



WISCONSIN MASONIC HANDBOOK

CHAPTER 1

DUTIES OF LODGE OFFICERS

A. INTRODUCTION

All successful lodges have one distinguishing characteristic. The officers of these lodges are informed, enthusiastic and dedicated to performing their duties. Please refer for more detail to the Lodge Officer's Handbook available on the website.

In Freemasonry, there is no substitute for quality.

Pride begets pride; enthusiasm spawns enthusiasm. Just as a school will relate with its varsity team, so also will the members of a lodge relate with its officers. When officers display the virtues of enthusiasm for their station with pride of accomplishment, the membership will be more willing to support them in all their endeavors. When all officers display a sincere love and concern for the Craft, respect for the Brothers, and humility with their authority, Freemasonry will prosper.

If the officers of a lodge worked as a team, then the Worshipful Master should have had experience as coach, manager, trainer, cheerleader, bat boy and sweepers helper. No Worshipful Master can expect of any Steward, Deacon or Warden, better workmanship than he himself did while in that chair. Remember this as you move through the chairs; only if you were a true and faithful workman as a Deacon can you expect your Deacon to be a true and faithful workman. Leadership is inspired by precept and example. "Look sharp, feel sharp, and be sharp."

It is also the specific duty of every officer to attend District meetings and Schools of Instruction. They should participate in the work of the School as assigned by the Grand Lecturer. The importance of proficiently and conscientiously conferring the degrees in the lodge cannot be overemphasized. Freemasonry must be made meaningful to a candidate in the Entered Apprentice Degree; therefore, sincerity, dignity, and exactness should be employed to assure that he receives only the best. Levity, frivolity and disturbances should not be tolerated. Avoid whispering, laughing, or chuckling - every candidate comes this way but once and he should see and hear the best work that we have to offer.

Lodge officers should attend and participate in Masonic Memorial Services. Make a special effort to encourage as many members to attend as possible. Each officer should assist the Worshipful Master and the Degree Work Committee in seeing that the meetings and degree work are conducted with dignity. Every officer should review as often as necessary the Charges given at the time of installation. Attention should be given to proper attire of all officers to maintain the dignity, which is one of the heritages of the Craft.

B. WORSHIPFUL MASTER



Of the many duties and responsibilities assumed by the Worshipful Master at his installation, some are quite obvious but will bear repeating. There are also some duties which, in order to be discharged efficiently, must be thought about and often some action taken before being installed as Worshipful Master. These will be discussed in the paragraphs to follow. No relative importance is intended or implied by the order in which they are noted. This will vary with the individual lodge.

Very carefully and thoroughly review the Charges to be made at the installation by consulting the Ceremony of Installation. When being installed, assent will be requested to these charges, as one cannot be installed without this assent. Hence, the absolute necessity of a constant review of these charges to assure conformity and to avoid any violation of the obligation assumed at installation.

STUDY and be sure you understand the Masonic Code of Wisconsin and in particular the "Specific Powers of a Master" defined in Chapter 56.06 of the Code which states "(1) A Master has absolute power in the government of his lodge," as well as Chapter 51 thru 93 - Regulations for Lodges. This "power" is an enormous responsibility and requires temperance, fortitude, prudence and justice.

The familiarity with the Code requires the Worshipful Master to ensure that his Wisconsin Code Book is current with all changes. He should also be familiar with all current decisions and edicts of the Grand Master. Be sure to review "The Edicts, Decisions, and other Announcements from the Grand Master or the Grand Lodge." Current edicts and announcements are available from the Grand Lodge Office or at www.wisc-freemasonry.org/publications/

Open and preside over the Lodge

The Worshipful Master or someone delegated by him should be there to greet a

brother, member or visitor when he comes to lodge. Plan on arriving at least one half hour before the lodge is scheduled to open and be at the door to greet everyone right up to the last minute; this means that you should have everything organized beforehand so that you are free to spend that half hour talking to the members and visitors. Let each man know how much his presence is appreciated by greeting him enthusiastically and calling him by name. See that any new member or visitor has a brother assigned to sit with him in lodge and to see that he is introduced around. Remember, that every man, regardless of his station in life, needs to belong and, in part, joined your Lodge to satisfy that need.

Opening and closing a lodge should be done in a dignified and ritualistically skillful manner. We are not necessarily suggesting that the Worshipful Master must be the most proficient ritualist in his lodge; but we are suggesting that he become as proficient as it is possible for him to do.

In presiding over the lodge, he should follow the prescribed order of business and be well informed in conducting the business as discussed in Chapter 2 of this HANDBOOK. Only the Grand Master and/or the Grand Lodge can overrule his decisions and orders. He should, therefore, be especially careful to see that his decisions are wise and just. Within the society of a Masonic Lodge, the Worshipful Master has been endowed with considerable power.

Finance Committee

The Masonic Code of Wisconsin Chapter 62.04 provides that each lodge shall have a Finance Committee consisting of the Worshipful Master, Senior and Junior Wardens. The basic responsibilities of this Committee are discussed in Chapter 4 of this HANDBOOK.

Chapter 62.04 of the Code also states: "The Finance Committee shall annually present a budget to the lodge for its consideration prior to the fixing the dues for the ensuing year."

Appointing New Officers

Even though it is the responsibility of the Worshipful Master to choose the appointed officers, this must be done before a Warden has been installed as Worshipful Master. It may be well to discuss such appointments with the Wardens. However, it is the Master's duty to fill vacancies that occur in appointive offices during his term. The surest way to build for the future is to strive toward making the best officer selections possible.

Degree Work

It is the duty of the Worshipful Master to see to it that the works as well as the meetings are conducted with the dignity consistent with the tenets of Freemasonry.

A checklist should be used to insure that a brother has been assigned to and is responsible for every part required for each degree. Suggested work assignments are listed in the Multiple Letter Cipher.

Committee Appointments

The Worshipful Master is to make all committee appointments. Again, as in the case of appointing officers, much of this effort should have been expended before being installed.

Committee chairmen, particularly the Program Committee Chairman, should be selected far enough in advance so that they can begin thinking and unofficially planning for the coming year. Efficient committees can do much to stimulate interest in lodge activity. We all know the undeniable truth, that the more people we put to work in the lodge and encourage to complete assignments, the more interest, activity and attendance we generate.

Masonic Memorial and/or Funeral Services

One of your duties as Worshipful Master is to insure that no effort is spared in counseling a deceased brother's family and informing them of his Masonic rights at this time. There is no requirement that the Worshipful Master specifically conducts the Memorial Service - the greater duty lies in seeing that it is properly done.

The most immediate source of assistance and guidance is to contact the Grand Chaplain.

A form titled, "To My Survivors" can be found at the end of this HANDBOOK. **It is recommended that the Lodge reproduce the form, sending one to each member of your lodge.** Inform the members to include this document with their important personal papers so those who will tend to their estate, will respect their request and be able to know whom to contact on their demise.

Appoint an Interviewing Committee

The Secretary should advise the Worshipful Master of all petitions received by him prior to the stated communication so he can determine if they are in order for presentation in the lodge.

Lodge Counselor

One of the finest tools for candidate instruction and education is that supplied by the counselor material obtainable from the Grand Lodge Office.

Leadership Training

It is the duty of the Worshipful Master to see that he and his corps of officers attend Leadership Training Seminars and District Meetings when scheduled in the District. The purpose of these seminars is to develop or enhance the skills needed to be an effective leader. It is aimed at all officers of the lodge, starting from the Junior Steward through the Worshipful Master. Other brethren are also encouraged to attend.

Officers' Meetings

The Worshipful Master must be responsible to see that he and his officers meet regularly to discuss the emergent problems of the lodge, to divide the work assignments, and, give frank and honest opinions as how they can best help each other. These meetings cannot be haphazard affairs. They must be planned. The Worshipful Master should prepare an agenda of topics to be discussed, the expected length of the meeting, and distribute it to all those he expects to attend. This meeting can provide an excellent opportunity for the junior officers, as well as committee chairman, to study at first hand the inner workings of the Fraternity. The officers of the lodge must plan to maintain continuity from one administration to the next. Succeeding Masters should not destroy that which their predecessors have built. Establish a continuing program of events that have proved successful, innovating only to maintain interest or excitement. Give all new ideas a fair but cautious trial. Gradual changes are more easily indicated than radical ones.

When you call an officer's meeting, open promptly, conduct your business efficiently and close early to have your refreshments, if any.

Committee Reports

Periodic committee reports should be required. Nothing will spur a committee to action as much as the knowledge that a report will be expected on the lodge floor at a specific time.

Building Operation

If your lodge owns its own building, you will have several responsibilities with which your counterpart in a "renting lodge" will not be faced. Initially, you should review the Masonic Code and Chapter 8 of the HANDBOOK.

Depending upon your lodge's procedure, you should also review the general operating procedures of your lodge with your Trustees or House Committee. Be particularly familiar with the rules governing use of the building by the various groups on dates other than their regularly scheduled meetings. The small investment in a calendar to schedule the use of the building by all of the groups will provide a valuable tool alongside your telephone. For further information, refer to the section of the HANDBOOK on "Lodge Buildings," Chapter 8.

In addition to the duties and responsibilities discussed above are those, which are imposed by the Masonic Code of Wisconsin and the By-Laws of each lodge.

C. WARDENS

It is a commonly accepted tradition that the Senior Warden is in charge of the Craft during the hours of labor and the Junior Warden during those of refreshment. In the absence of the Worshipful Master, of course, the Senior Warden becomes the Presiding Officer and in many respects he represents the Master in the government of the lodge. In the absence of both the Worshipful Master and the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden will preside. It is imperative, therefore, that each Warden prepares himself for this possibility as well as to assume the Master's chair in his own right one day.

Other than the duties assigned by the Worshipful Master, the most impelling duty is that of planning which can be greatly assisted through the Leadership Training Program, and having completed the William's Lodge simulation. It is necessary to become thoroughly familiar with the Master's duties and the requirements of lodge administration so that the Wardens can assist the Worshipful Master as well as prepare themselves to succeed to higher duties in the future.

Officer selection (not appointments) should be made well in advance of election and installation. The Senior Warden knows that he probably will be elected Worshipful Master and by far the greatest part of his planning must be done

before he is installed as Master.

With respect to officer appointments remember, that when a Steward is appointed to the line, a man is being appointed who stands a good chance of being elected as Worshipful Master in the future. There may be occasions when it is better to appoint a Past Master to an office rather than an unqualified man until more qualified men become available to avoid junior officers "jumping" stations. The training attained in each chair is an invaluable part of the experience needed to become a good Master.

1. A Special Message to the Senior Warden



In a short time the members of your lodge will consider bestowing upon you the most precious gift within their power; election to the station in the East - Worshipful Master. With rare exceptions, no higher honor can come to any man.

If there is a secret to a successful year in the East, it lies in the planning thereof. Your achievements as a Worshipful Master will depend almost entirely upon preparations made before the first rap of your gavel in the East. One of the key reasons this handbook was developed, was to provide you with significant help as you plan for your coming year to prepare you to fulfill your duties and discharge your obligation with honor, distinction and personal satisfaction.

The numerous duties and responsibilities that will become yours when you are elevated to the Master's station extend far beyond the conferring of degrees and the conduct of business of the stated communications. The future of Masonry in your community and in the State of Wisconsin is greatly influenced by your actions, more importantly, so is every man who enters your lodge.

You are urged to seek the wisdom and counsel of your predecessors. Talk to the Past Masters of your lodge and of other lodges and sift their collective ideas for wisdom, but do not hesitate to discard the chaff.

Make no mistake about it: Intelligent men are not going to spend their evenings hearing the minutes read and the bills allowed, or watching other men exemplify poorly the same ritualistic work they have seen a score of times before. Today's Mason expects to be challenged, engaged, and wants to find his own way to excel through Masonry and its teachings.

When men are interested in the work of an organization, they will be on hand to participate in its program. When there is nothing that interests them, they will not

be there, no matter how much we encourage them.

Unless Freemasonry presents what it has to offer in a challenging manner, intelligent men will not be on the sidelines to witness and participate.

2. A Special Message to the Junior Warden



The Masonic Code of Wisconsin states: "The Junior Warden of each constituent lodge shall act as liaison between his lodge and any related youth groups. He shall make periodic reports to the Junior Grand Warden and to his Worshipful Master, and keep them informed of his activities."

The following information is a sample of the three Masonic youth groups that the lodges can support. More information on Masonic youth groups and other youth groups can be found in on the website.

DeMolay

The vitality of youth and the experience of Masonry are the two inseparable elements that have made the Order of DeMolay successful. In 1922, the Order of DeMolay came to Wisconsin. In 1961, the Grand Lodge voted to sponsor DeMolay. Today, the Grand Lodge is a member organization of the United Masonic Board for DeMolay in Wisconsin, Inc. DeMolay is for young men between the ages of 13 and 21. Furthermore, lodges are encouraged to provide youth groups use of their facilities free of charge.

Job's Daughters

Job's Daughters is an organization for young ladies ages 11 to 20 who are related to Master Masons. This youth group places emphasis on development of character and self-confidence as well as learning leadership qualities. Its teachings are from the Book of Job from the Holy Bible.

Rainbow for Girls

Young ladies between the ages of 12 to 20 who have been recommended by an Eastern Star member or Master Mason may petition. Its ritual teaches a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, the truths of the Holy Bible, to seek dignity of character, effective leadership, and cooperation with equals and service to humanity.

In those lodges where Masonic youth organizations are presently being sponsored there is almost universally a crying need for additional adult leadership. The Junior Warden should address himself to support to the solicitation, commitment,

and development of volunteers to serve this vital element necessary to a successful youth group.

Much remains to be done for and with Masonic youth. Your lodge should consider some of the following areas of involvement with a DeMolay Chapter, Bethel of Job's Daughters or Rainbow Assembly.

Installations

Take it upon yourself to invite a DeMolay Chapter to act as an Honor Guard to the Installing Officers and the officers to be installed. You may use Demolay members to present the Holy Bible, and Flag at an installation. Consider inviting the DeMolays to act as escorts or ushers to all who attend the lodge installation. The lodge may, in turn, volunteer to form an Honor Guard or act as escorts or ushers at a DeMolay Installation.

Dinners

"Masonic Youth Nights" host a dinner in honor of any of the Masonic youth groups - Job's Daughters, Rainbow Girls and DeMolay young men. Invite the presiding officers of each of the youth groups to present a short three to five minute talk on their organization. The lodge in turn may present a program about Freemasonry to the youth; however, conclude the dinner program with some "fun" entertainment. Demolay Dads and Uncles receive special training on how to build these types of events, talk with them.

D. TREASURER AND SECRETARY

The basic duties of these officers are well "charged" to them at Installation. These officers leave upon the lodge the imprints of their efforts. Worshipful Masters usually are elected for one year terms, but the Treasurer and Secretary may be reelected many times. Because they execute almost all of the lodges' financial transactions record keeping and correspondence, and thus represent the Worshipful Master and the membership, they create a fixed impression not only within the lodge but also upon the world outside.

The effect of the Treasurer and Secretary's association with the officers and brethren in the interest of helpfulness and cooperation will do much to make each administration efficient and harmonious. Frequent and regularly scheduled reports to the lodges are necessary to properly conduct the business of the lodge.

The duties of the Treasurer are:

- Receive all monies from the Secretary and give receipt therefore.
- Keep a just and true account of all monies.
- Immediately deposit all monies received into the proper accounts.
- Payout monies by order of the Worshipful Master and consent of the lodge.
- Give a financial report at all stated communications.
- Inform the Worshipful Master of any surplus monies for the consideration of investment.

All duties of the Secretary are outlined in the Secretary's handbook. His duties include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- Observe the will and pleasure of the Worshipful Master in recording the proceedings of the Lodge; transmit a copy thereof to the Grand Lodge when requested.
- Receive all monies paid into the lodge, keeping a good and detailed accounting system of all monies received and/ or paid out, transferring funds to the Treasurer and receiving his receipt.
- Keep an accurate account of membership records and inform the Grand Secretary of any changes.
- Send out notices of dues and activities to the membership.
- Prepare and forward to the Grand Secretary the year-end financial statement at the proper time.
- Prepare and submit to the Grand Secretary the "Profit and Loss Statement" and "Balance Sheet"
- Receive and answer all correspondence.

E. CHAPLAIN



A demonstrated reverence for the tenets of Freemasonry is the towering characteristic of the Chaplain. Specifically, he is charged with offering devotions

at appropriate occasions and when requested by the Worshipful Master. He is also expected to recite the circumambulation scriptures for each degree.

F. DEACONS

In the active duties of conducting the business of a lodge, the Senior Deacon is the messenger for the Worshipful Master while the Junior Deacon is the messenger for the Senior Warden.

Specifically;

- (1.) The Senior Deacon is ultimately responsible for the proper preparation of the candidate who comes to him from the hands of the Junior Deacon, and he must absolutely assure himself that the candidate is "duly and truly prepared." He should so conduct his candidate through the degrees that the candidate will forever after be his friend because of that association.
- (2.) The Junior Deacon assumes the responsibility for the physical and mental preparation of the candidate. He is associated with the candidate at a time when apprehension and some doubt may be prevalent, and his attitude and actions can do much to relieve any existing doubts or fears and make this a most inspirational and exhilarating experience for the candidate.
- (3.) The Deacons play an especially important role in the Entered Apprentice degree. They are the first contact the new candidate has with our ritual. These first impressions are critical to the overall opinion formed by the candidate of our Fraternity. It is, therefore, the duty of the Deacons to see that these parts are done well, with sincerity, and from memory so that they establish an atmosphere of competence and an aura of respect that continues throughout the degree work.

G. STEWARDS

The Stewards along with the Junior Deacon are responsible for the physical preparation of the candidate. During this most impressionable phase of the conferral, joking with the candidate about his initiation, passing, or raising cannot be tolerated. Each candidate should receive the impression that his experience is to be a serious event, conducted with decorum and dignity. **THERE SHOULD BE NO HORSE PLAY OR LEVITY IN CONNECTION WITH THE RITUAL.** Instead, all should strive to impress upon the candidate's mind the importance of the ceremonies in which he participates. The Stewards are also

frequently called upon to assist during the hours of refreshment. They should be willing hands in the kitchen and dining hall.

H. COUNSELOR



The Lodge Counselor is to instruct and support each new candidate for the degrees and to facilitate continuing Masonic education in the lodge. He can call on members who have not been to lodge for a long time and keep track of new candidates and keep them in the habit of attending lodge meetings. The Lodge Counselor's place in the lodge is at the left of the Senior Warden in the West opposite the Senior Deacon.

I. TILER



Special attention should be paid to brethren visiting the lodge, because much of the pleasure of the visit must begin in this room. It is the Tiler's duty to protect the lodge from improper interruption or intrusion by unqualified persons and to keep the anteroom free from disrupting activities. He is further responsible to examine and vouch for late arrivals so he must be familiar with Chapter 84 and 85 of the Masonic Code of Wisconsin.

In addition, it is advisable that the tiler has readily available for reference the following resource material to assist him in receiving visitors:

1. List of Masonic Lodges - This annual book publishes the names of all Regular Grand Lodges of the United States and all Regular Grand Lodges of other Grand Jurisdictions and their constituent lodges. Book may be purchased from:

*Pantagraph Printing & Stationary Co.

P.O. Box 1406

Bloomington, IL 61702-1406

2. Foreign Recognition Chart – This chart contains information as to what foreign Grand Lodges are recognized by what United States Grand Lodges, 13" by 19".

May be purchased from:

*Masonic Service Association

8120 Fenton Street

Silver Spring, MD 20910

* It should be noted that these change rapidly and if in doubt contacting the Grand Secretary for his most recent information is the safest way to ensure proper security.

3. Letter from Grand Secretary- This letter replicates an official dues card used by Prince Hall Grand Lodge, F. & AM. of Wisconsin, Inc. It also specifies the color of the card for the current year.

The Tiler represents the Worshipful Master at the outer door of the lodge, receiving messages and names of brethren desiring to enter. Consequently, he should be civil and courteous. It is his duty to see that all who enter the lodge are properly clothed.



J. TRUSTEES

"A Trustee of a lodge is a statutory, not a Masonic officer." However, a Trustee has a great responsibility to his lodge and its members. The statutory duties of a Trustee are found in a separate distinct Chapter of the Masonic Code of Wisconsin.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TRUSTEES AND THE MASTER

The duties and responsibilities of the Worshipful Master and Trustees are specified in the Masonic Code of Wisconsin and By Laws of the lodge. In addition, the Wisconsin Statutes also specify duties of the Lodge Trustees.

Section 56.01 (1) of the Masonic Code of Wisconsin provides: "A Master has absolute power in the government of his lodge." Section 60.05 of the Masonic Code of Wisconsin states: It is hereby made the duty of the Trustees of lodges to exercise a general supervision over the property, both real and personal, including trust funds of the lodge, unless otherwise provided by regulation of the lodge "Trustees are required to secure approval of the lodge before purchasing, selling, leasing, or mortgaging any real property."

Primarily, the Trustees' duties and responsibilities are to supervise, manage, and control all of the lodge's property for the lodge.

Trustees do work for the lodge; they are not an independent body operating within the lodge without the lodge's and Master's approval. For example, they cannot sell property without lodge approval and they cannot refuse to execute a legal document that has been approved by the lodge membership.