

Digest of Masonic Law

CHAPTER 27

**FINANCES; DUES, SUSPENSION FOR NON-PAYMENT
THEREOF, AND REINSTATEMENT
DUES**

Constitutional Provisions

Every member of a Lodge must pay to the Secretary of the Lodge such monthly or annual dues as may be prescribed by the By-Laws of the Lodge. (Art. X, Sec. 18)

Regulations

27.01 It is competent for Particular Lodges by By-Laws duly adopted to make such uniform and reasonable assessments of annual or monthly dues upon the members as are necessary for the well-being of the Fraternity. (See Const. Art. X, Sec. 18)

27.02 A Lodge has the power, under the Constitution, to enforce the collection of any assessment authorized by its By-Laws, but none other.

27.03 A Particular Lodge, may, by By-Law duly adopted, change its dues or assessments, but no such By-Law shall be retroactive or put a Brother in default who has paid his annual dues under a valid By-Law in force at the time of such payment.

27.04 The payment of dues to the Particular Lodges is governed by the By-Laws. If they are made payable in advance, they are due at the date when made payable, and those who do not pay at the designated time are in arrears. The Grand Lodge requires dues for an entire year, even though the member may have belonged to the Particular Lodge for only a small fraction of the year, and the Particular Lodge may adopt a similar policy by its By-Laws. If it fails to do this, it will still be liable to the Grand Lodge for the annual dues for its entire membership except in cases where a Brother has had membership, in more than one Florida Lodge during the year. (See Constitution, Article X, Section 20) But members of Particular Lodges in Florida who are in the Armed Forces of the United States of America, and receiving less than \$50.00 per month in salary, shall while the United States is engaged in war, be exempt from Grand Lodge per capita assessment; *provided*, that the Particular Lodges of which they are members take similar action, notifying the Grand Secretary of such action.

References

Dues may be made annually or monthly, according to the express terms of the Constitution. (Constitution, Article X, Section 18)

Regulations

27.05 Article X, Section 18 of the Constitution is construed as advisory and not mandatory, and a By-Law requiring Lodge dues to be payable quarterly is not contrary to the intent of the provisions of Article X, Section 18.

27.06 If a Lodge reinstates a suspended Mason, and at the same meeting that he was reinstated makes him an Emeritus Member, the Lodge must pay the Grand Lodge dues for him for the year in which the action is taken.

27.07 A member paying his dues in full and applying for a dimit prior to December 27th is not chargeable with dues for the following year, for want of Lodge action, as action should be taken by the Lodge on or before December 27th.

References

As to other assessments by Grand Lodge, See Chapter 14

As to dues of dual member who dimits, See Reg. 26.04

Dues of Emeritus Members may be remitted. Const. Art. X, Sec. 13; Regs. 26.08, 26.09

Rulings and Decisions

Lodges are not required to pay for those members who have not paid their assessment. (1952 Proc. 31)

It is proper to accept dues from a member who is under charges in a court of law. (1948 Proc. 48)

A Brother who withdraws from Lodge by dimit is required to pay all current dues before issuance of dimit and if Brother in that same year affiliates with another Florida Lodge, he is not required to pay dues to the Lodge with which he affiliates because Masonic Law does not contemplate a Brother paying dues more than one time each year. (1959 Proc. 60, 164)

SUSPENSION FOR NON-PAYMENT OF DUES

Constitutional Provisions

Every member of a Lodge who is six months or more in arrears for dues shall be notified thereof by the Secretary, and in case of failure or refusal to come forward and pay his dues, or give satisfactory excuse, within three months after such notification, may be suspended at the discretion of the Lodge. (Art. X, Sec. 20)

Regulations

27.08 A Lodge By-Law providing for automatic suspension for non-payment of dues is not in accord with Article X, Section 20 of the Constitution, and is void. All suspensions for non-payment of dues must be by direct Lodge action, but may be made effective at a certain future date, not later than December 27th of that year, unless paid meanwhile; *provided*, the Constitutional requirements involved are complied with.

References

See By-Law 4.02 of Uniform Code of By-Laws, Regulation 24.05 for procedure for suspension for non-payment of dues.

Regulations

27.09 At the time of making up Lodge Returns hereafter, the Particular Lodges of this Grand Jurisdiction shall be permitted to take credit for, or deduct, Grand Lodge dues and assessments for all those whose names appear in the "Exhibit of Losses" column, as suspended for non-payment of dues, and those who may have died during the year without having paid dues.

When a member suspended for non-payment of dues by a Particular Lodge is reinstated, the Particular Lodge shall account to Grand Lodge for arrearages of such member.

No Lodge shall reinstate a suspended member without collecting or remitting current year's dues, but in case of remission of dues, the Lodge shall account to Grand Lodge for Grand Lodge per capita.

Only the Grand Lodge, or the Grand Master, can remit any portion of arrearages of a suspended member suspended for non-payment of dues.

27.10 No Masonic rights, privileges, or benefits can be extended to any one while under sentence of suspension or expulsion.

27.11 A Particular Lodge may, in suspending one or more Brothers for non-payment of dues, provide that such suspension shall become effective at certain future date, unless the dues are in the meantime paid.

27.12 Dues are not chargeable during suspension for any cause.

Rulings and Decisions

The Master of a Lodge does not have authority to order suspension of members for non-payment of dues. The action for suspension must be by direct Lodge action. (1954 Proc. 65)

Action of a Particular Lodge suspending members without due notice is null and void. (1980 Proc. 166)

Regulation 27.08 provides that no suspension shall be made after December 27th, but, the Regulation contains a provision, which always overrides anything before it, and that must be complied with. Even if there was no such provision, the requirements of the Constitution would prevail over the provisions of the Regulation. If a Brother has been suspended December 27th without proper notice, the suspension would be illegal. If a Brother was suspended after December 27th because proper notice had not been given to him six months prior to that date, then that suspension is valid, in accordance with the Constitution, and also is in compliance with the requirements of the Regulation. (1984 Proc. 116)

REINSTATEMENT

Regulations

27.13 A Member suspended for non-payment of dues can be reinstated only after petition has been properly submitted, which shall take the same course as a petition for the Degrees; *provided*, any such petition which is rejected may be renewed by a new petition after three months from date of such rejection. A favorable vote of three-fourths of the members present by ball ballot or secret written vote shall be necessary to reinstate a member suspended for non-payment of dues.

27.14 In handling a petition for reinstatement for N.P.D., a Lodge may collect or remit all dues, including current dues, or any part thereof, but any per capita due Grand Lodge must be paid to Grand Lodge.

27.15 A Mason suspended for non-payment of dues by a Lodge which afterward becomes dormant or defunct, can be restored by the Grand Master upon the recommendation of some regular Lodge, and the payment of all arrearages to the Grand Secretary, who shall issue a Certificate upon which the restored Brother can apply for membership in any regular Lodge, but the payment of arrears of dues may be remitted by the Grand Lodge, or Grand Master in recess, in meritorious cases, upon the recommendation of the Lodge in which the Brother desiring restoration seeks affiliation. (See Reg. 9.13)

Rulings and Decisions

Lodge may reinstate members suspended for N.P.D. without payment of current year's dues unless such action is prohibited by Lodge By-Laws. (1942 Proc. 55)

It is optional with the Lodge whether or not to collect back dues or current dues from a suspended Brother seeking reinstatement but per capita due Grand Lodge must be paid by the Lodge. (1943 Proc. 74)

Money for back dues tendered with petition for reinstatement belongs to Lodge even if petition is rejected, but may be returned as donation by a vote of the Lodge. Money tendered for current year's dues must be returned if petition is rejected. (1942 Proc. 46)

If amount tendered with petition and reinstatement is only for the amount of arrearage at time of suspension, it should be retained by the Lodge even if applicant is rejected. Any sum tendered for current dues must be returned if petitioner is rejected. (1944 Proc. 33)

On reinstatement of suspended Brother for N.P.D., nothing is paid to Grand Lodge except per capita due when suspended. (1944 Proc. 36)

Brother suspended in 1933 and moving into jurisdiction of another Lodge in 1934 and seeking reinstatement must apply to Lodge of which he was a member and seek reinstatement on terms provided in the By-Laws of that Lodge. (1947 Proc. 32)

On petition for reinstatement from suspension for N.P.D., by now defunct Kansas Lodge, correct procedure is for petitioner to clear with Grand Lodge of Kansas, paying all amounts due and taking receipt therefore and attaching same to petition for affiliation. Grand Master will then restore from suspension and permit Lodge to act on receiving petition. (1946 Proc. 37)

Members seventy (70) years old suspended twelve (12) years before applying for reinstatement may be reinstated at discretion of Lodge after thorough investigation. (1947 Proc. 31)

When Lodge is negligent in failing to investigate the condition of a Brother on Emeritus List, and suspends him for non-payment of dues for succeeding years, it may, by appropriate Resolution, reciting its oversight and negligence, reinstate the Brother and remit to Grand Lodge the dues for such member. (1961 Proc. 162, 319)

A Lodge should accept petition for reinstatement of a member 65 years of age who has been suspended for non-payment of dues in 1932, but reinstatement of petitioner is matter of discretion of the Lodge. (1964 Proc. 65, 268)

LODGE FUNDS

Regulations

27.16 Lodge funds may be used for charity, public installation, entertainments, refreshments, and for any purpose not unmasonic, when ordered by the Lodge.

27.17 Lodges must not contribute from their treasuries to Masonic or alleged Masonic objects in foreign jurisdictions, as for example, the building of a Temple at Jerusalem, unless such objects have been approved by the Grand Lodge or by the Grand Master.

References

The Treasurer is the custodian of the funds of the Lodge, even when only held in trust, therefore, the Secretary should promptly turn over to the Treasurer all moneys received by him for fees. Reg. 22.02

Rulings and Decisions

Unmasonic is defined as anything that Masonry is not part of. (1947 Proc. 31)

A Lodge may contribute from its funds to Memorial Hospital. (1946 Proc. 37)

Lodge may use its funds to award prize to outstanding high school senior boy but Lodges are cautioned against expenditures not strictly Masonic. (1944 Proc. 36, 100)

Lodge may contribute to erection of hospital in the community. (1944 Proc. 31)

Lodge may donate funds to Community Christmas Tree. (1942 Proc. 53)

Lodge By-Laws requiring notice to members of contemplated expenditures of over \$250 does not require notice to members to purchase bonds as investment. (1944 Proc. 36)

Lodge charity funds contributed primarily for the assistance of worthy needy Brother Masons and their families cannot be donated to other organizations, even though such organizations might do a certain amount of charity work. (1954 Proc. 68)