) copied from another source must appear with a credit line acknowledging the source of the original material, if known. This is both a courtesy to the original author(s) and protection against misquotes and claims of copyright infringement.

LINKS
By linking to other websites, a home page provides each visitor with the opportunity to visit other Masonic sites, within and without the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. Be sure that the Masonic sites to which you link maintain a high quality and adhere to principles of common decency and courtesy. You should not link to sites sponsored by so-called Masonic entities with which we are not in fraternal communication. If you are not sure, ask the Grand Secretary's office for clarification. Links to general interest sites should only be included if they do not conflict with the principles of the Fraternity, or present controversial, political, or otherwise inappropriate content. Because you do not control the links or their content, you must regularly review the links to ensure their validity and content (See Ownership, page 1-68).
PHOTOGRAPHS

One way to enhance a website is to include photographs of lodge members doing things in the community. Just like a newspaper, it is a good idea to have the permission of those in the photograph for publication on the web. In some cases, it will be more prudent to have very general captions that describe an event, but do not identify the individuals pictured. Always be sure to respect the privacy of those who may benefit from the lodge's charity.

GUEST BOOKS

Guest-books are a popular addition to websites in which visitors can make comments regarding the site and interact with other guest-book signers. If there is no review or monitoring of guest-book messages before they are posted in public, it is critical that the webmaster review the site daily and have means to delete inappropriate messages. (See Ownership, below)

OWNERSHIP

Lodge websites are the property of the lodge, even if they are hosted on a member's ISP allocated server space. The control of that website is always the responsibility of the Worshipful Master, who is accountable to the Grand Master for all material placed in public. It is a good policy for the Worshipful Master to approve everything that is posted on a lodge website. If the Worshipful Master does not have access to the internet, it should be the webmaster's responsibility to get approval of a paper copy of all material before it is posted. Any action or use of the internet via a lodge's website that would be considered non-Masonic in nature will subject that lodge to all the normal disciplinary actions that the Grand Master presently has under his authority.

(Please see page 1-35 for additional information)

All URL’S, webmasters and domains must be registered with the Grand Secretary (grandsec@glmasons-mass.org).

The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts credits The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania for the initial development of these guidelines.
Social Media and Massachusetts Freemasonry

The presence of Massachusetts Freemasons on various social networking sites is growing exponentially and it is drawing attention to the fraternity. By participating on sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn (and others), we should strive to make that attention as positive as possible. When we represent ourselves as members of the fraternity, we become someone’s impression of Freemasonry. As such, it is important that we act accordingly and subscribe to the lessons we were all taught as Masons in terms of how we communicate and interact with Masons and non-Masons.

Social Media Code of Conduct for Massachusetts Freemasons

- A Mason should conduct his Social Media activities in a way that reflects his membership in the Craft. He should act in a way that presents a positive image of his membership in Freemasonry to the world.
- As a Mason, he must be aware that his postings are a permanent record; and therefore his conduct may influence the world with a positive or negative image about him personally and also about any organizations to which he belongs.
- His actions on the various Social Media outlets should reflect the highest standards of morality and integrity he would practice within the Lodge.
- To ensure our fraternity represents itself to the high standards we believe in, we must regulate our actions through Brother-to-Brother intervention. As a Mason, you should advise a Brother if you feel that what he has posted is improper within the framework of our Grand Constitutions, rules, regulations, and edicts.
- Do not identify any Freemason as a member of the Craft unless he has provided his consent, or has already identified himself as such.
- Lodge notices, and information contained within Lodge notices beyond the time and place of meeting, should not be discussed.
- There should never be discussion related to the application, background or investigation of an applicant.
- There should never be a discussion regarding the ballot of an applicant.
- There should never be a discussion related to the business of a Lodge and what is discussed within our tyled doors.
- The posting of pictures or videos of Lodge events must comply with the Grand Constitutions, rules, regulations, and edicts.
- Information about Lodge or District social activities must comply with the regulations already in place for Lodge Notices (for example, no reference to alcohol or games of chance).
- The posting of social activities of a Lodge or District should comply with the regulation standards already in place for the distribution of Lodge Notices and inserts.
- No official communication with other Grand Lodges or their subordinate Lodges may take place online. Contact must be conducted through the Office of the Grand Secretary.

May 1, 2012

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