

BY-LAWS
FOR
ODD FELLOW LODGES
UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF
THE GRAND LOIDGE OF MAINE
INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS

_____ Lodge # _____

ARTICLE I – MEETINGS, TERM AND QUORUM

Section 1 – Meetings

A) Regular Meetings

- a) Shall meet on a specified day and time _____.
- b) The day and time may be changed by amending these By-Laws.
- c) May decide, by vote of the Lodge, to dispense with meetings during any two months during a calendar year.

B) Special Meetings

- a) The Noble Grand may call special sessions of the Lodge at any time or when petitioned by at least seven (7) members of the Lodge.
- b) Notice thereof shall be given to all members and shall include the time, date and purpose of the meeting.
- c) No other business shall be transacted except as specified in the notice.

Section 2 – Term

- A) The fiscal year of the Lodge shall be the twelve (12) months ending December 31st.
- B) The term (for election of officers and assessment on membership) of the Lodge may be October 1st to September 30th or January 1st to December 31st.

Section 3 – Quorum

- A) A quorum; to transact business, is 5 (five) members (one of which is qualified to preside) in good standing in the Lodge which is meeting.

- a) Should the Lodge, during the session, be left without a quorum; it shall stop transacting business and close without ceremony.
- b) All members, of the Lodge that is meeting, have the right to submit legislation, make motions, debate and vote.

ARTICLE II - ELECTIVE AND APPOINTIVE OFFICERS

Section 1 – Qualifications

- A) Only a Third Degree member in good standing may hold an office.

Section 2 – Elective

- A) The elective officers of the Lodge are: Noble Grand, Vice Grand, Secretary, Financial Secretary (optional) and Treasurer.
- B) Nominations shall be made on the two (2) regular meetings preceding the elections.
- C) A member cannot hold the two offices of Secretary and Treasurer at the same time in any Odd Fellows Lodge.
- D) The Treasurer, not the Trustees, is the proper custodian of the funds and all notes and bonds belonging to the Lodge.

Section 3 – Appointive

- A) The Noble Grand appoints the following officers: Warden, Conductor, Inside and Outside Guardians, Chaplain, Left and Right Supporters of the Noble Grand, Left and Right Scene Supporters, Musician and Color Bearer.
- B) The Vice Grand appoints the following officers: Left and Right Supporters of the Vice Grand.

Section 4 – Terms

- A) The term of all officers (elected and appointed) shall correspond to the term of the Lodge.

Section 5 – Pro-tem

- A) In the absence of any regular officers (excluding the Noble Grand and Vice Grand); the presiding officer may, for that meeting only, appoint pro-tem officers.

Section 6 – Qualifications

- A) All elective and appointive officers shall commit to memory, prior to installation, the several charges, of their respective offices, in the opening and closing ceremonies.
- B) Noble Grand and Vice Grand
 - a) To be eligible for the office of Noble Grand, a member must have served in the office of Vice Grand for a minimum of six months.
 - b) To be eligible for the office of Vice Grand, a member must have served at least a term in each of two (2) different stations or two (2) terms in one (1) station or office of an Odd Fellow Lodge.
 - c) In the event there are no qualified members to hold either/or both offices, the Lodge may, prior to installation, request a dispensation to elect any Third Degree member to either/or both offices.

Section 7 – Duties of Elective Officers

A) Noble Grand

- a) Open and preside over Lodge meetings.
 - 1) When absent, the Vice Grand will preside.
 - 2) If neither is present, a Past Grand will preside.
 - 3) Even when present, another Past Grand may preside during degree work.
- b) Shall interpret, observe, and enforce the Laws of the Order, subject to appeal by the Lodge or a higher authority.
- c) Shall admit no member of another lodge that is not qualified and not in possession of the proper password.
- d) Shall be the deciding vote, except when balloting on membership, on all matters or questions before the Lodge.
- e) Shall appoint members to fill committees not otherwise provided for.
- f) Shall inspect and announce the results of all votes of the Lodge.
- g) Shall have charge of the charter; which shall always be in the room where the Lodge is meeting.
- h) Shall draw upon the Treasurer for all sums voted by the Lodge.
- i) Shall sign all necessary warrants, certificates and other documents.
- j) Shall perform such other duties as usually pertain to the office.
- k) May be reimbursed for expenses as provided for in the budget of the Lodge.

B) Vice Grand

- a) Shall assist the Noble Grand in presiding over the Lodge.
 - 1) Have special charge of the inner door.
 - 2) In the absence of the Noble Grand, the Vice Grand shall preside over the Lodge.
 - 3) Shall perform all other duties required by the charges and Laws of the Order.
- b) May be reimbursed for expenses as provided for in the budget of the Lodge.

C) Secretary

- A) Shall keep an accurate account of the proceedings of the Lodge.
- B) Shall write all communications as requested by the Lodge.
- C) Shall fill out all cards and certificates granted by the Lodge.
- D) Shall issue all summonses or notices required by the Lodge.
- E) Shall attest to all monies ordered paid at regular and special meetings.
- F) Shall review the annual reports to the Grand Lodge – making sure they are on the forms supplied by the Grand Lodge, completed, signed, sealed and mailed; and read said reports to the Lodge.
- G) Shall perform the duties of the Financial Secretary - if none was chosen.
- H) Shall keep a list of all warrants drawn on the Treasurer – name, date, amount and fund drawn on.

- I) Shall keep a register of membership – names, dates of application, election, initiation (or signing of the member’s register upon admission by Card or Dismissal Certificate), resignation, withdrawal by card, death, suspension, reinstatement or expulsion and dates of conferring of degrees and attainment of official rank. Shall report to the SGL on the form provided all new members after they take their Initiatory Degree.
- J) When a member belonging to an Encampment takes a withdrawal card or is expelled, suspended or reinstated from an Odd Fellows Lodge, the Secretary shall notify the scribe of the member’s encampment thereof.
- K) Shall safeguard all books, papers and properties belonging to the office and turn the same over to their successor.
- L) The Secretary and Financial Secretary are the only officers authorized to use the seal of the Lodge.
- M) Shall record in the minutes of each meeting an accounting of the rituals belonging to the Lodge.
- N) Shall read to the Lodge all communications addressed to the Lodge.
- O) Shall perform such other duties as usually pertain to the office or as may be delegated.
- P) May be reimbursed for expenses as provided for in the budget of the Lodge.

D) Financial Secretary

- a) Shall keep the accounts between the Lodge and its members.
- b) Shall pay over to the Treasurer all monies received for the Lodge.
- c) One month prior to a new term, send out notices to each dues paying member detailing what they owe the Lodge.
 - 1) Two months prior to a new term, submit a list of the accounts of each member to the Lodge for their review.
 - 2) Once in arrearage more than one term and with proper notice, a member can be suspended for non-payment of dues by vote of the Lodge.
- d) Shall receive such compensation as the Lodge may have fixed prior to election.
- e) Shall safeguard all books, papers and properties belonging to the office and turn the same over to their successor.
- f) Shall give bond, signed by a surety or guaranty company, in an amount recommended by a majority of the Trustees and voted by the Lodge; the cost of which will be defrayed by the Lodge.
- g) Shall submit, at the end of the term, a full report of the activities of the office and assist in the preparation of the annual report to the Grand Lodge (on the forms supplied by the Grand Lodge).
- h) Shall be reimbursed for expenses as provided for in the budget of the Lodge.

E) Treasurer

- a) Shall give bond, signed by a surety or guaranty company, in an amount recommended by a majority of the Trustees and voted by the Lodge; the cost of _____ which will be defrayed by the Lodge.
- b) Shall be the custodian of the funds, notes and securities of the Lodge.
- c) Shall pay all orders drawn by the Noble Grand and attested by the Secretary.

- d) Shall report monthly on all the activity of their office.
- e) Shall submit, at the end of the term, a full report of the activities of the office and assist in the preparation of the annual report to the Grand Lodge (on the forms supplied by the Grand Lodge).
- f) Shall receive such compensation as the Lodge may have fixed prior to election.
- g) Shall safeguard all the books, papers and properties belonging to the office and turn the same over to their successor.
- h) May be reimbursed for expenses as provided for in the budget of the Lodge.

Section 8 – Duties of Appointive Officers

- A) Warden
 - a) Shall have charge of the regalia and lodge room property; placing it in the lodge room before opening and removing it after closing; reporting any damage to the Noble Grand.
 - b) Shall prepare and safeguard the ballot box.
 - c) Shall take up the password before opening.
 - d) Shall canvass votes when required.
 - e) Shall act as a messenger.
 - f) Shall perform such other duties as usually pertain to the office or as may be delegated.
- B) Chaplain
 - a) Shall perform such duties as pertain to the office
- C) Other Appointive Officers
 - a) Shall perform the duties as set force in the Ritual and charge books.
- D) Any expenses of an appointive officer may be reimbursed as provided for in the budget of the Lodge.

ARTICLE III - TRUSTEES AND COMMITTEES

Section 1 Trustees

- A) The Lodge, at the same time as the other elective officers, shall nominate and elect three (3) members as trustees; in the following manner:
 - a) Initially, one would serve one year, the second would serve two (2) years and the third would serve three (3) years.
 - b) Each year thereafter, the Lodge would elect a member to serve for three (3) years.
- B) Their duties shall be to care for and preserve all the property of the Lodge.
 - a) Provide for adequate insurance.
 - b) Prepare and execute rental agreements.
 - c) Submit an annual report, financial and otherwise, of all the activities of the office; and assist in the preparation of the annual report to the Grand Lodge.
- C) Any expenses of a Trustee may be reimbursed as provided for in the budget of the Lodge.

Section 2 – Committees

- A) The Noble Grand, at the beginning of each term, shall appoint members to the following committees:
 - a) Finance
 - 1) Shall consist of three (3) members.
 - 2) Shall review and report on all bills presented to the Lodge.

- 3) Shall audit and inspect the accounts, books, securities, funds and other property in the hands of the Treasurer, Secretary, Financial Secretary (if their be one) and any other officers and committees charged with the receipt and expenditure of money.
 - 4) Shall sign the annual report to the Grand Lodge.
 - 5) Neither the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Financial Secretary nor any member of the Trustees shall be a member of the Finance Committee.
- b) Instruction
- 1) Shall consist of at least a minimum of three (3) members.
 - 2) Shall schedule training for members of the Lodge to include, but not limited to, schools of instruction and mentoring of new members.
 - 3) Shall report annually to the Lodge and Grand Lodge on all its activities.
- c) Membership
- 1) Shall consist of at least a minimum of three (3) members.
 - 2) Shall, in conjunction with the Noble Grand, promote and execute plans to recruit new members.
 - 3) Shall, in conjunction with the Finance Committee, promote the habit and practice of paying their dues in advance.
- d) Visiting
- 1) Shall consist of at least a minimum of three (3) members.
 - 2) Shall keep themselves informed at all times of the condition of Lodge members.
 - 3) Shall make report to the Lodge any member who might be ill and in need of assistance or visitation.
- e) Youth Activities
- 1) Shall consist of three (3) members.
 - 2) Shall, under the direction of the Noble Grand, promote and execute plans for youth activities to include, but not limited to, sponsorship of athletic teams, scholarships, institution of a Junior Odd Fellow Lodge and participation in the United Nations Pilgrimage for Youth.
 - 3) Shall report annually to the Lodge and Grand Lodge of all its activities.
- f) Interviewing
- 1) Shall consist of three (3) members.
 - 2) Shall review applications for membership.
 - 3) Shall examine the black book and inquire about the health, standing and character of the applicant.
 - 4) One member of the committee shall conduct a personal interview.
 - 5) Shall make a faithful report of their findings within two weeks.
- g) The Noble Grand may appoint such other committees deemed necessary for the operation of the Lodge.
- 1) Their duties shall be as specified by the Noble Grand.
- B) Any expenses, of any committee, may be reimbursed as provided for in the budget of the Lodge.

ARTICLE IV - MISCELLANEOUS

Section 1 – Elections

- A) Shall take place on the last regular meeting of December.
- B) All elections shall be by written ballot, unless there be only one nominee; in which event the Noble Grand shall declare the nominee elected.
 - a) A majority of the votes shall be necessary for election. Should no candidate receive a majority on the first ballot, the candidate having the least number of votes shall be dropped off the next ballot, and so on, until a candidate receives a majority of the votes cast.
- C) Each nominee shall select a teller at elections; who, with the warden, shall canvass the votes. The Warden shall declare the result to the Noble Grand; who shall declare the nominee, with the majority of the votes cast, elected.

Section 2 – Dues and Assessments

- A) Dues, in conjunction with other lodge income, shall be sufficient to meet all Lodge expenses and obligations.
 - a) Dues for this Lodge shall be five (5) dollars more than the current assessment of the Grand Lodge (rounded up to the next dollar).
 - b) Dues shall be payable in advance.
- B) Should the expenses and current liabilities for any year be in excess of the income and current assets to the extent that it would impair the financial standing of the Lodge; an assessment may be levied on the contributing members to meet the deficiency.

Section 3 – Returns and Records

- A) At the end of each term (December 31st), the Lodge shall transmit to the Grand Secretary, on a form provided therefore, a full report of the names of those initiated, reinstated, admitted by card, rejected, withdrawn, suspended for non-payment of dues, expelled for cause and deceased; the names of the Past Grands, the whole number in each class of membership and an alphabetical list of members; the number of brothers, sisters and widowed families relieved, and brothers and sisters buried; the amount of money applied to each of these purposes, and the amount paid for the relief of orphans. A list of newly elected officers should be made a part of this report.
 - a. Should a Lodge fail to make a complete report for a period of two years, it would be deprived of all its rights and privileges; with the possibility of having its charter forfeited.
- B) At the end of the fiscal term (December 31st), the Lodge shall submit a full statement of all investments, funds and liabilities.
 - a. Should a Lodge fail to make a complete report for a period of two years, it would be deprived of all its rights and privileges; with the possibility of having its charter forfeited.
- C) The Lodge shall keep, in book form, a permanent dated record of all persons admitted to membership – including honors obtained in the Order and termination of membership.
- D) The Lodge shall keep sufficient records to show, at any time, the accounts of its members; its receipts and disbursements; all investments of its funds and other effects.

- E) The records and accounts shall be audited within sixty (60) days after the end of the term (December 31st) by a committee of the Grand Lodge; the time and place to be agreed to by both the Lodge and the committee. The Lodge shall not sell or distribute, for any purpose outside the Order, any of the member rosters, mailing lists or personal information held by the Lodge to any person or persons, institutions or agencies for sales promotions.

Section 4 – Cards and Certificates

- A) The Lodge shall use only the cards and certificates authorized and furnished by the Sovereign Grand Lodge.
- B) The cards and certificates shall be issued and recognized by the Lodge in accordance with the provisions of the Code of General Laws (Chapter XXVII).

Section 5 – Funds

- A) The Lodge shall have control of its financial affairs and its funds; so long as it acts in accordance with the Constitution and the Laws of the Order.
 - a) It shall use the income for any purpose which is for the good of the order.
 - b) It shall not use the income for any purpose expressly restricted by the laws or mandates of the Sovereign Grand Lodge.
 - c) All funds, from whatever source derived, are trust funds.
 - 1) All moneys and investments are to be deposited in the name of the Lodge in an approved bank or trust company.
 - 2) The Grand Lodge of Maine has a reversionary interest in all funds and investments.
 - 3) Any division among members or improper distribution is illegal and void.
 - d) The Lodge may create special funds by voluntary contributions or the holding of entertainment (such as bingo or fair booths) or bazaars.
 - 1) No expense, from said events, shall be paid with regular funds.
 - 2) May use said funds for any purpose authorized by the Code of General Laws.
 - e) No funds of the Lodge shall be invested or used in the purchase, construction or alteration of a building unless the plans, specifications and full particulars of financing are submitted to and receive the approval of the Grand Lodge of Maine.
 - 1) The Lodge shall not incur any debt or obligation nor enter into any contract for such purpose without the prior approval of the Grand Lodge of Maine.
 - 2) This shall not apply to improvements or alterations the cost of which shall not exceed one thousand (\$1000.00) dollars.
 - 3) May apply to the Grand Lodge of Maine Building Relief Fund for assistance in the improvement or alteration of their buildings.

Section 6 – Benefits

- A) Attentive/Caring Benefits
 - a) The Lodge shall visit their sick members, widows and orphans.
 - b) The Lodge shall relieve their distressed members, widows and orphans.
 - 1) For cases beyond their means, assistance is available from the Grand Lodge Special Relief Fund.
 - 2) The Lodge funeral or death benefit, if one is provided for, is \$_____ ; and is payable to all contributing third degree and veteran members in good standing.

- 3) Such benefits shall be reported to the Grand Lodge annually.
- 4) Shall, whenever possible, offer care and assistance to a sojourning brother.

Section 7 – Offenses and Appeals

- A) Should any member of the Lodge violate any of the Laws of the Order, they would be amenable to the Lodge and may be tried.
 - a) The entire process, from filing charges to making appeals, is outlined In Chapter XXXVIII of the Code of General Laws.
- B) If found guilty, the member may be punished by reprimand, fine, suspension or expulsion from the Order.
 - a) Refer to the Code of General Laws, Chapter XXXVIII and Chapter V, Section 13 for details.

Section 8 – Charter and Effects

- A) Should this Lodge become defunct, surrender its charter (except for purposes of consolidation) or have its charter forfeited; then all rights and title to all funds, property and other effects shall become vested in the Grand Lodge of Maine in accordance with the By-Laws of the Grand Lodge of Maine.
 - a) It shall be the duty of the last installed officers and trustees to deliver immediately to the Grand Secretary (or any other person authorized to receive the same) the charter, seal, books, papers, funds, investments, property and all other effects belonging to the Lodge.
- B) The Grand Lodge of Maine allows consolidations of Lodges under its Jurisdiction.
 - a) The guidelines and forms would be supplied by the Grand Secretary.
 - b) Once all the requirements are met, the Grand Lodge Officers would conduct the ceremony.

Section 9 – By-Laws

- A) Definition
 - a) The details, to supplement the Constitution, for the governing of this Lodge.
- B) How Amended
 - a) By-Laws may be adopted, amended, altered or repealed by the Lodge.
 - 1) After having been read at three (3) consecutive regular meetings.
 - 2) Changes would need to be distributed to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the first reading.
 - 3) Vote would happen after the third reading.
 - 4) Would require a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present for passage.
 - b) The amended By-Laws, in triplicate and ninety (90) prior to the next session, would be submitted to the Grand Lodge for their review and approval.
 - c) Shall become effective after Grand Lodge approval.

Section 10 – Dispensations

- A) A Lodge will need to request a dispensation for the following:
 - a) To install an ineligible officer.
 - b) To wear regalia in street parade or public appearance.
 - c) To hold meetings other than at regular meeting place.
 - d) To organize subordinate bodies.