



**GRAND LODGE
FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
OF WASHINGTON**

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To All Lodges:

Re: Elections and Installations

My Brothers:

My February 11, 2021 letter stated that I would be providing information on how Lodges may conduct elections and installations in a virtual environment. I have given this matter much thought and consulted with the Executive Committee and the Committee on Jurisprudence. The following questions and answers are intended to provide guidance to you for your Lodge's elections.

May Lodges elect and install officers prior to the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge?

Lodges have the option to hold elections and installations. Lodges that wish to hold elections and install their officers must make a written request to the Grand Master, through the Grand Secretary, to do so. The request must state the date and time of the Stated Communication where the election and installation will occur. A Lodge's election and installation of officers will be allowed after the Grand Master issues a dispensation for that purpose.

Will Lodges be required to hold elections following the Annual Communication?

Lodges should be aware that under Sec. 15.05 B.L. it must hold its election of officers for 2021-22 during the period starting on the Monday following the Annual Communication (June 14, 2021) through December 14, 2021.

The February 11, 2021 letter states that Lodges will be open on the First Degree in Ample form. However, Sec. 15.08 B.L. states that the Lodge must be open on the Master Mason degree to perform the installation of officers. How is this conflict going to be addressed?

If dispensation to hold election and installation is granted, it will state that the Lodge will be open on the Third Degree in ample form for that Communication and then it may go to "off-session" for the Installation.

Is there a time-frame to hold elections and installations?

Because the Annual Communication will be held in June, it is necessary for the Credentials Committee to have correct information concerning the officers of each Lodge. Therefore, Lodge elections and installation of officers must be completed no later than May 17, 2021 and the new officers entered into Grandview by the Lodge Secretary no later than May 20th.

What platform can be used to hold elections and the installation?

If a Lodge decides to hold its election and installation, it must do so using Zoom. This platform is known to support confidential electronic voting and there are numerous Brothers available to assist Lodges in setting up the voting procedure.

Sec. 15.06 B.L. states elections must be by written ballot. How can a Lodge use written ballots over a virtual platform?

The Lodge will need to use a polling feature on the Zoom platform to conduct the election. The electronic voting is considered a written ballot.

Must the election and installation occur at the same Communication?

Yes

Is there a special procedure for the Installation?

The installation ceremony shall be conducted according to the public ceremony found in the Standard Work starting on page 4-14 with reasonable modifications to account for the use of a virtual platform and the conditions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Specifically, the following modifications are necessary:

The Worshipful Master-elect shall have a Volume of the Sacred Law open with the square and compasses properly displayed on which he can take his official obligation.

The Installing Officer will “symbolically” present the Worshipful Master the various items listed on page 4-17 of the Standard Work.

The Installing Officer will symbolically invest officers with the jewel (and rods) of their office.

The officers to be installed must attend the virtual meeting to be installed.

The incoming officers are not required to wear the apron of the office to which they are to be installed.

Lastly, this is still an installation of officers so the Brothers should be properly attired.

Must a Lodge provide Notice of the election?

If I grant a Lodge dispensation to hold an election, all members of the Lodge must be notified of when the election will occur.

Remember the Past, Visualize the Future



Chris J. Coffman
Grand Master
Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Washington

cc: Clinton M. Brown, Jr., Grand Secretary
Grand Lodge Elected Officers