



GRAND LODGE OF
A.F. AND A.M. OF CANADA
IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

GRAND SECRETARY

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COVID-19 Update October 09, 2020

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Brethren,

The second wave of COVID-19 is unfortunately upon us. This has led to increased case counts throughout the Province and even to levels higher than they were last April. As a result, the Grand Master has extended the cancellation of in-person Masonic gatherings across the Province.

The cancellation of all in-person Masonic meetings and events in the Province has now been extended until AT LEAST January 31, 2021. We will continue to monitor and adjust as the situation evolves.

The Grand Master wishes to congratulate all Masonic brethren in Ontario for the way that they have supported each other and for the diligence they have shown to date in their obedience to all local and Provincial Health Guidelines and hopes that we can continue this in the months ahead.

Based on the continuation of the lockdown, a number of administrative issues are highlighted below.

Lodge Dues:

I wish to draw your attention once again to the Grand Master's remarks in the October 2020 Communique which included the following directive:

"The Worshipful Master, Secretary and Treasurer of each lodge have already been authorized to conduct the necessary business of the lodge until the lodge re-opens, subject to retroactive approval at the next regular meeting. I therefore decree that, until we return to labour, they may authorize the remittance of the dues of any member without requiring notice of motion or a vote. This will, like all their other decisions, be ratified at the next regular in-person meeting." Note that if lodge dues are remitted, they must be appropriately recorded in the books of the Secretary and Treasurer.

Processing of Demits

First, all demits must be processed in accordance with Sections 190-194 of the Constitution.

Second, the effective date of a demit issued in good standing (no dues owing) is the date on which the demit was submitted in writing to the Lodge Secretary.

Third, to issue a demit in good standing, the member must be fully paid up as of the date of the request of the demit.

Therefore, during the lockdown, demits can be received by the Lodge Secretary who then must determine if dues are paid up to the date of the request.

If that is the case, the name will be read out at the next regular meeting of the lodge (whenever that will take place) and the demit in good standing will be issued following the meeting but effective the date the request was received by the Lodge. These demits in good standing are to be recorded on the first semi-annual return submitted after the demit was received in writing by the lodge Secretary.

Before a demit is issued, hopefully an investigation can be done by telephone to ascertain if remitting the brother's dues would solve the issue.

Processing Suspensions NPD

The COVID-19 update distributed on April 2, 2020 still applies on the topic of suspensions for NPD. "Suspensions NPD: The names of any brethren more than 12 months in arrears must still be read out at the next regular meeting of the lodge and the Worshipful Master will then declare them suspended. However, the brethren will be suspended as of the date of the end of the 12 month period."

Lodge dues are payable in advance. Brethren must be notified within 10 months of the date they were dues owing. Such notification would state that they would be suspended effective twelve months from the date dues were due, even though the name may not be read out in lodge until after that. This note, referencing Section 202, will identify to the brother concerned what date they will be 'effectively' suspended.

The names will still be read out at the first regular meeting after resumption of labours to complete the process as required by Section 200 (d). The letter following that meeting will simply confirm the effective date of the suspension. These suspensions are to be recorded on the first semi-annual return submitted after the effective date of the suspension.

The fact that these brethren are technically suspended (without the lodge meeting) is a bit of a moot point when no one is meeting at this time.

Again, before processing this, the Worshipful Master should try to ascertain if the brother is in need of financial assistance.

Masonic Memorial Services

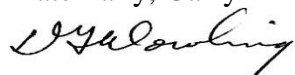
Masonic Memorial Services remain under the lockdown of all Masonic activities. We deeply regret that we are not able to pay our respects to departed brethren at this time in the manner to which we are accustomed. However the risk associated with brethren gathering to perform a Masonic Memorial Service are still too great to permit this activity.

Remembrance Day Services and Parades:

Regrettably no dispensations will be issued this year for groups of Masons to participate in Remembrance Day Services or parades. While individual Masons may choose on their own to attend such events, no regalia is to be worn.

Further updates will be published as required.
Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Fraternally, Garry



D. Garry Dowling,
Grand Secretary