

STUDY GUIDE
IN PREPARATION
FOR THE
POSITION OF
WORSHIPFUL MASTER

There seems to be a desire on the part of the Grand Lodge Officers that members of the craft, who are progressing through the chairs in their Lodge, need assistance in preparation for their year as Worshipful Master. In the past, some Lodges have instituted their own “training program” while others have left it up to the individual to learn what he needs to know on his own. Requiring an individual to learn the necessary information by osmosis is not satisfactory and to this end, and to also make the training uniform, the Grand Lodge Officers have devised the study guide contained in this document.

It is intended that the study and preparation for Worshipful Master be done over a period of years. One cannot wait until they are sitting in the position of Senior Warden to begin their study, and certainly waiting until the evening of the Past Master’s degree to learn, is unacceptable.

In the past, the Worshipful Master had a Lodge Secretary who had 20 or more years of experience and could be relied upon to “know everything”. However, more and more of these old time Secretaries are being replaced and this fountain of knowledge is no longer there. This is just one more reason for you as the Worshipful Master to make sure you study and prepare for your year. It will take not only you and the Secretary to make the Lodge successful; it will take all of the officers and members.

There are a number of publications that the prospective Worshipful Master should read in their entirety, while there are others that he should be familiar with and be able to use in answering questions of making decisions in his Lodge.

The list of publications recommended for reading are:

- Lodge By-Laws
- *Look Well*, by Dwight Smith
- *The Master’s Book* by Carl H. Claudy
- *The Indiana Monitor*

The list of publications recommend for familiarization is:

- *The Indiana Blue Book of Masonic Law*
- Secretary’s Handbook
- The Mentor’s Manual
- Public Ceremonies

He should also be familiar with and know how to obtain information from the Grand Lodge Website located at indianafreemasons.com

The following pages will list those things that a prospective Worshipful Master needs to have committed to memory; frequently asked questions and answers received by the staff of the Grand Lodge Office; and a listing of Chapters in the *Indiana Blue Book of Masonic Law* (“Blue Book”), and a selection of questions and answers taken from those Chapters that are recommended for review.

It is not expected that anyone have the Blue Book memorized; however, all should have the knowledge how to use the Blue Book in determining answers to questions that may arise.

My Brother, other members of the Fraternity will observe and note how you conduct and operate your Lodge. Your actions will also determine whether or not your Lodge is viewed as one that operates within the rules or just meanders along.

FOR MEMORIZATION

- The opening and closing of Lodge on all three degrees
- The ability to conduct the entire degree on EA, FC and MM, excluding lectures. This would, however, include the Charge of all three degrees and working tools.
- The various methods of recognition of a degree (pass, token of the pass, signs, words, grips and steps of all three degrees)
- What the three steps on the Master's carpet represent
- The four cardinal virtues
- The tenets of our Fraternity
- Moving a Lodge from Labor to Refreshment and from Refreshment back to labor

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RECEIVED BY THE GRAND LODGE STAFF

1. How do I register and order my tickets for the annual communication? Hint: there are two answers. They are by paper or electronic.

Answer: The Lodge Secretary is provided with your credentials for the annual communication. He will fill them out according to whether you are attending or you are sending a proxy. You or your proxy must bring the credentials form with you when you come to the annual communication. You should also ensure you have your current dues card with you.

Your ticket order is contained in the invitation that is sent to you as Worshipful Master. You will be instructed to order your tickets either by returning the paper order form or going to the Grand Lodge Website and ordering your tickets electronically. If you submit the paper form, you should make a copy for your records. If you file electronically, you will receive an email confirmation. Please keep a copy of the email confirmation and bring it with you to the meeting in case there are any questions. **If you are sending a proxy, then you should give the order form to him so that he may order his tickets.**

We are moving towards more electronic registering for meal tickets, so read your invitation and instructions carefully. At some point in time, all meal ticket orders will be accomplished electronically.

2. As Lodges become more concerned with remodeling or repairing their existing Lodge Halls, they must from time to time secure additional funds to cover the expenses. While the topic of assessments is covered later in this study guide, it is important that you know the proper procedure to secure a loan to cover expenses. Your first contact should be the Chairman of the Supervisory Board. He will guide you in the proper documentation that you must provide to the Supervisory Board and also will guide you in securing the loan. Regardless, you will need to bring the topic of a loan and your dealings with the Supervisory Board before the Lodge membership for a vote.

3. As the Worshipful Master and voting member of Grand Lodge, what do I get paid for attending the annual communication? What does this payment consist of and how do I receive this payment?

Each voting member of Grand Lodge receives a daily per diem amount, currently \$20.00 per day, and one round-trip payment for mileage, currently \$0.26 per mile. Mileage is calculated from the members Lodge location to Indianapolis. Each Lodge will be credited the amount of this total payment on their annual statement of dues and assessments (Recap Statement) which is received in January/February. The Lodge may reimburse the Worshipful Master prior to receiving this credit on the Recap Statement. To receive per diem for both days, you must remain for the entire second day, including installation of Grand Lodge Officers.

4. Believe it or not, we have received the question, “What time is the noon lunch”. The obvious answer is noon.

LISTING OF CHAPTERS AND QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTIONS

Chapter 12: Requirements for a Lodge

1. From time to time, a Lodge may have need to move its Charter. Generally, to move your Lodge Charter takes the approval of the Grand Master. Under what circumstances, however, may it do so without permission of the Grand Master?
2. In this chapter is the listing of the minimum members (officers). There are some situations where an individual may hold more than one office. What are those positions? There are other positions that may not be held by single individual. What are those positions?
3. Are Lodges required to have trustees?

Chapter 17: Lodge Officers – Election and Installation

1. Election of officers is held in December. Specifics are contained in Regulation 17.010. If a Lodge is not able to hold an election at the appointed time, what must it do?
2. Are nominations allowed during the election of officers?
3. Can the W.M. or Wardens serve on the auditing committee?
4. May a member who has a physical handicap serve as a Line Officer?
5. When a vacancy occurs in an office of Worshipful Master, what does the Lodge do?
6. When a vacancy occurs in an office other than the Worshipful Master, what does the Lodge do?

Chapter 18: Duties of Lodge Officers

1. What are the duties of the Worshipful Master?
2. Who may open a Lodge?
3. Who may conduct the business of a Lodge?
4. May any member close the Lodge?

Chapter 21: Use of Lodge Halls

1. Who may and for what purposes may a Lodge use its Lodge Hall?

Chapter 22: Meetings of a Lodge

1. The stated meeting of a Lodge is specified in its Lodge By-Laws. Additionally, the exceptions for a stated meeting are also specified in the Lodge By-Laws. If a Lodge cannot hold its stated meeting as specified, may the Lodge hold the meeting at a time other than is specified in the Lodge By-Laws?
2. When may a Lodge hold a meeting on Sunday?
3. When may the business of Lodge be held?
4. Under what circumstances may a Lodge hold ceremonies in public?
5. How many have to be present to open your Lodge?

Chapter 23: Masonic Burial and Memorial Service

1. Who is entitled to a Masonic Burial or Memorial Service?
2. May an EA or FC participate in a Burial or Memorial Service?
3. May a member who commits suicide receive a Masonic Burial or Memorial Service?
4. May a Lodge create its own method of performing a Masonic Burial or Memorial Service?

Chapter 24: Lodge Records

1. Does a Lodge have to file tax returns with the IRS and State Department of Revenue?
2. What are the requirements for a Lodge to file information regarding real estate and business personal property?
3. What are monthly activity reports and when should they be submitted?
4. What reports are due from officers and committees and when are they due?

Chapter 29: Petitions for the Degrees

1. What are the fees for the degrees and when are they to be paid?
2. A petition for membership or for the degrees must be in writing and signed by the petitioner. Name the other three requirements.
3. What is the role of the investigating committee for a petition for membership or degrees?

4. The ballot on a petition for membership or for the degrees must be done at a stated meeting. Name the other requirements for balloting.

Chapter 32: Rejected Petitioners and Objections

1. When can a rejected petitioner submit another petition?
2. What happens if an objection is raised during the conferral of the degrees on a candidate?

Chapter 33: Transfer of Membership and Demission

1. How does a member transfer between Lodges in Indiana?
2. How does a member transfer to or from your Lodge and a Lodge in another jurisdiction?
3. When can a member demit from the Fraternity and what is the process?
4. May an EA or FC affiliate with your Lodge? How can they come to your Lodge and finish their degrees?

Chapter 35: Conferring of Degrees

1. How shall the three degrees of Masonry be conferred?

Chapter 37: Annual Dues

1. When should a Lodge review their annual dues and what is included in the dues of a Lodge?
2. When does the dues process begin and what are the various milestones?
3. Who may have their dues and assessment remitted?
4. What is the process of suspension for non-payment of dues and assessments?
5. May a Lodge establish an “assessment” outside of the normal dues and assessments amount and what is the procedure?

Chapter 39: Lodge Administration

1. What are the Annual Reports and when are they due in the office of the Grand Secretary?
2. What are the Grand Lodge Dues and Assessments and when is payment due in the office of the Grand Secretary?

3. Are their penalties for not submitting Annual Reports and/or Grand Lodge Dues and Assessments on time?

Chapter 62: Service Awards

1. The topic of the Grand Lodge Award of Gold is one that is continually discussed. Many ask when can it be given and when can we request it?

Appendix C: Reception of Distinguished Guests

1. From time to time, your Lodge will be visited by Grand Lodge officers or, in some cases, by a Special Deputy. Is there are proper way to receive them and make introductions?

Appendix E: Ball and Cube Ballot

1. The ball and cube ballot is used for all petitions for degrees or membership. It also may be used by the Worshipful Master to vote on any other motion should he so choose. It is not used for the election of officers in December. Paper ballots are used in that instance. Are there proper ways to prepare, display and examine the ballot box? Is there a proper “ritual” in taking the ballot with the ball and cube box?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Chapter 12: Requirements for a Lodge

1. Answer: The Grand Master must give permission for a Lodge to move its Charter from its current location, either on a temporary or permanent basis for holding its meetings. However, Approved Decision 12.010-2 gives some latitude when holding a Table Lodge. Additionally, the Grand Master may, from time to time, issue blanket dispensations for the moving of a Charter and these will be issued after the installation of each new Grand Master. Lodges will be notified of these and they also will be placed on the Grand Lodge Website.
2. Answer: Approved Decision 12.020-2 states in part that unless the Lodge By-Laws forbid, an individual may hold the office of Secretary and Trustee or Treasurer and Trustee at the same time. Additionally, it states that the office of Worshipful Master and Trustee should not be the same individual.
3. Answer: Approved decision 12.020-3 states that Lodges that rent meeting space or are part of a Temple Association are not required to have trustees.

Chapter 17: Lodge Officers – Election and Installation

1. Answer: Regulation 17.050 states in part that if a Lodge fails to elect officers at the specified time, then the Grand Master may grant a dispensation to hold a special election.
2. Answer: No. Regulation further states that election by acclamation or one Brother casting a unanimous vote is not allowed.
3. Answer: No. See Approved Decision 17.010-6.
4. Answer: Yes. Prior to 2005, a member who was blind could not serve as a Line Officer. However, Approved Decision 17.010-7 was repealed in 2005 at the Annual Communication.
5. Answer: Regulation 17.110 states in part that if the office of Worshipful Master becomes vacant, the Warden next in rank shall succeed to his rights, powers and duties, or he may, with the consent of the Lodge, request a dispensation from the Grand Master to hold a special election.
6. Answer: Regulations 17.080 and 17.081 give specific guidance as to when an office may be filled. Some shall be done by special elections and some may be appointed by the Worshipful Master. An acting officer for Secretary or Treasurer is covered in Regulation 17.081.

Chapter 18: Duties of Lodge Officers

1. Answer: Regulation 18.010 provides the specifics of the duties of the Worshipful Master and should be read and understood. Even though others may be tasked with the submission of

reports, it is the duty of the Worshipful Master to ensure they are accomplished. Additionally, he shall attend all meetings of the Grand Lodge or cause a proxy to be in attendance.

2. Answer: Only the Worshipful Master or one of the Wardens of the Lodge may open, excepting always the Grand Master or his Special Deputy. A Past Master of a Lodge is not permitted to open his Lodge.

3. Answer: Any competent Brother may preside over the Lodge.

4. Answer: Yes. Any qualified Brother may close the Lodge which has been opened in form.

Chapter 21: Use of Lodge Halls

1. Answer: In the past, the restrictions on the use of Lodge Halls was extensive and gave Lodges very little control. However, over the past years, these restrictions have been reduced and in some cases eliminated. A detailed study of Chapter 21 should be accomplished to ensure that a Lodge does not deviate from what is and what is not allowed. If in doubt as to how you want to use the Lodge Hall, a question to the Grand Master would be appropriate.

Chapter 22: Meetings of a Lodge

1. Answer: No. Regulation 22.010 states in part that the stated meeting cannot be called off to meet at any subsequent time. They also cannot be called to meet an hour earlier than is specified in the Lodge By-Laws. You make sure that you provide in your Lodge By-Laws any exceptions for your stated meeting. Exceptions might include legal holidays and inclement weather. If you provide for these, then you might state that your meeting would be the following week, as an example.

2. Answer: A Lodge may be convened on Sunday for the purpose of conducting the funeral or memorial service for a deceased member. They may attend divine services in a body, without regalia, upon invitation of a church or synagogue.

3. Answer: The business of a Lodge may be conducted only during a stated meeting or the meeting of the Executive Committee. Regulations 22.060 and 39.130 apply. The Executive Committee must have been approved by the Lodge as a change to the Lodge By-Laws and submitted to the Grand Lodge By-Lodge committee for approval.

4. Answer: Regulation 22.090 states in part those ceremonies may be held in public for the purpose of installation of Lodge Officers, presentation of service awards and a Masonic Funeral or Memorial Service.

5. Answer: Regulation 22.050 states The presence of seven of its members who are Master Masons is necessary for any Loge to be opened on any degree, to confer a degree, or to transact business.

Chapter 23: Masonic Burial and Memorial Service

1. Answer: Regulation 23.010 states in part that if requested by either the member or his family, it is a privilege granted only to an affiliated Mason or to a demitted Mason whose demit has been issued no longer than six months. Furthermore, an EA or FC may be afforded Burial and Memorial Services; Provided, that all other requirements contained in 23.010 and 23.020 have been met.
2. Answer: Yes. An EA or FC may participate in Burial and Memorial Services with the Craft, but may not participate as an officer.
3. Answer: Approved Decision 23.020-1 states in part that the answer is yes, unless his death is shown to have been dishonorable. This has generally been interpreted that if suicide is involved while committing a “crime” then he would not be entitled.
4. Answer: No. Regulation 23.040 states in performing either traditional Masonic burial or conducting a Memorial Service, a Lodge shall use only the official Funeral Rituals authorized by the Grand Lodge of Indiana, as revised from time-to-time.

Chapter 24: Lodge Records

1. Answer: Yes, absolutely. While not specifically covered in Chapter 24, Lodges are required to file a federal 990, 990EZ or 990N, depending on the amount of their revenue and value of their real estate. They are also required to file the Indiana State form NP-20. A Lodge is well advised to seek assistance from a tax professional in these filings as failure to file will result in the loss of non-profit status and a stiff monetary fine.
2. Answer: Non-profit groups are required to file a property tax exemption form 136 with their county government. Specific guidance may be obtained from both the County Auditor and Assessor. These are to be filed every other year on even years. While there may be some indication that Lodges do not need to file, it behooves each Lodge to prepare form 136 and submit to the county assessor. If the assessor does not want it, have it stamped anyway and put in your Lodge files. The next elected assessor may wonder why you didn't file, and if you a copy stamped by a previous assessor, you have your Lodge covered. Business personal property forms 103 and 104 must be filed each year and submitted to the county assessor via your township assessor (if you have one).
3. Answer: Monthly activity reports are those that are submitted to the office of the Grand Secretary. This report reflects the various activities that a Lodge has been involved in, such as, degrees conferred, death of members, suspension of members, and a list of members who have been demitted. There are other activities which must be reported and they are listed on the report itself. The report is a standard form obtained from the office of the Grand Secretary or produced on the lodge database program. These reports are due in the office of the Grand Secretary no later than the 10th day of the following month. Thus, the report for January is due no later than February 10 and so on. While the Secretary is charged with completing these forms and sending

them to the Grand Secretary, it is the responsibility of the W.M. to see they are submitted. You may refer to Standing Resolution 55.180: Monthly Reports.

4. Answer: Regulation 24.030 states in part that a financial report is to be made by the Secretary at the first stated meeting of the month. Also, annual reports are to be made by the Treasurer, Secretary, Charity Committee, and Ambassador to the Masonic Home/Foundation and trustees at the first stated meeting in January.

Chapter 29: Petitions for the Degrees

1. Answer: Fees for the degrees must not be less than \$45.00 and are collected from the petitioner for the degrees at the time of his presentation of his petition to the Lodge. This could be either at a stated or called meeting. Every person must pay the fees and there is no provision to waive them for anyone. Approved Decision 29.010-2 discusses this as regards those in the Clergy. Fees should not be retained until after election, but should be turned over to Treasurer as soon as possible, preferably the night of the reading of the petition. Regulation 29.020 states in part that there is no provision for partial payments or the advancement of funds by the Lodge.

2. Answer: Regulation 29.030 covers petitions. It states in part that petitions must be made in writing, signed by the petitioner and recommended by two members of the Lodge being petitioned. The petitioner must also fill out the question accompanying the petition and the fees associated must also be included. The petition must also be read in open Lodge which may be a stated or called meeting. The Executive Committee may not receive petitions. While some jurisdictions allow any Master Mason to sign a petition, Indiana does not have this provision. He must fill out all the questions on the petition. Petitions may be presented at a called or stated meeting and if presented at a called meeting, must lie over at least three weeks to be voted on at a stated meeting. A majority of the members present at a called or stated meeting may refuse to entertain (receive) a petition.

A procedure that you might follow could be as follows: The Secretary reads all portions of the petition and indicates that it is in order and that he has also received the fees with the petition. A motion then should be made to receive the petition and if received, a committee be assigned to investigate the petitioner. If a majority vote to receive the petition, you then can assign members to act as the investigating committee and to report back at the next stated meeting. If there is no majority to receive (a majority to not receive) then the petition and fees are returned to the individual and he is free to petition elsewhere as he desires.

3. Answer: The investigating committee should meet with the petitioner and his wife if he is married. While many Lodge do this at the Lodge Hall, it is advisable to meet with the petitioner at his home in a casual atmosphere. While the committee should verify the answers to questions on the petition, they should also inquire about other topics that give them a “feel” for him as a person. The committee should also be able to answer questions from not only the petitioner but also from his wife. Without the support of his wife, a member will not be very involved. Remember that for the most part, a new petitioner and his wife know very little if anything about Masonry and are just as interested in learning about you and your involvement as you about

them. Specific guidance for investigating committees can be found in Regulation 29.070 and Form 14 is to be used.

The committee shall turn in their written reports to the Secretary and be prepared to give a verbal report as well as answer questions at the stated meeting when an election is held.

At least a majority of the members of the investigating committee must be present for the Lodge to proceed with an election. Under certain specific circumstances a written report may be presented and read in open Lodge.

4. Answer: Regulation 29.110 states in part that balloting for degrees or membership must be done at a stated meeting. a ballot must be taken on each petition after the report of the investigating committee, every member of the Lodge present must vote, and should but one negative vote appear, the W.M. shall cause another ballot to be immediately taken and then if one or more negative votes appear, the applicant shall be declare rejected. Also, a Lodge may, by majority vote, by ball and cube ballot, elect to membership by affiliation, one who has been demitted from said Lodge not more than three years previously, if the petition is presented during that three year period.

Chapter 32: Rejected Petitioners and Objections

1. Answer: Regulation 32.010 states in part that an applicant for degrees or membership shall have been rejected, can come before the Lodge again only by a new petition. Your Lodge By-Laws may indicate a waiting period, but if not, he may petition at his pleasure. However, he must wait 90 days before he can petition another Lodge.

2. Answer: A good portion of Chapter 32 has been repealed. You should read the entire Chapter to determine at what point in candidates advancement are objections proper and how to handle them. However, you should note Regulation 32.050 which indicates when the Worshipful Master may and should arrest the conferring of the EA degree. Regulation 32.060 covers objections during the candidate's advancement after having the EA degree conferred.

Chapter 33: Transfer of Membership and Demission

1. Answer: Regulation 33.010 provides basic guidelines on transferring between Indiana Lodges. However, a detailed procedure has been published in the Secretary's Handbook. The steps are as follows: The member approaches the Lodge where he wants to become a member. The new Secretary will have him fill out Form 15, Notice of Intent to Transfer, and send it to his current Indiana Lodge. The member should also fill out and present Form 16, Petitions to Transfer, to the new Lodge Secretary. Upon receipt by the old Lodge Secretary, and if the member is in good standing, a Form 17, Certificate of God Standing will be executed and sent to the new Secretary. This action should be reported at the next stated meeting of the old Lodge. When the new Lodge receives Form 17, they may then vote on the petitioner for membership. During the process, the petition to transfer may be read in the new Lodge and investigated. Once the petitioner is elected, Form 18, Notice of Election, is sent to the old Lodge Secretary and Form 20, Demit for a Master Mason, is executed and sent to the new Lodge Secretary.

2. Answer: The process and forms are essentially the same; **however, all forms and correspondence shall go through the office of the Grand Secretary of Indiana. There are no exceptions.**

3. Answer: Regulation 33.020 states in part that a Master Mason, free from charges and all indebtedness to the Lodge may upon written application, and a majority vote of the Lodge, demit therefrom. While some Lodges, receiving a request for a demit, act on it at the same meeting it was received, that is not proper. This same regulation states in part, that upon receipt of the application at a stated meeting, the Worshipful Master shall appoint a qualified Brother to investigate the reasons, circumstances and desirability surrounding the application and to report at the following stated meeting at which time action may be taken. Many time a member will submit his request for a demit at the December stated meeting expecting that action will be taken at that time and he will not be required to pay dues for the next year. According to regulations, action cannot be taken until the next stated meeting, so this means at the January stated meeting at which time his dues are in arrears.

In the case of an EA or FC, they may demit under the same conditions excepting that a unanimous favorable vote is required. If granted then either one third or two thirds of the total fee paid shall be returned to him.

4. Answer: Regulation 33.030 states in part that an EA or FC may not affiliate with your Lodge. He must first obtain an EA or FC demit from his current Lodge and then petition for the remainder of the degrees on Form 13, Petition for the Degrees, attaching his EA or FC demit to it, and present to your Lodge with either one third or two thirds of the fees for the degrees in your Lodge. Once received, the process of receiving, investigating and balloting shall be followed.

Chapter 35: Conferring of Degrees

1. Answer: Chapter 35 was completely written at the Annual Communication in 2012 and should be studied very carefully. While not the optimal desired result, it has been approved and is in effect until changed. A number of items in the old Chapter 35 have been repealed and, thus, are no longer utilized. One of them is the previously established and often misused Five Candidate Program. Specific guidelines have been established on not only the number of candidates to be taken at a time and how, but also the time between degrees. Additional guidelines are delineated for the conducting of each of the three degrees. These guidelines shall be followed. While the convening of a Grand Master's one day class is not specifically outlined, the provisions for a "One Day Class" are allowed in Regulation 35.100, Accelerated Initiation Program. All request for a "One Day Class" shall be requested from the Grand Master through his Secretary.

Chapter 37: Annual Dues

1. Answer: Regulation 37.010 is you reference and should be studied closely. The Lodge should review and set during the month of June, for the coming year, not only the finances of the

Lodge, but also the amount to be set for Lodge dues. If you have not included this statement in your Lodge By-Laws as required, you should do so following the normal procedures in amending Lodge By-Laws. This is done following the Annual Communication in May in case there is an increase in Grand Lodge Per Capita charges or the assessment for the Masonic Home.

The word dues is perhaps one of the most misused. There are really three words or terms that are important and they are “dues”, “Masonic Home Assessment” and “total dues and assessments” (what a member pays for his membership card). Remember, the Masonic Home Assessment is levied against the individual Mason and the per capita charges are charges to the Lodge. Here is an example:

Total dues and assessments for your Lodge (what a members pays for his card) might be \$100.
The Masonic Home Assessment is currently \$16.50
Your Lodge dues are then \$100 minus \$16.50 or \$83.50. That’s it, simple.

Now that you know the amount of the “Lodge Dues” you need to ensure that this amount will cover all of the Lodge expenses, which include not only the per capita charges, but your utilities, refreshment expenses, any salaries paid to your officers, supplies for candidates, etc. The amount of \$83.50 is the amount you will have with which to operate your Lodge and should be adjusted based upon your review of expenses. You will review and vote on this amount at your June stated meeting. It does not have to lie over until the next stated meeting.

2. Answer: Regulation 37.070 contains a detailed dues process and the various milestones. The dues process really begins at the June stated meeting with the setting of dues and assessments for the coming year. The Lodge is required to notify the Grand Secretary no later than July 10 of various information necessary in the preparation of dues notices and membership cards. This information is requested shortly after the Annual Communication in May and should be read and reviewed in Lodge as soon as received. The information required may change from year to year, so relying on last year’s information is not advisable. Dues and Assessments are due to the Secretary on or before the first day in January. No later than three weeks after the date of the first stated meeting in January, the Secretary shall notify those members who have not paid their dues and assessments. A standard Form 25 is available for notification. At the first stated meeting in February, the Worshipful Master shall appoint a Dues Committee of three or more members, including both Wardens and the Secretary. They will investigate and report at the March stated meeting. After the report of the Dues Committee at the March stated meeting, the matter of remission of dues and assessments shall be discussed and for those not having their dues remitted, the Worshipful Master shall that charges for non-payment of dues be filed. A standard Form 26 is available for this process. At the April stated meeting, the Secretary shall report those members who have not paid dues and assessments and the Worshipful Master shall then conduct a trial in accordance with Regulation 37.080. You should study Regulation 37.080 closely before conducting the trial for non-payment of dues and assessments. **Each cases must be handled separately. They cannot all be done at once.**

3. Answer: Regulation 37.030 states in part that a Lodge may, by majority vote, remit the dues of any member who is in financial difficulty or is either physically or health-wise unable to pay.

Regulation 37.040 states in part that a member of the Armed Forces may have his dues remitted if he is financially unable to pay, unable to transmit his dues because of assignment or is serving outside of the fifty States of the USA. Also, there must have been a declaration by the President of a national emergency.

4. Answer: Regulation 37.080 is detailed and should be reviewed closely before the April meeting when suspension is being considered. Each case must be handled separately and there are specific procedures to follow if the member appears to either pay his dues or present facts that might lead to a remission of dues. The procedure of suspension should never be taken in a cavalier manner. Make sure that your committee has taken the time and effort to contact members to ensure they are given every opportunity to respond to their dues invoice. There have been cases where a member was suspended while he was a resident of a nursing home with dementia. This type of treatment of our members is unacceptable.

5. Answer: Regulations 39.090 and 37.100 cover the topic of "Assessments". An assessment outside of the normal dues and assessments may be levied for only three reasons: Pay the Grand Lodge dues of the Lodge; Defray the operating expenses of the Lodge; and, maintain the Masonic Relief Fund and Charity Fund.

If the Lodge desires an assessment for the purpose of erecting a new Masonic Temple, or remodeling of an existing building, Regulation 37.100 provide specific guidelines to be followed. It must be approved by the Grand Master, and specific instructions on a written ballot to be mailed to the membership is covered in this regulation.

If you feel that there is a need for an assessment it would be advisable to contact the Grand Secretary and the Chairman of the Supervisory Board for assistance.

Chapter 39: Lodge Administration

1. Answer: The Annual Reports have three parts, Part 1, 2 and 3. All parts are due in the office of the Grand Secretary no later than March 15. Part 1, contains administrative items, such as a listing of the officers for the ensuing year. Part 2, contains the financial report of the Lodge. Part 3, contains any salary or wage information paid by the Lodge for services rendered. All three parts must be completed and signed by the applicable persons noted on each form. The Secretary and Treasurer are tasked to complete these forms, but you are responsible to ensure they are completed and submitted on time.

2. Answer: The Grand Lodge Dues and Assessments is the charge to the Lodge for the Grand Lodge per capita amounts. Each year in January and February, the office of the Grand Secretary conducts an audit of the Lodge's activities for the previous year. These are reported on Lodge activity reports on a monthly basis. The Secretary is provided with a statement of charges called the "recap" statement along with a listing of people in the Life Endowment program and a listing of those who have earned a credit for purchasing a Masonic license plate. Make sure you have the Secretary read this report at your stated meeting and explain all of the items in the report. The total amount due is called the Grand Lodge Dues and Assessments. This payment is also due in the office of the Grand Secretary no later than March 15.

3. Answer: Regulation 39.020 states in part that a monetary penalty may be assessed to the Lodge of \$5.00 per day, except Saturday and Sunday, for failure to submit either the annual reports or pay the Grand Lodge Dues and Assessments by March 15. Failure to submit reports or pay dues and assessments may result in the Lodge being suspended by the Grand Master.

Chapter 62: Service Awards

1. Answer: The Grand Lodge Award of Gold (50 year award) can only be given on or after the anniversary date that a member was raised a Master Mason. It cannot be presented prior to that anniversary date. The Secretary should keep a record of those who are coming up for their award and make sure he orders the certificate, pin and Gold membership card in time to make the presentation on or shortly after the Master Mason anniversary date. The application may be found on line on the Grand Lodge website and should be submitted at least 30 days prior to anniversary date.

The 50 year award is an extremely important milestone in a member's Masonic life. It should not be presented in a haphazard manner. Certainly a gathering with members of the Lodge and members of the recipient's family should be in attendance. A luncheon or dinner is appropriate for this event. Remember, this event can be made in public so the invitation of other members of the community should be considered.

Chapter 62 also covers other awards that maybe presented either by the Lodge or in some case by the Grand Master at the annual communication. You should review those in case you have a worthy Brother who is eligible.

Appendix C: Reception of Distinguished Guests

1. Answer: This appendix in the "Blue Book" discusses in detail the reception not only of the Grand Master, but also reception of the Deputy Grand Master, Special Deputies of the Grand Master, Past Grand Masters and the other Grand Lodge officers. It provides the order of precedence, who receives Grand Honors and how Grand Honors are given.

The failure to receive and give due recognition to a distinguished guest can be very embarrassing to the Lodge and you should always strive to ensure the reception is accomplished in a proper and dignified manner.

Appendix E: Ball and Cube Ballot

1. Answer: This appendix contains the description of a ballot box, the ballots themselves (white balls and black cubes) and the construction and material of which they are all made.

This appendix also contains the wording to be used ("ritual") in the preparation for voting. Specific instructions are also provided for the Senior Deacon and Wardens. You should study this appendix carefully and set aside some time to practice so that all know exactly what they are to do. Voting is an important event and should be carried out with great care.

You should also note that only one person or one motion may be voted upon at a time. Voting for a group of candidates at one time is not allowed.