



**ROLF M. WIDSTRAND**

Grand Master 2021-2022

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Brethren:

As the recommendations from the State of Minnesota have changed, the following are the updates to our current edicts for lodges. All updates are effective immediately, unless otherwise stated.

**GENERAL**

- Take care and watch out for our brothers, stay home from Lodge if you're sick.
- State and local restrictions supersede this edict – if your city has more stringent guidelines, you must follow them.
- Follow CDC guidelines for masking and social distancing.
- Masks are no longer required to be worn by vaccinated individuals inside lodge buildings (**Members are on their honor as Masons**).
- Food is again allowed at lodge meetings (both indoors and outdoors).
- Lodges may open on any degree.

**DEGREE WORK**

Lodges may begin conferring their own degrees as follows:

- A Custodian or Monitor is involved in a practice of the degree.
- EA and FC degree conferrals may resume on June 1.
- MM degree conferrals may resume on July 1.

Degree restrictions and safety protocols (since degrees require closer contact):

- Participants in the degree (cast, candidates, and guides) will attest to being fully vaccinated or they will wear a mask. Those in close contact should also wear goggles, or face shields, and use proper hand sanitizing.
- A maximum of 3 candidates for any degree.
- A break of one hour is recommended between the first and second section of the third degree.

Schools of Instruction may be scheduled and held. Please schedule all schools through your Lodge's District Representative.

Fraternally,

Rolf M. Widstrand  
Grand Master



# GRAND LODGE OF MINNESOTA

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### COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

**General Information:** The COVID-19 virus is contagious for at least three days before a person may feel any symptoms, and some infected individuals will never become symptomatic. Therefore, this COVID-19 preparedness plan for in-person Lodge activity is meant for the safety of the members of the Masonic fraternity in Minnesota.

The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is administered by Grand Master Rolf M. Widstrand, who maintains the overall authority and responsibility for the plan. However, officers and members are equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.

The Grand Lodge of Minnesota's COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows the industry guidance developed by the state of Minnesota, available at the Stay Safe Minnesota website (<https://staysafe.mn.gov>), which is based upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19, Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) statutes, rules and standards, and Minnesota's relevant and current executive orders. It addresses:

- ensuring sick members stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons;
- social distancing – members should maintain six-foot distancing;
- member hygiene and source controls, including face coverings;
- lodge building and ventilation protocol;
- lodge cleaning and disinfection protocol.

The Grand Lodge of Minnesota has reviewed and incorporated the industry guidance applicable to our business provided by the state of Minnesota for the development of this plan.

#### I. GENERAL REGULATIONS

- (1) Orders and guidelines from the federal, state and local governments are to be followed.
- (2) Edicts from the Grand Master of Minnesota are to be adhered to.
- (3) The Minnesota Masonic Code governs all Masonic matters.

Questions regarding anything not covered by these three General Regulations are to be submitted through the District Representative to the Grand Lodge office.

#### II. MEETINGS

- (1) It is recommended that, when possible, in-person Lodge meetings be limited to 1-hour in length
- (2) Social distancing of six feet between individuals from different households should be maintained during in-person lodge activities. *(ends June 1)*
- (3) Masks are no longer required to be worn by vaccinated individuals inside lodge buildings (**Members are on their honor as Masons**).
- (4) Lodges are advised to post the MN Department of Health's Screening Checklist at the building entrance.



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(5) Members are expected to conduct a self-screening at home before attending any in-person lodge meeting. Anyone feeling unwell, showing symptoms of illness, or who may have been exposed to someone with symptoms of illness must be sent home. A non-contact temperature check and secondary screening is recommended on entering a facility.

(6) Food and beverages are again allowed to be served at meetings.

- Individuals from different households should maintain 6' spacing, so please rearrange your dining area accordingly. *(ends June 1)*
- Hand sanitizer should be set at each dining tables and bottles be liberally placed throughout the building to encourage their use.

### III. DEGREE WORK

Lodges may begin conferring their own degrees under the following restrictions:

- A Custodian or Monitor is involved in a practice of the degree
- EA and FC degrees may resume starting June 1
- MM degrees may resume starting July 1

Safety protocols for degrees:

- Participants in the degree (cast, candidates, and guides) will attest to being fully vaccinated or they will wear a mask. Those in close contact should also wear goggles, or face shields, and use proper hand sanitizing.
- A maximum of three (3) candidates for any single degree.
- A one-hour break is recommended between the first and second section of the MM degree.

Schools of instruction may be scheduled and held. Please work through your District Representative to schedule a school.

### IV. BUILDING USE

This is the responsibility of the owner/manager of the building if not owned by the lodge.

- (1) Renters of separate, non-shared spaces are to meet the requirements of the state for opening the different types of establishments.
- (2) In shared space, the renter should have a copy of lodge operating procedures.
- (3) For single event renting of a shared space with the lodge, the procedures required by the lodges should be included as part of the agreement. (This could also apply to other organizations that use the lodge building on a regular basis such as OES and concordant bodies.)
- (4) All non-masonic sponsored uses not already contracted, should have an agreement which requires the user to follow the rules of operation for Masonic events and either be required to clean and sanitize



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immediately after the event or be charged for having someone sanitize the facility to protect the lodges and buildings.

(5) Fresh air should continually be added to communal spaces in the building. Air should be blown out of the room so that fresh air is drawn into the room. Air streams should never blow toward or across people in the building. These procedures create movement of air that helps move any of the virus carrying mediums away from people rather than toward or recirculated where people are located in the building.

### Recommendations (if applicable to your situation and to the extent possible)

- a) Supplement ventilation system with the use of portable HEPA filter units.
- b) Keep systems running longer hours (24/7 if possible) to enhance the ability to filter contaminants out of the air.
- c) Maintain relative humidity levels of RH 40-60%.
- d) Add a flush cycle to the controls of the HVAC system, and run HVAC systems for 2 hours before and after occupancy if your system allows for this.
- e) Check and rebalance the HVAC system to provide negative air pressure whenever possible.
- f) Consult an HVAC professional or the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers to ensure proper ventilation is provided, and ventilation systems are properly maintained. See Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Resources from ASHRAE and Others ([www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/resources](http://www.ashrae.org/technical-resources/resources)).

## V. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Lodges should first seek to source personal protective equipment (PPE), in the form of items like masks and hand sanitizer, in their communities. Consult with your local hospital, medical clinic, pharmacy, OES chapter, or church to find a PPE vendor in your area.

If supplies cannot be found in your community, it is possible to obtain PPE through the Grand Lodge office, though significant lead times may be required so please plan accordingly.

## VI. AMENDMENTS

Finally, this is intended to be a living document as conditions and requirements seems to change with little notice. If members of our Craft discover resources and recommendations that would both improve this policy and increase the safety of the members of this Fraternity, they are strongly encouraged to submit those resources to the Grand Lodge office for immediate consideration.



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### Appendix A – Guidance for developing a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan

#### General

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Coronavirus (COVID-19) – [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV)

Minnesota Department of Health (MDH): Coronavirus – [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus)

State of Minnesota: COVID-19 response – <https://mn.gov/covid19>

#### Businesses

CDC: Resources for businesses and employers – [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/businesses-employers.html)

CDC: General business frequently asked questions – [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/general-business-faq.html)

CDC: Building/business ventilation – [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html)

MDH: Businesses and employers: COVID-19 – [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html)

MDH: Food safety protocols - <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/safedining.pdf>

MDH: Health screening checklist – [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf)

MDH: Materials for businesses and employers – [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/materials)

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED): COVID-19 information and resources – <https://mn.gov/deed/newscenter/covid/>

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI): Updates related to COVID-19 – [www.dli.mn.gov/updates](http://www.dli.mn.gov/updates)

Federal OSHA – [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

#### Handwashing

MDH: Handwashing video translated into multiple languages – [www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdQuPGVcceg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdQuPGVcceg)

#### Respiratory etiquette: Cover your cough or sneeze

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html)

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing\\_sneezing.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/etiquette/coughing_sneezing.html)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html)

#### Social distancing

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/businesses.html)



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### Housekeeping

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html)

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html)

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html)

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): [www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2](http://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2)

### Employees exhibiting signs and symptoms of COVID-19

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/basics.html)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/facilityhlthscreen.pdf)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/returntowork.pdf)

State of Minnesota: <https://mn.gov/covid19/for-minnesotans/if-sick/get-tested/index.jsp>

### Training

CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-small-business.html)

Federal OSHA: [www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf)

MDH: [www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf](http://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/about.pdf)