



# THE GRAND LODGE OF SASKATCHEWAN

Office of the Grand Secretary

Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons

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*To Be the Fraternal Organization of choice for Men in the Province of Saskatchewan*

**Date:** Thursday, October 1, 2020.

**Memo to:** All constituent Lodges

**From:** Grand Secretary

**Re:** **Lodge Procedural Guidelines to be followed while Covid-19 Saskatchewan Health Authority Guidelines are in effect**

On July 10, 2020 our Grand Master, MW Bro. Dan Olmsted, issued guidelines to be followed by all constituent lodges in the event a lodge wished to meet. Since the beginning of August several lodges have decided to call a meeting. As the Covid-19 Pandemic continues to affect our ability to meet as we traditionally have done, the Grand Master, in consultation with the Board of General Purposes and the Board of Custodians of the Work, has approved the following guidelines to be followed by lodges when they choose to meet.

*The Grand Master encourages all lodges to resume their regular meetings if they feel comfortable to do so and they reside in an area of the province that is not considered a “hot spot” for Covid-19 infections.*

*Lodges are encouraged to contact the Office of the Grand Secretary to discuss alternative procedures not contemplated in these guidelines.*

The Saskatchewan Health Agency Guidelines require our lodge practices to be modified. As indicated earlier by the Grand Master lodges are to conduct all regular meetings in the Entered Apprentice Degree and ensure that all lodge paraphernalia has been sanitized prior to use.

Members of the lodge while attending lodge meetings are required to:

- Wear face masks while in the lodge hall
- Practice appropriate physical distancing whenever possible
- Sanitize/wash hands each time prior to touching any surface
- Provide their own pens and sanitize their hands prior to signing the Register unless the lodge has established another procedure to collect the names of all in attendance (such as having the Secretary record the names of those in attendance and reported in the lodge minutes).

## 1. Opening and Closing the Lodge

- Please refer to the Guidelines issued previously on July 10, 2020. (copy attached)

## 2. Election and Installation of Lodge Officers

### OPTIONS

- a) **The Lodge may hold Elections and the Installation as outlined in the Constitution.**

No dispensations would be required but the Lodge would have to comply with the Grand Master's COVID Guidelines re conducting the Election, the Installation and Investiture of Officers.

- b) **The Lodge may request that the Worshipful Master and Officers remain in office until the normal time in 2021 when the Lodge would follow the normal procedures.**

If the consensus of the members of the Lodge is to have the officers remain in office for another year, the Lodge Secretary must send a request for a dispensation to the Grand Secretary to waive the requirements of the Constitution to hold an annual election for the Master and Wardens of the lodge (No. 56)

- c) **If the Worshipful Master or any other elected officer wishes to resign his office, it is to be filled as directed by the Grand Master. If no election takes place then the incumbent would remain in office but could be replaced on a temporary basis until the next election cycle.**

For example the Senior or Junior Warden is unable to attend meetings and rather than officially resigning, the Worshipful Master arranges for a Past Master to temporary fill the office at a meeting of the lodge. The same procedure could be used to replace the Worshipful Master on an ad hoc basis, as required.

### **If the Lodge chooses to conduct elections for Officers and hold an Installation:**

#### **Elections:**

- Five paper ballots, previously counted and separated into piles, should be provided to each attending member as he enters the lodge.
- The scrutineers table and chairs should be sanitized.
- The Deacons should have long handled containers to collect the ballots.
- Lodge members should all have their own personal pens to mark the ballots.

**If requesting dispensation to Elect and Install on the same evening, provision must be made for the Examining Board to determine if the Master Elect is capable of meeting the requirements to be installed.**

## **Installation:**

- The night of the Installation, if possible, the Officers' Chairs should be occupied by the Installing Officers. If not the chairs will have to be sanitized prior to each person sitting in the chair. It is suggested that only personal collars should be worn that night.
- Officer collars should be sanitized and placed on or beside the chair the officer will be seated after investiture.
- No exchange of aprons should take place.
- Grand Honours should be postponed until another occasion.
- No perambulations should take place. Members should remain in their seats and may repeat the necessary phrases, wearing masks.
- All steps, signs and tokens and the 5 Pts. of F. should be demonstrated only. Substitute the Sign of Fidelity for the Word when passed.
- Adjustment of the Great Lights should be done by one designated Brother.
- Sealing of vows should be on a personal VSL.
- Any Brother who has previously been invested into an office should not be reinvested. He should be instructed to return to his station.
- No grips are to be exchanged.
- The newly obligated WM will place himself in the Chair when called upon.

### **3. Balloting for Candidates:**

- The SD, WM and the Wardens should have access to hand sanitizer each time they touch the Ballot Box.
- The Ballot Box and its contents should be carefully sanitized prior to the meeting.
- Balloting would be done by one member voting and then returning to his seat. The Brother would proceed to the West, sanitize his hands, ballot and then return to his seat, the next to vote would then stand and repeat the process.

*Note: If the Lodge chooses to wear gloves instead of hand sanitizer the gloves should be discarded after each use since cross contamination may occur if the wearer of the gloves touches more than one surface with his gloves.*

### **4. Receiving Candidates for the Entered Apprentice Degree**

*If conducting an Entered Apprentice Degree only one candidate may be received to that point in the ceremony where he has received his EA apron at the meeting.*

**This is an option a lodge may consider if it wishes to initiate more than one candidate on a given evening. After the candidate receives his apron he may be seated and all surfaces touched must be sanitized before admitting the next candidate.**

- Once the lodge is opened the ceremony requires the candidate to answer the necessary questions and be prepared. Social distancing will be difficult. Masks should be worn at all times.
- The lodge should consider appointing a “guide” for the conducting of the candidate. The “Guide” would ideally be a lodge member who is closely associated with the candidate, perhaps someone from the candidates close contacts.
- Failing that possibility the “guide” should physically distance himself from the candidate whenever possible. The cable tow should be held at a distance.
- No one other than the “guide” should ever touch the candidate. Kissing the VSL is to be discouraged, perhaps a second volume that has been sanitized could be provided to the candidate to use for that purpose.
- The Secret Work should be demonstrated without ever touching the candidate or the “Guide” could act on behalf of the Past Master doing the Secret Work.
- The remaining parts of the ceremony be modified to comply with the SHA Guidelines. Working Tools should not be passed to the candidate to examine.
- All Charges should be delivered from the seat location of the speaker.
- Candidates could sign Bylaws at a later date or only with a sanitized pen.

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