



**MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE
of ANCIENT, FREE *and* ACCEPTED MASONS of
BRITISH COLUMBIA *and* YUKON**

Office of the Grand Master
M.W. Bro. Donald W. MacKenzie

**THIS NOTICE CONTAINS ADVICE AND LIMITATION ON MANY MASONIC
ACTIVITIES. PLEASE ENSURE THAT THE LODGE OFFICERS AND MEMBERS READ
THE ENTIRE DOCUMENT AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS.**

15 November 2021

Brethren,

Subject to the specific conditions recommended by the executive officers and now directed by our Grand Master, lodges in British Columbia may resume their labours as of Monday, 15 November 2021. Members in the Yukon Territory will adhere to their own Health Authority regulations. While it is recognized that it is not provincially mandated for meetings with under 50 participants to prove they are vaccinated, proof of vaccination is mandated for events with 50 or more participants. The executive officers and ultimately the Grand Master have determined for the health and safety of all Brethren, this jurisdiction will require proof of vaccination to attend all masonic events both indoors and outdoors. During online meetings with lodges, attended by the executive officers, and in consultations conducted by the District Deputy Grand Masters with their lodges, it is clear that a sizeable majority of the members present at those discussions prefer to attend lodge only if there is proof that a vaccination process is in place. Above all, the executive is greatly concerned for the fraternity's reputation should an outbreak of covid-19 arise following attendance at a masonic meeting. As a result of these concerns this decision allows for a uniform standard throughout our jurisdiction, which visiting brethren will understand, allowing them to follow the universality of these procedures. *i.e.*, when there is an installation of officers or when the DDGM visits a lodge, there will also be visitors and the lodge attendance which will likely exceed 50 brethren. When the Grand Master visits a district or to attend a special ceremony, the number of brethren, visiting brethren and/or guests will, in all probability, exceed 50 attendees. At this point in time, it appears that the annual communication in June will require double vaccination for all those wishing to attend.

THE FOLLOWING RULINGS ARE IN EFFECT UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

1. Proof of vaccination will be required for attendance to all masonic events both indoors and outdoors. (i).
2. Masks are required to be worn at all times (Refer to exceptions in following sections).
3. Current covid-19 infection plan for each separate body must be posted in plain view in lodges.
4. Hand sanitizer to be available at various stations both inside and outside the lodge room.

1/5

"Improvise, adapt, and overcome"

8555 Government St, Burnaby, BC V3N 4S9 Canada
t: +1-604-736-8941 | e: grand_lodge@freemasonry.bcy.ca

5. It is recognized that some lodges may not wish to open at this time. The Grand Master will grant dispensation upon a written application to the Grand Secretary.
 - (i) This is not to disenfranchise those brethren who, for whatever reason, are not vaccinated. the goal is for the older and immune compromised brethren to safely attend a lodge meeting.
 - (ii) Lodges are encouraged when they reopen to delay the conferral of degrees until January in order that lodge members and new officers are able to practice and regain their proficiency. We owe it to those candidates who have been patiently waiting to receive the best that we can offer. The same holds true for a candidate proving their efficiency in a degree.

A. Procedures for opening a meeting and for brethren to attend a masonic meeting.

1. Brethren must prove they are double vaccinated with either the provincially issued electronic QR code or a printed version of the QR code. Because some of the brethren do not have access to the electronic versions of their vaccinations, the paper record they received at the time of each vaccination will be accepted until such time as those brothers are able to obtain an electronic QR record. Brethren must also show government picture identification at the time they enter the lodge building.
2. The Worshipful Master and others with speaking roles may remove their masks while performing their duties. Masks must be worn at all times with the above exception or when eating at a festive board. Masks are necessary as most of our buildings do not have adequate mechanical ventilation.
3. A safety plan must be in place and posted at the lodge building entrance, at the porch book, in the washrooms and in the festive board rooms. Lodges should consider not holding a festive board until they meet a standard of care as provided by local health authorities.
4. White cotton gloves will not be worn. Ensure hand sanitizer is provided and conveniently placed throughout the lodge room. Hand sanitizer effectively cleans hands whereas gloves cannot be sanitized until they are laundered.
5. Cleaning and sanitizing the lodge room and building must be completed in accordance with provincial and local standards.

B. Conferring degrees

1. Candidates must be double vaccinated and proof of vaccination must be provided.
2. Candidates must be asked if they are okay with having physical contact with a member(s) of the lodge during the degree.

3. Should a candidate not have proof of vaccination or state they are not comfortable with physical contact, the degree cannot proceed. These points must be asked of the candidate in advance of the degree (night before if not sooner) to avoid the candidate from becoming embarrassed immediately prior to conferring the degree.
4. Candidates will seal their obligation on the VOSL with a disposable sheet of paper on the appropriate page. The sheet of paper will be disposed of immediately after they leave the altar. A waste tub will be to the side of the altar for this purpose.
5. The candidate's "degree clothing" will be laundered after each use.
6. The candidate's blindfold will be laundered after each use or alternatively, disposable blindfolds may be used.

C. Balloting/Voting

1. Election of officers by written ballot:
 - a. Every brother will be provided slips of papers on which to write their choice for each position. All unused paper "ballots" will be disposed of in waste containers as they leave the meeting or to take home with them.
 - b. Pens or pencils will either be sanitized, disposed of or, offered to the brethren to take home with them.
 - c. Deacons will collect the ballots in a container which may be sanitized following the meeting or disposed of via a recycling or waste bin.
 - d. Completed ballots will be disposed of *via* regular means by the lodge secretary
2. Balloting by ball and cube:
 - a. Balls and cubes will be immediately sanitized after the lodge meeting. It is highly recommended using multiple sets of balls and cubes in the event of there being more than one candidate or where a ballot by ball and cube is also required.

D. Installation of Officers (Please refer to the GLBCY Covid-19 Infection Control Plan)

1. The Installing Master is permitted to remove his mask while performing his duty.
2. Perambulations with safe distancing is permitted. Singing is permitted if a mask is worn.
3. Investing Officers are permitted to remove their mask as they charge the new officer with their duty or have them undertake an oath for their office.
4. Each of the lodge officer's regalia will be available on a table and the Brother will pick up his collar and place it on their shoulders.
5. If cuffs are a part of their office they will pick them up from the same table and place them on their coat sleeves.
6. If rods/wands/swords are part of their office, they will also pick it up from the table.

E. Board of Installed Masters (BOIM) (Please refer to the GLBCY Covid-19 Infection Control Plan)

1. The Installing Master and others with speaking roles may remove their masks while performing their duties.
2. The Worshipful Master-elect will be asked if they are comfortable with physical contact during the BOIM. If they are not comfortable with physical contact, two Past Masters who are comfortable with physical contact will demonstrate what is necessary to the Worshipful Master-elect.

F. Long service awards or certificates or other forms of masonic recognition

1. The brother being honoured will be asked to join the Worshipful Master, District Deputy Grand Master or Grand Master at the secretary's desk.
2. A table with the brother's award will be made available in the secretary's area where the requisite words will be spoken to honour the recipient. The brother will be directed to pick up the jewel and display it on their jacket breast pocket. The brother may adhere the pin to their jacket's lapel.
3. Certificates, plaques and other awards are to be picked up from the table by the brother receiving the acknowledgement and/or accolade.
4. Each brother will be given an opportunity to speak and at which point they may remove their mask.

G. Official Visit by the District Deputy Grand Master

These visits will follow the same procedures as a lodge meeting and will follow the protocol in the *Book of Ceremonies*

5/5

H. Official Visit by the Most Worshipful Grand Master

These visits will follow the same procedures as a lodge meeting and will follow the protocol in the *Book of Ceremonies*

I. Other points for consideration

1. Brethren are reminded that our *Constitution and Regulations* provide for the Grand Master to make rulings to govern the jurisdiction.
2. These rulings will be reviewed regularly by the Grand Master and the executive and will be updated when appropriate.

Fraternally,



RW Bro. George Moore
Grand Secretary



MW Bro. Donald W. MacKenzie
Grand Master

/twm

by email