

Grand Master Coronavirus (COVID-19) Directive

March 13, 2020

I firmly believe in the autonomy of our institutions and the importance of letting our leaders lead. To that end, **effective immediately, Masonic activities within the jurisdiction may proceed**, provided the presiding officer determines it is the prudent and responsible thing to do.

To each individual in position to make such a decision, **I strongly urge you to monitor the spread of the coronavirus**, particularly in your community and surrounding area, and to **put the health and wellbeing of your members above all else**. To that end, **all non-essential Masonic meetings and activities are hereby suspended or cancelled thru April 30th or until further notice.**

An essential meeting is a once a month meeting to transact the business of the organization to include paying bills, collecting dues and to hold elections. When possible only have the required officers necessary to conduct business to meet. Utilize teleconference calls where possible.

A non-essential meeting includes meetings to perform degree work, townhalls, fundraisers, mentoring events, etc.. Utilize teleconference calls if needed.

Make sure the meeting place is properly sanitized to include furnishings and lavatories.

It is imperative that we quickly, clearly, and decisively communicate this message to the Craft. With the benefit of time and further consultation with leaders from inside and outside the fraternity, we are afforded the opportunity to refine the decision and the implications it has on our members, lodges, and appendant bodies.

I highly recommend that you educate yourself on the facts about the virus. Attached is a **COVID-19.fact sheet**. Also included is a letter that should be given to your subordinate house and officers: "**Advice for Churches from the Surgeon General: Preparing Your Church for Coronavirus**" Although it was written for churches, it is appropriate for our organization.

This announcement is subject to further revisions as the situation dictates. Grand Lodge will monitor developments daily.

Take due notice thereof and govern yourself accordingly.

Fraternally yours,

Wilbert M. Curtis

Wilbert M. Curtis, Grand Master
MWP HGL of Texas and Jurisdiction

COVID-19 Factsheet



What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in parts of the United States. Risk of infection with COVID-19 is higher for people who are close contacts of someone known to have COVID-19, for example healthcare workers, or household members. Other people at higher risk for infection are those who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Learn more about places with ongoing spread at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic>.

Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

How can I help protect myself?

People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

What should I do if I recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19?

If you have traveled from an affected area, there may be restrictions on your movements for up to 2 weeks. If you develop symptoms during that period (fever, cough, trouble breathing), seek medical advice. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often.

Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.



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For more information: www.cdc.gov/COVID19