

THE BULLETIN BOARD

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AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM GRAND MASTER JOHN E. TRAUNER MARCH 18, 2020

On March 16, the California Department of Public Health released new guidance on the prevention of COVID-19 transmission. The Department has found that all non-essential gatherings should be postponed or canceled until further guidance is provided. **All Masonic gatherings are non-essential in the context of this guidance.**

In addition, a growing number of counties are issuing "shelter in place" orders, directing everyone in those counties to stay inside their homes and away from others as much as possible while the order is in effect. They may leave their homes only to provide or receive certain essential goods or services, engage in certain essential activities or work for essential business and government services. **All Masonic gatherings are also non-essential in the context of these "shelter in place" orders.**

Based on the foregoing, it is my direction that there be no Masonic gatherings of any kind in this state until further direction is received from me.

This includes all Masonic Organizations and Masonic Youth Orders. None of our Masonic Organizations or Masonic Youth Orders may hold a gathering of any kind in this state until further direction is received from me.

Masonic Funeral and Burial Services

While there is some authority to the effect that a funeral is an essential activity, you should contact the licensed funeral director for the service about your participation. If the licensed funeral director believes that the conduct of the funeral will qualify as an essential activity which you may attend, then members of lodges, Masonic Organizations, and Masonic Youth Orders may attend and participate, but only in such numbers and with such social distancing as the licensed funeral director for the service shall determine.

Payment of Lodge Essential Bills Including Charity

As a result of these actions, no lodge can hold a stated meeting to pay its bills, and there is no clear remedy in our law to solve this problem. I do note CMC §403.095 which allows the elected officers of Grand Lodge to conduct the essential business of the Grand Lodge if a competent state or national authority prohibits an Annual Communication. While this provision is not available for use by constituent lodges, I believe that the extraordinary and unforeseeable circumstances we are now experiencing allow me to exercise my powers as follows:

Special Procedure for Lodges

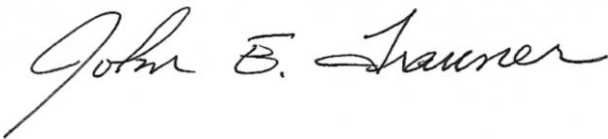
Effective today, a majority of the elected officers of the lodge may order the advancement of lodge funds to pay those essential lodge bills whose payment cannot reasonably be deferred.

- The elected lodge officers may confer by telephone, video conference, or email in making this determination.
- Expenditures by the lodge charity committee are an essential lodge bill for which payment should not be deferred.
- The lodge must ratify these payments at the next stated meeting held by the lodge.

The lodge master should inform the inspector of any other circumstances that may need to be addressed while this special procedure is in effect.

This special procedure is available only during the pendency of any applicable inhibition or prohibition on non-essential gatherings. In any event, it will have no further force or effect after my term as Grand Master ends.

Sincerely and fraternally,



John E. Trauner
Grand Master
Grand Lodge of F&AM of California



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