

Digest of Masonic Law

CHAPTER 4

GRAND LODGE - JURISDICTION AND POWERS

TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION

Constitutional Provisions

The jurisdiction of The Grand Lodge of Florida extends over all the recorded Lodges of Free and Accepted Masons within the political boundaries of the State, and within which it is the Supreme Masonic head and authority. Its jurisdiction also extends to any State, Province, or Territory in which no Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons exists, in which it may Charter particular Lodges; *provided*, that its jurisdiction and authority over Lodges so Chartered ceases as soon as a Grand Lodge is legally constituted in such State, Province, or Territory. (Art. I, Sec. 2)

Regulations

4.01 This Grand Lodge has exclusive original jurisdiction over all Regular Masonic Lodges within the boundary lines of the State of Florida and concurrent right with all other Regular Grand Lodges in the world to establish and superintend Lodges in any State, Territory, or Country where no Grand Lodge exists.

EXECUTIVE POWERS

Constitutional Provisions

The Grand Lodge is a representative body and derives its powers from the Particular Lodges who are its constituents and from immemorial usage and custom; and is, therefore, the supreme head and authority of the Ancient Craft Masonry in this jurisdiction. (Art. V, Sec. 1)

LEGISLATIVE, JUDICIAL, AND APPELLATE POWERS

Constitutional Provisions

It has original jurisdiction over all subjects of legislation for the benefit of the Craft, and judicial powers in the interpretation and administration of its own Laws, and in the trial and punishment of its own Officers and members, and appellate jurisdiction in all cases involving Masonic rights and benefits, not in violation of this Constitution, and the established Landmarks of the order; *provided*, that the Grand Master cannot be tried during his Grand Mastership, because no one can preside in his presence, but when the term for

which he is elected and installed expires, he may be tried as provided by Grand Lodge Regulations for trial of past Elected Grand Lodge Officers, if charges and specifications be filed against him within one year after the expiration of his Grand Mastership. (1985) (Art. V, Sec. 2)

Regulations

4.02 The Grand Lodge has exclusive original penal jurisdiction over Elected Grand Lodge Officers for life, and over Masters and Wardens of the Particular Lodges and District Deputy Grand Masters and subordinate Grand Lodge Officers while in office and continuing jurisdiction after expiration of term of office as to offenses committed while in office. (1984)

4.03 A Particular Lodge has penal jurisdiction as provided in Chapter 44 except as provided in Regulation 4.02. (Amended 1979)

4.04 The Grand Lodge has appellate jurisdiction in all matters arising in the Particular Lodges.

4.05 Any act or decision of a Lodge, or Master, may be reviewed by the Grand Lodge, or in the recess of the Grand Lodge, by the Grand Master, subject to the action of the Grand Lodge.

POWERS RELATING TO PARTICULAR LODGES

Constitutional Provisions

The Grand Lodge has the power to constitute new Lodges, and grant Charters or Warrants of Constitution for the same, and has the supervision and approval of the By-Laws of the Particular Lodges, and therefore may adopt a Uniform Code of By-Laws for their government; *provided*, that local Regulations for the benefit of the Craft be not interfered with. (Art. V, Sec. 4)

The Grand Lodge has the power to suspend the Charter of any of the Particular Lodges or of arresting or withdrawing the Charter of any of the Particular Lodges for good cause shown; and when a Lodge forfeits or surrenders its Charter, the Grand Lodge succeeds to all its furniture, jewels,

funds, books, papers, and other property, and may appoint some proper officer to take charge of the same for the benefit of the Craft; *provided*, that when the Charter of a Lodge is restored, all its furniture, jewels, books, papers, and other property, shall also be restored. (Art. V, Sec. 5)

POWERS RELATING TO REVENUE AND FINANCES

Constitutional Provisions

The Grand Lodge has the power to assess and collect an annual revenue, adequate to its current demands, and to make such other assessments from time to time, and appropriations as may be required for its permanent accommodation, the increase of its library, and the preservation and security of its public proceeds and archives; and to do all other matters and things which, in its wisdom, may be required and necessary for the general benefit of the Craft in the jurisdiction, not prohibited by this Constitution and the Old Landmarks of Freemasonry. (Art. V, Sec. 6)

References

Grand Lodge Revenue and Finances, Chapter 14.

POWERS RELATING TO OTHER ORDERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Regulations

4.06 The Grand Lodge of Florida claims and asserts jurisdiction of all Masonic affairs in Florida, including all organizations, whose fundamental or principal predicate for membership is Masonic affiliation for the members of such organizations. Such organizations may not be formed or used for any purpose in violation of any of the laws, principles, or tenets of Freemasonry, nor for the purpose of serving as a forum for the debate of partisan and controversial questions, nor as an agency for the dissemination of propaganda. Such organizations shall not be used, directly or indirectly, for the endorsement of or opposition to the candidacy for office of

any person, nor for supporting or proposing any proposal or program, in the Grand Lodge, any Particular Lodge, or other organization whatever, or in the United States, any State or subdivision thereof.

4.07 Master Masons of this Grand Jurisdiction are prohibited from petitioning any organization whose fundamental or principal predicate for membership is Masonic Affiliation until they have been Master Masons for at least six (6) months or have passed a satisfactory examination on the catechism of the Third Degree. Organizations exempt from this prohibition shall be the Order of the Eastern Star, the Order of the Amaranth, the White Shrine of Jerusalem, or any recognized Masonic Youth Organization, such as the Rainbow for Girls, the Order of DeMolay, or Job's Daughters. (2001)

4.08 Every assembly, Lodge, or organization or person claiming to be Masonic, and is not under the charge, control, and protection or recognition of regular and competent Masonic authority, is clandestine.

4.09 It is not proper for a corporation for profit to use the corporate name "Masonic Temple Corporation," nor any other name that would indicate Masonic connection.

4.10 No Mason shall be a member or a stockholder of a corporation hereafter formed which predicates its membership therein on Masonic affiliation, unless such corporation is expressly authorized or approved by the Grand Lodge.

4.11 Members of the Particular Lodges of Florida, in good standing, when temporarily residing outside the Grand Jurisdiction of Florida, may affiliate with or become members of any Masonic Club or other organization sponsored, approved, or Chartered by any other Grand Jurisdiction of Masonry recognized by the Grand Jurisdiction of Florida.

Rulings and Decisions

Order of the Eastern Star is not an Appendant Order of Masonry. (1948 Proc. 194; 1969 Proc. 212)

The White Shrine of Jerusalem is not an Appendant Order of Masonry. (1976 Proc. 102)

This is in regard to the contract between Bahia Temple A.A.O.N.M.S. and Brother Melvin L. Duncan. Having considered the contract and the Masonic Law of this state, Ruling and Decision as follows:

1. The parties know the Masonic Law of this State:
 - (a) That The Grand Lodge of Florida, F. & A. M., and the Grand Master in the recess of Grand Lodge is the Supreme Authority and that the Landmarks, the Constitution, and Regulations of the Grand Lodge and the lawful Orders of Edicts of the Grand Master are Supreme Masonic Law of this Jurisdiction.
 - (b) Every Masonic resident in the State of Florida is subject to and bound by his obligation to obey these laws.

- (c) Every Mason is bound to obey every Summons, Order, or Edict issued by proper Masonic Authority.
- (d) That no Organization Masonic in character has the power to modify, deny, defy, or obstruct any Summons, Order, or Edict of the Grand Lodge or the Grand Master and no such organization may by contract, agreement, order or directive impair, diminish, or weaken the supreme power of the Grand Lodge in the recess to direct and control all Masonic Fraternal Matters in this State.
2. The contract referred must be construed in the light of the foregoing rules and knowledge of the parties as to the law governing same. No presumption is intended that the parties intended to break Masonic Law or impede any Mason in his compliance with Masonic Law but on the other hand was entered into with full knowledge that the contract could not lawfully be used to allow any Mason in this State to defy, refuse to obey, evade, or avoid full and prompt obeyance and compliance with each and every Order, Edict, Summons, or request for aid, assistance or information made by the Grand Master or his designated representatives.
3. The contract and agreement may be binding upon members of Bahia Temple in their relations one with the other but in no way impairs the power of the Grand Lodge or the Grand Master nor constitutes any reason or excuse for any Mason to fail or refuse to obey fully, completely, and promptly all Summons, Orders, Edicts, or requests for aid and assistance made and issued in the name of the Grand Lodge by any proper and authorized Masonic authority. Any Mason who fails or refuses to promptly obey any and all Orders, Directives, and Summons as issued in the name of the Grand Lodge or any duly constituted Committee, Board, Commission, or Representative of the Grand Lodge or the Grand Master shall be subject to Masonic Discipline. September 12, 1984. (1985 Proc. 91, 325)

References

Chapter 47, Clubs and Similar Organizations

MISCELLANEOUS POWERS

Regulations

4.12 It is not expedient, or authorized by an existing law, for the Grand Lodge to act as a trustee for the property or estate of a Brother Mason who may desire the same to be held by it and the income to be applied for the benefit of his family after his decease.

4.13 No solicitations nor circulations of a non-Masonic character shall be made unless they are of service or benefit to the members of the Particular Lodges of this Grand Jurisdiction or the Craft in general.

All funds collected will be directed to the Masonic Home and/or the Grand Lodge Administrative Endowment Fund.

No member will be solicited for any service or program if he has requested in writing not to be solicited, and no list of membership will be provided to any company or organization except such list of members that have agreed in writing to participate in a particular program. (1995)

4.14 Anything in the Regulations of the Grand Lodge to the contrary notwithstanding, the Corporate Board shall each year set a price to be charged to all Particular Lodges for all printed material furnished to them, except the Proceedings of the Annual Grand Communication. (1983)