



THE GRAND LODGE OF MARK MASTER MASONS

of England and Wales and its Districts and Lodges Overseas

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Dear Sir and Brother

A Provisional Blueprint for an Exit Strategy

We have been in discussions with the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE) and others about a common approach to exiting the suspension of masonic activity which was announced on 17 March 2020. Our main aim is to ensure the least disruption and to learn from a few of our Districts abroad where meetings have recently been allowed to resume.

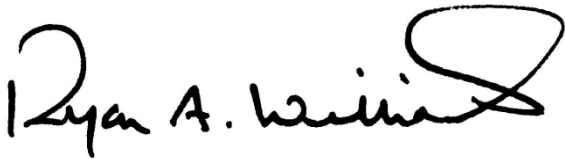
1. As soon as government guidance changes to allow groups of ten or more people from different households to meet indoors, it is expected that a lifting of the general suspension of masonic activity will be announced. The resumption of meetings will take place either fourteen days after the announcement or on a date, if later, on which government guidance becomes effective.
2. Units in all the Orders administered from Mark Masons' Hall will be permitted to meet with no more present than the government's prescribed maximum.
3. It is likely that shielding policies for vulnerable members will remain in force and such members are strongly advised to follow the advice of their doctors and not attend until it is felt safe for them to do so.
4. Summonses for meetings should be issued in the normal manner, but care should be taken to ensure that no more than the prescribed maximum permitted number of members physically attend.
5. The minimum number of members required to hold a meeting (known as a 'quorum') is set out in the relevant section of the Constitutions & Regulations governing the Order to which the Unit belongs and is listed in the Annex to this document for ease of reference.
6. Flexibility will be required to ensure that all essential offices are filled, either by the appointed officer or a stand in.
7. It is likely that social distancing will be required to be maintained throughout the early meetings – this will be mandatory if the prevailing government guidance requires it.

8. It may be that masks will be required to be worn throughout meetings – this will be mandatory if the prevailing government guidance requires it.
9. No masonic meetings where ritual and ceremonial are being performed may be transmitted by video conference or any other means. Separate guidance will be issued in relation to transacting administrative business only.
10. Dining after meetings will be at the discretion of the Lodge and the authorities responsible for the venue but must, always, follow government guidance. (Some Districts have been able to dine multiple tables of ten at the same venue with great success).
11. Separate guidance will be issued about the implications of maintaining social distancing during ceremonies and whether suitable adjustments can be made to accommodate this requirement. It is understood that social distancing may inhibit the holding of meetings/performance of ceremonies.

You should bear in mind that these proposals are subject to the prevailing government guidance in the UK and, for our Districts abroad, the local government and public health directions.

The situation is being kept under constant review and I will be in touch again soon when I have further information to share with you. In the meantime, stay safe and keep well.

With fraternal regards and best wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ryan A. Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "R" and a long, sweeping tail.

R.W.Bro. Ryan A Williams, P.G.J.W.
Grand Secretary

Annex – Minimum attendances, all MMH Orders

Mark

Regulation 125. No Lodge shall be opened unless three Brethren are present in addition to a Tyler, and no business shall be transacted at a meeting unless at least three members of that Lodge are present, but an entry of the meeting shall be made in the minute book. Any items of business on the agenda for such meeting, other than the election or installation of a Master, may be considered at the next meeting of the Lodge. If the meeting in question be the election or installation meeting a special report shall be made to the Grand Master, or the Provincial or District Grand Master, and his direction taken as to the course to be pursued.

Royal Ark Mariner

See Mark above.

Knight Templar

Statute 67. The presence of an Installed Preceptor and four other Knights at the least is requisite to constitute a Meeting of a Preceptory for the Installation of a Knight into the Order; but any other business may be transacted at a Meeting if three, including a Preceptor, shall be present. In either case two of those present must be subscribing members of the Preceptory. This Statute shall not apply to a Conclave of Installed Preceptors, held for the purpose of installing a Preceptor in the Chair or to the election of a Preceptor under Statute 72. The presence of two Preceptors is necessary to form a Conclave of Installed Preceptors.

Red Cross of Constantine

Revert to Craft – Five (excluding the Tyler (*Sentinel*) and the candidate for the degree in question): two must be members of the Lodge (*Conclave*) and one an Installed Master (*Sovereign*).

Royal & Select Masters

Regulation 89. No Council shall be opened unless six Companions are present in addition to a Sentinel, and no business shall be transacted at a meeting unless at least three members of that Council are present, but an entry of the meeting shall be made in the minute book. Any items of business on the agenda for such meeting, other than the election or installation of a Master, may be considered at the next meeting of the Council. If the meeting in question be the election or installation meeting a special report shall be made to the Grand Master, or the District Grand Master/Grand Inspector, and his direction taken as to the course to be pursued.

Allied Masonic Degrees

Regulation 88. No Council shall be opened unless six Brethren are present in addition to a Tyler, and no business shall be transacted at a meeting unless at least three members of that Council are present, but an entry of the meeting shall be made in the minute book. Any items of business on the agenda for such meeting, other than the election or installation of a Master, may be considered at the next meeting of the Council. If the meeting in question be the election or installation meeting a special report shall be made to the Grand Master, or the District Grand Prefect or Grand Inspector, and his direction taken as to the course to be pursued.

Order of the Secret Monitor

Regulation 81. (i) No business shall be transacted at any meeting unless there be present five members of the Conclave; and no ceremony shall be performed unless one of the brethren present be an installed Supreme Ruler qualified to preside.

(ii) The third Degree shall not be conferred unless at least three installed Supreme Rulers are present.

Scarlet Cord

Regulation 60. No business shall be transacted at any meeting unless there be present five members of the Consistory; and no ceremony shall be performed unless one of the Companions present be an installed President qualified to preside.

Knights Beneficent of the Holy City

Article 21. Nine Scottish Masters may form a Lodge of Saint Andrew. The Lodges of Saint Andrew within the same region are independent of each other. Each is placed under the authority of a Prefecture. If circumstances so require, a Lodge of Saint Andrew may be placed under the direct authority of the Scottish Directorate.