

**ORDER SONS OF ITALY  
IN AMERICA**

**GRAND LODGE OF MASSACHUSETTS**



**BY-LAWS**

## PREFACE

The Judiciary Commission is pleased to provide this updated and edited revision of the By-Laws of the Massachusetts Grand Lodge. Please note that the entire By-Law Manual, for the betterment of the Order, has been computerized, which will enable changes to be kept current.

The Grand Lodge has encountered many changes over the past twelve years, and this By-Law Manual is intended to be as current as possible. Changes will always be a part of our great Order. Progressiveness and changing times will always require constant review.

The By-Law Manual and the General Laws, together, are a useful and valuable asset for every member of the Order Sons of Italy.

These By-Laws are intended to be a tool for every member, so that he or she may have a thorough understanding of the many avenues of interest and concern our great Order undertakes.

It is the hope of the Judiciary Commission that these By-Laws be administered with intelligence, equality, and fraternity for the advancement of the Order Sons of Italy in America.

Fraternally,  
JAMES F. FICCO  
Chairman, Judiciary Commission

Kevin A. Caira  
State President

Carmelita Bello  
State Orator

Judiciary Commissioners  
Gloria Gelineau, Secretary

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## GENERAL LAWS

### CHAPTER 1

#### THE GRAND LODGE OF MASSACHUSETTS

M.L. ART. 1. The Grand Lodge of Massachusetts of the Order Sons of Italy in America instituted on the 25th day of January 1914, and legally authorized by the state authorities to transact business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on the 28th day of January 1918, a fraternal organization that derives its origin and its existence from the Supreme Lodge of the Order Sons of Italy in America, which was created by the State of New Jersey on the 22nd day of June, 1905 by the authority of the Supreme Lodge, and in conformity with its Constitution and By-Laws, the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts exercises jurisdiction of all Lodges and members of the Order within the confines of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the States of New Hampshire, Maine and Vermont.

M.L. ART. 2. The Grand Lodge is composed of the following entities:

- (a) The representatives of Lodges under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts called State Delegates;
- (b) All members of the State Council, called State Officers, who shall by virtue of their office, be designated State Delegates with all the powers and duties thereof;
- (c) All the Past State Presidents, who shall, by virtue of their office, be designated State Delegates, with all the powers and duties thereof;
- (d) All the members of the Benefit Insurance Commission, who shall, by virtue of their office, be designated State Delegates, with all the powers and duties thereof;
- (e) The Presidents or Chairmen of all Permanent Commissions, who shall, by virtue of their office, be designated State Delegates, with all the powers and duties thereof;
- (f) The Chairman of the Charitable and Educational Trust, a unit of the Grand Lodge, who shall by virtue of the office be designated State Delegates, with all the powers and duties thereof.

## POWERS OF THE GRAND LODGE

M.L. ART. 3. The Grand Lodge has all those powers approved or implied that it derives from the Constitution and the General Laws of the Supreme Lodge. These powers are legislative, executive, administrative and judicial in character, and are exercised directly and exclusively within the limits of its jurisdiction, and also by means of subsidiary, dependent and auxiliary organizations.

M.L. ART. 4. The Legislative power belongs exclusively to the Grand Lodge in session. In the exercise of this power, it may make laws to regulate its conduct, its administration, its functions and also the conduct, administration, and functions of its auxiliary, subsidiary, and dependent organizations; laws to regulate the relations and the reports of the various subsidiary organizations of the Order within its jurisdiction; and in general, laws to supervise and protect the material and moral interests of the Order within its jurisdiction. Every law must be submitted to the National Council for its approval before it is promulgated.

M.L. ART. 5. The Grand Lodge when in session has the following additional powers:

- (a) To impose a personal or Per Capita Tax to be paid by every member of the Lodges within its jurisdiction in order to provide for the needs of its administration. It may impose other supplementary taxes for the maintenance and functioning of its subsidiary and auxiliary bodies, and also to provide for the development of the Order within its jurisdiction. It may determine the method and terms for the collection of these taxes;
- (b) To control, ratify, and annul the deliberations of the State Council and of its other auxiliary and dependent bodies, excepting the State Arbitration Committee;
- (c) To establish the location and the dates of its sessions;
- (d) To establish the administrative requirements for the functioning of its offices;
- (e) To elect and remove the State Council, the Benefit Insurance Commission, the National Delegates, and all other elected Commissions created under these By-Laws;
- (f) To elect any Past State President as Honorary State President for life by a two-thirds vote of its members;
- (g) To purchase and administer property necessary for its purposes;

- (h) To establish and maintain a fund for assistance in case of death known as the Benefit Insurance Fund for the benefit of members of the Lodges within its jurisdiction;
- (i) To establish and maintain a Junior Division;
- (j) To establish and maintain a publication with a minimum of six (6) issues per year;
- (k) To decide by absolute majority of its members the extension of its sessions for one or more days.

M.L. ART. 6. The Grand Lodge shall have the authority granted to it by the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to pay a Death Benefit exceeding \$500.00 and the authority to institute a Level Premium Insurance Program.

M.L. ART. 7. The Grand Lodge meets in ordinary and extraordinary sessions. Every meeting is called a Convention.

M.L. ART. 8. The Grand Lodge meets in ordinary session once a year in the town, city or state established by the preceding convention and for as many days as the State Council determines to be necessary for the accomplishment of its business in an election year. In the following non-election year, a one-day convention, which may be overnight, will be called by the State Council to accomplish its business.

The Grand Lodge meets in extraordinary session at the location and for the required number of days determined by the State Council, whenever it is called by a deliberation of the State Council, and passed by an absolute majority vote, and may also be called in extraordinary session upon majority vote, and may also be called in extraordinary session upon the request of an absolute majority of the members of the Grand Lodge.

M.L. ART. 9. The Order of the Day of every ordinary Convention shall be as follows:

- (a) Opening of the Convention according to ritualistic form;
- (b) Announcement of the naming of the members of the committees previously appointed by the State Council for the Convention;
- (c) Reports of the Credential Committee;
- (d) Minutes of the previous Convention;
- (e) Assignment of proposals and resolutions to proper committees for investigation and study;
- (f) Nominations of candidates for all offices of the Grand Lodge;
- (g) Reports of Officers of the Grand Lodge;
- (h) Reports of the Benefit Insurance Commission;

- (i) Reports of the Committee on Laws;
- (j) Election of State Officers, Benefit Insurance Commissioners, National Delegates and Alternates, and five (5) Arbitrators and five (5) Alternates.
- (k) Reports of Special Committees;
- (l) Unfinished Business;
- (m) New Business;
- (n) Selection of the location of the subsequent Convention;
- (o) Installation of State Officers;
- (p) Closing of the meeting according to ritual.

M.L. ART. 10. Sections "f" "j" and "o" shall be eliminated from the Order of the Day in every Convention when an election is not required by law.

M.L. ART. 11. The Order of the Day for every extraordinary session shall be determined by the State Council unless it is determined upon the request of an absolute majority of the members of the Grand Lodge, in which case, it shall be based upon their request.

#### **PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE FOR THE CONVENTION**

M.L. ART. 12. The sessions of the Grand Lodge must be regulated by the following parliamentary procedure and by other special rules that any or each session may adopt in its wisdom.

- (a) All resolutions, changes, or modifications of law which have been received by the Secretary of the Grand Lodge within the proper time established by law, must be assigned to the Special Committees immediately after the announcement to the Convention of the appointment of members of the committee;
- (b) No member shall have the right to speak more than once on the same subject except at the discretion of the presiding officer and only after any and all other members who desire to speak on the subject have been given the opportunity to exercise their right to speak and be heard. Exception is hereby made for the members, however, who are making reports for the various committees, who shall have the right to speak again to close the discussion;
- (c) The presiding officer cannot take part in the discussion unless the Chair is assigned to another State Officer in order of precedence;
- (d) The right to talk is limited to five minutes. Exception is made, however, for a member who is making a report for a committee;

- (e) The votes shall be taken by the upraised hand, exceptions being made for elections which shall be conducted by secret ballot, and voting by roll call. A roll call vote shall be held when, and if, fifty or more members of the Grand Lodge request it;
- (f) No motion can be discussed or voted upon if it is not seconded and announced by the Chair;
- (g) A motion for reconsideration can only be made and seconded by members who voted with the majority for approval or disapproval of the original motion;
- (h) The motion to close the discussion, or to adjourn the meeting, if seconded, is voted upon immediately and is not debatable;
- (i) Points of law and motions of order are voted upon immediately and take precedence over all other motions;
- (j) Reports of State Officers and Commissions must be approved by sections first, and in their entirety afterwards;
- (k) A majority of votes (relative majority) shall be intended to mean the highest number of votes;
- (l) One-half plus one of the votes cast shall be intended as an absolute majority vote;
- (m) In voting by secret ballot, unmarked ballots or those nullified cannot be considered in the counting of the votes;
- (n) The parliamentary rules of procedure set forth in Robert's Rules of Order (Revised) shall regulate and govern the procedure and discussions in all matters not specifically covered by the Laws of the Order, by the present rules, and by the special rules which each Convention may adopt.

M.L. ART. 13. When appeals are made against the decision of the Chair on points of law or motions of orders, the presiding officer must temporarily assign his/her Chair to another officer, according to precedence. The appellant from the decision of the Chair must first give the reasons for his/her appeal, and the former presiding officer must then give the reasons for his/her decision. After both have spoken, the presiding officer must submit to the assembly, without any further discussion or debate the following question: "Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained by the Grand Lodge?"

M.L. ART. 13A. The Grand Lodge delegates be sent a detailed breakdown of all income and expenses incurred for the Grand Convention each year, within 120 days of the conclusion of our Grand Convention.

**CHAPTER II**  
**THE STATE COUNCIL**

M.L. ART. 14. The State Council is the executive body of the Grand Lodge and it exercises the EXECUTIVE powers of the Grand Lodge when the Grand Lodge is not in convention assembled. The State Council has the power to issue orders and decrees in case of necessity in matters not otherwise provided for under the Laws of the Order, provided no order or decree shall impose new dues or assessments; and provided further that it shall not annul any Law of the Order imposing such dues or assessments.

The orders or decrees of the State Council go into effect immediately upon adoption. All such orders or decrees adopted by the State Council during the interval between State Conventions shall be submitted to the next State Convention for ratification by the Grand Lodge. The failure to so ratify these orders or decrees shall not nullify their effect retroactively, but such action will put an end to the orders or decrees as of that date.

The State Council may impose a reasonable registration fee to be paid by delegates, alternate delegates, and guests attending the annual State Convention.

The State Council shall be elected at the biennial State Convention of the Grand Lodge. Its term of office is two years and until their successors are duly elected and qualified.

Only those members of the Grand Lodge, who have indicated their availability, may be elected or reelected to the State Council.

M.L. ART. 15. No State Council shall be composed of more than 35 members whose rank and precedence are established according to the subsequent order:

- (a) A State President
- (b) A State First Vice President
- (c) A State Second Vice President
- (d) An Immediate Past President
- (e) A State Orator
- (f) A State Recording Secretary
- (g) A State Financial Secretary
- (h) A State Treasurer
- (i) State Trustees (refer to M.L. ART. 31)

M.L. ART. 16. The State Council meets in ordinary session at least once a month at the time and location established at the first meeting after its election, and meets in extraordinary session whenever it is called by the State President on his own initiative, or when a meeting is called upon the request of five or more State Officers. All Past State Presidents may participate in the meetings of the State Council in an advisory and consultive capacity.

M.L. ART. 17. The members of the State Council, with the exception of the Ex-State President, shall be elected by the Grand Lodge in session, for a period of two years, and shall remain in office until their successors are installed. The members of the State Council, with the exception of the Immediate Past President, shall not hold office for more than two consecutive two-year terms.

M.L. ART. 18. Only members of the Grand Lodge who have served for an entire term as a National or State Officer may be elected State President, and only members who have served for an entire term as a State Delegate may be elected for any office in the State Council. Every State Officer, at the end of his/her term, may be elected to the same or any other office of the State Council, including that of State President provided that he/she has served for one complete term.

M.L. ART. 19. The State Council enforces the Laws of the Order within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, for and on its behalf, and also sees that the Constitution and General Laws of the Supreme Lodge, as well as the By-Laws of the Grand Lodge are strictly enforced. It also sees that the orders and deliberations of the Supreme and Grand Lodges are executed, and that the deliberations and decrees of the National Council are strictly observed and enforced.

M.L. ART. 20. The State Council administers the funds of the Grand Lodge and assigns to each of its activities that portion of the funds which it believes useful and necessary. It must keep two distinct and separate funds upon which it exercises complete control. They are:

1. A General Fund
2. A Special Fund



All funds received from initiation fees for new Lodges, profits received from the sale of books of account, regalia and equipment sold to the Filial Lodges, Per Capita or Personal Tax, or any tax or taxes imposed for the operation of the Grand or Supreme Lodge, and payments for subscriptions imposed on members for the news publication of the Order, are deposited and maintained in the General Fund. All funds received from subscriptions, donations, proceeds from feasts, dances, concerts and other or similar functions are deposited and maintained in the Special Fund.

Taxes to be paid to the Supreme Lodge, salaries, rents, and any and all other expenses for the maintenance of the offices or Commissions of the Grand Lodge, daily allowances to National Delegates, expenses for travel, expenses for the meetings of the Grand Lodge, expenses for the purchase of regalia, furnishings, books of account, equipment, and expenses for the printing of the news publication are paid out of the General Fund.

M.L. ART. 21. In addition to the powers and prerogatives granted the State Council by Article 50 of the National Laws, The State Council shall also have the following powers and prerogatives;

- (a) To convoke the Grand Lodge in ordinary and extraordinary session or sessions, and for each and every Convention or meeting, nominates from the State Delegates or its members, a Credential Committee of five members, and other Special Committees which it believes necessary and useful for the smoother functioning of the Convention, provided that the powers conferred on these committees are not in conflict with the inherent right and powers of the Permanent Committees established by virtue of these By-Laws;
- (b) To fill vacancies that occur in the Benefit Insurance Commission and in any other elective commissions or committees, limiting its choice to members of the Grand Lodge;
- (c) To fill vacancies that occur for any reason whatsoever in its own membership, limiting its choice to members of the Grand Lodge. In case five or more vacancies occur, the State Council must then call an extraordinary session of the Grand Lodge to fill said vacancies;
- (d) To submit to the National Council all laws passed by the Grand Lodge, and upon receiving the approval of the National Council, the State Council shall promulgate them;
- (e) To promote the organization of new Lodges in its jurisdiction, approve the requests for a Charter, transmit them to the National Council, and take care of the institution of new Lodges after the Charter has been granted by the National Council;

- (f) To supervise the Lodges, exercising actions of ratification, modification, and nullification of their deliberations, internal rules or By-Laws, and financial accounts; assume their direct administration whenever it is necessary to protect the best interests of the institution and the rights of the members, substituting its control for that of the Lodges, whenever the action of the Lodges are contrary to Laws of the Order;
- (g) All internal By-Laws of Lodges within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge must be submitted to the State Council prior to promulgation, for the purpose of approval, revision, correction or rejection;
- (h) To adjudicate, after having heard the report of the State Orator, all violations of an administrative nature of Lodges and members, and nullify or modify the actions and deliberations of Lodges in conflict with the Laws of the Order;
- (i) To authorize the suspension of disability benefit payments in subordinate Lodges;
- (j) After investigation by the State Orator or a State Officer expressly designated to carry on said investigation, deliberates the suspension of Lodges in its jurisdiction for failure to pay its financial obligation, or as a disciplinary measure, proposes to the National Council the dissolution of those Lodges which do not remedy in proper time the causes which brought about the suspension, and administers the property and funds of the Lodges so dissolved;
- (k) To authorize the transfer of members from one Lodge to another within its jurisdiction, to approve requests for transfer for other jurisdictions and transmit them to the National Council for the necessary authorization, and to decree expulsion from the Order of any official or member who refuses to give to one of its duly authorized representatives, the Charter, books of account, equipment, and funds of the suspended Lodge;
- (l) Upon the proposal of the State President, and by a majority vote, to elect from the members of subordinate Lodges, a Chairman or President, and other members of Commissions and Permanent Committees, hereinafter specified under these By-Laws and other Special Committees which the State Council may deem necessary, whose powers and duties shall be defined by the State Council;
- (m) Under the auspices of the State Council, the State President shall be tendered a Testimonial Dinner during the second year of his/her term.
- (n) That the Grand Lodge Council is prohibited from granting the use of mailing addresses of Grand Lodge members and Local Lodge members except for the internal use of the Order Sons of Italy in America.

## CHAPTER III

### STATE OFFICERS

#### PREROGATIVES AND DUTIES OF THE STATE OFFICERS

M.L. ART. 22. The State Officers are a constituent part of the Grand Lodge and, as such, they are no longer obligated to perform duties imposed upon them by the Lodge of which they are members, except to pay dues and assessments imposed upon them by the Laws of the Order. In case the Lodge of which the State Officer is a member becomes suspended or is ordered dissolved, the suspension or dissolution shall not reflect upon such State Officer nor deprive him/her of the rights and prerogatives inherent to his/her office.

- (a) A State Officer may not be an officer in a Filial Lodge, with the exception of a State Trustee. He shall be excused from attending meetings or manifestations of his/her Lodge. If a State Officer does appear at his/her Lodge, he/she, the State Officer, shall always be considered the representative of the State Council, having all the rights to exercise the supervision which he/she believes necessary and opportune.

M.L. ART. 23. All State Officers are obliged to attend the meetings of the State Council and the sessions of the Grand Lodge. If he/she absents themselves without excuse for three consecutive meetings, they will automatically forfeit their office.

- (a) All candidates for State Office shall have their name on the ballot followed by the Lodge number and city or town where the Lodge is located.

#### THE STATE PRESIDENT

M.L. ART. 24. The State President is the highest ranking officer of the Grand Lodge, upon whom the State Officers depend for leadership and direction. He/She is the presiding officer of the State Council and the representative of the Grand Lodge. More over he/she presides while the State Convention is in session and is the moderator thereof. In addition to the powers granted the State President by Article 52 of the National Laws, he/she shall also have the following powers:

- (a) To submit to the judicial authorities any and all State Officers, Filial Lodges or their officers if they render themselves guilty of infractions of law.

- (b) By virtue of his/her office be a National Delegate and shall act as Chairman of the delegation, call all necessary meetings, and preside over all meetings of the delegation.

#### THE STATE VICE PRESIDENTS

M.L. ART. 25. The State First Vice- President is the second ranking officer of the State Council and assists the State President. In case the State President is absent or is unable to act, the State First Vice –President assumes the duties and prerogatives of the State President.

The State Second Vice-President is the third ranking officer of the State Council. In the absence of the State President and of the State First Vice-President, the State Second Vice-President shall preside and act in their stead.

If for any reason the State President ceases to occupy his/her position, the office of State President shall be filled by the State First Vice-President and the State Second Vice-President shall become the State First Vice-President, by order of the State Council.

#### THE IMMEDIATE PAST STATE PRESIDENT

M.L. ART. 26. The immediate predecessor of the State President in office shall be designated the Immediate Past State President. The Immediate Past State President is the Fourth-ranking officer of the State Council. In the absence of the State President and the State Vice-Presidents, the immediate Past State President assumes the office of State President and acts in his/her stead, with like powers and prerogatives. If the Immediate Past State President relinquishes the office for any reason, the immediate predecessor shall succeed to the office.

The outgoing State President be granted the position of National Delegate at Large upon expiration of his term as State President. The duration of National Delegate shall be for one (1) term.

## **THE STATE ORATOR**

M.L. ART. 27. The State Orator is the fifth ranking officer of the State Council. Whenever requested by the State President, the State Orator gives opinions on the interpretations of the Laws of the Order. He/She is also charged with the duty of enforcing the judiciary Laws of the Order. His/Her special duties are:

- (a) To prefer charges against members or officers who violate the Laws of the Order. In preferring charges he/she acts under the direction of the State President, of the State Council, or on his/her own initiative.
- (b) To prosecute members or Officers before the State Committee on Arbitration;
- (c) To accept, prosecute or reject complaints forwarded to him/her for appropriate action or to transmit such complaints to the proper authorities in the hierarchy of the Order; provided there is reasonable cause for him/her to accept, prosecute or reject such complaints and his/her act, relating thereto, conforms to the Laws of the Order.
- (d) To give his/her opinion on the legality of all controversies or complaints of an administrative nature submitted to the State Council for determination;
- (e) To give a report to the State Convention of his/her acts and doings relative to judiciary activities of the Grand Lodge during his/her term of office.

## **THE STATE RECORDING SECRETARY**

M.L. ART. 28. The State Recording Secretary is the custodian of the archives of the Grand Lodge and is the keeper of its seal. In addition to the duties imposed upon the State Recording Secretary by Article 56 of the National Laws, he/she shall also:

- (a) Supervise the offices of the Grand Lodge;
- (b) Publish and send to all Filial Lodges, Chairmen of Permanent Commissions, State Delegates, and State Deputies, during the month of October a record of the business transacted in every Convention;
- (c) Publish and send to all members of the Grand Lodge, the proposals and resolutions received in proper time for every Convention;
- (d) Prepare and have printed in the magazine all proposals approved by the State Convention within ninety days after approval by the National Council;

- (e) Shall annually, during the month of January, send to each Lodge a notice of Submission of Proposals.
- (f) Publish and send to all filial lodges, by the end of April, Proposals and Resolutions to be addressed and voted on at the annual Convention.

## **THE STATE FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

M.L. ART. 29. The State Financial Secretary is the custodian of the records of account for the Grand Lodge, and is the custodian of its equipment. The duties of the State Financial Secretary are outlined in Article 57 of the National Laws.

## **THE STATE TREASURER**

M.L. ART. 30. The State Treasurer is the depository of all the funds of the Grand Lodge and the custodian of all instruments evidencing title or claim to real and personal property owned by the Grand Lodge and of all securities, including other incidental instruments, which constitute the investments or reserves of the Grand Lodge or its institutions; provided the laws of the Grand Lodge do not provide otherwise. The State Treasurer shall deposit all funds, except that portion which he/she may be directed to retain in his/her possession, in a bank or banks previously designated by the State Council, which deposit shall be made in checking or savings accounts opened in the name of the Grand Lodge. In addition to the duties imposed upon the State Treasurer by Article 58 of the National Laws, he/she shall also:

- (a) Deposit the funds consigned to him/her by the State Financial Secretary within three days;
- (b) Present at every Convention, a written report, previously approved by a majority of the State Trustees, on the condition of the Treasury.

## THE STATE TRUSTEES

M.L. ART. 31. For the purpose of electing State Trustees, the area under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts shall be divided into six districts. Each district shall be entitled to one State Trustee for each Two Thousand (2000) members in district. In any district that has a surplus of One Thousand and One (1001) members after dividing the district membership by 2000, an additional State Trustee shall be elected. Any District, however, having less than 2000 members, shall be entitled to one State Trustee.

In addition, Three (3) State Trustees shall be elected at large, regardless of membership count.

The Districts shall be as follows:

District 1: Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden Counties

District 2: Worcester County

District 3: Middlesex County

District 4: Suffolk County

District 5: Norfolk, Bristol, Barnstable, Plymouth, Dukes, and Nantucket Counties

District 6: Essex County, States of New Hampshire, Maine, and Vermont

M.L. ART. 32. The State Trustees must audit and verify the books of account of the Grand Lodge every three months, and must audit and verify the inventory of the property of the Grand Lodge at least once each year. At every Convention the State Trustees must present a report on the financial condition of the treasury and the inventory as verified by them. The State Trustees must audit and verify the books of account of the Grand Lodge, the Charitable and Educational Trust, the Building Trust, the Benefit Insurance Commission, and any and all subordinate Trusts, Commissions or Committees of the Order, every three months.

M.L. ART. 33. If the State Financial Secretary or the State Treasurer, upon request of the State Trustees, should refuse to give, or fail to submit their books of account, bank books, documents of titles to property, and any and all other documents or papers at the time of the verification of accounts by the State Trustees, The State Council must take the following procedure:

- (a) Demand of the Officer (who has neglected or refused the immediate submission to the State Trustees of the books of account, bank books, documents of title of property, and other documents entrusted to him/her) the immediate surrender to the State Council of the books or documents in his/her possession, and if necessary, take court action to obtain possessions of the books and documents above mentioned;
- (b) Suspend the officer who has failed in his/her duty;
- (c) Refer him/her to the National Arbitration Committee for expulsion from the Order.

## MISCELLANEOUS

M.L. ART. 34. All officers of the Grand Lodge leaving office must consign to their respective successors all objects, regalia, books of account, documents, and all other property in their possession that belongs to the Grand Lodge. Whoever violates the spirit or intent of this article if found guilty by the State Arbitration Committee, must be expelled from the Order.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE STATE DEPUTY

M.L. ART. 35. The State Deputy is the representative of the State President and the State Council to the Lodges where he/she is assigned. He/she cannot be assigned as a State Deputy for the Lodge of which he/she is a member. He/she remains in office until his/her successor is appointed. The State Deputy shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) To exercise in behalf of the State President and the State Council, moral and administrative control over the Lodges in his/her district.
- (b) To visit frequently the Lodges in his/her district, and see that the Lodges observe the statutory requirements, regulations, and ritual of the Order;
- (c) To see that the books of account are properly kept, to see that the administrative system of the Lodge is functioning properly, inspecting whenever he/she desires the books of account, the minutes of the meetings, bank books, and any other matters or objects that are subject to the control of the State Council;
- (d) To denounce to the State Orator for proper action any officer who has altered, carried away or destroyed acts, documents, books of accounts, records and minutes of the meetings. It is his/her duty to denounce to the State Orator any officer who is guilty of fraud or misappropriation of funds, or of transgression of his/her duties, or of other serious malfeasances or non-feasance while in office.
- (e) To assume the position of the presiding officer whenever he/she is requested to do so, or whenever he/she deems it necessary because of the incompetence of the presiding officer, or when intemperate and abusive language is being used which causes disorder in the Lodge, and which offends the dignity of the presiding officer and the decorum of the assembly;
- (f) To order Lodges which have failed to pay the Per Capita Tax or personal tax to make immediate payment of the same. He/She also orders the immediate payment of any other tax which is not paid in proper time. If the Lodges fail to obey his/her request, he/she immediately notifies the State Council of their failure to comply with his/her request;

- (g) To preside at installation ceremonies of officers, after he/she has assured himself/herself that the books of account of the outgoing administration are in proper order, and that the property and funds of the Lodge have been properly consigned to the new officer, and that new bonds for the incoming financial officers have been made out;
- (h) To send to the State Council, at least once every three months, a detailed report of every installation ceremony, and of every initiation in his/her district, and reports on what he/she observes of importance during his/her visits and the by the Lodges on these matters.

M.L. ART. 36. Every State Deputy shall be required to attend not less than four meetings a year (the year to be computed from the date of appointment) and every State Deputy, who without justification, fails to attend a meeting of the Lodge to which he/she is assigned for three consecutive months shall, ipso facto, cease to be State Deputy for that Lodge.

## CHAPTER V

### PERMANENT COMMISSIONS OF THE GRAND LODGE

#### APPOINTED COMMISSIONS

M.L. ART. 37. Upon proposal of the State President, State Council by its majority vote shall elect from the membership of the Order, a Chairman or President and other members of the Permanent Commissions hereafter specified whose powers and duties shall be defined from time to time by the Grand Lodge in Session. Each of the Permanent Commissions hereafter specified shall consist of a minimum of five (5) members.

#### CHARITY COMMISSION

M.L. ART. 38. The Charity Commission is the charitable agency of the Grand Lodge. Its duty is to provide for the needy members of the Order, within its means. In cases of emergency or extraordinary circumstances, the Commission may, by a three-fourths vote of its entire membership allocate such funds as it shall deem necessary, to provide for recipients who are not members of the Order.

M.L. ART. 39. Reserved for future provision.

## JUNIOR DIVISION COMMISSION

M.L. ART. 40. The Junior Division is the organization which shall direct and administer the activities of the Junior members of the Grand Lodge, according to the rules contained in the By-Laws of the Junior Division, which are an integral part of these By-Laws. It is composed of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and five Commissioners. The Past President of the Junior Division shall take part in the council of the division, in a consultive and advisory capacity, similar to the positions held by Past State Presidents of the Grand Lodge, with relation to the State Council.

- (a) All appointments made to the Junior Division Commission shall be taken from the rank and file of Supervisors, District Supervisors and those directly in contact with Junior activities.
- (b) The Junior Division Lodges shall be made up of mixed Junior Lodges with a male and female supervisor for such Lodges.
- (c) All By-Laws pertaining to the Junior Division are incorporated by reference.

#### MAGAZINE COMMISSION

M.L. ART. 41. The Magazine Commission shall be entrusted with the direction and administration of the official publication of the Grand Lodge. In addition to a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary, one other of its members shall act as Director. The activities, powers, and duties of the Commission and its members, shall be regulated in accordance with the rules as are formulated by the Grand Lodge in Session.

#### JUDICIARY COMMISSION

M.L. ART. 42. The Judiciary Commission has the general supervision of the publication, revision, amendment, addition, and modification of the Grand Lodge By-Laws and regulations. The Chairman must examine the By-Laws of Filial Lodges, and recommend their approval to the State Council, provided the By-Laws are in accord with the laws of the Order. He/she must keep a copy of the By-Laws of Filial Lodges in the records of the Grand Lodge.

## FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMISSION

M.L. ART. 43. The Finance Commission shall supervise the operation of the Budget System and examine all requests for funds submitted by the various Commissions and Committees, and the budget recommendations of the State Council.

- (a) The Finance Commission shall meet with various Commissions and Committees and the State Council prior to the Annual Convention, to discuss all matters in the budget. At the Annual Convention, the Finance Commission shall conduct an open hearing before submitting its report to the Convention, to afford the Delegates an opportunity to express their views.

## BUDGET SYSTEM

M.L. ART. 43A. The financial operation of the Grand Lodge shall be by an annual budget to be prepared by the State Council and the Commissions and Committees of the Grand Lodge requiring funds for their operation, and shall be administered in accordance with the rules hereafter set forth. These rules may be amended, altered, modified or revoked only by action of the Grand Lodge while in session.

1. The financial year shall end on December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.
2. The annual budget shall be classified and designated to show separately each unit for which an appropriation is recommended:
  - (a) Ordinary Maintenance, which shall also include debt and interest charges matured and maturing during the year, and shall be subdivided as follows:
    - (1) Salaries and wages of employees.
    - (2) Ordinary Maintenance.
  - (b) Proposed expenditures for other than ordinary maintenance, including additional equipment.

The Grand Lodge in Convention assembled, may by majority vote make appropriations for the purposes recommended and may reduce or reject any amount recommended in the annual budget. In the event of emergency affecting the safety, well-being or prestige of the Order, the Grand Lodge may make necessary applications designed to remedy same and to provide the funds for that purpose.

All amounts appropriated by the Grand Lodge as provided in this section, shall be for the purposes specified. If the Grand Lodge fails to take action with respect to any amount recommended in the annual budget, either by approving, reducing, or rejecting the same, before the adjournment of the Convention, such amount shall without action by the Grand Lodge become a part of the appropriations for the year.

3. Every unit Chairman requesting an appropriation shall, between March 1st and March 31st of the year appear before and furnish the State Council and the Finance Committee detailed estimates of the full amounts deemed necessary for the ensuing year.
4. No unit shall incur a liability in excess of the appropriation made for the use of such unit.
5. On recommendation of the State President, the State Council may, by a majority vote transfer any amount appropriated in the then current year for the use of any unit to another unit, but no transfer shall be made for any amount appropriated in the current year for the use of any unit to the appropriation for any other unit except by a two-thirds vote of the State Council.
6. The Grand Lodge in Convention assembled shall by majority vote fix the amount of the Per Capita Tax by dividing the total amount of the budget approved by the total number of members enrolled as of March 31st of each year.
7. Any funds remaining in an appropriation unexpended at the end of a fiscal year shall be transferred to the Excess and Deficiency Fund. This Fund to be administered by the State Council, for the further development of our Grand Lodge.
8. Any National Per Capita increase shall be added to the Grand Lodge per capita tax at the time it occurs with no vote required by the Grand Lodge in convention assembled.

## ORGANIZATION AND EDUCATION COMMISSION

M.L. ART. 44. The Organization and Education Commission shall supervise the diffusion of the ideals and purposes of the Order in the jurisdiction by means of written publications or lectures, and by visitations and ceremonies. It must do the work necessary to arrange for the organization of a new Lodge, and shall have the supervision of the ceremony at the installation of a new lodge, as well as the installation of the officers and initiation of members at said ceremony. It must particularly see that Filial Lodges fully observe the rules and regulations of the rituals with the purpose of adding dignity and solemnity to the ritualistic ceremonies of Lodges, and that degree teams throughout the Order henceforth do not change any of the existing degree team equipment.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMISSION**

M.L. ART. 45. The Public Relations Commission is to concern itself with the expansion, affirmation and propagation of the Order. In addition, the Commission is to foster and promote public relations that enhance the prestige and good will of the Order, stimulate the interest of the members in the purposes and ideals of the Order, and to publicize the activities of the Order.

## **ITALIAN CULTURE/HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

M.L. ART. 46. The Italian Culture/Historical Commission shall encourage the dissemination of Italian culture in the communities within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge. It will also develop programs to promote an awareness and knowledge of Italian culture both within the Order and the general public, and will seek, obtain, and preserve all possible historical information.

## **SCHOLARSHIP COMMISSION**

M.L. ART. 47. The Scholarship Commission shall promote, foster, and encourage the ideal of scholastic achievement. It shall develop and coordinate a scholarship program that will recognize and honor academically outstanding high school seniors who are planning to further their education at accredited four-year institutions of higher learning. Properly qualified applicants for scholarship awards may be members, children of members, grand-children of members or members of the Junior Division of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, Order Sons of Italy in America, as well as non-affiliates, regardless of race, color or creed, who are seniors in high schools under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.

## **SPORTS COMMISSION**

M.L. ART. 48. The Sports Commission shall develop and coordinate an inter-lodge sports program. It shall also encourage and assist when requested, intra-lodge sports activities. The commission will recognize and honor Italian-American athletes who have demonstrated special ability and sportsmanship.

## **COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE**

M.L. ART. 49. The Commission for Social Justice shall act as the Anti-Defamation arm of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts and serve in conjunction with the National Commission for Social Justice of the Order Sons of Italy in America. Membership on the Commission shall be determined by the State President and the Commission's structure shall be organized consistent with guidelines established by the National Commission for Social Justice.

The purpose of the commission is to ensure equal concern respect, treatment and opportunity for all Italians, Italian Americans and those of other ethnic origins. It shall respond to acts of bias, bigotry, defamation and prejudice; work diligently to eliminate stereotyping and to promote a positive image of Italians and Italian Americans; and carry out the programs and policies set forth by the National Commission for Social Justice.

## **STATE DEPUTY COMMISSION**

M.L. ART. 49A. The State Deputy Chairman shall be appointed by the State President with the advice and consent of the State Council. The State Deputy Commission shall consist of a State Deputy Chairman as over-all supervisor of all deputies and 9 other members; one from districts 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7, and two from districts 3 and 5 will serve as District Deputies. The activities, powers and duties of the Commission and its members, shall be regulated in accordance with the rules as are formulated by the State Council.



## **MEMBERSHIP AND RETENTION COMMISSION**

M.L. ART. 49B. The Membership and Retention Commission shall consist of a Chairman and not more than thirty (30) members, appointed by the State President, with the advice and consent of the State Council. It shall be the duty of the Commission to encourage the Filial Lodges to implement Grand Lodge programs of coordinated membership plans; to develop programs, and to conduct State Membership Drives.

### **SPECIAL PROVISIONS**

M.L. ART. 50A. The officers of all Commissions shall consist of a Chairman or President, a Vice-Chairman or Vice-President and a Secretary. The Chairman or President shall be appointed by the State President from the membership of the Commission. All officers of all Commissions shall have the powers and duties which are ordinarily inherent to their positions.

M.L. ART. 50B. The term of office of appointed members of Permanent Commissions shall run for the same period as that of the State President and the State Council which appointed them; provided that in no case shall such term last beyond the expiration date of the term of such State President and State Council.

M.L. ART. 50C. All Commissions are obliged to present to the Grand Lodge at every ordinary session a written report of its activities for the preceding year, and to the State Council whenever requested.

M.L. ART. 51. Reserved for future provision.

## **OSIA CHARITABLE & EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

M.L. ART. 52. There shall be eleven (11) Trustees to be selected, appointed and qualified as follows:

- (a) Two (2) of the Trustees shall be present holders of the following offices of the State Council of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts Order Sons of Italy in America, and they shall serve until their successors in office qualify under the By-Laws of the said Grand Lodge: State President & State 1st Vice President.
- (b) The other nine (9) Trustees hereunder, shall be selected by the State President of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, with the approval of the State Council, from the duly qualified members of the Order Sons of Italy of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts.
- (c) The State Council shall nominate and elect the Chairman of the Trustees from the approved Trustees.

The Trustees with the exception of the State President and the State 1st Vice-President shall serve for a term of office as follows:

- (a) Four (4) Trustees for a period of one (1) year.
- (b) Five (5) Trustees for a period of two (2) years.

Thereafter, all Trustees shall be appointed for a term of two (2) years, or until a successor is selected.

M.L. ART. 53. Reserved for future provision.

### **ELECTED COMMISSIONS**

#### **THE BENEFIT INSURANCE COMMISSION**

M.L. ART. 54. The Benefit Insurance Commission is the subsidiary organization that administers the Benefit Insurance Funds of the Grand Lodge according to the regulations established by the Grand Lodge.

- (a) The Term of Office of all elected officers and elected Commissioners will be a four (4) year term. The terms of office to be staggered so that the President, Secretary and one (1) Commissioner be elected at one time and two (2) years later the Treasurer and one (1) Commissioner be elected. The elected officers and elected Commissioners shall serve no longer than two (2) consecutive terms.

The remaining Commissioner, one (1), to be a shared appointment between the State President and the President of the Benefit Insurance Commission. The one (1) appointed Commissioner shall be approved by the State Council and shall serve no longer than two (2) two-year terms. The appointed Commissioner should have a background in the fields of insurance, investment or law, compatible to the insurance industry. They will have all the rights as defined by M.L. ART. 2 paragraph (d)

- (b) The President, the Treasurer and the Secretary of the Benefit Insurance Commission have the power and authority which is ordinarily inherent to their positions.
- (c) The Commission shall be obliged to present to the Grand Lodge at every ordinary session thereof, a written report of its activities for the preceding fiscal year.

M.L. ART. 55. All rules and regulations concerning the "1959 Revision of Life Insurance Program for the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, Order Sons of Italy in America" together with all amendments thereto are incorporated herein by reference.

## CHAPTER VI

### NATIONAL DELEGATES AND ALTERNATES

M.L. ART. 56. Representatives of the Grand Lodge to the Supreme Lodge are called National Delegates.

M.L. ART. 57. National Delegates and Alternate National Delegates are elected by the Grand Lodge in session every two years before every ordinary Convention of the Supreme Lodge, and remain in office until their successors are elected.

M.L. ART. 58. For the purpose of electing National Delegates and Alternate National Delegates, the Grand Lodge shall be divided into seven districts. Each district shall elect one (1) National Delegate and one (1) Alternate National Delegate for each 1000 members in the district, with the exception of District 7 which is combined with District 6. The surplus over 1000 shall go into an "At-Large" pool, from which there shall be elected one (1) National Delegate and one (1) Alternate National Delegate for each 1000 members or fraction thereof above 500. In addition two (2) National Delegates shall be elected for each National Trustee of the Grand Lodge; these Delegates are evenly distributed throughout the Districts. The six National Delegate Districts shall be as follows:

District 1: Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden Counties:  
Lee, North Adams, Pittsfield and Springfield.

District 2: Worcester County:  
Fitchburg, Leominster, Marlboro, Milford and Worcester

District 3: Middlesex County:  
Arlington, Belmont, Billerica, Burlington, Cambridge, Everett, Lexington, Medford, Melrose, Natick, Newton, Stoneham, Wakefield, Waltham, Watertown, Wilmington, Winchester and Woburn.

District 4: Suffolk County:  
Boston, East Boston, Hyde Park, Revere, Roslindale, South Boston and Winthrop.

District No. 5: Norfolk, Bristol, Barnstable and Plymouth Counties:  
Attleboro, Braintree, Brockton, Canton, Cape Cod,  
Easton, Fall River, Franklin, Hingham, Milton, New  
Bedford, North Attleboro, Norwood, Plymouth, Quincy,  
Rockland, Stoughton, Taunton, Walpole/Foxboro and  
Weymouth.

District No. 6: Essex County  
Gloucester, Haverhill, Lawrence, Lynn, Peabody, Salem  
and Saugus.

District No. 7: New Hampshire, Maine and Vermont:  
Portsmouth, NH, Rochester, NH and Rumford, ME

M.L. ART. 59. All members of the Grand Lodge who have been State  
Delegates for one entire term are eligible to be nominated and elected to  
the office of National Delegate.

M.L. ART. 60. When the election is held by a relative majority vote, and  
there are two or more National Delegates and Alternates to be elected,  
the position of each candidate with respect to the result is determined by  
the graduating scale of votes. The candidate with the highest number of  
votes and as many others after him/her in order of the lesser number of  
votes they have received, as are required, have the right to be  
proclaimed elected as National Delegates according to the number of  
representatives the Lodge is entitled to have in the Supreme Lodge;  
while the candidate with the highest number of votes following the last of  
the preceding group, and as many others after him, according to the  
lesser number of votes they receive as are required, have a right to be  
proclaimed elected as Alternate National Delegates.

M.L. ART. 61. In the event one or more National Delegates are unable to  
participate in the National Convention, they shall be substituted by the  
Alternate National Delegate in the order of their election. When there are  
no Alternate National Delegates in the District the Alternate National  
Delegate-at-Large takes the place of the National Delegate unable to  
attend the Convention.

M.L. ART. 62. The National Delegate who cannot participate in a National  
Convention shall be required to give reasonable notice in advance of the  
date of the Convention to the State Recording Secretary that he/she  
cannot participate, in order to give the State Recording Secretary proper  
time to provide for substitution.

M.L. ART. 63. Within sixty days after each Convention, the National  
Delegates must compile and send to each Filial Lodge and National  
Delegate a report of the business transacted by the Supreme Lodge  
indicating how each National Delegate voted on every question.

**CHAPTER VII**  
**FILIAL LODGES**

M.L. ART. 64. One or more Lodges may be instituted in any community in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, The States of New Hampshire, Maine and Vermont, with the approval of the State Council and the authorization of the National Council.

M.L. ART. 65. For the institution of a Filial Lodge, it is required that a Charter be granted by the National Council upon proper request of the State Council.

M.L. ART. 66. The application for a Charter must be upon a form prescribed by the National Council, furnished by the Grand Lodge. The application must contain the signatures of no less than 25 persons and must be presented and submitted to the State Council, accompanied by the applications for admission to the Order of the signers, together with a Charter fee of \$75.00.

M.L. ART. 67. One half of the Charter fee shall be forwarded to the National Council, together with the application for a Charter, and the other half of the fee shall go into the general fund of the Grand Lodge.

M.L. ART. 68. After the Charter has been granted, the signers shall hold a meeting under the direction of a State Officer or members of the Committee for Organization and Education, and shall proceed to election of officers from among their members. All signers shall be eligible for any office.

M.L. ART. 69. The institution of a Lodge shall be conducted according to the rules contained in the Ritual of the Order.

M.L. ART. 70. The signers who are initiated at the ceremony of the institution of the Lodge shall be recognized as Founders, and acquire thereby, all rights granted to Founders by the General Laws and these By-Laws.

- (a) The signers who are not present at the institution of the Lodge may be initiated at any one of the first three meetings which the Lodge shall hold after the institution ceremony, but they cannot be considered as Founders. If they are not present for their initiation at any one of the three meetings following the institution of the Lodge, without any justifiable reason or excuse, they shall lose their admission tax and expenses of medical examination.
- (b) (b) A signer who is elected as an officer of the Lodge, who is not present at the institution of the Lodge, and does not give justifiable reasons for his/her absence, shall lose the rights conferred him/her as an officer, and at the first meeting following the ceremony of institution, the Lodge shall hold an election to fill the vacancy.

M.L. ART. 71. At the first meeting after the institution of a Lodge, the President shall appoint members to all positions which he must fill, as well as hold an election to fill all other unfilled elective positions of the Lodge. At this meeting, the amount to be paid by each member as dues shall be determined, and the day, place, and hour for all future ordinary meetings of the Lodge shall also be fixed.

**EQUIPMENT OF THE LODGE**

M.L. ART. 72. The Regalia of the Lodge shall include:

- (a) A Regalia for each officer of the Council.
- (b) One Regalia for the Herald.
- (c) One Regalia for the State Deputy.
- (d) The Banner with the Emblem of the Order.
- (e) One Gavel.
- (f) Five Ritual Books.
- (g) Five By-Law Books.

**POWERS OF THE FILIAL LODGES**

M.L. ART. 73. Every Lodge shall have the following powers:

- (a) To legislate on all matters that concern the material and moral welfare of its members in accordance with the laws of the Supreme Lodge and of the Grand Lodge.
- (b) To exercise its executive power within the limits of the above-mentioned laws when it is in session, and by means of its council, when it is not in session.

- (c) To exercise its judicial power for violations of laws by its members by means of an Arbitration Committee.
- (d) To admit as members, persons of good reputation and in conformity with the requirements contained in the General Laws and in these By-Laws.
- (e) To establish and collect monthly dues from its members which would be paid quarterly, semi-annually, or annually, leaving the choice to the Lodge.
- (f) To determine and pay to its disabled members a benefit not exceeding seven dollars per week, and to provide, if it is necessary, a health service for its members.
- (g) To suspend the payment of disability benefits for any length of time by a majority vote provided that a written notice of the proposal for the suspension of disability benefits is sent to each and every member at least three days before the meeting at which the proposal is to be discussed and voted upon. If the Lodge should vote to suspend the payment of disability benefits, it must be approved by the State Council before it can be put into effect.
- (h) To administer its funds according to the rules established hereinafter, and in conformity with the General Laws and these By-Laws.
- (i) To control, ratify, or annul the deliberations of the Council.
- (j) To elect and remove summarily any and all of its officers and committees.
- (k) To present every year during the month of March, for each session of the Grand Lodge, one or more proposals or resolutions which must be forwarded to the State Recording Secretary no later than the last day of the same month.

To present to the local lodges at the May meeting, proposals and resolutions to be voted on at the State Convention

If a proposal submitted to the Annual Convention is defeated it may not be resubmitted to the Annual Convention for a period of two years

- (l) To acquire and administer real and personal property necessary for its function and activities.
- (m) To promote and conduct social functions for its purposes.
- (n) All those other powers which it expressly and impliedly derives from the General Laws or from these By-Laws.

- (o) A Filial Lodge may authorize the formation of a Nominating Committee as follows: A Nominating Committee of five (5) members shall consist of the Immediate Past President, the Chairman of Trustees, and three members elected by ballot from its membership at the monthly meeting preceding the month of nominations. The President shall not be Ex-Officio a member of this Committee. Members of the Nominating Committee are not barred from becoming nominees for office. The Chairman of the Nominating Committee be elected by the members of that Committee from their body.

The Chairman of the Nominating Committee shall report at the meeting of the Lodge held for the purpose of nominations and shall read the list of nominees. The list is given to the presiding officer who will then ask if there are any further nominations. Other nominations may be made from the floor. The Committee's nominations are treated the same as if made by the members from the floor. No vote is necessary to accept them. When the nominations are completed, the Lodge shall proceed to an election as provided in our By-Laws.

M.L. ART. 74. No Lodge may vote any assessment or obligatory tax without first notifying each and every member by inserting the relative proposal in the notice of the call of the meeting in which the proposal is to be discussed and voted upon. Said notice must be sent at least ten days before the meeting.

M.L. ART. 75. In the administration of its funds, every Lodge must adhere to the following regulations:

- (a) No sum can be appropriated or spent, directly or indirectly, for a religious or political purpose or occasion.
- (b) No sum can be appropriated to pay a doctor for his services to a member excepting the fees paid to the Lodge doctor.
- (c) In cases where a proposal is made to appropriate a sum greater than five hundred dollars, for whatever purpose, the proposal for the appropriation must be placed in the Order of the Day of the notice of the call of the meeting in which the proposal is to be discussed and voted upon, and this notice shall be sent to each and every member of the Lodge at least ten days before the meeting is held.
- (d) All payments of Lodge expenses must be made by check, signed by the President and the Treasurer. No payments shall be made by cash.

## MEETINGS OF THE LODGE

M.L. ART. 76. The order of business of an ordinary session shall be as follows:

- (a) Opening according to Ritual.
- (b) Role Call of Officers, State Delegates, and Alternate State Delegates.
- (c) Reading of the Minutes of the preceding Meetings
- (d) Bills and Communications.
- (e) Consideration of Applications for New Members.
- (f) Initiation of New Members.
- (g) Unfinished Business.
- (h) New Business.
- (i) Good and Welfare of the Lodge.

M.L. ART. 77. Roberts Rules of Parliamentary Procedure prescribed in these By-Laws for the meetings of the Grand Lodge shall apply as well to the meetings of the Filial Lodges.

M.L. ART. 78. An absolute majority vote is necessary for the approval of every proposal.

M.L. ART. 79. Any deliberation taken by a Filial Lodge which is in conflict with the General Laws of the Order, or with these By-Laws, is null and void.

## ORGANIC STRUCTURE OF FILIAL LODGES

M.L. ART. 80. The organic structure of the Lodge shall be composed of the Council, Chairman of appointed Committees, and Delegates.

## THE COUNCIL

M.L. ART. 81. The Council is the administrative and controlling body of the Lodge when the Assembly is not in session. The Council has the power to administer and control the affairs of the Lodge, but not the power to impose new assessments. The Council shall not incur expenses other than those necessary for the administration of the regular affairs of the Lodge. In case of emergency, the Council, by a majority vote thereof, may appropriate a sum of money, not to exceed \$500.00 with which to meet expenses incidental to such emergency; and the appropriation so made shall be reported to the assembly at its next meeting. The Council shall neither have the power to change or modify the laws of the Lodge.

M.L. ART. 82. The Council is composed of fifteen officers whose rank and precedence are established according to the following order:

- (a) The President
- (b) The Vice-President
- (c) The Immediate Past President
- (d) The Orator
- (e) The Recording Secretary
- (f) The Financial Secretary
- (g) The Treasurer
- (h) Five Trustees, one of whom will be elected as Chairman within thirty days following their installation.
- (i) Two Masters/Mistress' of Ceremonies
- (j) The Guard

M.L. ART. 83. The members of the Council, with the exception of the Immediate Past President must be elected, for a period of two years, by the Lodge at its meeting during the month of March, and must be installed on or before May 15 of an election year.

M.L. ART. 84. A member who is elected as an officer loses the position to which he/she was elected when he/she is absent from the installation exercises of the officers, and his/her absence is not excused by the Lodge at its subsequent meeting; and in every case, excepting for illness, if he/she is not installed in office for two subsequent meetings.

M.L. ART. 85. The Council must meet in ordinary session once a month and in extraordinary session any time the President deems it necessary, or upon the request of five or more officers.

M.L. ART. 86. Vacancies which occur in the Council must be filled by supplemental elections at the meeting subsequent to that at which the vacancies were recorded in the minutes of the meeting, except in cases provided for in the subsequent article.

M.L. ART. 87. If the President of a Lodge absents himself/herself from three consecutive meetings without being excused for these absences by the Lodge, the position is declared automatically forfeited during the third meeting of his/her absence under "New Business" of the Lodge, by the then presiding officer or if the office of President becomes vacant for any reason, the Vice-President, shall then be installed by the State Deputy as President for the rest of the term, and a new Vice-President shall be elected.

M.L. ART. 88. If any officer of the Lodge, including the Immediate Past President absents himself/herself for three consecutive meetings of the Lodge, the position shall automatically be declared forfeited by the President, under "New Business" during the third meeting of such absence, except in such cases when such absence is caused by superior forces, independent of habitual occupation, and such reasons are accepted by the Lodge.

M.L. ART. 89. At the close of each term of office, the Council must present to the Lodge for its approval, during the meeting in which the new officers are to be installed, the following documents and accounts:

- (a) A complete financial accounting for the entire term of office.
- (b) An accounting of the last quarter of the term of office.
- (c) A record containing the complete inventory of all the property and money consigned by the outgoing officers to the new Council, signed by the officers of both Councils, and the State Deputy.
- (d) Guaranty bonds for the new financial officers.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELIGIBILITY TO OFFICES IN THE COUNCIL**

M.L. ART. 90. In order to be eligible to be elected President or Vice-President of a Lodge, a member must have served a ONE YEAR TERM in a lesser position of the council, and in order to be eligible for any other council office a member must have been a member of the Order for at least six months prior to his/her nomination for office.

M.L. ART. 91. The above requirements do not apply to cases of Founders of a Lodge which has less than one year of existence, in which case, any member has the right to be elected to any office. The requirements as specified in M.L. Article 90 do not apply in case of members of Senior Lodges who were members of the Junior Division for one year or more before they were admitted to the Senior Lodge for one year or more before they were admitted to the Senior Lodge by a transfer card granted to them by the Junior Division. Said members are eligible for election as Trustees of the Lodge, even though they have been members of the Senior Lodge for less than six months.

#### **DUTIES AND PREROGATIVES OF OFFICERS OF THE LODGE**

M.L. ART. 92. The officers of the Lodge are to fulfill all the duties and exercise all the Rights as specified in the General Laws of the Supreme Lodge, in Articles 22 through 32.

M.L. ART. 93. The President of the Lodge, in addition to the duties specified in Article 22 of the General Laws of the Supreme Lodge, will also have the following prerogatives:

- (a) A President of a Lodge who has held the office of President for two consecutive terms may be re-elected with the unanimous consent of the assembly.
- (b) A President shall, by virtue of his/her office, become one of the Delegates to which the Lodge is entitled for as long as he/she remains President.

M.L. ART. 94. The Orator of a Lodge, in addition to the duties specified in Article 25 of the General Laws of the Supreme Lodge, is also the legal representative of his/her Lodge, and it is his/her duty to see that the laws are enforced.

He/She must call to the attention of the President any statutory violation or ritualistic or regulatory infractions that he/she observes. He/she has the right to speak last on all discussions.

## COMMITTEE OF ARBITRATION

M.L. ART. 95. The Committee of Arbitration consisting of five (5) members and five (5) alternates shall be elected at the biennial election meeting of the Lodge.

The Committee of Arbitration of the Lodge has original jurisdiction and determines all cases in which complaint is made by the Orator against a member of the Lodge or by a member against another member of the same Lodge; provided before complaint is made it shall be submitted to the State Orator for approval, and provided further that the State Orator has the right to refer the complaint to the State Committee of Arbitration, if he/she has reasonable cause to believe a fair trial cannot be had before such Committee.

M.L. ART. 96. Prior to seeking recourse of the Committee of Arbitration, the Lodge and its members must endeavor to settle the differences existing between them by means of a Jury of Honor. The Jury of Honor shall be composed of three members. Each of the parties involved in the dispute shall choose one member of the Jury of Honor, and the two members thus chosen shall choose a third member. Only those differences that cannot be settled after having been submitted to the Jury of Honor may be presented to the judicial powers of the Order.

## OTHER COMMITTEES

M.L. ART. 97. Any other committee of a temporary or permanent nature, appointed by the President or elected by the Lodge, according to the regulations of the Lodge, or according to the wish and desire of the members of the Lodge in every case, shall have those attributes and powers conferred upon them at the time of their formation, and shall remain in office for a period of time necessary to complete their duties. They shall present a report to the Lodge upon completion of its business or at any time the Lodge requests a report.

(a) The Lodge President may appoint a Sports Committee, Culture Committee, Membership Retention Committee, Charity Committee, Public Relations Committee, Social Justice Committee, Organization & Education Committee, Budget & Finance Committee and Scholarship Committee.

## THE STATE DELEGATES

M.L. ART. 98. Every Lodge with twenty-five members or more has the right to representation in the Grand Lodge provided the filial lodge per capita tax is paid in full not later than May 31<sup>st</sup> of the quarter preceding the convention, in the ratio of one State Delegate for each fifty members; and if the number of members calculated according to the subsequent articles exceeds by twenty-six or more a multiple of fifty, for the difference the Lodge shall have the right to another delegate. Whenever a Lodge is duly instituted immediately prior to a State Convention, due credentials shall be issued to the new Lodge and made available to the Lodge President in order to be seated at the forthcoming State Convention.

M.L. ART. 99. The representation of each Lodge in the Grand Lodge shall be computed by taking the number of members in the Grand Lodge file and Per-Capita Tax paid as of December 31, PREVIOUS to the ELECTIONS. Refer to M.L. ART. 107.

M.L. ART. 100. For every State Delegate a Lodge must elect an alternate, provided there are sufficient eligible candidates available in compliance with M.L. ART. 104.

M.L. ART. 101. The election of the State Delegates and their Alternates shall be held by every Lodge from among its members every two years in the month of March, coinciding with the election of lodge officers and arbitration committee, and the election may be declared by a relative majority vote, by deliberation of the Lodge at the same meeting.

M.L. ART. 102. When a Lodge is entitled to one Delegate, the President automatically is named State Delegate and the election of an Alternate Delegate shall be held.

M.L. ART. 103. When the election is held by a relative majority vote, and there are two or more State Delegates and Alternates to be elected, the position of each candidate with respect to the result is determined by the graduating scale of votes. The candidate with the highest number of votes and as many others after him/her in order of the lesser number of votes they have received, as are required, have the right to be proclaimed elected as State Delegates according to the number of representatives the Lodge is entitled to have in the Grand Lodge; while the candidate with the highest number of votes following the last of the preceding group, and as many others after him/her, according to the lesser number of votes they receive as are required, have a right to be proclaimed elected as Alternate State Delegates.



When a Lodge is entitled to two State Delegates and Alternates, the election shall be held for one State Delegate and two Alternates. The President is automatically one of the Delegates.

M.L. ART. 104. Any member who has completed an entire term as a State Deputy, or as an officer of a Lodge prior to his/her nomination as State Delegate, is eligible to be elected State Delegate or Alternate.

M.L. ART. 105. The preceding article does not apply to Founders of Lodges which have been in existence for less than one year at a time of election, all of whom are eligible candidates for the office of State Delegate or Alternate.

M.L. ART. 106. The State Delegates and their Alternates assume office immediately following their election and remain in office for a period of two years, or until their successors are elected.

M.L. ART. 107. The number of State Delegates and Alternates of any Lodge will be subject to change following the March 31st quarterly membership report of each year. State Delegates and Alternates will either be increased or decreased, reflecting the number of paid-up members in each Lodge.

M.L. ART. 108. Every State Delegate and Alternate Delegate is required to attend meetings of his/her Lodge. His/her name shall be added to the roll of officers and shall be called at the roll call of officers at each session. If he/she is absent for three consecutive meetings and is not excused by the Lodge for his/her absences, his/her position shall be declared forfeited.

M.L. ART. 109. Every State Delegate and Alternate whose election has been properly called to the attention of the State Recording Secretary, and whose Lodge is not in default or suspended, has a right to receive from the State Recording Secretary at least ten days before the Convention, a document known as a "credential" attesting to his/her election, his/her good financial standing with his/her Lodge, and the good financial standing of his/her Lodge toward the Grand Lodge.

M.L. ART. 110. Every State Delegate and every Alternate, in order to take part at a Convention, must, at the beginning of the meeting present his/her credential to a committee previously appointed by the State Council known as the "Committee for the Verification of Credentials," or "Credential Committee."

M.L. ART. 111. The names of State Delegates and of their Alternates with valid credentials shall be reported by the Credential Committee to the State President, who shall recognize in each one of them the right to participate in the Convention. The Committee must then refer to the Assembly thus composed, case by case, the names of those State Delegates or Alternates whose credentials have been questioned or contested, giving the reasons presented to them for and against the contested credentials and their recommendation for the decision which the State Delegates should consider in every case. The persons contesting the credentials shall then have the right to speak first to the members of the Grand Lodge thus composed, giving the reason for objecting to the credentials; then, the person whose credentials is being contested shall have the right to give the reasons for sustaining the validity of his/her credentials. After these two persons have been given an opportunity to state their reasons, the State President, without further discussion, shall submit the following question to the members of the Grand Lodge for a vote: "Shall the recommendation of the Credential Committee be accepted?"

M.L. ART. 112. Every State Delegate or Alternate has the right to be reimbursed for his/her expenses for travel to and from town, city or state where his/her Lodge is located, to the town, city or state the Convention is held. In addition, he/she shall be paid a daily allowance of not less than the amount allocated by the Supreme Lodge per day for each and every day at the Convention. The expenses for travel, as well as the daily allowances shall be paid to him/her by his Lodge, but if a State Delegate or Alternate State is absent from one or more sessions of the Convention, and the absence is not excused by the Grand Lodge, he/she shall lose his/her rights to be reimbursed for expenses of travel and the daily allowance for all days of the Convention.

- (a) If a Delegate to a State Convention fails to vote in the election of the State Officers, the Lodge which he/she represents shall be notified.
- (b) If a Delegate to a State Convention is in attendance at the duly called convention but unable to leave his room due to a disability incurred while attending, the election committee shall send two of its members to the delegate's room with a ballot, there-by allowing said delegate the right to vote in the election.

M.L. ART. 113. The State Delegate who cannot participate in a Convention shall be required to notify the President of his/her Lodge of his/her inability to be present at least five days before the Convention, so as to give him/her time to provide for substitution.

M.L. ART. 114. The State Delegate who is unable to attend the Convention and fails to notify the President in due time, loses his/her office and shall be prohibited from holding any office in the Grand Lodge for a period of two years.

M.L. ART. 115. In case all the State Delegates and all the Alternates of a Lodge are not able to be present at a Convention, no other member may be substituted for them, unless the Lodge at an ordinary or extraordinary meeting, authorizes or appoints a person or persons to represent it at the Convention, and notifies the State Recording Secretary accordingly at least three days before the Convention. In this case, a credential, signed by the President and Financial Secretary, shall be given to each representative of the Lodge, and his/her credential must be accepted by the Credential Committee in Convention.

M.L. ART. 116. Every Lodge is legally required to send all its representatives to every Convention, and if it fails to do so, or if it should send fewer representatives than the total number it is legally required to send, the Lodge must pay to the State Council, within two months from the date of the Convention, a fine corresponding to the amount of the Convention registration fee set by the State Council for each and every State Delegate absent.

M.L. ART. 116A. The First Alternate State Delegate shall take the place of any State Delegate who cannot participate at a Convention, just as he/she has the right to occupy the place of a State Delegate who should cease to hold the office. The second Alternate shall exercise the same rights as the first, when the first cannot exercise such rights, and so on.

M.L. ART. 116B. State Delegates unable to attend the Convention, because of death in the family, serious illness or accident, are allowed to run for office; provided, prior to nominations, he/she submits a statement to the Convention, in writing and signed in his/her hand that he/she will accept the nomination and specify the office for which nomination will be accepted.

M.L. ART. 116C. State Delegates may be nominated for any office including National Delegate, if he/she has the necessary qualifications even though he/she is not present at the Convention at the time at which nominations are made; provided, prior to nominations, he/she may submit a statement to the Convention in writing and signed in his/her own hand, that he/she will accept the nomination and specify the office for which nomination will be accepted: And further provided, that he/she must present his/her credentials to the Convention Credential Committee prior to the close of the registration of delegates by the Credential Committee on the day before the announced time for the election.

M.L. ART. 116D. All proponents of proposals have the right to a closed written voting ballot at the convention on any proposal, if so requested. Ballots being counted under the supervision of a pre-appointed person by the proponent

## CHAPTER VIII

### REQUISITES, QUALIFICATIONS AND CONDITIONS FOR ADMISSION TO LODGES

M.L. ART. 117. Basic requirements for admission to the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts are set forth in the General Laws of the Order, Chapter 1, Article 1.

- (a) The Grand Lodge established a minimum age of 18 years for admission to local lodges, and a minimum age of 10 years for admission to the Junior Division.

M.L. ART. 118. Admissions to the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts shall also be limited to persons with good reputations, and who are residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or the States of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont.

M.L. ART. 119. The application for admission must be submitted to the Recording Secretary of the Lodge which he/she intends to join.

M.L. ART. 120. Every application must be read to the Lodge by the Recording Secretary, at every meeting following its receipt. It must be then referred by the President to a committee appointed by him/her, composed of three members known as the "Investigating Committee" and it shall be their duty to scrupulously look into the conduct and reputation of the applicant.

Having completed its investigation, the committee will recommend to the assembly to accept or reject the application. A majority vote in favor of the applicant shall be sufficient for acceptance. In all cases in which the Investigating Committee reports rejection of an application, any member may move to have the members pass upon the merits of the application.

M.L. ART. 121. A person whose application is accepted shall be notified by the Recording Secretary of the time and place of the meeting in which he/she is to be present for initiation, and if he/she is absent and does not present himself/herself for two successive meetings, the application shall no longer be effective. If he/she should apply for membership again, he/she shall start from the beginning, according to the requirements for admission of new members.

M.L. ART. 122. Once the membership application is completed by the candidate, and approved by the Filial Lodge, the member is immediately initiated and enrolled in the Filial Lodge, and the Grand Lodge copy of said application is forwarded to the Grand Lodge, (along with the \$10.00 application fee).

Before a person is initiated as a member, he/she must pay an admission fee that shall be established by the Local Lodge, provided however, that such fee shall be a minimum of \$10.00 to a maximum to be established by the Lodge. The current applicable fee shall be sent to the Grand Lodge with every application, the balance to be retained by the Local Lodge. Such person must also pay any other tax or financial obligation established by the Grand Lodge or by the Local Lodge.

The State Council shall have the right to revise or establish a uniform admission fee during periods of an organized State Membership Drive.

M.L. ART. 123. The requirements of M.L. ART. 117 through M.L. ART. 122. Do not apply to those joining a Senior Lodge from the Junior Division; they must fulfill the following requirements:

- (a) Request and obtain from the Junior Division permission for his/her transfer known as the "Transfer Card" to a Filial Lodge; send or present it in place of an application to the Recording Secretary of the Lodge he/she desires to join.
- (b) Present himself/herself at the initiation meeting when he/she is notified that he/she is to be initiated; and he/she must be initiated not later than three successive meetings from the date of his/her notification. Upon the transfer of a junior member to a Filial Lodge, he/she will be accorded the same rights as any member transferring from one Lodge to another.
- (c) When a junior member transfers to a Senior Lodge, his/her seniority shall prevail from the date of his/her initiation in the Junior Lodge.

M.L. ART. 124. Each month every Recording Secretary shall file with the State Recording Secretary a list of all applicants who have been rejected as the result of an unfavorable vote of the Lodge.

M.L. ART. 125. No one member may be a member in two or more lodges except where a member of a lodge is also a member of a society or club which joins the Order and transforms itself into a lodge, in which case, the member shall be allowed to remain a member of his/her original Lodge, and also become a member of a Lodge so formed and himself/herself in the formation of a new Lodge in which case he/she may be permitted to enroll as a Founder of the new Lodge and remain a member of his original Lodge. No more than five members from any one established lodge forming a new lodge may be enrolled as Founders and Signers (three Founders and two Signers).

A member with dual membership cannot be a candidate, or hold elective office, including State Delegate, in more than one Lodge at a time. It is to be understood that "Elective Office" includes the office of State Delegate.

M.L. ART. 126. A person who is admitted into a Lodge without having fulfilled the requirements prescribed in these By-Laws shall not be considered a member of the Order; and the Officers responsible for such illegal admission must be denounced by the State Orator to the State Arbitration Committee. A person so admitted shall be cancelled from the roll of membership and shall forfeit all fees and dues paid.

M.L. ART. 127. Whenever it becomes known that a person has fraudulently obtained admission into the Order, the Orator of the Lodge to which he/she belongs shall place him/her under charges denouncing him/her for expulsion to the Arbitration Committee of the Lodge if he/she is an ordinary member, or the State Arbitration Committee if he/she is an Officer of the Lodge.

**CHAPTER IX**  
**RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS**  
**RIGHTS OF REGULAR MEMBERS**

M.L. ART. 128. Every member in good financial standing has the following rights:

- (a) The right to participate at the meetings and at the deliberations of the Lodge, immediately after his/her initiation.
- (b) The right to attend any and all meetings in any other Lodge in the United States and Canada, where he/she has a right to speak only at the close of the meeting under the "Good and Welfare of the Order," or on an impersonal basis, on matters which reflect on the life and better development of the Order. He/she acquires this right immediately after initiation.
- (c) The right to vote at all biennial elections provided that the member has been a member of the Order prior to that January meeting prior to the election. The right to vote at any special election provided that the member has been a member of the Order for three months prior to the month in which the special election is held.
- (d) The right to be elected to administrative office, except President, Vice-President and State Delegate, provided that he/she has held membership in the Order for at least six months.
- (e) The right to propose persons for membership to his/her own Lodge and to any other Lodge.
- (f) The right to disability benefits, acquired one year after initiation, and nine months after initiation in the case of the Founders, subject to the provisions and conditions hereinafter contained in these By-Laws.
- (g) The right to medical services furnished by his/her Lodge, subject to the provisions and conditions hereinafter contained in these By-Laws.
- (h) Every other right not specified herein, which he/she derives from the General Laws and these By-Laws.

## **DUTIES OF REGULAR MEMBERS**

M.L. ART. 129. Regular members are required to perform the following duties:

- (a) To obey and respect authorities of the Order.
- (b) To pay dues and assessments.
- (c) To obey all Laws of the Order.
- (d) To assist in the work of the Order.
- (e) To settle any grievances that may arise by submitting these grievances to the proper authorities of the Order, or to the Assembly of the Lodge while in session.

No member of the Order shall resort to any civil court to enforce any claim, demand, right or cause of action which he/she may have against any Lodge, Grand Lodge or Supreme Lodge, or against any of their respective institutions, or against any of the Officers as such, unless and until he/she shall have pursued and exhausted all remedies provided by the laws of the Order.

## **RIGHTS OF SENIOR MEMBERS**

M.L. ART. 129A.

Effective January 1, 2020, lodges with members that meet the following requirements, defined hereafter as "Senior Members", having been certified by the State Recording Secretary, shall only be required to pay the amount equal to the current National per capita tax for each "Senior Member" provided they meet all three of the following criteria:

- 1) Are 80 years of age or older
- 2) Have twenty-five (25) years of uninterrupted membership in the Order
- 3) Became members of the Order on or before December 31, 2019

## **RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF SOCIAL MEMBERS**

M.L. ART. 130. Persons of good reputation, honesty and character who have been and are in sympathy with the social and civic program of the Order Sons of Italy in America and who propose to cooperate with our Lodges for the success and progress of the Order may be admitted as SOCIAL members of the Lodges provided that they are not eligible for regular membership.

- (a) Application must be made on a form furnished by the Grand Lodge.
- (b) A fee of \$10.00 is to be paid by the applicant with the application. The fee will be returned if the application is not approved.
- (c) Applications must be approved by a vote of the Lodge and sent to the Grand Lodge for approval with a \$10.00 application fee.
- (d) Annual dues for SOCIAL members shall be set by the Filial Lodge. The Grand Lodge will set the same per capita tax assessments for a SOCIAL member as a REGULAR member.
- (e) SOCIAL members shall retain all the rights and privileges of membership as defined in M.L. ART. 128, and any other rights of membership derived from the General Laws, with the exception that SOCIAL members may NOT hold office.

## CHAPTER X

### SEPARATION AND REINSTATEMENT

#### DEFAULTS, CANCELLATIONS, RESIGNATIONS

M.L. ART. 131. A member is in arrears when he/she has not paid the current dues, fines, and assessments to the local lodge and a member is in default when in arrears with the payment of dues, fines, and assessments to the local lodge for a period of three consecutive months. A member is in default who by the first day of the fourth month, does not remove the cause of such default and shall be stricken from the rolls of membership.

M.L. ART. 132. A default or failure to make proper payment deprives the member of the following rights: the disability benefits payable because of illness or disability for employment; the benefits of medical services of a Lodge; the right to speak at meetings, the right to vote at the meetings on any question or election; the right to become eligible for any office, but if the member holds an office in the State Council, his/her default does not affect his/her right to vote or speak, or that of eligibility to office unless the Financial Secretary of the Lodge notifies the State Council by first class letter, and the member fails to place himself/herself in good financial standing within a month from the date of notification.

M.L. ART. 133. Default produces ipso facto the loss of office by any member who occupies a position or office in the Council Commissions, or Committees, excepting members of the State Council, no one of whom loses his/her office because of being in default, unless the Financial Secretary of the Lodge to which he/she belongs advises him/her of his/her indebtedness and notifies the State Council by first class letter as well and the State Officer fails to make the necessary payments within a month from the date of notification.

M.L. ART. 134. When a member becomes defaulted, the Financial Secretary must immediately send him/her a notice of his/her indebtedness and he/she must read his/her name to the Lodge at the meeting following the month in which he/she became in default, provided, however, that no notice of cancellation shall be sent to such member until such time as the Lodge Trustees call upon the defaulted member and urge him/her to retain membership and have filed a written report therefore with the Financial Secretary.

M.L. ART. 135. The member in order to place himself/herself in good financial standing must pay the Financial Secretary of his/her Lodge the amount of his/her indebtedness within thirty days after he/she becomes in arrears.

M.L. ART. 136. The member who places himself/herself in good financial standing reacquires ipso facto his/her right to the medical services, the right to speak, to vote and the right of eligibility to office; and if, at the time of payment, when he/she removes his/her indebtedness, he/she is in good health, he/she reacquires within thirty days, the right to disability benefits.

M.L. ART. 137. A member who is in default, and who is disabled for work at the time, who later places himself/herself in good financial standing, does not reacquire his/her right to disability benefit payments for the entire duration of his/her present illness or disability, and in every case, he/she does not reacquire until thirty days after payment of all his/her dues and taxes which removes his/her default, his/her right to disability benefits.

M.L. ART. 138. A member who has lost his/her office as State Delegate because he/she is in default reacquires his/her office when he/she places himself/herself in good financial standing.

M.L. ART. 139. The Financial Secretary must notify each member of his/her default by means of a first class letter ten (10) days before the expiration of the time prescribed to place himself/herself in good financial standing, advising him/her that upon the expiration of the period of grace, he/she shall be cancelled and deleted from the rolls of the Lodge.

M.L. ART. 140. The failure by a member to receive the notice of imminent cancellation sent to him by first class mail does not interrupt the procedure of cancellation provided that the notice was sent to his/her last known address.

M.L. ART. 141. The name of the member to whom the notice of cancellation was sent, who fails to make the proper payments within the period of grace, shall be read to the Lodge by the Financial Secretary at the meeting following the expiration of the thirty days and at the same meeting his/her name must be deleted and cancelled from the rolls of the Lodge. If the cancellation is not effectuated because of negligence or for any other reason, the member shall be considered cancelled, regardless.

M.L. ART. 142. Cancellation carries with it the loss of any and all rights in the Order.

M.L. ART. 143. The member who intends to terminate his/her affiliation with a Lodge may resign by presenting or sending a written declaration of his/her intention to the Recording Secretary, and his/her resignation must be accepted and cannot be rejected except in cases where the resigning member is under charges.

The name of the resigning member shall be cancelled from the rolls of the Lodge.

### REINSTATEMENT

M.L. ART. 144. A person cancelled by a Lodge because he/she is in default, or because of resignation, provided he/she is morally worthy, must be readmitted to the same Lodge without the necessity of a vote on the same, provided further that he/she applies to the Lodge within ninety days from his/her cancellation, accompanying his/her application with a certificate of good health given to him/her by the doctor of the Lodge, together with the amount of dues or taxes owed by him/her at the time of his/her cancellation. He/she shall immediately reacquire, upon his/her Re-admission, his/her seniority benefits, and the right of eligibility to administrative or representative office, both of which are reacquired ninety days after re-admission.

M.L. ART. 145. A person cancelled because of default or because of resignation, who fails to take advantage of the right to readmission, within ninety days from the date of his default or resignation, may be re-admitted to any lodge by accompanying his/her application with pre-payment of one year's dues. No admission fees, vote, or initiation is necessary, and said member will re-acquire all rights and privileges except seniority ninety days after re-admission.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE TRANSFER CARD

M.L. ART. 146. The transfer card is the document by which permission is granted to a member to transfer himself/herself from his/her Lodge to another Lodge.

M.L. ART. 147. The granting of the transfer card is within the power of the State Council for the transfer from one Lodge to another Lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts; and in the power of the National Council for a transfer from one Lodge within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts to another Lodge in any jurisdiction.

M.L. ART. 148. The request for transfer must be filed on a form prescribed by the State Council and in every case, should be presented or sent by the applicant to the Executive Council of his/her Lodge, which in turn, if approved, must forward it to the State Recording Secretary.

M.L. ART. 149. In order to file an application for a transfer card the member must be in good financial standing with regard to payment of dues and assessments to his/her Lodge up to and including the month in which the application is presented; and he/ she must not be under charges or under a definite sentence of an Arbitration Committee.

M.L. ART. 150. A member subject to the provisions of the preceding article has the right to receive a transfer card in the following cases:

- (a) When he/she changes his/her residence from one town or city to another town or city in the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge.
- (b) When his/her Lodge is suspended or dissolved because of its financial indebtedness to the Grand Lodge, or because of disciplinary measures, provided that he/she was not involved in the causes which brought about the suspension or dissolution of the Lodge.

M.L. ART. 151. The State Council has the discretionary power to grant a transfer card even in cases where the applicant desires to transfer from one Lodge in a city or town to another Lodge in the same city or town, provided that the application is motivated by good and sufficient reasons, to be determined by the State Council.

M.L. ART. 152. The Transfer card must be submitted to a secret vote by the Lodge receiving the member, and a relative majority vote in favor or against shall constitute acceptance or rejection.

M.L. ART. 153. The preceding article does not apply to the case of a member transferring from a Lodge of another jurisdiction, in every case, the transfer card, accompanied by a medical certificate of good health, must be accepted without the necessity of any vote.

M.L. ART. 154. Within a week after the meeting in which a transfer card is accepted, the Recording Secretary of the receiving Lodge must inform the Recording Secretary of the Lodge from which the member transferred and the State Recording Secretary, of the acceptance of the member by the receiving Lodge.

M.L. ART. 155. The name of a member whose transfer card is accepted must be cancelled from the rolls of the Lodge from which the member transferred, and must be inscribed on the rolls of the receiving Lodge.

M.L. ART. 156. The transfer of rights and duties of the member who has obtained a transfer card, takes effect on the first of the month immediately succeeding the month the transfer card was accepted and all financial obligations and tributes up to that date are to be paid to the Lodge from which the member transferred, and the receiving Lodge shall forward any of said funds collected by it to the Lodge from which the member transferred.

M.L. ART. 157. If the transfer card is rejected by a vote of the receiving Lodge, or it ceases to be valid because it is not used within the prescribed sixty days from the date of its issuance, the member of the Filial Lodge must return it at the following meeting to his/her Lodge, and must pay at the same meeting his/her dues and taxes which have matured in the meanwhile, to place himself/herself in good financial standing and to reacquire all his/her rights.

M.L. ART. 158. A member who changes his/her residence with intention of establishing a permanent residence in a town or city away from the seat of his/her own Lodge, is obliged to request a transfer card if in the town or city where he/she has established his new residence or within a radius of fifteen miles from said city or town there exists another Lodge. If he/she fails to transfer within one year, he/she shall lose his/her right to disability benefit payments.

M.L. ART. 159. The preceding article does not apply to members of the State or National Council who are obliged to change their residence because of their office.



## CHAPTER XII

### MEDICAL SERVICES AND DISABILITY BENEFITS

#### MEDICAL SERVICES

M.L. ART. 160. Every Lodge may institute a medical service for its members or for members and dependent persons of their family subject to the following restrictions:

- (a) Medical Services cannot be extended in any case to a member in default.
- (b) When two or more doctors offer their services to a Lodge as physician, the selection shall be made by means of an election and in the election all rules shall be applied which are prescribed for election of officers within the Order and the doctor receiving a relative majority shall be declared elected.

#### DISABILITY BENEFITS

M.L. ART. 161. Every Lodge may pay to its members in good financial standing, in the event of their inability to attend to and perform their usual or other occupation, because of disability due to accident or illness, a disability benefit. Such disability benefit may be paid by the Lodge in accordance with such rules and regulations and By-Laws as it may promulgate, subject, however, to the approval of the State Council.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ELECTIONS

M.L. ART. 162. Elections, general, special or partial, must be held by secret ballot by means of a cumulative ballot which shall include all the positions to be voted upon, or by means of a single ballot for each office. Each Lodge shall adopt one or the other method.

M.L. ART. 163. A member of a Lodge may be nominated for any office, including State Delegate, if he/she has the necessary qualifications even though he/she is not present at the meeting at which nominations are made; provided, prior to nominations, he/she submits a statement to the Lodge, in writing and signed in his/her own hand, that he/she will accept the nomination and specify the office for which nomination will be accepted.

M.L. ART. 164. When the cumulative ballot method is adopted for use for the elections of a Lodge, the nomination of candidates shall be held at the preceding meeting, or at the meeting of the election, provided that the notice is given to all the members ten days before the election. The Recording Secretary shall see that a ballot is printed with the names of all candidates arranged according to precedence of office. For each office, the names of the candidates shall be placed as drawn by lot immediately following the meeting of nominations with all the candidates or their representatives present at the drawing.

M.L. ART. 165. The elections of the Grand Lodge shall always be held by a cumulative ballot, and the Electoral Committee shall be obliged to print a ballot with the names of all candidates arranged according to precedence of office, and for each office the names of the candidates shall be placed on the ballot determined by a drawing at the close of nominations of each office. The election, by means of printed ballots as above mentioned, shall take place on the second day of the Convention, at which time any and all other business before the Grand Lodge shall be suspended for the purpose of voting.

Elections of the Grand Lodge can be by voting machines, if they are available at the convention site. This option will be exercised by the State Council in effect prior to the election with notification to lodges 120 days prior to the elections at the State Convention.

M.L. ART. 166. The notice for a general election of a Filial Lodge must be sent to all members at least ten days before the meeting and must state that the election is to be held for all officers; however, notices of partial or special elections must specify the offices or the officers to be voted upon.

M.L. ART. 167. In addition to the other conditions prescribed for election to the various offices of the Lodge and the Grand Lodge by the General Laws, or by these By-Laws, the member, the officer or State Officer who is in default, with his/her own Lodge or with the Grand Lodge cannot be a candidate, nor can he/she be elected to any office.

M.L. ART. 168. In all elections the rule of absolute majority must be applied, but in the election of Trustees, Master/Mistress of Ceremonies, the Guard or State Delegates upon a deliberation taken by the members at the same meeting, the rule of relative majority may be adopted. The rule of absolute majority requires one-half plus one of the votes cast which are recognized as valid by the Electoral Committee. The rule of relative majority requires the highest number of votes even though it is less than one-half.

M.L. ART. 169. In all elections the following cases may occur:

- (a) A single candidate for one office.
- (b) Two candidates for one office.
- (c) Three or more candidates for one office.

In the first case, the single candidate shall be declared elected by acclamation. In the second case, the candidate who receives an absolute majority vote shall be declared elected, and in case of a tie vote, then the member who has seniority membership in the Order shall be declared elected. In the third case, if none of the candidates receives an absolute vote, then the two candidates who receive the highest and the second highest number of votes according to the graduating scale of votes shall be voted upon for the second time, and all other candidates shall be eliminated.

M.L. ART. 170. In the counting of votes, blank ballots and ballots nullified by the Electoral Committee shall not be counted. A ballot can be nullified because it has upon it some evident and apparent signs of recognition of the member, who cast the vote, or because the ballot does not clearly show the intent of the person casting the same, or because it bears the name of a person who is not a candidate.

M.L. ART. 171. The proclamation of those who are elected must be made by the President of the Electoral Committee.

M.L. ART. 172. The Electoral Committee shall be appointed by the presiding officer, and shall be composed of a President and four examiners. The nomination of candidates shall be directed by the presiding officer and not by the President of the Electoral Committee.

M.L. ART. 173. During an election, cases may arise where a member has been nominated but lacks the necessary qualifications for the office, or cases may arise where a member is about to vote without having a legal right to do so. In these cases, as soon as the irregularity is observed, it is necessary to immediately call this matter to the attention of the Lodge or the Grand Lodge which shall decide the merits of the questions. From the decision of the Lodge in the above cases, the member has the right of appeal to the State Executive Council, and from the decisions of the Grand Lodge in the above cases, the member has the right of appeal to the National Council.

M.L. ART. 174. Protests for any irregularities must be made to the Electoral Committee before the proclamation of the result of the election. These irregularities may be observed during the voting or in the counting of the votes. On every protest the Electoral Committee shall render its decision. From the decision of the Electoral Committee, the member has the right of appeal first to the Lodge, and then to the State Executive Council if the matter pertains to an election in a Filial Lodge, or, to the Grand Lodge and then to the National Council, if the matter pertains to an election of the Grand Lodge.

M.L. ART. 175. In questions concerning elections in Lodges, the decision of the State Council is final and cannot be appealed. In questions concerning the elections of the Grand Lodge, the decision of the National Council is final and cannot be appealed.

M.L. ART. 176. Elections in violation of the rules and regulations contained in these By-Laws or in the General Laws shall be null and void.

M.L. ART. 177. Reserved for future provisions.

M.L. ART. 178. Reserved for future provisions.

M.L. ART. 179. Reserved for future provisions.

## CHAPTER XIV

### ADMINISTRATIVE DEFECT

M.L. ART. 180. Any member of a Filial Lodge has the right of appeal to the State Council in the first instance, because of an administrative defect committed by a Filial Lodge, if he/she is damaged or suffers injuries to his/her rights by reason of said defect, within ten (10) days of its occurrence, and he/she may further appeal the decision of the State Council to the National Council within ten (10) days from the date that he be is notified of the decision of the State Council.

(a) The Lodge against whom a complaint is filed shall have ten (10) days notice to prepare a defense.

M.L. ART. 181. The appeal to the State Council must be accompanied by a deposit of Five Dollars for the expenses of the hearing. If the appeal is decided in favor of the appellant or in cases where the representatives of the Lodge at the hearing do not request payment for their traveling expenses, the Five Dollar deposit shall then be returned to the appellant in full. In cases where the finding is made against the appellant, then the expenses of travel for the representatives of the Lodge shall be deducted from the Five Dollars deposited, and the balance, if any, shall be forwarded to the appellant.

M.L. ART. 182. In the case of an "administrative defect" that is committed by the Grand Lodge, a member of a Filial Lodge, Lodges and entities, who are damaged thereby, may appeal to the National Council within ten (10) days. The decision of the National Council shall be final and may not be appealed.

M.L. ART. 183. The State Council shall determine if an "administrative defect" has occurred after a hearing is held on the matter. All parties involved must be invited to be present, and after hearing the opinion and the conclusions of the State Orator, the State Council shall render its decision. The absence of either one or both of the parties involved does not invalidate the decision of the State Council.

M.L. ART. 184. If, as a result of the investigation of the State Orator, or as the result of the hearing, there is sufficient proof to show that the "administrative defect" was not the result of an error, but the result of fraud, misrepresentation, or deceit, the officer or the entity guilty of the commission of the fraud, misrepresentation, or deceit, shall be suspended by a decree of the State Council, and charges must be preferred against the guilty party or parties through the medium of the State Orator to the State Arbitration Committee.

## CHAPTER XV

### SALARIES, INDEMNITIES, AND ALLOWANCES

M.L. ART. 185. A Filial Lodge, at the meeting when an election is to be held, or at the meeting for nominations of candidates for offices, and in every case before nominations, must fix the salaries of the Recording and Financial Secretaries, the Treasurer, and the indemnities to be allotted to other officers.

M.L. ART. 186. Such salaries shall remain unchanged for the duration of the term of the Administration, but at the end of this period of time, the Council may propose to the Lodge, a bonus to be paid for special work or services rendered.

M.L. ART. 187. The daily allowance to be allotted to National Delegates shall be determined by the State Council as follows:

- (a) All Delegates to the National Convention will be reimbursed as per National By-Laws only.
- (b) All travel will be by lowest cost available.
- (c) Reimbursement will be from the day before the convening of the convention to the closing of the convention, except for the State President who may have pre-convention or post-convention meetings.
- (d) Reimbursement will be paid after travel vouchers and receipts are submitted to the Grand Lodge office and approved by the State Treasurer and State President.
- (e) Additional expenses for the promotion of the Grand Lodge and hospitality may be expended by vote of the State Council before the convention.

M.L. ART. 188. The Councils of the different grades shall determine the daily allowances to be paid to witnesses in the cases before the Arbitration Committee of Lodges, and they shall also determine the wit-fees to be allowed to members at hearings upon appeal of "administrative defects" before the State Council.

M.L. ART. 189. The daily allowance must be made for the actual days spent in the fulfillment of their duties, including those expenses incurred in traveling to and from their habitual residence to the locality in which their duties are to be transacted.

M.L. ART. 190. The State Deputies are entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred by them in the execution of their duties of office.

M.L. ART. 191. The daily allowance that must be allotted State Delegates shall be determined by the Filial Lodge for its State Delegates; by the State Council for its Officers, Past State Presidents, members of the Benefit Insurance Commission and Chairmen of Permanent Commissions, and shall not be less than per diem expenses established by National Law.

M.L. ART. 192. The State and National Delegates are entitled to a daily allowance only for those days in which they actually participated in the business of the State or National Convention, but they shall lose this allowance, as well as that for reimbursement or traveling expenses, if they fail to take part in any of the sessions of the State or National Convention without justifiable reasons.

M.L. ART. 193. Expense vouchers for salaries, indemnities, daily allowances and reimbursements for traveling expenses for members so entitled shall be submitted to the Lodge or Grand Lodge within 45 days from the date incurred. Vouchers not submitted within this period shall not be honored.

## CHAPTER XVI

### REGULATIONS OF A MISCELLANEOUS CHARACTER

M.L. ART. 194. When, whether in the General Laws, the By-Laws, or the regulations of the Order, a general provision conflicts with a specific provision, the specific provision shall prevail.

M.L. ART. 195. Mutual benefit societies and clubs existing in Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont may become affiliated with the Grand Lodge.

M.L. ART. 196. No Lodge may send to another Lodge any dance, banquet, concert, raffle or picnic tickets, or tickets for any occasion, or requests for subscriptions without prior authorization of the State Council.

M.L. ART. 197. No Lodge may admit to its membership any person with a reduced admission fee without prior authorization of the State Council.

M.L. ART. 198. No Lodge may participate in a parade without previous authorization of the State Council. In a parade, every official is required to wear the sash of his/her office.

M.L. ART. 199. The official color of the Order shall be "Purple" and shall be worn on October 12, Columbus Day.

M.L. ART. 200. Members in good standing are those members not in default with their dues and assessments.

M.L. ART. 201. The members of the Order shall be referred to as "Brother" or "Sister" as the case may be.

M.L. ART. 201A. No Officer or State Officer who accepts an elective or nominative position on a committee or commission may receive compensation for such position without first receiving the permission of the body who elected or appointed him/her to accept such compensation.

M.L. ART. 202. The appointment of a Lodge Chaplain is discretionary with each Lodge.

M.L. ART. 203. Each year an outstanding man or woman may be selected and honored as such.

M.L. ART. 203A. Non-resident members who during the course of their membership in the Order Sons of Italy in America, Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, who are members in good standing, who change their legal residence from Massachusetts to another State, and find it impossible to participate in his or her Filial Lodge meeting, shall be transferred from their Lodge to the Grand Lodge rolls (non-member) at an annual fee of \$5.00 and shall be entitled to remain insurance members ONLY. One dollar of the \$5.00 fee will entitle such person to receive the Sons of Italy Magazine.

## **CHAPTER XVII**

### **STATUS OF MEMBERS ABROAD**

M.L. ART. 204. The member in good financial standing with the Financial Secretary of his/her Lodge, who goes for a visit the Financial Secretary of his/her Lodge, who goes for a visit from the payment of dues or assessments for the length of visit outside the United States, whether or not the member notifies the Lodge of their intention to leave the country.

M.L. ART. 205. The member who goes or establishes a residence abroad and later returns to the seat of his/her Lodge, in order to be re-admitted to the enjoyment of all his or her rights, must notify the Recording Secretary of the Lodge of their return within a month from the date of arrival in the United States. If the member has not previously notified their respective Lodge of their departure and during the interim of their departure was cancelled from the rolls because of default in payments, must submit to the regulations concerning re-admission or reinstatement before he or she may re-affiliate themselves with the Order.

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**APENDIX I**

**PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**

Our Order consists of thousands of men and women from every walk of life, young and old, who have associated themselves together to achieve purposes common to all. It is governed on the principle that when differences of opinion arise the will expressed by the majority is binding upon all the members. When the will of the majority on any question within the scope of the organization has been determined, and that will does not violate any superior law, and every member, either personally or by his/her elected representative has had a reasonable opportunity to vote on the question, then the will of the majority should be carried out by all the members, including those who did not vote with the majority. This is how every well-ordered society functions. Where there is a clash of opinion, therefore, the decision is made by the majority.

In order to discover the will of the majority on a given question without wasting time, without confusion, and with a minimum of friction, rules known as rules of parliamentary procedure have been evolved. These rules were not made by any one man or group of men. They have grown out of the experience of countless deliberative assemblies, great and small, extending from nearly a thousand years ago to this day.

It is not possible within the space of this section to cover more than the elements of these rules. It is felt that those who preside at our Lodge meetings, and members generally, ought to become more familiar with elementary rules of procedure and should follow them. It must be borne in mind that they should be applied at all times with tact and understanding. Let us start by stating some simple but important general rules:

1. One question, and only one, can be under consideration at any one time.
2. Only one person may have the floor at any one time.
3. No member may speak unless he is first recognized by the Chair.

There are these important exceptions to this rule:

- (a) When you rise on a point of privilege;
- (b) When you rise on a point of order, or on a point of parliamentary inquiry, or for information;
- (c) When appealing from the ruling of the Chair;
- (d) When you rise to object to the consideration of a question;
- (e) In making a motion for reconsideration.

4. No member while speaking may be interrupted by another member. To this rule there are these important exceptions:
  - (a) When you rise on a point of privilege;
  - (b) When you rise on a point of order, or on a point of parliamentary inquiry, or for information;
  - (c) When appealing from the ruling of the Chair;
  - (d) When you rise to object to the consideration of a question;
  - (e) In making a motion for reconsideration.
5. All speaking must be addressed to the Chair only. There is no exception to this rule.
6. All speaking must be confined to the matter under consideration.
7. Under our rules no member has a right to speak more than five minutes on one question. The only exception to this rule is when a member is reporting for a committee.
8. No member may speak a second time on the same question until all other members who desire to speak on the question have been heard.
9. Under our rules, a member reporting for a committee has the right to speak on a question growing out of his/her report.
10. It is never permitted to any speaker to indulge in personalities, or to use offensive or vulgar language. A speaker may not refer to another member by name.
11. When the presiding officer raps his/her gavel to restore order or to recall the speaker to the question, the speaker must stop talking until the presiding officer indicates that said speaker may proceed.

The physical arrangements at the meeting place are important aids to orderly and dignified procedure. They deserve more attention than is given them by many of our Lodges. The stations occupied by the officers ought to be symmetrically arranged, and should stand out somewhat from the seats occupied by the members. The hall and equipment should be clean and cheerful, and not dingy and depressing. Seats should be so arranged as to prevent members from sitting in the nooks and corners of the hall when more central space is available. Clean insignia are attractive and colorful, soiled ones repel the observer. The beautiful flags that nearly all our Lodges possess would be more useful assets if displayed regularly at the meetings. Finally, meetings are more successful and pleasant when members are made comfortable by providing adequate light, heat and ventilation in the hall.

The presiding officer is the leader of the members in meeting assembled.

1. He/She must be scrupulously fair and courteous to all members.
2. He/She is the arbiter of all questions of order and privilege raised by members.

3. He/She maintains order in the assembly and applies the rules impartially and tactfully.
4. He/She aids the shy or unlettered members in formulating the motions they may wish to submit to the assembly.
5. He/She stands when he/she states the motion or puts a motion to vote, or passes upon a question of order or privilege. No motion is properly before the meeting until it has been stated by the Chair.
6. He/She is attentive to the discussion.
7. He/She may not speak for or against any question unless he/she first turns the chair over to the next officer in line. Having taken part in the debate he/she does not resume the chair until the question has been voted on. But he/she may, without relinquishing the chair, give a factual explanation of the question for the guidance of the members.
8. He/she may not make motions while presiding.
9. Under our special rules he/she may vote at elections or in case of a tie vote.
10. After hearing the opinion of the Orator he/she decides all the questions of law. The decision is subject to an appeal to higher authority as provided by law.
11. On a point of order he/she may deprive a member of the floor or caution or censure him /her or even order him/her to leave the hall. This power he/she uses carefully and with restraint, but when clearly necessary he/she uses it with firmness.
12. He/She may declare a recess, or in cases of emergency dissolves the meeting.
13. He/She has a right to expect that the members will observe the rules of procedure. Without the cooperation of the members in this respect it would be impossible to conduct an orderly meeting.

Under our special rules the presence of ten members constitutes a quorum. In order that business may be transacted legally a quorum must always be present. A member may rise, and after being recognized suggest the absence of a quorum. Upon failure to obtain a quorum there can be no business transacted except to take steps to obtain one, and to take up such matters as the time to adjourn, or to take a recess, or to adjourn.

After the meeting has been duly opened, the roll of officers called, the records of the preceding regular and special meetings read, corrected, if need be, and approved, and communications read, the transaction of the business of the Lodge is properly before the meeting. Business should be transacted with expedition, but not in a hurry. Matters to be acted on by the Lodge must be presented in the form of motions, resolutions or



orders. A motion is a proposition. It should be clearly stated and must cover some matter that falls within the scope of the purposes of the order. Only one main motion, resolution or order at a time may be considered by the Lodge. While the main motion is pending only matters that are subsidiary or incidental to the main motion or matters that are of a privileged character may be presented to the meeting.

For the guidance of presiding officers and members of our Lodges we set forth the various motions that may be made and the order of their sequence. All these motions require a second unless otherwise specified, and all of them are debatable and amendable unless otherwise stated.

1. THE MAIN MOTION OR QUESTION.
2. SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS:
  - (a) Motion to postpone indefinitely. Not amendable.
  - (b) Motion to amend. An amendment to an amendment cannot be amended. That is to say, amendments in the third degree are not permitted. Motions may be amended by adding, by striking out, by inserting, by striking out and inserting, by substituting or by dividing.
  - (c) Motion to commit or refer to a committee or to recommit to a committee. May be renewed after progress.
  - (d) Motion to postpone to a definite time. Debatable only as to the propriety of postponement.
  - (e) Motion to limit or extend limit of debate. Debatable only if made as a main motion.
  - (f) Motion to close debate. Sometimes called the previous question. Not debatable. Not amendable.
  - (g) Motion to lay on the table. Not debatable. Not amendable.
3. INCIDENTAL MOTIONS:
  - (a) Motion to suspend rules. Not debatable. Not amendable.
  - (b) Withdrawal of a motion. The maker of a motion may withdraw it at any time before it is voted on, provided there is no objection made by any member. If objection is made the maker must obtain leave to withdraw by a majority vote. No second required. Not debatable. Not amendable.
  - (c) Objection to consideration. No second required. Not debatable. Not amendable.
  - (d) Points of order, parliamentary inquiry, information. No second required. Not debatable. Not amendable. Chairman decides a point of order or may submit point to a vote of the assembly without his/her decision.

(e) Appeal from the ruling of the Chair. Must be seconded. Not debatable if made when an un-debatable motion is pending. Not amendable. The presiding officer must relinquish the chair until the appeal is decided. The appeal must be made immediately after the Chair announces its ruling. The question on appeal is, "Shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained?"

4. PRIVILEGED MOTIONS:
  - (a) Question of privilege. No second required. Not amendable. The Chair decides.
  - (b) Motion to take a recess.
  - (c) Motion to adjourn. Not debatable. Not amendable. May be renewed only after some progress has been made
5. MISCELLANEOUS MOTIONS:
  - (a) Motion to reconsider. Not amendable. May not be renewed. Must be made at the same meeting at which vote sought to be reconsidered was taken. Under our special rules only members who voted with the majority on the question sought to be reconsidered may make or second a motion to reconsider. Not debatable if motion to which it applies was un-debatable. Reconstruction of a motion to reconsider is not permitted.
  - (b) Motion to rescind, repeal or annul. Motions to reconsider or to rescind are not in order if the votes sought to be reconsidered or rescinded have been acted upon by the Lodge to the extent that its position has been materially changed. A motion to rescind is not in order if a motion to reconsider may be made.

## VOTING

Our special rules provide that all motions, including even the motion to close debate, are decided by a majority vote. Our rules also require that a vote be taken by a show of hands, unless a motion is previously made and carried to vote by ballot or roll call. After a vote has been taken by a show of hands and a member doubts the vote and requests that the vote be verified by a roll call, then the vote will be so verified if at least four other members join in the request. Elections are regularly held by secret ballot. A motion to vote by ballot or roll call is not debatable. Since the judgment of the assembly is expressed by a vote it is a serious breach of order while a vote is being taken for any person to try to influence a member's vote.

Where our own laws are silent the rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order have been adopted as binding.

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