

# THE GRAND LODGE

of Ancient, Free and  
Accepted Masons  
of North Carolina



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GRAND MASTER 2020  
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May 13, 2020

To the Masters, Wardens, and Brethren of North Carolina:

Brethren,

I hope this communication finds you safe and well. As most of you may be aware, on May 5, 2020, Governor Cooper issued Executive Order No. 138 easing restrictions on travel, business operations, and mass gatherings – commonly referred to as Phase 1. While I am aware that many of my brethren are anxious to resume our normal meetings and continue the business, fund raisers, and social gatherings of our lodges, I believe it is prudent that we remain cautious in returning to our lodges for any type of masonic-related activities. With this in mind, and in consultation with the other Grand Line Officers, I intend to follow a similar “phased approach” to return to our **in-lodge** activities.

I have closely reviewed the executive order and associated guidance from the NC DHHS. I find that section 6.A. of the Executive Order prohibits mass gatherings in a “meeting hall” and defines a “mass gathering” as convening “more than ten (10) persons at the same time in a single space”. I realize there are a number of lodge officers that could benefit from resuming practices of Opening and Closing the lodge on the Master Masons Degree, as well as preparing for degree work, which we hope can resume as the crisis related to this pandemic begins to subside.

As such, effective Wednesday, May 13, 2020, at 5:00pm, I will permit the following **limited in-lodge activities** to resume:

1. At the Master’s discretion and with due consideration of the health and well-being of his members, up to ten (10) officers of the Lodge may utilize the lodge facility for ritual practices
2. Coaches and candidates, if they choose and at the Master’s discretion, may meet in lodges for in-person coaching

Please note, if the Master of a lodge chooses to allow the permitted activities within the lodge, the following restrictions and requirements must be met:

- If the lodge building is managed by a temple board, the Master of the lodge must receive their permission to meet in the building prior to doing so
- Lodge practices are limited to officers of the lodge and one Past Master or Certified Lecturer. At no time shall more than ten (10) people be present in the lodge facility at the same time

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- During lodge practices, it is recommended that all members present wear face masks and take sufficient precautions to ensure adequate social distancing is maintained
- No business may be transacted during these practice sessions
- At the conclusion of the practice, the members present will take care to disinfect any objects or surfaces touched during the practice
- If a coach and candidate wish to use the lodge facility for in-person coaching, they must first receive permission from the Master of the lodge to do so
- If coaching sessions are permitted at the lodge, it is recommended that both the coach and candidate wear face masks throughout the session
- At the conclusion of the coaching session, the coach shall be responsible for disinfecting any objects or surfaces touched during the session

Also, in preparation for when lodges are permitted to resume regular business meetings, I urge the Masters of the lodges to ensure their lodges have adequate disinfectant, cleaning supplies, and hand sanitizer available in the lodge and that all surfaces which members may come into contact with are regularly disinfected prior to and following any gathering in the lodge. Further, the Master should take an inventory of the number of pairs of white gloves they have available, as many members may wish to wear gloves once meetings are permitted to resume. If a lodge does not have a sufficient number of pairs of gloves available, they may want to consider purchasing additional pairs as soon as possible. I have checked with the owner of Dean & Associates Masonic Supplies – <https://bluelodgeaprons.net/> - and he has confirmed that they currently have gloves in stock.

Finally, regardless of whether your lodges choose to meet for the allowed purposes or not, I want to encourage each of you to continue your outreach activities to your brethren and widows.

If you have any questions or concerns about any information presented here, please do not hesitate to contact me directly or contact our Grand Lodge office.

Sincerely & Fraternaly,

Grand Master



## Best Practices for Dealing with COVID-19 in Lodge

1. Do not shake hands with one another.
2. Wear a mask when indoors in instances when social distancing may not be possible
3. Try to allow for 6 ft. of separation between you and your brethren whenever possible.
4. If you feel the urge to cough or sneeze, do so in your folded arm.
5. Avoid contact with your face and mouth as much as possible.
6. Do not share food from the same plate.
7. Remember to wash your hands, often, with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds with warm water, and utilize disposable towels for drying.
  - a. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60%-95% alcohol may be used.
  - b. Key times to wash your hands include:
    - After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing
    - After using the restroom
    - Before eating or preparing food
    - After contact with animals or pets
    - Before and after providing routine care for another person who needs assistance (e.g., a child)
    - After touching commonly used surfaces such as door handles
8. If surfaces are dirty, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap & water prior to disinfection.
9. Utilize bleach solutions consisting of 1/3 cup of (minimum) 5.75% Sodium Hypochlorite solution to (1) gallon of tap water for the disinfecting of surfaces and 60-70% Hydrogen Peroxide solution in water for electronic items such as keyboards and monitors. **Remember to wear gloves while cleaning with the solutions.** Mix a bucket of water with bleach, dip your towel into the bucket and squeeze out. Wiping all surfaces, leave the areas cleaned with the bleach solution damp and allow to dry on its own. For any electronics, spray the Hydrogen Peroxide solution in water on to a rag and wipe down all electronics, allowing to air dry. **Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.**
10. Discard all cleaning waste materials in the trash. Wear disposable gloves while handling trash, and wash your hands after removing the gloves.
11. If you or a family member is showing signs of the illness, stay home.