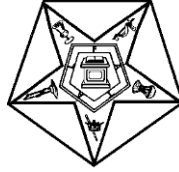


Grand Chapter of Georgia Order of the Eastern Star

ORGANIZED FEBRUARY 21, 1901

From the Desk Of
Tina Spier
Worthy Grand Matron



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Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I pray that you and your families are continuing to stay safe and well during these unprecedented times that we are facing. As we leave the year 2020 and move forward into 2021, we still have the COVID-19 Virus with us and threats of other viruses on the horizon. No one knows what tomorrow will bring so we work with what we know. In moving forward, it is important that nothing we do is worth putting our member's health and life at risk.

Recently, a meeting was held with the members of my Planning Committee, Jurisprudent Committee and Elected Line officers regarding our upcoming Grand Chapter Session. A unanimous vote for a one-day session was taken. A letter of this decision has been provided to our members, so I ask that you please be patient as plans will be forthcoming once they are finalized.

In January, some of our chapters were able to have a stated face-to-face meeting. Hopefully, as time goes on more chapters will be able to start meeting. Over the next couple of months, our chapters have two important events coming up, our elections and installations.

Prior to our shut down last year, some of our chapters were able to hold their elections. At that time, I had to issue a "null and void" declaration. I now rescind the "null and void" declaration and reaffirm the elections. The chapter members (can or shall) vote by show of hands (or verbal consent) to confirm the election.

Chapters that are now meeting and didn't have elections last year, may proceed with your elections according to the dates specified in the Manual and Code and our previous MWGM guidelines.

ELECTIONS & INSTALLATIONS – COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS MWGM GUIDELINES WITH ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS/CLARIFICATION FROM THE WORTHY GRAND MATRON (Revised)

ELECTIONS:

ABBREVIATED IN-PERSON VOTING: As WGM, I feel that this method can be used for Chapters that are unable to hold a March meeting or as an acceptable if in-person activity is allowed and your leadership is in agreement to use this method.

Description: select a specific date and on that day have your Chapter Rooms open for a set time so that eligible voting members can come to the Chapter during that time and cast their ballot. The slate

of Officers to be voted on could be sent to the members beforehand if desired. The official ballot would be given to them as they enter the Chapter Room. Members would mark their ballot, deposit it in the ballot box and leave (an “in” and “out” process). If desired and felt to be necessary, precautions such as signing in could be used. The preparations for the Abbreviated In-Person Voting protocol would need to be arranged prior to the voting day and the instructions discussed and presented clearly to the members well in advance. If using this method of voting, and for the safety of our members, face masks must be worn, observing social distancing and restricting the size of attendance as necessary.

The WM and Secretary should work together to set up this method of voting if the members desire to use this type of voting. In order to maintain a secret ballot, I would suggest using a ballot box with a lid. Once all members have submitted their ballot, the WM & Secretary can complete the tally. In case of no election for an office, the members are notified and a new ballot taken for that office. Members should be notified immediately of the election.

INSTALLATIONS:

In-person OES Installations with COVID-19 Restrictions: Face Masks, Social Distancing, Limited Attendance. These instructions are a temporary deviation from normal Eastern Star procedures due to the coronavirus pandemic.

I hereby issue the following temporarily modified guidelines for the Ritualistic Ceremony for conducting in-person open installations adhering to COVID-19 restrictions. All participants are to wear face masks, maintain social distancing and attendance is to be limited as required by national and/or local health authorities. These modified Guidelines may be used wherever in-person meetings are allowed by national and local authorities and the Worthy Grand Matron. The following instructions are not permanent.

Modified In-person Installation. The Installation Ceremony language printed in the Ritual shall be used, adjusting wording as necessary to fit the circumstance (pages 98-126). The floor work shall be modified as follows in order to maintain social distancing. All participants will wear face masks/coverings.

All Installing Officers shall be in their Stations six feet apart. The Installing Marshal will remain at her/his Station and invite the incoming Officers to enter the Chapter Room. The Officers will enter the Chapter Room carrying their badges and proceed to the Stations where they will be installed. It is possible their Stations will be on the sidelines six feet apart. When the Officers reach their Stations, they will be seated. The Installation Prayer will be given at the Altar or from the Installing Chaplain's Station. The Installing Marshal will read the roll of Officers to be installed. As their name is called, the Officer will stand at their Station and remain standing. All Officers remain standing and face the Altar to repeat the Obligation of Office given by the Installing Officer. The Officers will then be seated at their Stations.

The Worthy Matron-elect and the Worthy Patron-elect shall be seated in the Chapter Room wherever necessary to maintain social distancing. The Installing Officer shall direct the WM-elect to approach the Altar (unescorted) to be installed. At the Altar, she shall put on her badge when directed and then as directed proceed to the East or near the East, whichever position maintains social distancing, to receive Grand Honors and be seated. The same procedure shall be used for the WP-elect.

All other Officers shall remain at their Stations, stand when addressed by the Installing Officer to receive their charge, put on their badge when directed and be seated.

At the end of the Ceremony, the Installing Officer shall direct the Installing Marshal to proclaim from her/his Station the Officers regularly installed.

If the WM and WP are to sign the bible, the WM will proceed to the altar as before when installed, sign the Bible, and then be seated. The same procedure shall be for the WP.

For the safety of all present, NO singing is allowed; Please refer to previous guidelines from the MWGM.

If the Chapter elects to have a meal or refreshments, please refer to our previous guidelines of our Grand Master.

If members and/or visitors are allowed to be present at your chapter, please adhere to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Chapters that did not hold election last years, are unable to hold a face-to-face meeting, unable to use the Abbreviated in-person voting method, or to hold the installation of officers by April 30, must submit a request for special dispensation to hold election and/or installation after the required date.

Sisters and Brothers, as we try to move forward during this unusual time, I encourage all members to work together within their chapters. Let's remember to keep our members well and safe while working to get our chapter's business completed.

I pray that each of you keep the faith, hope, love and peace within until we shall meet again.

Blessings of Love
Tina Spier
Worthy Grand Matron


Approved:


Tina Spier, Worthy Grand Matron


Jeff Sperin, Worthy Grand Patron



Attest:



Betsy Nibeck, PGM, Grand Secretary