# HANDBOOK FOR LODGE SECRETARIES

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THE OFFICE OF LODGE SECRETARY

Of all the officers of a Masonic Lodge, the Secretary is burdened by the heaviest and most vital tasks although he is outranked by the Master, Wardens and Treasurer; the importance of his work is second to none.

The Worshipful Master gives leadership and inspiration to the Lodge but it is the Secretary who must attend to all the minute details, which help insure the success of the Master’s tenure in the East.

If the Secretary is competent in handling the details of his office, does not shirk his duties and remembers that he is the servant and not the Master of the Lodge, his Brethren may rejoice in having chosen him to occupy this important position. The duties are many, and vary from Lodge to Lodge, but each Secretary assumes three important sets of responsibilities:

1) To the Lodge -- to see that all business is handled in a timely manner and that all membership and Lodge records are maintained neatly and correctly.

2) To the Membership to issue all dues receipts promptly and reply to all correspondence and inquiries as promptly as possible.

3) To the Grand Lodge to submit all reports as required and to comply with other requests within the proper time frame.

GENERAL DUTIES

The responsibilities accepted by the Lodge Secretary when he is installed are covered in the Installation of the Secretary (Page 80 of the Colorado Craftsman).

In a Masonic Lodge the Secretary is in charge of all the executive details, with the exception of those allotted to the Treasurer. In addition to the mechanical duties involved in the office, such as recording the minutes, collecting dues, maintaining membership records, etc. the Secretary is continually at the beck and call of the Master and the Brethren, arranging funeral services, sending floral tributes to bereaved families, acting as liaison officer between the members and Grand Lodge, serving as Lodge correspondent, etc.

The Secretary is responsible for preparing and mailing the Trestle board, invitations to special meetings, scheduling activities for the Temple building, and generally keeping the Lodge members informed of Lodge activities.

Constant contacts with his fellow members, affords the Secretary opportunity to serve his Lodge by spreading harmony and inculcating within the hearts and minds of his Brethren the true spirit of Masonic helpfulness. All this requires many hours of dedicated labor within and outside the confines of the Lodge Room

A Secretary should regard his work as a sacred trust and rejoice in the fact that his position offers him many opportunities to serve without encroaching upon the powers of the Master. The ideal Secretary realizes that his duties should be performed with dignity and humility and in such a manner that harmony, rather than discord, prevails in the Lodge.
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THE QUALIFICATIONS OF A LODGE SECRETARY:

A Lodge Secretary must possess a complete understanding of how the Lodge functions. Because of their past leadership, a Past Master who achieved a measure of success in the East makes the best Lodge Secretaries. They are familiar with the Lodge functions and their tenure in the East assures them of a wider acquaintance among the members, which is an asset to the Secretary who must act as liaison officer between the Lodge and the Brethren. They also possess a greater spirit of loyalty and helpfulness.

In summation, here is a list of qualifications that a good Secretary must possess:

1) He must be a member in good standing and not be delinquent in his dues.
2) He must possess administrative ability, loyalty and integrity and be morally, mentally and physically able to perform the duties required of him.
3) He must be trustworthy, scrupulously honest and prompt in the remission to the Treasurer of all the monies he collects.
4) He must be efficient, possess a knowledge of the proper procedures of his office and always maintain his books and records in order and up-to-date. His minutes should be processed carefully and accurately.
5) He must refrain from committing to paper, or bringing before the Lodge, anything which is improper, which does not have the approval of the Master or which might run contrary to the principles and landmarks of the Fraternity.
6) He should possess initiative; do the right thing in the right way without having to be told.
7) He should be modest in his demeanor and not fall into the habit of continually usurping the floor. Fewer words and more action are hallmarks of a good Secretary plus the ability to think and to learn and profit by experience.
8) He should always be dignified, especially when speaking or reading the minutes. Undue levity on the part of the Secretary detracts from the decorum of a Masonic gathering. His voice should be well modulated, never to low to be heard in the rear of the Lodge or so loud his voice can be heard outside.
9) He should be neat, not only in his attire but also in the typing or writing of the minutes or other records. Future historians will appreciate this.
10) He should be conscientious in the performance of all his duties.
11) He should be prompt. This is one of the most desirable attributes of a good Secretary, first in his place and last to leave the Lodge room. Punctuality in attendance and promptness in attending to the business of the Lodge is an essential attribute; procrastination and tardiness go hand in hand in making a poor Secretary.
12) He must be thoroughly familiar with Masonic Forms and documents and know when to use them.
13) A pleasing personality and a friendly disposition are indispensable assets, plus a character beyond reproach and the possession of a full and complete sense of personal responsibility to the Lodge and to the Brethren in general.
14) He must be familiar with the Laws of his own Lodge and his Grand Lodge, also with the Book of Constitutions.
15) He must be a good Mason and live up to its highest ideals. He must be slow to anger, quick to lend a helping hand and ever ready to visit the sick and or aid and comfort the bereaved.
PREPARING FOR THE MEETING:

Before each regular meeting of the Lodge, the Secretary and Master should sit down together and review the agenda for the meeting. Use of a sample agenda form like the one at the end of this section to outline the business for the meeting serves two purposes: 1) it helps the meeting run smoothly, and 2) it makes the Secretary's job of recording the business conducted during the meeting easier, since he has only to check off many items of business as they are conducted.

Have the minutes of the last regular, special, and emergency meetings completed. Approval of the minutes should never be dispensed with or postponed.

In advance of each regular meeting, a list of regular bills to be voted on for allowance should be prepared. Checks to cover all warrants should be written by the Treasurer after the bills are approved.

If a degree is to be conferred, the Secretary should make a friendly call to the Candidate to let him know the members of the Lodge are looking forward to receiving him and to answer any last minute questions the Candidate may have. Phone calls should also be made to the signers of the petition, reminding them to attend the meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE:

The Secretary is responsible, at the Lodge meeting, for informing the membership of correspondence that has been received. This does not mean that all letters, invitations, etc. must be read aloud word for word, but briefly summarize for the members the contents of a letter.

The one exception is correspondence received from the Grand Master containing the direction that the letter is to be read at the next regular meeting of the Lodge. This correspondence must always be read verbatim.

If correspondence is summarized, the Secretary may want to have the letters available on his desk after the meeting for anyone who wants to read them.

AFTER THE MEETING:

All notifications of Degree Work, investigating committee assignments, certificates to be issued, dimits granted, etc., should be completed and mailed the day following the meeting. Much of the paper work can be prepared in advance, at the same time the agenda for the meeting is determined. It is then ready to mail immediately after approval.

MONTHLY REPORTING:

A monthly report is to be prepared and submitted to the Grand Lodge Office each month, even if there is no change in membership during the month. This report is due by the 10th day of the following month. (See Monthly Reports in the Reports Section of this Manual)

ANNUAL LODGE DUES:

The collection and recording of all members’ dues and the issuance of dues cards is one of the Secretary's most important responsibilities. (See Lodge Dues Section of this Manual)
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MEMBERSHIP - DEGREE WORK – AFFILIATIONS, ETC.

The Grand Secretary must always route all requests involving Lodges in other Grand Jurisdictions as well as responses to requests from other Colorado Lodges through the Grand Lodge Office for certification.

ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE SAMPLES OF A MEETING AGENDA AND AN ANNUAL CHECKLIST OF RESPONSIBILITIES, WHICH YOU MIGHT FIND USEFUL. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THESE ARE SAMPLE FORMS.

A very important aspect of the Secretary's job is the faithful recording of the proceedings of the Lodge under the direction of the Worshipful Master and transcribing them into a regular Minute Book. They are then read at the next regular stated communication, with the Worshipful Master and Secretary both signing them.

Minutes of the proceeding should be accurate, well written or typed. They must include everything pertinent to the work of the evening so that future historians may form a complete and comprehensive picture of what transpired at every meeting.

**SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR LODGE MINUTES**

**A. Regular Order of Business**

After the Lodge is opened in regular communication, the following order of business, subject to the will and pleasure of the Worshipful Master, may be followed unless you have an order of business in your bylaws:

1. Recognition of Past Masters
2. Recognition of Visitors
3. Reading, correcting, approving, and signing by the Worshipful Master of the minutes of the last regular communication and all subsequent communications.
4. Correspondence
5. Bills
6. Reading and Referring Petitions
7. Reports of Committees on Petitions
8. Balloting on Petitions
9. Unfinished Business
10. New Business
11. Good of the Order
B. Minutes of Regular Communication
______________________________ Colorado, ____________________ 20 ____,
______________________________ Lodge No. _____________ A.F. & A.M., met at ____________________
Masonic Temple at ____________ p.m. The Lodge was opened on the ____________ Degree. The
following Officers were in their Stations and Places:
Worshipful Brother _______________________________ Worshipful Master
Brother ________________________________ Senior Warden
Brother ________________________________ Junior Warden
Brother ________________________________ Treasurer
Brother ________________________________ Secretary
Brother ________________________________ Senior Deacon
Brother ________________________________ Junior Deacon
Brother ________________________________ Senior Steward
Brother ________________________________ Junior Steward
Brother ________________________________ Chaplain
Brother ________________________________ Marshal
Brother ________________________________ Tiler

If, due to absence of any of the above officers, an office is filled by a substitute, indicate by using
the word “as” before the station. As an example:

Brother John B. Smith ________________________________ as Senior Deacon

The visitors should be recorded by name, number and location of each visitor’s respective Lodge.

Reading of Minutes

The reading of the last regular and all intervening communications were read, approved and signed by
the Worshipful Master.

Reading of Correspondence

All correspondence should be summarized.

Bills

The following bills were read, and on motion were allowed and warrants ordered drawn on the
Treasurer for the same. List all bills and reflect who, from, and for what.

Reading and Referring of Petitions

A Petition for the Degrees of Freemasonry from (___ Full Name___) in the proper form prescribed by
the Grand Lodge, recommended by Brothers (___ Names_______), and accompanied by the fee of
$______, was read, received and referred to the following committee: (List the names of those serving
on the committee reflecting the Chairman as such) Mr. (___ Name___), was born (___ Date___) in (___ Place___),
he was resides at (___ Address___), and his occupation is (___ Occupation___)
HANDBOOK FOR LODGE SECRETARIES

Reports on Committee on Petitions

The committee to which was referred the Petition of (____Full Name____), for the Degrees/Affiliation reported thereon, the report was read, and the Ballot ordered.

Balloting

The Ballot was spread on the petition of (____Full Name____) and he was declared elected/rejected.

Calling from Labor to Refreshment

By Order of the Worshipful Master, the Lodge was called from Labor to Refreshment at _________ o’clock p.m.

Calling from Refreshment to Labor

By Order of the Worshipful Master, the Lodge was called from Refreshment to Labor at _________ o’clock p.m.

Work

Brother (____Full Name____) was Examined on his Proficiency in the (____Name Degree____) in compliance with Section 178 of the Book of Constitutions.

Balloting on Advancement

The Ballot was spread on the Petition for Advancement of (____Full Name____) to the Degree of (____Name Degree____) and being found clear his Petition was granted.

When all business has been transacted, the record should read:

No further business appearing, the Lodge was closed at _______ p.m., with peace and harmony prevailing.

There were _________ members present.

Attest:

_________________________ _____________________
Secretary Worshipful Master

It is sad that some Lodges have not preserved their Minute Books. Their value is not realized until someone comes along and wants to write the history of past events. Secretaries should always insure that the Old Minute Books are safely stored away. They hold a great deal more history than you may realize. Many generations in the future the Brethren will award you a silent vote of thanks for having written and preserved these old records. The minutes of today are the history of tomorrow.

I will also refer you to page 10 of the Book of Forms which states “Each Lodge shall keep the following books and account, which shall be made of paper of good quality, and bound in a substantial manner. Any one or all of such books may be in what is known as loose-leaf form providing the pages are properly numbered to insure against loss of any record. (The Book of Forms is regulated by Section 67 of the Book of Constitutions)
HANDBOOK FOR LODGE SECRETARIES

1. A Minute Book, or Book of Record, in which shall be recorded all the proceedings of the Lodge which may with Masonic propriety be reduced to writing. A printed blank form of minutes shall not be used, but the Minute Book may contain printed headings for each communication, showing the titles of Officers of the Lodge.

Also, please be aware that in the age of computer use it is not legal to keep the Lodge Minutes on a computer. Minutes must be in written form and kept on paper.
CHECKLIST OF MONTHLY RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUE DATES

JANUARY
10th monthly report and address changes due to the Grand Lodge
10th Per-Capita due to be paid to the Grand Lodge
4th Friday – Grand Lodge Annual Communication

FEBRUARY
10th monthly report and address changes due to the Grand Lodge
Mail Delinquent Dues Notices

MARCH
10th monthly report and address changes due to the Grand Lodge
Mail 2nd Delinquent Dues Notices

APRIL
10th monthly report and address changes due to the Grand Lodge
10th monthly report and address changes due to the Grand Lodge
Read names of members subject to suspension, send letter by Certified Mail to appear at the first Stated Communication in June to show cause why they should not be suspended for non-payment of dues
Order Dues Cards for the next year form the Grand Lodge

MAY
10th monthly report and address changes due to the Grand Lodge (Your Lodges Per-Capita is based on this report)

JUNE
Vote on Members subject for suspension – Notify suspended members
30th Educational Grant Awards due in the Grand Lodge Office

JULY
10th monthly report and address changes due to the Grand Lodge
Send reminders of Unpaid Dues

AUGUST
10th monthly report and address changes due to the Grand Lodge
First Saturday – Anniversary Communication of the Grand Lodge

SEPTEMBER
10th monthly report and address changes due to the Grand Lodge
Order Notices, envelopes, etc., in preparation for the Dues Notices

OCTOBER
10th monthly report and address changes due to the Grand Lodge
Proposed Changes to the Book of Constitutions to the Grand Lodge
10th monthly report and address changes due to the Grand Lodge
Prepare Annual Report for Grand Lodge
Prepare for Annual Audit and closing of the Lodge Books for the Year
Mail Dues Notices

NOVEMBER
10th monthly report and address changes due to the Grand Lodge
15th Election of the Lodge Officers Report due to Grand Lodge
10th Annual Summary of Membership due to Grand Lodge Office
Annual Audit of Lodge Books
PETITION FOR THE DEGREES

(Form No. 19)

A Petition for the Degrees should be thoroughly completed and signed by the Petitioner before it is read at a regular stated communication of the Lodge. It is the responsibility of the Brethren recommending the petitioner to insure the form has been completed in its entirety.

FEES

The Petition must be accompanied by the fees for the Degrees as set forth in Grand Lodge Law and the Lodges by-laws. The petition must not be read and received by the Lodge unless the required fees accompany it.

When received, the fees are to be paid over to the Treasurer and deposited as part of the Lodge funds. The fees are not to be held by the Secretary until the result of the ballot is known. If a petition is rejected, the fees are refunded to the petitioner from the Lodge funds by a warrant drawn on the treasury.

RECEIVING THE PETITION AND REFERRAL TO A COMMITTEE

The Secretary will read the petition at a Stated Communication of the Lodge when called upon to do so by the Worshipful Master. After the reading, the Worshipful Master will assign an Investigating Committee in Open Lodge consisting of at least three (3) members of the Lodge, none of which shall have recommended the petitioner. (Section 159, Book of Constitutions)

The names of the Committee Members are noted in the space provided on the reverse side of the petition. Immediately following the reading and referring of the petition, the Secretary should prepare a report from the petition showing name, address, phone number, place and date of birth, occupation, names of recommenders, and provide this information to the Chairman of the Investigating Committee. (Section 159, Book of Constitutions)

The Investigating Committee should conduct a complete and detailed investigation of the petitioner. A pamphlet, "Duties of the Investigating Committee" is available from the Grand Lodge Office to provide members of the Committee general guidelines for conducting the investigation. (Section 161, Book of Constitutions.)

BALLOTING

The Petition must be balloted on at the same meeting that the Investigating Committee makes its report. The Committee can report and the Petition can be balloted upon at the next subsequent communication after the reference of the Petition to the Committee. The minutes of the meeting shall indicate the Committee reported, however, they shall show no fact of record as to the report being Favorable or Unfavorable. (Section 169, 175, 177, 180, 181, and 183 Book of Constitutions)

When the Worshipful Master calls for Balloting, the Secretary again reads the Petition to the members of the Lodge before the Ballot is cast.

If the Ballot is Favorable, the Secretary should promptly inform the Petitioner in writing of his Election, send him a receipt for his fees, and inform him where and when to report to receive his Entered Apprentice Degree.
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If the Petitioner is rejected, the Secretary must promptly inform the Petitioner of this in writing and return his fees to him. The Petitioner is entitled to no other information other than he has been rejected. (Section 184, Book of Constitutions)

RECORDING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A report is required to Grand Lodge for Rejected Petitioners on monthly report; the Secretary also needs to make a record of the same in the minutes of the Lodge meeting and record the results of the ballot on the reverse of the Petition. The Petition must be carefully preserved in the archives as one of the important records of the Lodge.

FORM OF PETITION

Lodges may prepare and have printed their own Petitions. However, it shall be in the form required for such purposes by the Grand Lodge, and must embrace all of the matter contained within the form adopted by the Grand Lodge. (Section 149, Book of Constitutions)

NOTICE OF ELECTION TO RECEIVE THE DEGREES

The Petitioner should be notified in writing of his Election to receive the Degrees. The notification should also acknowledge receipt of all fees accompanying the Petition.

The following are suggestions only, but it is believed they will aid in making the Candidate feel welcome and at ease during his initiation and increase his awareness of the personal fellowship that is a gratifying part of the fraternity:

1. A letter like the sample below, on your Lodge's letterhead, noting the date and time of initiation, the address of the Lodge, should be provided the Candidate for his information.

2. A copy of the letter should be sent to the signers of the petition.

3. If the investigation shows the man has relatives in the area whom are Masons, they should be notified of the Candidate's election and invited to attend the Initiation.

4. A member of the Lodge, preferably one of the Brothers signing the petition, should make arrangements to pick up the Candidate on the night of Initiation, take him to Lodge, and return him home afterwards.
HANDBOOK FOR LODGE SECRETARIES
SAMPLE LETTER OF NOTIFICATION

Dear (Name)

It is my pleasure to notify you that at the Stated Communication of ___________ Lodge No. ___________ A.F. & A.M. held on the day of ________ 20 ____. You were elected to receive the Degrees of Masonry.

The Worshipful Master requests, therefore, that you present yourself at the Lodge located at (Address) on (date) at (time), for Initiation.

If for any reason, you cannot appear at the above time, please notify the undersigned as receipt of $__________ with your petition is hereby acknowledged.

Fraternally,

________________________
Secretary

NOTIFICATION OF REJECTION OF PETITION

It is the Secretaries responsibility to notify, in writing, any man whose Petition for the Degrees is rejected for whatever reason. Any fees that accompanied the Petition are to be returned at the time the notification of Rejection is sent. This is on a Lodge check.

The Secretary shall record in the minutes that the Petition was rejected, either by objection or on ballot. If an objection is made against the petitioner, the identity of the objector and the reasons for the objection are not to be included in the minutes.

Report of the Rejected Petition is required to Grand Lodge on the Monthly Report

Below is a sample letter to use for Notification of Rejection:

SAMPLE LETTER OF NOTIFICATION OF REJECTION

Dear Sir:

I regret to inform you that a Regular Communication of _____ Lodge No. _____ A.F. & A.M. held on the day of ________, 20 ____, your Petition for the Degrees was denied.

Your fee of $___________, which accompanied the Petition at the time of presentation, is herewith returned.

Yours respectfully,

________________________
Secretary
The Secretary can make a worthwhile contribution to Masonry by writing a personal letter to each newly Raised member. If the letter is properly worded and encourages the new Mason to evince a continuing interest in the Fraternity, it would help to cement the ties that bind him to his Mother Lodge. Such a letter is reproduced below:

Dear Brother ____________:

Having consummated your membership in the Masonic Fraternity, we presume you are anxious to understand thoroughly the step you have just taken.

The exact nature of our Fraternity being still new to you, we deem it advisable to inform you on certain points, the knowledge of which will give you a broader view of the organization you have just joined.

Freemasonry interferes neither with your religion nor politics, but has for its foundation the great principles of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Freemasonry strives to teach a man the duty he owes to God, his neighbor, and to himself. It includes the practice of virtue and makes an extensive use of symbolism in its teachings.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that Freemasonry is not to be embraced in the hope of personal gain or advancement nor for mercenary or unworthy motives. Anyone so actuated will be bitterly disappointed. The true aim of Masonry is to cultivate a Brotherly feeling among men.

Freemasonry is not a benefit society. We do not subscribe so much a year to entitle us to draw sick pay or other benefits, or to make provision for those who survive us. No man should enter the ranks of our Fraternity in the hope or expectation of deriving any financial benefit from it. Masonic Charity is directed only toward those who, from adverse circumstances and through no fault of their own, have met with misfortune.

Loyalty to one’s country is an essential Qualification in Freemasonry. Disloyalty, in any form is abhorrent to a Mason and is regarded as a serious Masonic offense.

Your admission to the Craft entails certain financial obligations and these can be discharged without detriment to yourself and those dependent upon you. This annual subscription, or dues, is for the support of your Lodge and the Grand Lodge and their work.

May I suggest that you avail yourself to some of the many books that have been published on the subject of Freemasonry in order that you may learn more about the lofty Principles of the Fraternity?

If I can be of assistance to you, or recommend a course of Masonic reading that will help you to a better understanding of the organization of which you are now a member, please do not hesitate to call on me.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

_____________________

Secretary
A. BETWEEN COLORADO LODGES

The Secretaries of the two Lodges involved may handle requests for Degree Work between Colorado Lodges. The Secretary of the Lodge requesting the work should complete a request (form 61) and forward it to the Secretary of the Lodge being requested to do the work. The Secretary of the Lodge Conferring the Degrees should promptly notify the Candidate's home Lodge of the date each Degree is conferred (Form 62). The collection of all fees and assessments is the responsibility of the requesting Lodge. BOTH Lodges report the dates of the Degree Work on the Monthly Report. A simple notation such as "Courtesy for Lodge No. _____should be included as appropriate. The Lodge Conferring the Degrees does not include the activity in the recapitulation at the end of the Monthly Report. The Lodge for whom the Degrees were conferred does.

B. BETWEEN GRAND JURISDICTIONS

Requests for Degree Work by a Lodge in another Grand Jurisdiction must have the approval of the Grand Lodge. Therefore, these requests must be routed through the Grand Lodge Office.

A request should be completed by the Lodge Secretary and forwarded to the Grand Lodge Office. If the exact name and number of the Lodge that will be doing the Courtesy Work is unknown by the Lodge Secretary, it will be forwarded to the Grand Lodge of the Jurisdiction that will be doing the courtesy Work and request them to assign a Lodge. This is to be accomplished by the Grand Lodge and not by the Constituent Lodge.

The collection of all fees is the responsibility of the requesting Lodge.

The Grand Lodge Office will notify the Lodge as they receive word of the dates the Brother’s Degrees are conferred. Should this information be conveyed directly to the Secretary of the Lodge requesting the work by the other Lodge, the Grand Lodge Office should be notified by the Lodge Secretary of the dates on his next monthly report. This is required that the Grand Lodge might maintain its records.

PETITION FOR ADVANCEMENT

An Entered Apprentice or a Fellow Craft may apply for advancement by appearing at any Stated Communication of the Lodge and Standing Examination upon his Proficiency in the Lecture of the appropriate Degree. Presenting himself for standing such examination shall be considered his Petition for Advancement.

The ballot for advancement shall not be spread until after his examination, nor at any other communication than at the one at which he was examined.

Results of the ballot apply as any other ballot on Candidates.

An Entered Apprentice or a Fellow Craft who did not stand his Proficiency and advance within two (2) years after taking the Degree and who now wishes to complete his Degree Work must submit a Petition for Reinstatement (Form 52). The petitioner should thoroughly complete all questions on the Petition. This Petition for Reinstatement is to be acted upon the same as a Petition for the Degrees. (Section 172 of the Book of Constitutions)
HANDBOOK FOR LODGE SECRETARIES

LODGE DUES

One of the most vexing problems, which confront the Lodge Secretary, is the collection of annual dues. Although no sure fire remedy has been discovered which will solve the matter of getting members to meet their obligations promptly, the situation may be brought under control if (1) the Secretary understands why dues are essential to the stability of a Lodge and (2) he make a determined effort to collect them and does not allow an account to fall so far in arrears that the member is lost through Suspension.

Dues play an important role in the operation of the Lodge and the Lodge Secretary must be depended upon to see that they are collected. If he is lax and allows members to fall behind a Lodge can suffer serious financial set-backs, and serious loss of membership through Suspensions.

Many Lodge Members do not realize the necessity for them to pay the annual dues. A prepared statement could be sent with dues notices to demonstrate the importance of paying dues.

Such a statement could read:

A very substantial part of every dollar you pay into the Lodge Treasury in the form of dues is used to pay the Grand Lodge Per-Capita levied against every member.

This represents a very vital and important contribution by Masons, not only for the support of normal activities of the Grand Lodge, but also for the upkeep of it’s very generous outside work among indigent Masons, their widows and orphans.

The balance of your dues is used to defray the cost of the following Lodge expenditures:

1. Rental of the Lodge room.
2. Expense and upkeep of the Lodge equipment such as:
   A. Cost of Candidates' Bible
   B. Candidates' costumes
   C. Laundry, replacement of worn-out equipment, etc.
   D. Charitable disbursements to needy Brethren, widows and orphans
   E. Support of social activities.
3. Other Lodge expenses, including cost of printing, stationery, postage, dues cards, forms and certificates, floral tributes to departed members, etc.

When a member receives a statement of this nature to explain where his dollars are used, the changes are he is going to pay his dues promptly, especially if he values his Masonic affiliation. If he doesn’t then no amount of explaining is going to make him pay and the Fraternity would be better off if his name is erased from the membership rolls.

The Lodge Secretary should always examine extenuating and unusual circumstances such as when a Brother is in dire need or jobless. In these cases provisions should be made of the Remission of the Brothers dues.

Dues for the current year are due and payable January 1st of each year.

Dues reminder notices should be mailed to all members of the Lodge no later than November. If a member has not paid his dues for the current year, a reminder that those dues must also be paid should be sent at this time. Each Lodge is responsible for preparing its own form of dues notices. The
HANDBOOK FOR LODGE SECRETARIES

Grand Lodge Office will supply printed dues cards, provided that you send a purchase order for the same.

When collecting dues, don't forget that a member may, by paying 20 times his Lodge dues plus per capita, purchase a Perpetual Membership, guaranteeing income to his Lodge in perpetuity. Encourage members of the Lodge to consider the Perpetual Membership Program. (Section 129(e), Book of Constitutions)

Immediately after receiving a member's dues, the Secretary should prepare and sign a current dues card and mail it to the Brother.

If a member has not paid his dues by February, it is recommended that a reminder should be sent by the Lodge Secretary and followed up with subsequent letters.

DELIQUENT MEMBERS

The problem of dues delinquency is not always caused by lack of finances. Very often it results from lack of interest on the part of the Lodge in newly Raised Brethren and those whose age and health do not permit them to attend meetings regularly. Other factors, which aggravate the problem, are uninteresting programs, an unfriendly Lodge room atmosphere, lengthy and boring meetings. This creates a problem when the Secretary attempts to collect dues.

Some suggestions for tackling this vexatious problem.

1. Perhaps in March send a letter to each member in arrears with his notice of dues explaining how his dues are used.

2. Impress upon the delinquent member that a Lodge operates financially along the lines of any business and that dues are its only source of income.

In April it would be a good idea to forward a letter to each Brother that is in arrears with his dues, not only as a follow up to give the Brother another opportunity to pay his dues prior to the start of Suspension action which should start in May.

An example of such a letter might be as follows:

Dear Brother ______________:

A short time ago I wrote to you about the dues you owe the Lodge. Evidently we, as a Lodge, have made some sort of error or we would have received your dues by now. If we have failed in our obligations to you in any way we would like to be made aware of such oversight that we might correct the situation or to prevent such an occurrence in the future. If you are suffering some sort of financial or physical difficulty please let us know that we might assist in some small way. Your Lodge does have a Benevolent Fund, which is for this type of purpose and we would be glad to remit your dues if the situation warrants assistance.

Please let us hear from you even if we do not like the answer that we will receive.

Sincerely and Fraternally,

Secretary
HANDBOOK FOR LODGE SECRETARIES

Each May the Secretary should read the names of all members that are Delinquent in their dues. A letter should be sent to these members notifying them to appear at the first Stated Communication in June, to show cause why they should not be suspended from Membership for Non-payment of Dues. This letter is to be delivered by a Master Mason or by Certified Mail, at least 20 days prior to the date the member is to appear.

A sample of such letter might appear as follows:

Dear Brother ________:

The by-laws of the Lodge provide that a member who is in arrears in dues payment for one year shall be suspended from membership unless the dues shall have been paid to the Secretary before June 1st.

As you can see from the enclosed statement, you are one of our members who will be affected, since your dues remain unpaid.

Although this indebtedness has been called to your attention on several previous occasions, no remittance has been received to date, nor have you explained why this amount remains unpaid.

In accordance with our by-laws, you are hereby given notice to appear at the Stated Communication on June _______, 200_ to show cause why you should not be suspended from membership for non-payment of dues.

If no action is forthcoming, action to suspend you from membership will be taken by the Lodge, unless you have made payment or have given the Lodge good and sufficient reason why such drastic action should not be taken.

I sincerely hope you will make immediate full or partial payment at once or notify me why you are unable to do so.

Sincerely,

Secretary

Each June the names of the Delinquent Members shall be read and the Lodge will vote, by written ballot, on their Suspension of Membership for non-payment of dues. If the majority do not ballot for Suspension, the dues shall be declared remitted and the funds taken from the Lodge’s Benevolent or Charity Fund if available. If the Ballot is for Suspension, the Secretary shall immediately notify the member of such action.

Members Suspended for Nonpayment of Dues (NPD) are to be reported on the next Monthly Report.

One fact to always bear in mind is this: Every collection letter should aim to collect the money without sacrificing good will or violating the common Masonic courtesies. Remember that a letter is a human contact across space, this means of bridging the gap between one person and another. It should be phrased as though you were talking to someone across the table. This, of course, can only be done if the letter writer puts his own personality into his missives, giving them warmth and the human touch. A good letter writer always places himself in the other fellow’s shoes by only making appeals to which he himself would readily respond. He also knows that a friendly letter is the one that generally produces the best results.
HANDBOOK FOR LODGE SECRETARIES

REMISSION OF DUES

Special situations, such as financial hardship or the failing mental competency of a Brother, may warrant special consideration by the Lodge. Any Brother may choose to pay another Brother’s Dues. By majority vote, a Lodge may remit all or part of a Member's Dues and pay, out of Lodge funds, the Grand Lodge Per Capita.

REINSTATEMENT AFTER SUSPENSION

Any member Suspended for non-payment of dues for less than two years may be reinstated to Good Standing by bringing his dues current. No action or approval of the Lodge is required. The Secretary will announce the member's restoration at the next Regular Communication.

Any member who does not bring his dues current within two years from the date of his Suspension may not be reinstated to Good Standing without first Petitioning the Lodge for Reinstatement and paying the arrearage in dues to the date of his Suspension plus current year’s dues. A majority vote, by written ballot is required for Reinstatement.

RETURNS AND REPORTS

Of paramount importance to the individual Lodge and the Grand Lodge is the manner in which the Secretary prepares and submits his returns and reports.

Every Lodge Secretary is, or should be, familiar with the procedure of preparing and filing these reports since the Grand Lodge Office issues specific instructions on how they are to be processed.

One of the most difficult duties of the Grand Lodge Office is to keep the membership roll correct and up to date, and the only way this can be accomplished is with the wholehearted cooperation of the Lodge Secretaries. Our sole means of obtaining this information is through your reports.

To facilitate the work of compiling the reports, sufficient copies, to last an entire year, are mailed to each Lodge Secretary in November annually.

The four most vital reports are the Monthly Activity Report, the Annual Anniversary Per-Capita Report, the Election of Officers Report and the Annual Summary of Membership Report.

MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORTS

The Monthly Activity Reports are the primary source of information the Grand Lodge Office has for maintaining accurate membership records. Even if there are no gains or losses for a Lodge during the month, an activity report is to be submitted to the Grand Lodge Office by the 10th day of the following month. This requirement is stated in Section 68 of the Grand Lodge Book of Constitutions.

With the computerization of records it is more important than ever that complete and accurate reports be submitted on a timely basis.

PLEASE USE THE MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT AS REVISED JUNE 2010 (see sample). It has been designed to make the Secretary's job easier in reporting the information and to clarify certain areas that were confusing on the previous report. It also requests data not covered on previous versions of the report.

The same form should be used for the Lodge's file copy and for the copy submitted to Grand Lodge.
In all cases a member's full given name, with at least a middle initial should be provided. For common last names such as Smith or Peterson, providing the man's full middle name will help identify his record. Add Sr. or Jr. if applicable.

Please type or print neatly and ensure the member's name is spelled correctly.

**Section - Gains:**
Report all Degree Work, as well as the date a Brother is proven Proficient in the Master Mason Degree.

All Information should be provided for individuals receiving their EA Degree. When reporting further Degree Work, only the Brother's name and appropriate Degree Date(s) need be included, unless a member has Petitioned for Advancement after two years and is now receiving his FC or MM Degree. Then all information should be provided.

The Proficiency date is extremely important. Do not neglect reporting when a Brother is proven proficient.

If Degree Work is done as a Courtesy by the reporting Lodge for another Lodge, this work should be reported and noted as Courtesy Work with the member's home Lodge name and number provided. (If a Brother is raised as a Courtesy, he should not be included in the summary count on the back page by the Lodge performing the work.) If another Lodge has performed Degree Work as a Courtesy for the reporting lodge, “Degree Work” should be included on the lodge's report as soon as the Lodge is notified of the dates. The name and number of the Lodge performing the degree work should be noted on the report.

**Section - Affiliations or Plural Membership**
Include the Brother's full name and address, including zip code, and specify in the space provided if this is an Affiliation by Dimit or a Plural Membership. The brother's former/parent Lodge and Degree Dates are extremely important, especially if the other Lodge is in a different Grand Jurisdiction. Unless all blanks are completed, the Grand Lodge Office cannot establish an accurate record for this new member.

**Section - Dimits or Terminations of Plural Membership**
All blanks should be completed. The information regarding the Lodge the Brother is Dimitting to is essential.

**Section - Deceased Members:**
Although it may not seem very important, please provide the occupation. If retired, please indicate the occupation before retirement. The birth date is also important; it many times assures us we have the correct member, especially if more than one member in a Lodge has the same or similar name. If the exact date of death is not known, please provide at least the month and year of his death.

**Section - Reinstatements**
The member's name is not enough when reporting a Reinstatement. The exact date of Reinstatement is vital for future determination of the member's length of membership. All blanks must be completed for each member Reinstated. Include the zip code when reporting the Brother's current address. Including the member's address will help the Grand Lodge Office identify him on the computer.

**Section - Suspensions:**
The member’s full name and exact Date of Suspension should be entered.
Section - Recapitulation:

The Recapitulation is extremely important. It is to the Lodge’s benefit for the Secretary to insure the count is completely accurate each month. The membership count reported here is used by Grand Lodge to determine Per-Capita fees due by a Lodge at the end of the year.

The beginning count, "Members at end of Last month", should always match exactly the ending count of the previous months report. Check to be sure it does. The gains and losses for the month are marked in the appropriate spaces. If an adjustment to the membership count is necessary, a brief explanation should be included.

If there is no activity during the reporting month, a beginning and ending membership count must still be written in.

It is important to remember that member losses not reported in a timely manner may be included in your Lodge’s membership count on the next years Annual Return. This means your Lodge will be charged the Grand Lodge Per-Capita for members in a year in which they did not pay dues to your Lodge.

If a Brother, Suspended for Non-Paymen of dues is known to hold Plural Membership in another Colorado Lodge or in another Grand Jurisdiction, include the name, number, and location of the other Lodge so that the Grand Lodge Office may notify the other Lodge of the change in the Status of this Brother’s membership in your Lodge.

ADDRESS CHANGES:

It is extremely important that address changes for members are reported to the Grand Lodge Office on a monthly basis. Mail these changes with each Month's Activity Report.

The Grand Lodge Office provides forms for address change reporting and are included in the annual mailing that is sent the later part of October or the first part of November each year. Additional forms may be acquired upon request. A number of Lodges have their own forms that they use for more than one purpose and other Lodges use computer generated reports for reporting changes.

Every quarter the Grand Lodge Office will provide (by request) the Secretary with a printout of the data-base containing the information in the Grand Lodge computer. The Secretary is requested to mark up the printout showing changes and return it to Grand Lodge. We cannot accept your roster for this purpose, as it would require the staff to cross check each and every member for corrections. Keeping in mind that your Lodge is just one of one hundred and thirty and with over fifteen thousand members in the state that would be an insurmountable task.

Any format is acceptable to the Grand Lodge provided the following information is included and NEATLY TYPES OR PRINTED.

1. Lodge name and number (Need only to appear one if more than one address change is being reported).
2. Members full name, including Jr., Sr., etc., if appropriate
3. Members new address, including Zip Code
HANDBOOK FOR LODGE SECRETARIES

ELECTION OF OFFICERS REPORT

This report is to be completed and mailed to the Grand Lodge Office immediately following elections. By Constitution the Election of Officers is to be done at the First Stated Communication in December. This report is due in Grand Lodge office no later than December 15. Do Not Wait to Mail This Report With The Monthly Report. This report is used to prepare the Directory and is vital in order to get the Directory printed on time to be distributed at Annual Sessions.

The report is to be submitted even if the same Officers are to serve for the coming year.

Please type or print the information. This will help reduce errors in the Grand Lodge Directory.

Complete the information about the Lodge's meeting date, time and location. Some Lodges change dates and meeting times, the only way this information can be accurate is with these reports. Please remember if your Lodge changes its meeting time or place it will require a by-law amendment approved by the Grand Master.

A mailing address, including zip codes, needs to be listed for each officer. Two addresses are requested for the Lodge Secretary: his home address and, if different, his mailing address. The mailing address will be listed in the Grand Lodge Directory and all correspondence will be sent to this address. UPS is used to mail large items and they will not deliver to a P.O. Box, therefore, a street address is requested.

Colorado has multiple Area Codes, therefore, please indicate Areas Codes along with phone numbers. Also, indicate which phone number, business or residence, is to be printed in the Directory. If none is indicated, both numbers will be printed.

If any of the information changes during the year, it is requested the Grand Lodge Office be informed as soon as possible.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP PER-CAPITA REPORT

This report is to determine Per-Capita that each Lodge will be responsible for paying. It is to be prepared and mailed to the Lodge Secretary in May of each year. It must be completed in its entirety and returned to the Grand Lodge Office prior to July 10th, each year. If this report is not prepared and returned to the Grand Lodge Office, the numbers on the last report filed or the total number of members in the Grand Lodge data-base will be used, without regard of plural members, to determine the number of members for Per-Capita purposes. If this report is not filed it may cost your Lodge an unnecessary liability.

Section 2. Include all members, including Dual and Plural members.

Section 3. List Plural Members and their mother Lodge. Plural Members are those members who belong to two or more Colorado Lodges. The mother Lodge of this member pays his Per-Capita and all other Lodges of which he is a member are exempt.

Section 4. Total number of members on which the Lodge will pay Per-Capita.

Dual Members are members who belong to a Colorado Lodge and a Lodge in another State. These members are required to pay Per-Capita.

The numbers as reported on this Report are used by the Finance Committee at the Anniversary Communication (1st Saturday in August) to determine the total number of members within the Grand Lodge.
HANDBOOK FOR LODGE SECRETARIES

Jurisdiction of Colorado and from that number the Per-Capita is established. Any report received after the 1st of August cannot be used and those numbers become useless.

YEAR END MEMBERSHIP REPORT

This report is a recap of all the work done by the Lodge in the past year and reflects a recap of membership changes during the year.

This report is due in the Grand Lodge Office prior to December 10th of each year and is required by Section 68 of the Book of Constitutions.
MONTHLY REPORT
Lodge No. A.F. & A.M.

Month/Year

At the regular communications of this Lodge during the above month, the following business, required to be reported to the Grand Lodge, was transacted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOSSES</th>
<th>DEATHS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Birth Date</td>
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<tr>
<th>EXPULSIONS</th>
<th>DIMITS</th>
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<td>Name</td>
<td>Birth Date</td>
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<tr>
<th>REJECTIONS</th>
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<td>Name</td>
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<tr>
<th>RECAPITULATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership  First of Month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gains: Raised</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Losses: Deaths</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership End of Month (A+B-C=D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members not yet Raised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Members per Roster</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Master Mason Proficiencies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
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Signature of Secretary: Sec Phone #: Date
MONTHLY REPORT (Page 2)

Lodge No. ________ A.F. & A.M.

Month/Year

GAINS
(Only record as gain on front sheet after raised)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Name:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Petition Date:</td>
<td>Petition Date:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Address:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Date of Birth: | Date Initiated: | Date of Birth: | Date Initiated: |
| Date Passed: | Date Raised: | Date Passed: | Date Raised: |

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<th>Name:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Petition Date:</td>
<td>Petition Date:</td>
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<td>Address:</td>
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| Date of Birth: | Date Initiated: | Date of Birth: | Date Initiated: |
| Date Passed: | Date Raised: | Date Passed: | Date Raised: |

AFFILIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Affiliation: Primary</td>
<td>Type of Affiliation: Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>Plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual</td>
<td>Dual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Address:</td>
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</table>

| Date of Birth: | Date Initiated: | Date of Birth: | Date Initiated: |
| Date Passed: | Date Raised: | Date Passed: | Date Raised: |
| Lodge Last a Member of: | Lodge Last a Member of: |
| Location: | Date Affiliated: | Location: | Date Affiliated: |

REINSTATEMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Name:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Address:</td>
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</table>

| Date of Birth: | Date Initiated: | Date of Birth: | Date Initiated: |
| Date Passed: | Date Raised: | Date Passed: | Date Raised: |
| Date Suspended: | Date Reinstated: | Date Suspended: | Date Reinstated: |
### Annual Summary of Membership Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Sub Total</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Total Members as of December 1, (year before)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Total Raised in (current year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Affiliated in (current year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Reinstated in (current year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Total Increase in (current year) (Add Lines 2 thru 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Members as of November 30, (current year) (Add Lines 1 and 5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Deaths in (current year)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Demits in (current year)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Suspended in (current year)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Expelled in (current year)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Total Loss in (current year) (Add Lines 7 thru 10)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Recap of the Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Sub Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Total Members as of November 30, (current year) (Sub. Line 6 from 11)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Plural Member (In State)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Dual Members (Out of State)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Total E.A.’s for (current year)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Total F.C.’s for (current year)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I certify the foregoing returns are correct

Secretary: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________

{Lodge Seal}
TO: ALL SECRETARIES OF CONSTITUENT LODGES IN COLORADO

SUBJECT: ANNUAL PER-CAPITA MEMBERSHIP REPORT

At the Annual Anniversary Communication of the Grand Lodge on August 2, (current year), the members of the Grand Lodge will approve the budget for (Next Year). The per-capita cost per member will be determined by the total dollars approved, divided by the total Colorado members. The following information is therefore required in order to determine the membership count.

1. Lodge Name and Number

2. Members as of June 30, (current year) (Include Plural and Dual in this count)

   ____________

Plural Members belong to another Lodge in Colorado
Dual Members belong to another Lodge in another State

3. List Names and Mother Lodge of all Plural Members (Please Print)

   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________

4. Total Number of Plural Members

   ____________

5. Total Per-Capita Members (Line 2 less Line 4)

   ____________

I certify the foregoing information is correct.

________________________________________
Secretary

(Seal)

_________________________(current year)
Date

Note: If a member is lost after June 30, (current year) for any reason, per-capita must be paid.

Remember your Lodge’s Per-Capita is based upon receipt of this report

THIS REPORT IS DUE IN THE GRAND LODGE OFFICE

NO LATER THAN JULY 15, 2008

RETURN ONE COPY TO GRAND LODGE

THE OTHER COPY IS FOR YOUR RECORDS
APPLICATION FOR A FIFTY YEAR AWARD

When a member has completed 50 years as a Mason he is entitled to a 50-Year Pin, Card and Certificate. This application must be completed in its entirety. The dates are very important and should be confirmed by the Lodge Secretary. The Lodge Secretary should ensure that no break in membership has occurred, such as Suspension, Dimit, etc. If a Brother has received his Degrees in another Lodge this should be noted. Also, if the brother is a Past Master that also should be noted along with the year/years that he served.

Complete the form (Form 58) and forward to the Grand Lodge Office at least thirty days prior to the presentation. It is not necessary that a Grand Lodge Officer make the presentation however, in many cases it is desirable.
REPORT OF THE AWARD OF THE
FIFTY YEAR MASONIC SERVICE EMBLEM
OF THE M.W. GRAND LODGE, A.F.&A.M., OF COLORADO

Date____________________

This is to report that the Fifty Year Masonic Service Emblem awarded to:

Brother__________________________________________
of______________________________________________

was presented to him on__________________________
by______________________________________________
in______________________________________________
located at________________________________________

REMARKS:________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

Fraternally,

_________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________

Lodge No._____

Jurisdiction of_____________________________________

AFTER COMPLETION PLEASE RETURN TO THE GRAND LODGE OF COLORADO
OTHER AWARDS

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE: This is an Award which can be given to a Mason or Non-Mason for one who has exemplified an outstanding contribution to his community. It is actually an Award presented by the Grand Lodge and the individual Lodge but is usually awarded by the individual Lodge. A pin accompanies the Certificate and is a great way for the Masonic Fraternity to honor the recipient.

TWENTY-FIVE YEAR AWARD: This is an award presented by the Lodge to a Brother who has obtained Twenty-Five years of continuous membership. It can be ordered from the Grand Lodge for a nominal fee and can be presented by the Lodge to a deserving Brother.

WIDOW’S CARD AND PIN: A wonderful way to show the Widow that she is remembered by the Fraternity. Embossed over the square is the Widows name, her husbands name and the date of his death along with the name and number of his Lodge.
One of the vitally important duty of a Lodge Secretary is the writing of letters or notes of Condolence when a Brother Passes Away, when Death comes to a Brother’s family, when illness strikes and on numerous other occasions.

Letters of Condolence are the most difficult to write, yet they are much appreciated when sympathetic understanding is needed by the bereaved and grief stricken. They must, therefore, be carefully worded and always convey a feeling of genuine warmth and commiseration. A letter which gives comfort when illness occurs, or when a loved one dies, is like a friendly and consoling handclasp.

Condolence letters should be brief, tactful and sincere and should not dwell too much on cherished memories that are apt to open up the wounds of pain and sorrow rather than to offer comfort.

Always bear in mind that the principal purpose of a condolence message is to say in as few words as possible what is in the heart and to bring to those in sorrow a measure of solace and consolation.

A few specimens of Condolence Letters follow:

A LETTER TO A WIDOW OF A DECEASED BROTHER

Dear Mrs. ____________,

The members of ____________ Lodge were shocked to learn of the sudden Death of your Dear Husband and our Beloved Brother, whose friendship and Brotherly companionship we have enjoyed through the years.

The sincere sympathy and earnest Prayers of the Brethren of the Lodge go out to you in your hour of bereavement, together with the hope that God will sustain you with his richest Blessings.

Sincerely,

__________________________
Secretary

ANOTHER LETTER TO A WIDOW ON THE LOSS OF HER HUSBAND

Dear Mrs. ____________,

I have been asked by the Worshipful Master, Officers and Brethren of ________________ Lodge to express to you their deepest sympathy over the loss of your devoted husband and our esteemed Brother.

He was a fine man and Mason and we knew him for his great worth, his constant cheerfulness, his concern for the welfare of his fellowmen and his deep devotion to you and the members of his family.

In our common grief we are sure that you will understand the great sorrow in our hearts
HANDBOOK FOR LODGE SECRETARIES

May Almighty God sustain and console you.

Sincerely,

___________________
Secretary

ANOTHER LETTER OF CONDOLENCE TO A WIDOW

Dear Mrs. _________________,

The members of _________________ Lodge were profoundly shocked to learn of the passing of your Dear Husband and our beloved Brother.

Brother _________________ was a genuine Mason, good, upright and well loved by all who knew him. We shall miss him and his friendly smile and handclasp.

While we can well imagine how deep your grief must be, we are sure you will find great consolation in the monument of love and respect your Dear Husband left behind. No one who knew him intimately will ever forget him.

If there is anything we can do for you, now or in the future, please call upon us.

Sincerely,

___________________
Secretary

ONE MORE LETTER TO A WIDOW

Dear Mrs. _________________,

The Worshipful Master, Officers and Brethren of _________________ Lodge grieve with you on the loss of your Beloved Husband and our good Brother and wish to offer our you and your family their heartfelt condolences.

We offer the Prayer that God in his infinite wisdom may sustain you through these trying times and lighten your sorrow, to the end that the grief you shall bear be one of loving memories.

Sincerely,

___________________
Secretary
Dear Brother ________________,

There are times when the pen seems weak and lifeless in the hand of one who writes on an occasion such as this.

I am in such a frame of mind as I strive to express, on behalf of the Brethren of your Lodge, the sympathy they feel for you in this sad hour.

Be assured, however, that as much as it is possible to do so, we share your grief and Pray that the passing of time will soften the blow and enable you to again desire pleasure from meeting with us in Lodge, as in the happy days gone by.

We pray that the Great Architect of the Universe will sustain you and assuage your sorrow.

Sincerely,
________________________
 Secretary

ANOTHER LETTER TO A BROTHER ON THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE

Dear Brother ________________,

On behalf of the members of ________________ Lodge, I wish to extend to you our Deepest Sympathy on the loss of your dear ________________.

We know from our own experience how bewildering and sad is the occasion when one we have loved and cherished is taken from us. And yet, from this experience, and your own belief in the Immortality of the Soul, I know you will be comforted by the knowledge that some day you and your Beloved ________________ will be re-united in that “born from which no traveler returns”.

May the Great Architect of the Universe sustain and comfort you.

Sincerely
________________________
 Secretary

TO A BROTHER ON THE DEATH OF A PARENT

Dear Brother ________________,

The sad news has just come to us of your great loss.
LETTER TO A FAMILY OF A BROTHER WHO HAS PASSED AWAY

Dear ______________,

The news of the Passing of our Esteemed Brother came as a great shock to the members of ______________ Lodge, as it must have been to you and all who were close to him.

Brother ______________ was one of the finest Masons I have ever known. He was a true friend and a loyal Brother and exemplified in life the lofty principals of our Fraternity.

On behalf of the members of this Lodge, I wish to convey to you and your family our Deepest Sympathy and to express the hope that God in his Infinite Wisdom will comfort and sustain you on this sad occasion.

Sincerely,

___________________________
Secretary

LETTER TO A BROTHER WHO IS ILL

Dear Brother ______________,

The news of your illness has just reached us.

You may be sure that your Brethren will be thinking of you during your illness and praying for a speedy recovery. As soon as your condition permits, a committee of the Brethren will visit you.

In the meantime, nowhere will your absence be more keenly felt and missed than in your Masonic Lodge.
The Lodge as a whole, reflecting the sentiment of every Brother, sends you this evidence of our deep concern for your welfare, together with the sincere wish that your recovery will come soon and be complete.

Fraternally,

__________________________
Secretary

Very often the Secretary will find it advantageous, when composing letters of condolence, to combine the salient points in one letter with those of another. By doing so he can select the paragraphs which best serve the need or the occasion. In this way he can vary his correspondence instead of using the same letter each time.

MASONIC FUNERALS

When a Lodge is notified that a Brother has Passed Away and that the family has requested a Masonic service the Secretary should get the necessary information from the Funeral Director and then relay the information to the Worshipful Master. It is the Secretary’s responsibility to prepare the Memorial Roll which should be read by the Secretary as part of the Masonic Committal and presented to the Widow at the conclusion of the service. Many forms of Memorial Rolls can be used as some Lodges have developed their own. The Grand Lodge, however, does have two separate items that can be used and they are shown below. The Resolution of Respect is a two page document and comes in a binder which is available with the Certificates through the Grand Lodge Office.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT SAMPLE
THE SCROLL IN MEMORY SAMPLE

The Scroll in Memory is also available through the Grand Lodge Office and is a one page Certificate that should be tied with a ribbon when being presented to the Widow.
December (current year)

The Colorado Masons' Benevolent Fund Scholarship Committee was established in 1966 by action of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Colorado, meeting in session. Scholarships amounting to over $9 million have been awarded to more than 750 students to attend institutions of higher learning in Colorado. The scholarships are for up to $7,000 per year, renewable for four years for a total of $28,000 and are awarded primarily for leadership, maturity, need, and scholastic ability without reference to race, creed, color, sex, or Masonic relationship.

The participation of the local lodge is of vital importance to this program. The “Lodge Letter of Recommendation” is more accurately described as a letter of evaluation. It is very important that the lodge submit a letter for each student interviewed and that the letter communicates exactly what the interviewers observed and how they feel about that student's potential for our program, good or bad. The Committee relies heavily upon this communication because the interview is the only personal contact the Masonic community has with that student.

The scholarship administrator oversees the day-to-day operation of the program. Although the administrator may sit in on the committee meetings, he is not allowed to participate in the selection of recipients. The Scholarship Committee consists of the chairman and six other highly qualified individuals who have the very difficult task of selecting the recipients with the Grand Masters guidance and approval. The number of scholarships awarded each year is affected by the earnings of the Benevolent Fund and determined by that Board of Trustees. They have authorized 16 new scholarships each of the past few years.

Following is the process which the Colorado Masons' Benevolent Fund Scholarship Committee and Administrator follow annually. (All dates are approximate.)

November 1: The administrator will mail a scholarship application package to each public high school in Colorado. This package contains the application, instructions for the applicant and a cover letter to the applicant. A letter of introduction and instruction to the counselor is also included.

December/January: When the Grand Lodge Office receives the Officers Report listing the new Worshipful Master the administrator will send a scholarship information package to him. This mailing will include one student application package, identical to those sent to the schools, plus a Transmittal Letter, a sample Recommendation Letter, and the brochure "The Lodge Letter of Recommendation".

January thru early March: The Lodges will conduct interviews and send the resulting letters to the administrator. As the administrator receives applications he will arrange the
material in each application uniformly, add the lodge letter and place the folder in the appropriate box for the committee member that will review it.

**March 7:** This is the deadline for all new scholarship applications and lodge letters to be returned to the administrator at the Grand Lodge office.

**Fourth Monday in March:** The Scholarship Committee will meet for the first time to discuss philosophy, procedure and other pertinent topics of the selection process. The scholarship applications, usually 400 to 500, are equally divided and distributed to the committee members for their review and selection of the top applicants. They have two weeks to complete this process. The assignment of applications to committee members is geographical, insuring that a committee member will not review an application from a student in his community.

**First Monday in April:** The Scholarship Committee meets a second time to review the top forty or so applicants, as selected by the committee members, based upon leadership, maturity, need, and scholastic ability. The Committee will then select the number of applicants authorized by the trustees, recently 16, and these students will be offered scholarships. They also identify ten alternates.

**April 15:** The administrator will notify the Worshipful Masters of the lodges that interviewed successful applicants and the WMs will notify the winners. This initial notification is done by telephone and is followed up with an official Benevolent Fund notification letter. The winner is required to respond with a letter stating his or her acceptance of the award. The administrator will also notify all non-winners by form letter.

**Some time during the summer:** A Scholarship Luncheon will be held honoring all the new scholarship recipients. The recipients and their families are guests of the Benevolent Fund while the Worshipful Master and members of the sponsoring Lodges are encouraged to attend. The Grand Master and his officers are always very supportive of this luncheon. This is an excellent opportunity to showcase Masonry.

**Prior to Fall and Spring Semesters:** The Colorado Masons’ Benevolent Fund Executive Secretary will mail a tuition check to each institution of higher learning in Colorado which has one or more of our recipients enrolled.

**Ongoing:** The administrator monitors the student progress and activity. Our requirements are that each recipient maintains at least a 2.5 Cumulative Grade Point Average and an average of 15 academic hours per semester. Some students need a little encouragement toward achieving that goal after surviving the initial shock of college and being away from home. Others just sail on thru and don’t need a lot of attention from the administrator.

Your efforts and that of your lodge members are greatly appreciated.

Fraternally,

Tom Cox
Scholarship Administrator
EDUCATIONAL GRANT AWARD

March 15, (current year)

TO: All Constituent Lodges in Colorado

Subject: Educational Grant Award

Brethren:

The Trustees of the Colorado Masons Benevolent Fund Association have approved a continuation of the Educational Grant Program for the year 2009. The rules have changed to allow a lodge to award grants to more than one student but the matching funds limitation of $500.00 per lodge still applies. The final application date of JUNE 30, (current year) IS ABSOLUTELY FIRM.

The RULES of the Educational Grant Program for (current year)

1. The student(s) selected must be a 2007 Colorado public high school graduate, who will attend a Colorado institution of higher learning.
2. The Colorado Masons Benevolent Fund Association will match one or more grants of a constituent lodge up to and including $500.00. The total matching funds will not exceed $500.00 per lodge regardless of the number of grants the lodge has awarded.
3. The lodge will write the check(s) for the total amount of each grant, payable jointly to the student and the school. (e.g., John Doe and Adams State College.)
4. The lodge will present the check(s) to the student(s) and the Benevolent Fund Office will reimburse the lodge one half of the total amount of the check(s), up to $500.00.
5. Two copies of the attached application forms must be prepared and returned to the Grand Lodge Office with a postmark no later than June 30, 2007.
6. The Grand Lodge Office will forward one copy of each application to the Benevolent Fund Office on a timely basis.
7. A lodge that has mailed the application before June 30, 2007 and has not received reimbursement by August 10, 2007 should contact the Executive Secretary of the Benevolent Fund immediately.
8. To keep the administrative cost of this program to a minimum, NO EXCEPTIONS to these rules can be considered.

The rules outlined above where voted and approved by the Colorado Mason’ Benevolent Fund Board of Trustees at their annual meeting and apply to all applications for matching funds for the year (current year). Please note that the rules specify one student and the deadline for submission is set at a firm June 30. The scholarship Administrator records all Educational Grant Award Forms that are received in the Grand Lodge and then sends one copy to the Executive Secretary of the Benevolent Fund for payments to the Lodge.

This is a great program to allow the Lodge to participate in a local scholarship award without creating an excessive financial hardship. You are strongly encouraged to join in and make another student and his or her family aware of Memory.

Fraternally,

[Signature]

Tom Cox
Scholarship Administrator
Lodge Name and No. 

1. Recipients Name ___________________________ High School Senior (Yes/No) ___
   College or Institution ___________________________ Amount Lodge Will Contribute $_______

2. Recipients Name ___________________________ __ High School Senior (Yes/No) ___
   College or Institution ___________________________ Amount Lodge Will Contribute $_______

Amount Requested from Benevolent Fund (Same as total Lodge contribution in I & 2 above up to $500)
$ __________

Total Amount of Lodge Check to Student (total of the Lodge & Benevolent Fund contributions)
$ __________

Is Lodge Secretary's Name Or Address Different From The 2007 Colorado Masonic Directory? If yes, write new secretary’s name and address below. If no, write nothing.
Do you want us to prepare and send an Award Certificate to you? Circle YES NO

If Yes, please provide the following:
Desired date of presentation 1. __________________________ 2. __________________________
Presentation location (City) 1. __________________________ 2. __________________________


(Let please prepare three copies, send two copies to the Grand Lodge Office and keep one copy for the lodge records.)

Lodge Secretary's name and address: Only if different from the information in the 2008 Colorado Masonic Directory. (The certificate and reimbursement check will be sent to the lodge Secretary.)

Name __________________________
Address __________________________
City_________________________ State ______________ ZIP __________________________
Phone ( ) __________________________