

The Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of Ohio

RICHARD A. DICKERSCHIED
GRAND MASTER
GRAND LODGE of OHIO



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

Date: May 1, 2021

RE: EDICT 2021-5 Return of In-Person Meetings

This Edict Supersedes Edicts 2021-1, 2021-3, and 2021-4.

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

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

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

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

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

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

All Stated and Special Meetings:

- **Purple** – All in-person meetings are to be held virtually using the Grand Lodge of Ohio Virtual Meeting Guidelines.
- **Red** – It is recommended in-person meeting be convened as usual, OR, by order of the Worshipful Master, a Virtual Meeting may be held to accomplish the business of a lodge using the Grand Lodge of Ohio Virtual Meeting Guidelines.
- **Orange** – In-person meeting must be convened per Masonic Code.
- **Yellow** – In-person meeting must be convened per Masonic Code.
- ❖ **Stated meetings cannot be cancelled per Ohio Masonic Code.**

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Additional:

- On premises meals/food **may** be served before or after any lodge meeting.
- Grand Master One-Day-Classes can be used in Edict 2021-2 to minimize potential risk.
- If so desired, use of Fellowcraft Team walkers (those without words to say) during Master Mason Degrees may be eliminated to promote social distancing.
- In-person candidate investigations must follow color level restrictions per this Edict, and with approval by the candidate.
- In all cases, follow CDC, State and Local Pandemic Protocols.

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

- Virtual meetings can only be opened in the Entered Apprentice Degree using the virtual opening/closing ritual approved by the Ritual Committee which is posted in Grand View under "Virtual Meeting Resources".
- A virtual stated meeting must follow all other meeting requirements per Ohio Masonic Code to open a lodge and transact business.
- Balloting or Lodge Elections are prohibited in a virtual setting.
- Virtual candidate investigations and examinations are not permitted.
- Virtual degree conferral is not permitted. Grand Lodge of Ohio Masonic Ritual as printed in our ritual book may not be discussed in a virtual setting.
- In-person meetings in combination with virtual streaming/meeting platforms are prohibited.
- Virtual education meetings may be called for purposes of education only.
- **If the Lodge Officers cannot perform a stated meeting through online (virtual) means,** all usual and customary bills for utilities, taxes, and services, normally acted favorably upon by the Lodge may be approved by the consent of the Worshipful Master, Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Secretary and Treasurer. No other business may be acted upon. Phone or email are acceptable modes of communication for this method and all transactions must be recorded by the Secretary and included in the next in-person meeting minutes of the lodge.

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In Closing:

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

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

- ❖ DO NOT feel obligated to attend lodge, or any event, until YOU are comfortable doing so.
- ❖ If you have a temperature or do not feel well, please stay home.
- ❖ Respect each other's decision pertaining to personal contact and brotherly love should always prevail.

I FURTHER DIRECT this Edict is required to be distributed immediately, read, and entered upon the minutes at the next Stated Meeting of each Lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction, and all Lodges should govern themselves accordingly. This Edict is to be in effect from 12:01am on the First day of May 2021, until midnight on October 15, 2021 unless retracted, extended, or amended by another edict.

Given under my hand and seal of the Grand Master of Masons in Ohio in the city of Springfield, Ohio, this First day of May, A.D. 2021, A.L. 6021.

Fraternally,

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

