

# The Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of Ohio

RICHARD A. DICKERSCHIED  
GRAND MASTER  
GRAND LODGE of OHIO



P.O. Box 181480  
Fairfield, Ohio 45018  
richd@dsuban.com

**Date: December 21, 2020**

**RE: EDICT 2021-4 Return of Limited In-Person Meetings**

## **This Edict Supersedes Edicts 2021-1 and 2021-3.**

**WHEREAS**, The Global Pandemic called Covid-19, the Ohio Department of Health introduced an Ohio Public Health Advisory System which to identify the risk level for each county and a corresponding color code to represent that risk level,

**And WHEREAS**: Four color coded levels which are purple, red, orange, and yellow to provide Ohioans with guidance as to the current pandemic exposure and spread rate as measured and reported in each county,

**And WHEREAS**, The Ohio Public Health Advisory System page being available at the following web site:  
<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/> .

**And WHEREAS**, this website is updated weekly by the Ohio Department of Health each Thursday and with the understanding that not all parts of the state of Ohio are at the same status.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, **RICHARD A. DICKERSCHIED**, Grand Master of Masons in Ohio, by virtue of the powers in me vested by the Constitution of the Grand Lodge of Ohio, hereby decree that:

Masonic Lodges holding allegiance under the Grand Lodge of Ohio of Free and Accepted Masons of Ohio must follow meeting guidelines listed below using said Ohio Public Health Advisory System levels the day of the event:

### **All Stated and Special Meetings (other than specified below this section):**

- **Purple** – All in-person meetings are to be cancelled. Regularly Scheduled Stated Meeting(s) must be held virtually to accomplish the business of a lodge using the Grand Lodge of Ohio Virtual Meeting Guidelines.
- **Red, Orange, or Yellow** – By order of the Worshipful Master, meeting(s) may be convened in-person per masonic code, *OR*, a Virtual Meeting can be held to accomplish the business of a lodge following the Grand Lodge of Ohio Virtual Meeting Guidelines.
- ❖ Stated meetings cannot be cancelled per Ohio Masonic Code.
- ❖ Lodge visitors at stated/special meetings for any color status other than specified in below sections:
  - Only the degree participants, members of the Lodge, District Advisor, District Deputy Grand Masters, District Education Officers, and Grand Lodge Officers may attend stated and special meetings. No other visitors are permitted to promote social distancing, unless personally granted permission by the Worshipful Master.

# The Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of Ohio

RICHARD A. DICKERSCHIED  
GRAND MASTER  
GRAND LODGE OF OHIO



P.O. Box 181480  
Fairfield, Ohio 45018  
richd@dsuban.com

## Virtual Education Special Meetings:

- Virtual Special Meetings may be called by the Worshipful Master in the Entered Apprentice Degree for education using the Grand Lodge of Ohio Virtual Meeting Guidelines, for a meeting called only for that educational purpose.

## Election of Officers for lodges who were not able to hold an election due to Edict:

- **Purple** –Election of Officers are postponed until the next in-person stated meeting date. Current Lodge Officers will continue to serve in their current station/place until color status level is reduced.
- **Red, Orange, or Yellow** – Election of Officers must be convened per Masonic Code. If the Worshipful Master cannot attend, a Warden will preside.
- ❖ Use of Virtual means for any Election of Officer is prohibited.

## Lodge Officer Installations:

- **Purple** – Lodge Officers must continue to serve in their current station/place until color status level is reduced or may be conducted virtually at the discretion of the Worshipful Master Elect.
- **Red, Orange, or Yellow** - Lodge Officer Installation may be conducted in-person per Masonic Code or may be conducted virtually at the discretion of the Worshipful Master Elect.
- ❖ Elected/Appointed officers must be installed as soon as possible in-person or virtually, following the color status level above with a maximum of 60 days after election.

## Lodge Inspections:

- **Purple** – All in-person degree inspections must be rescheduled. Virtual Meeting(s) for pre-inspection (paperwork) must be called by the District Deputy Grand Master to accomplish his duties.
- **Red, Orange, or Yellow** – In-person degree inspections must be convened as usual. It is also the District Deputy Grand Master's decision to hold pre-inspections in-person or virtually as needed.
- ❖ Lodge visitors during degree inspections for any color status:
  - Only the degree participants, members of the inspected Lodge, District Advisor, District Deputy Grand Masters, District Education Officers, and Grand Lodge Officers may attend degree inspections. No other visitors are permitted to promote social distancing, unless personally granted permission by the District Deputy Grand Master.
- ❖ Pre-Inspection (paperwork) must be done on or before the original pre-inspection date.
- ❖ In all cases, the District Deputy Grand Master shall be the local authority concerning **lodge inspections and rescheduling thereof** in lodges assigned to him, taking his guidance from the Grand Master.

# The Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of Ohio

RICHARD A. DICKERSCHIED  
GRAND MASTER  
GRAND LODGE of OHIO



P.O. Box 181480  
Fairfield, Ohio 45018  
richd@dsuban.com

## Additional:

- Virtual Meetings when permissible by this Edict are **highly encouraged** during this time.
- On premises meals/food *should not* be served before or after any lodge meeting.
- Encourage a minimum number of attendees at in-person meetings to promote social distancing.
- Grand Master One-Day-Classes can be used in Edict 2021-2 to minimize potential risk, using pro-tem candidates. No visitors other than representatives of Grand Lodge and mentors are to be in attendance for a One Day Class.
- Use of Fellowcraft Team walkers (those without words to say) during Master Mason Degrees, even during degree inspections are discouraged to promote social distancing and to limit gathering size.
- In-person candidate investigations must follow color level restrictions per this Edict, and with approval by the candidate.
- In all cases CDC, State and Local Pandemic Protocols must be followed.

## The Ohio Grand Lodge Virtual Meeting Guidelines per this Edict are:

- Virtual meetings can only be opened in the Entered Apprentice Degree using the virtual opening/closing ritual approved by the Ritual Committee which is posted in Grand View under "Virtual Meeting Resources".
- A virtual meeting must follow all other meeting requirements per Ohio Masonic Code to open a lodge and transact business.
  - The only exception is a Virtual Installation of Lodge Officers, of which a declaration of opening/closing in the Master Mason Degree using the appropriate alternate ceremony. If an Open Installation is called by the Worshipful Master Elect, the link to the ceremony may be shared with family and friends. All lodge membership shall be notified if a meeting is to be virtual by email to the lodge members sent from our Grand View membership program and posted on the lodges' Grand View dashboard.
- Balloting by written, or by box is prohibited in a virtual setting.
- Virtual degree conferral is not permitted. Grand Lodge of Ohio Masonic Ritual as printed in our ritual book may not be discussed in a virtual setting.
- Virtual candidate investigations and examinations after this Edict date are not permitted.
- In-person meetings in combination with virtual streaming/meeting platforms are prohibited.
- **If the Lodge Officers cannot perform a stated meeting through online means,** all usual and customary bills for utilities, taxes, and services, normally acted favorably upon by the Lodge may be approved by the consent of the Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Secretary and Treasurer. No other business may be acted upon. Phone or email are acceptable modes of communication for this method and all transactions must be recorded by the Secretary and included in the next in-person meeting minutes of the lodge.

# The Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of Ohio

RICHARD A. DICKERSCHIED  
GRAND MASTER  
GRAND LODGE OF OHIO



P.O. Box 181480  
Fairfield, Ohio 45018  
richd@dsuban.com

## In Closing:

This Edict *does not apply* to the operations of masonic temples and their management thereof while following all state and local health protocols. This Edict also does not apply to other bodies/orders recognized by the Grand Lodge of Ohio, which are governed by their respective Grand Body and Jurisdiction.

## **Expectations for members of the Grand Lodge of Ohio during this pandemic:**

- ❖ DO NOT feel obligated to attend lodge, or any event, until YOU are comfortable doing so.
- ❖ If you have a temperature or do not feel well, please stay home.
- ❖ Respect each other's decision pertaining to personal contact and brotherly love should always prevail.
- ❖ These are difficult times. Before accepting any position or office during elections and if you are not comfortable in the above guidelines, with safety being the primary concern of all, I encourage you to respectfully decline the position if you are unwilling to perform the duties required of your office.

**I FURTHER DIRECT** this Edict is required to be distributed immediately, read, and entered upon the minutes at the next Stated Meeting of each Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction, and all Lodges should govern themselves accordingly. This Edict is to be in effect from midnight on the Thirty-First day of December 2020, until midnight on October 15, 2021 unless retracted, extended, or amended by another edict.

Given under my hand and seal of the Grand Master of Masons in Ohio in the city of Springfield, Ohio, this Twenty-First day of December, A.D. 2020, A.L. 6020.

Fraternally,

Richard A. Dickerscheid  
Grand Master, Grand Lodge of Ohio F&AM

