

# The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Florida

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## RULING AND DECISION NO. 1

July 27, 2017

The question has been raised: “Are the terms “With Prejudice or Without Prejudice” in compliance with Florida Masonic Law?”

In the search of our Digest of the Masonic Law of Florida and the Masonic Justice Manual as revised and approved by the Craft in 2014, I have found no reference to the legal terms “With Prejudice or Without Prejudice”. These are terms used in the Legal system of our society, civil and criminal, and have no bearing or reference to our Digest of Masonic Law, especially Chapter 44 which is our penal code.

In all Masonic Trials, we stipulate that we do not follow or adhere to civil law, but our Masonic Law is precedent, and charges of unmasonic conduct filed are a result of alleged violations of our Masonic Digest and not civil law. All Masons in good standing have a right to file charges of unmasonic conduct and have them heard. Charges of unmasonic conduct may be dismissed or found not in proper form, for various reasons, but dismissing charges and using the term “With Prejudice”, as used in civil trials, would negate a Brother’s right to refile charges of unmasonic conduct in proper form.

It is therefore my ruling and decision that the terms “With Prejudice” and “Without Prejudice” are terms used in Civil and Criminal trials only and have no merit or meaning in our Grand Lodge or Lodge Masonic Trials or in the dismissal of charges of unmasonic conduct when it pertains to our Digest of Masonic Law or our Masonic Justice Manual; therefore, these terms shall not be used in Penal Proceedings.

Fraternally,



Richard G. Hoover  
Grand Master

