

Digest of Masonic Law

CHAPTER 5

GRAND LODGE - OFFICERS

**Title, Election, Appointment, Installation, Term, Resignation,
Removal, Vacancies, Succession in Office and Discipline**

TITLE

Constitutional Provisions

The Officers of the Grand Lodge are: The Grand Master, whose title is Most Worshipful; the Deputy Grand Master, the Senior Grand Warden, the Junior Grand Warden, the Grand Treasurer, and the Grand Secretary, the title of each being Right Worshipful; and the Right Reverend Grand Chaplain who shall be appointed by the Grand Master; and a District Deputy Grand Master from each Masonic District which Districts shall not exceed twenty-eight (28) in number, who shall be appointed by the Grand Master, the title of each being Right Worshipful. (2016)

And the following Subordinate Grand Officers, viz: Grand Orator, Grand Marshal, Senior Grand Deacon, Junior Grand Deacon, Grand Standard Bearer, Grand Sword Bearer, Senior Grand Steward, Junior Grand Steward, Grand Pursuivant, and Grand Tyler whose title is Worshipful who shall be appointed by the Grand Master, but the Junior Grand Deacon shall be appointed only upon nomination of the Senior Grand Warden. (1990) (Art. II, Sec. 1)

Regulations

5.01 No Brother shall be appointed Grand Marshal, Senior Grand Deacon, Junior Grand Deacon, Grand Standard Bearer, Grand Sword Bearer, Senior Grand Steward, Junior Grand Steward, Grand Pursuivant, Grand Tyler, or District Deputy Grand Master who is not a Past Master of a Florida Lodge. Any Master Mason in good standing in a Florida Lodge shall be eligible for appointment to any other Grand Lodge appointive office or position and to any Grand Lodge Committee, Board, or Commission.

ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

Constitutional Provisions

The election of Grand Officers shall be held at the Annual Grand

Communication at such time as the Grand Lodge may appoint by appropriate Resolution. (Art. III, Sec. 1)

In balloting for Grand Officers, each Lodge is entitled to three (3) votes; if there be but two (2) of the three (3) principal Officers of a Lodge present, the Officer highest in rank shall cast two (2) votes; the Officer present shall have precedence over the proxy of an Officer higher in rank, but if two (2) or more of the Officers are represented by proxies, such proxies shall have precedence according to the rank of the Officers they severally represent; and if there be but one (1) Officer or proxy present, he shall cast the three votes of his Lodge. (Art. III, Sec. 2).

The Grand Master is always in nomination, and a majority of all the votes cast is requisite to a choice. (Art. III, Sec. 3)

Only members of the Grand Lodge who have been regularly elected and installed the Master of a Particular Lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Florida are eligible to be elected to any office in the Grand Lodge. (Art. III, Sec. 4). (1992)

It is the duty of the Grand Master-elect, as soon after the election as may be, to appoint the Subordinate Grand Officers and to announce the same to the Grand Lodge. (Art. III, Sec. 5)

Regulations

5.02 (a) Except as to incumbent Elected Grand Lodge Officers, hereinafter provided for, all nominations for election to an elective Grand Lodge Office shall be by nominating petition stating the name of the nominee, his address, telephone number (if any), and the nominee's Lodge number, and shall be signed by ten (10) Master Masons in good standing in one or more of the Lodges in the same Masonic District in which the nominee is a dues-paying member of some Lodge.

The petition shall contain an agreement signed by the nominee that if elected he will accept the office for which he is nominated.

The nominating petition shall be filed with the Grand Secretary on or before January 15. Upon receipt of the petition, the Grand Secretary shall note thereon the time and date of receipt and shall forthwith deliver to the nominee a form which shall provide for the nominee to furnish his personal history, Masonic record, and other pertinent information. The nominee shall sign the personal information form attesting to the correctness

of the information contained therein and return the same to the Grand Secretary on or before February 1. The Grand Secretary shall note on the personal and Masonic history form the date of delivery to and receipt from the nominee.

The Deputy Grand Master, Senior Grand Warden, and Junior Grand Warden shall always be in nomination for the next successive office in the Progressive Grand Lodge Line and the Grand Treasurer and Grand Secretary shall always be in nomination for re-election; *provided*, however, such officer shall file in the office of the Grand Secretary, on or before January 15 a signed, written statement that he will accept the office for which he is nominated as herein provided. The Grand Secretary, upon receipt of the signed written statement aforesaid shall deliver to the nominee a personal and Masonic history form which shall be completed, signed, and attested as to its correctness by the nominee and filed in the office of the Grand Secretary on or before February 1, and the Grand Secretary shall note thereon the date of delivery to the nominee and the date returned to the Grand Secretary's Office.

The Grand Secretary shall send a copy of all nominating petitions and signed written statements of incumbent officers and all personal and Masonic information forms of all nominees to each Particular Lodge, the Grand Lodge Elective Officers, the District Deputy Grand Masters, the District Instructors, and Past Grand Masters on or before March 15.

No other written or printed material or matter shall be distributed by mail or otherwise by, or in behalf of, any candidate or nominee for Grand Lodge Office.

In the event a vacancy or vacancies shall occur in the progressive Grand Lodge Line prior to January 15, the signed statement of an incumbent shall designate the office to which he in traditional course of events would be nominated. If the vacancy shall occur after January 15, the signed written statement of incumbent Grand Lodge Line Officer shall be construed to be an agreement to accept the highest office to which in traditional course of events he would be nominated and elected, that is, in event of a vacancy in the office of Deputy Grand Master the Senior Grand Warden shall be in nomination for Grand Master and the Junior Grand Warden shall be in nomination for Deputy Grand Master. In the event of more than one vacancy, the signed statements of incumbents shall be construed to be nominations to preserve the traditional progress of Grand Lodge Line Officers.

In the event of vacancy in nominations or nominees in the Grand Lodge Line Officers, all nominations for office of Junior Grand Warden shall be construed to be nominations for Junior Grand Warden and next highest office or offices so that each nominee shall be eligible for election to either office and may stand for election for the highest office and if not elected he shall be eligible for election to the other office, i.e. all nominees for Junior Grand Warden shall be in nomination for any or all offices vacant and not filled by nomination as above provided.

The Grand Master shall have authority to formulate and issue such Executive Orders as shall be necessary or appropriate to insure orderly election for all vacancies and preserve the traditional progress of Grand Lodge Line Officers.

The Grand Secretary, with the approval of the Grand Master shall prepare form of nominating petition and form for personal and Masonic history of nominees. Nominating petition shall be furnished to any Florida Master Mason upon request therefore.

In the event of any vacancy in nominations or nominees and filling such vacancy is not provided for herein, the Grand Master shall issue Executive Order setting forth the method and time for qualifying to fill such vacancy. (1983)

- (b) The Grand Secretary, with the approval of the Grand Master

shall arrange for printing and delivery of ballots, and if practicable, for use of voting machines and such other arrangements for secret voting by Lodge representatives as shall be appropriate.

The ballot shall show the name of the office, and the name of each nominee for said office shall be printed thereunder; *provided*, if there is only one nominee for an office the name of such office and the name of the nominee shall not be printed on the ballot and the Grand Secretary shall certify to the Grand Lodge that such nominee was elected to the office without opposition.

(c) The Committee on Returns and Credentials shall, under the supervision and direction of the Grand Master, or someone designated by him, conduct the election.

The election shall be by secret ballot or by voting machine.

Upon registration with the Committee on Returns and Credentials, each Lodge Representative shall be given paper ballot with name of office and nominees for such office printed thereon with appropriate space provided for designating the choice and vote of such representative by checkmark or crossmark. The ballot shall contain specific directions as to the manner of casting the ballot. If voting machines are used the Lodge representative, upon registration, shall be given an identification slip entitling him to enter a voting machine and cast his ballot.

The Grand Secretary, with the approval of the Grand Master, shall prepare detailed instructions governing conduct of the election, prescribing time for opening registration, casting of ballots and the period during which ballots may be cast which shall not be earlier than the opening of Grand Lodge nor later than 5:00 P.M. of said day, and shall further prescribe in said instructions detailed information as to place of ballot and preservation of ballots until counting, which instructions so prepared by the Grand Secretary shall be presented to the Jurisprudence Committee no later than twenty-four (24) hours prior to time of beginning of balloting.

Any Lodge representative claiming right to vote more than one ballot by reason of absence of other Lodge representatives shall register his claim with the Committee on Returns and Credentials but at the time of such registration shall be allowed to cast only one (1) ballot. Not later than one (1) hour prior to the time of closing of balloting the representative claiming the right to cast more than one (1) ballot shall again present his claim to the Committee on Returns and Credentials and if no conflict appears with the right of such representative to cast additional ballot or ballots, he shall be given such ballots as he shall be entitled to vote or identification slips entitling him to vote such extra ballots on voting machine.

(d) At the close of the time of balloting the Committee on Returns and Credentials, under supervision of a Canvassing Committee of five (5) members, two of whom shall be Past Grand Masters, shall count and canvass the ballots for each nominee and prepare written reports of the results of such count and canvass, which report shall be signed by the Chairman of the Committee on Returns and Credentials and Chairman of the Canvassing Committee, which report shall be forthwith presented to the Grand Lodge. If balloting as above provided shall not result in any nominee for an office receiving a majority of the votes or ballots cast, then and in such event further balloting shall be conducted in accordance with instructions and directions of the Grand Master. Successive ballots shall be taken in accordance with the above procedures by directions of the Grand Master until all offices have been filled by majority vote.

References

The Grand Secretary shall furnish each Grand Lodge Officer with a certificate of his election or appointment. Reg. 9.08

INSTALLATION

Constitutional Provisions

The last Grand Master, or any other Past Grand Master, may install the Grand Master-elect, whose duty it is to install the other Grand Officers elected and appointed, which duty must be performed before the close of the Grand Lodge; *provided*, any Past Grand Master, or Deputy Grand Master, or Past Deputy Grand Master, may perform that duty. But no Elected Grand Officer can be installed by proxy, except under some peculiar circumstances, when the Grand Master may grant a Dispensation for that purpose. (Art. III, Sec. 6)

Regulations

5.03 (a) The Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, any Past Grand Master, any Past Deputy Grand Master, or Constitutional Acting Grand Master may install the Grand Master-elect.

(b) Upon installation of the Grand Master, the Grand Lodge shall present him with a Grand Master's Jewel, including date plate, to be retained by him during his lifetime. That Grand Master shall take such action as is necessary to cause his estate to return the Jewel and date plate to the Grand Lodge upon his death. Upon receipt thereof the date plate shall be removed, inscribed with that Grand Master's name, and placed in the Masonic Museum. A Jewel received by the Grand Lodge, if available, with a new date plate, shall then be presented to a subsequently installed Grand Master. This regulation shall apply to all Grand Master's Jewels, commencing with the Jewel presented at the 165th Annual Grand Communication. All Past Grand Masters to whom this Regulation does not apply are urged to voluntarily comply herewith. (1995)

References

The Grand Master may grant Dispensation for installation of Grand Lodge Officers by proxy. Reg. 6.11 (a)

GRAND HONORS**Regulations**

5.04 The Particular Lodges are required to receive the Official Visits of the Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, the Senior Grand Warden, the Junior Grand Warden, the Past Grand Masters, and District Deputy Grand Masters (in their own Districts) with Grand Honors, respect, and obedience. The Grand Treasurer, the Grand Secretary, Past Deputy Grand Masters, and Past Grand Wardens may be received as a courtesy. A regularly elected Worshipful Master is entitled to Grand Honors at time of installation. (None others, except those provided for by Regulation, are entitled to be received with Grand Honors. See Monitor.) (2002)

Rulings and Decisions

Action of Grand Master in requiring written apology for discourtesies to District Deputy Grand Master on occasion of Official Visit was proper and in accord with requirements of Masonic Law. (1969 Proc. 58, 212)

TERM; RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL**Constitutional Provisions**

All Grand Officers duly elected and installed shall continue in office one year, and until their successors in office are duly elected and installed. The Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, and the Grand Wardens cannot resign during the year for which they are elected and installed in office. (Art. III, Sec. 7)

Regulations

5.05 The Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, and the Grand Wardens cannot resign during their term of office and no other Grand Officer can resign except by permission of the Grand Lodge, or the Grand Master in recess.

5.06 Repealed (1984)

5.07 It shall be the duty of a District Deputy Grand Master, when unable or unwilling to attend to his duties as prescribed by Article VI, Section 5, of the Constitution, to resign his office, and

upon such resignation, the Grand Master shall appoint another District Deputy Grand Master to fill such vacancy.

VACANCIES AND SUCCESSION IN OFFICE

Constitutional Provisions

In case of the death, incapacity, or inability from any other cause to perform the duties of the office of the Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master, the Senior Grand Warden, and the Junior Grand Warden, the Junior Past Grand Master shall forthwith call and give notice of a meeting of all living Past Grand Masters to be held not less than ten (10) days nor more than fifteen (15) days after notice of such meeting at the time and place specified in such notice, and the Past Grand Masters in such meeting, shall, in such manner as they deem appropriate from among themselves fill all vacancies then existing in Elective Grand Lodge Offices and the officers so elected to fill such vacancies shall have all of the powers appertaining to the offices to which they have been designated to fill, and shall serve until their successors are elected and installed at the next Special or Annual Grand Communication, and the Past Grand Masters may, at such meeting, call a Special Communication of Grand Lodge for the purpose of filling by election the offices filled by selection of the Past Grand Masters. The Grand Master designated by the Past Grand Masters shall immediately, after such meeting of the Past Grand Masters, promptly proclaim and publish to the Particular Lodges the actions of the Past Grand Masters. (Art. VI, Sec. 13)

“And in case of his (Grand Master’s) death, or incapacity for any cause, to perform the duties of his office, all the duties, powers, and prerogatives of the Grand Master devolve on the Deputy Grand Master until the next Annual Communication.” (Art. VI, Sec. 7 – Excerpt)

“and in case of death, removal, or inability from any other cause to perform the duties of the office of Grand Master and the Deputy Grand Master, the Senior Grand Warden succeeds to all the powers, rights, and prerogatives of the Grand Master. And in case of the death, removal, or inability from any cause to perform the duties of the office of the Grand Master, the Deputy Grand Master and the Senior Grand Warden, the Junior Grand Warden succeeds to all the powers, rights, and prerogatives of the Grand Master.” (Art. VI, Sec. 8 – Excerpt)

When the Senior Grand Warden is not in the West, the Junior Grand Warden does not succeed to fill it, because his proper place is in

the South; and the West must be filled by a pro tem appointment from time to time. (Art. IV, Sec. 4)

Regulations

5.08 The offices of Master, Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, and District Deputy Grand Master are clearly incompatible with each other, and therefore, no two (2) of them can be held by an individual at one and the same time. If a Brother holding any of said offices accepts either of the others, such acceptance is a surrender of the office so held, and it at once becomes vacant.

5.09 The office of Grand Master is never vacant, for succession being instant, there is no interim.

A - Suspension of Grand Master for Inability or Incapacity.

In the event the Senior Grand Warden, the Junior Grand Warden, Grand Treasurer, and Grand Secretary, or any two or more of them, shall believe, for good cause or reason, that the Grand Master is unable or incapable of performing the duties of his office, they shall forthwith give written notice thereof to the Junior Past Grand Master of such belief and the cause or reason therefore. The Deputy Grand Master shall not be an initiating party in order to avoid the appearance of impropriety or a conflict of interest.

The Past Grand Master so notified in accordance with the above procedure shall call and give notice to the Grand Master and all Past Grand Masters of a meeting at a time and place specified in such notice and the reason therefore.

At the meeting of the Past Grand Masters, a majority of whom shall constitute a quorum, the Junior Past Grand Master, or in his absence the immediate past Junior Past Grand Master, or in the absence of both of them a Past Grand Master selected by those present, shall preside.

The Past Grand Masters shall determine whether or not the Grand Master is unable to perform the duties of his office and may receive such evidence and testimony, including any evidence offered by or in behalf of the Grand Master, as may seem to them necessary or appropriate to make such determination, a majority vote of those Past Grand Masters present being sufficient for such determination.

If the Past Grand Masters shall find and determine that the Grand Master is unable to perform his duties, they shall enter an

appropriate order of such determination signed by the presiding Past Grand Master and in said order shall direct that the Deputy Grand Master shall forthwith assume the duties of office of Grand Master.

A full and complete record of all proceedings, including testimony and evidence received at the meeting together with the order entered at such meeting, shall be filed in the office of the Grand Secretary and copy of the order delivered to the Deputy Grand Master and to the Grand Master.

B - Request by Grand Master for Assumption of Duties.

Upon receipt of a request from the Grand Master and a statement from him that he is able to assume the duties of his office, the presiding Past Grand Master shall call a meeting of the Past Grand Masters to take such action as shall be appropriate in accordance with the same procedure established in Section A above for the suspension of the Grand Master, including an evidentiary hearing and order of determination in connection therewith.

C - Suspension or Removal of Other Elected Grand Lodge Officers.

In the event the Grand Master and two other Elected Grand Lodge Officers shall believe for good cause or reason that the Deputy Grand Master, Senior Grand Warden, Junior Grand Warden, Grand Treasurer, or the Grand Secretary is unable or incapable of performing the duties of his office, or should be removed for any other reason, including misconduct or violation of established Masonic principles, they shall forthwith give notice of such belief and the grounds therefore to all other Elected Grand Lodge Officers, including the officer whose conduct or capability is in question, and to all Past Grand Masters and of a meeting of said Grand Lodge Officers and Past Grand Masters at a time and place named and designated in said notice. At the meeting aforesaid, a majority of the Elected Grand Lodge Officers, exclusive of the officer whose conduct or capability is in question, and the Past Grand Masters present collectively shall constitute a quorum and the Grand Master, or in his absence the highest ranking Grand Lodge Officer present whose conduct or capability is not in question, shall preside.

Said Grand Lodge Officers and Past Grand Masters shall determine by collective majority vote whether or not the officer whose conduct or capability is in question is unable to perform the duties of his office or should be removed for reasons alleged and may receive such evidence and testimony, including any evidence offered for or in behalf of the officer whose conduct or

capability is in question, as may be necessary or appropriate to make such determination.

If it shall be determined as aforesaid that the officer whose conduct or capability is in question is unable to perform the duties of his office or should be removed from office for reasons alleged, all participating in said decision shall subscribe to and sign an appropriate order of such determination which shall be filed in the office of the Grand Secretary and a copy delivered to the affected officer. Upon filing of such an order, the officer whose conduct or capability was in question shall stand suspended or removed from his office as set forth in said order and the Grand Master shall forthwith appoint a qualified Master Mason as acting officer to fill the vacancy created by the suspension or removal.

D - Reinstatement of Suspended Elected Grand Lodge Officer

An officer suspended for incapacity may be reinstated by the Grand Master at such time as the Grand Master shall determine, with the concurrence of two other Elected Grand Lodge Officers, that the suspended officer is again capable of performing the duties of his office. The Grand Master shall have no power to reinstate an officer removed from office for misconduct.

The salary or compensation of an officer suspended for incapacity shall be continued during the period of his incapacity, but not beyond the Officer's term of office. An Officer removed for misconduct shall not be paid any compensation after such removal. (1983)

DISCIPLINE

Constitutional Provisions

“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–Excerpt)

Regulations

5.10 All Officers of the Grand Lodge, except the Grand Master, are subject to discipline by the Grand Lodge.

References

As to Powers and Duties of Grand Lodge Officers, see:
 Grand Master: Chapter 6
 Deputy Grand Master and Wardens: Chapter 7
 Grand Treasurer: Chapter 8
 Grand Secretary: Chapter 9

