

## Proposed Bylaws Summary

The Committee on Bylaws was asked by Grand Master Brenda Hamilton to review the Bylaws of the Grand Lodge of Maryland, and ensure conformance to the Code of General Laws and alignment to the model Constitution and Bylaws for Grand Lodges provided by the Sovereign Grand Lodge. The Committee has merged the previously approved Constitution and Bylaws into the model. Aside from the changes necessary to conform, the following changes are proposed.

- **Several spelling, punctuation, and other grammatical corrections**
- **Fixed pronouns to include women/sisters**
- **Rewording for conciseness and clarity. No change to meaning or intent.**
- **Sec 5. Members** (of the Grand Lodge)

Current	Proposed
(Was not previously outlined)	All members of the Grand Lodge shall have the right to submit legislation, make motions, debate and vote.
"...has served a regular term as Noble Grand of an Odd Fellows Lodge..."	"...has served a regular term as Noble Grand of an Odd Fellows or Rebekah Lodge..."

- **Sec 7. A. Elective Officers**

Current	Proposed
"The term of office for Grand Secretary and Grand Treasurer shall be three (3) years."	"The term of office for Grand Secretary and Grand Treasurer shall be three (3) years, not to be run concurrently."
"The Grand Master shall not hold an elective office in Odd Fellows lodge, Rebekah lodge, Degree lodge or Rebekah Assembly within the jurisdiction, unless permitted by the laws of the Grand Lodge."	"The Grand Master shall not hold another elective office in the Grand Lodge, or hold the office of President of the Rebekah Assembly, or Grand Patriarch or Matriarch in the Grand Encampment within the jurisdiction."
"The Board of Trustees to be composed of five members..."	"The Board of Trustees shall be composed of three members..."
"Not more than one member shall be from the same Lodge."	"Not more than 50% of the Trustees shall be from the same Lodge."
"Shall elect from their number, a Chairman."	"Shall elect from their number, a Chairman, within forty-five (45) days of the close of the annual session."

- **Sec 7. F. Nominations and Elections**

(None of the following changes were previously addressed in the bylaws.)

- No election of Grand Master. Deputy Grand Master will automatically rise to Grand Master. (Reason: To allow the incoming Grand Master time to prepare their program with surety of entering office.)
- Call for nominations must be made three times before closing nominations.
- Nominees must be present at the session, or provide written acceptance of the specific nomination in advance.
- Order of nominations will be: Deputy Grand Master, Grand Warden, Grand Secretary/Treasurer (If needed), Grand Representative, Alternate Representative, Trustees, Others.
- Ballots shall be read out loud before the body. The teller appointed by the Grand Master shall keep official count and declare the final result to the Grand Master.

- Installing Staff shall be chosen by the incoming Grand Master prior to the Annual Session.
- Emeritus Status
  - A member is eligible for Emeritus status after serving four (4) terms in any single office, demonstrating exemplary service to the Jurisdiction through that Office.
  - A resolution outlining the special achievements relating to the office, during their time in office, must be submitted and adopted at the Annual Session by majority vote.
    - The resolution must be signed by at least five (5) Past Grand Masters within the jurisdiction in order to be presented.
  - There shall be no limit on Emeritus statuses bestowed upon any one member.

Current	Proposed
<p>“The Grand Officers elected shall be installed at the pleasure of the Grand Lodge at some time during the Annual Session by the Grand Master or a Past Grand master. Should any elective or appointive Grand Officer not be present at the time of installation, he may be installed at a Special Session called for that purpose. If the Grand Master Elect is to be installed at such special session, the senior Past Grand Master present shall install him. In such an event, the Deputy Grand Master shall act as Grand Master, until the Grand Master is installed. Should any elective Officer fail to appear at the time set for installation and his absence is not excused by the Grand Lodge, the office shall be declared vacant and shall be filled by a majority vote of the Members present. The installation may be either public or closed as the Grand Lodge may decide.”</p>	<p>“Grand Lodge officers shall be installed immediately following the annual session in which they were elected. The incoming Grand Master shall decide, at least thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Session, the Form of Installation (Public or Closed), and inform the incoming staff.”</p> <p>“Officers who are not present for installation, and who have not been installed by the first meeting of the Board of Grand Lodge Officers, shall be installed at that time. If any Officer has not installed by the close of the first meeting of the Board of Grand Lodge Officers, the office will be declared vacant, and filled according to “Section 9. Vacancies in Office of”.”</p>

• **Sec 8. A-B - Duties of the Grand Master**

Current	Proposed
<p>“Shall render decision concerning the constitution and laws of his Grand Lodge and of the lodges’ in his jurisdiction, subject to review by the Grand Lodge.”</p>	<p>“Render decisions concerning interpretation of the Laws of the Order. All decisions are subject to review by the Committee on Judiciary prior to or at the annual session concluding the Grand Master’s term.”</p>
<p>“The Grand Master shall select and communicate the Term Password to the Grand Secretary, who shall in turn, communicate the password to the District Deputies.”</p>	<p>“Immediately following Installation, the Grand Master shall select and communicate the Term Password to the Grand Secretary, who shall in turn, communicate the password, by cypher, to the District Deputies, for those units under the direct supervision of the Grand Lodge. The District Deputies shall then communicate the password to the</p>

	Noble Grand of each lodge under their commission in proper form.”
“Shall, in person, or by District Deputy Grand Master, or other qualified Past Grand, install the officers elect in all Odd Fellows Lodges.”	“Shall, by request of a Noble Grand, install the officers elect of any Odd Fellows lodge within the jurisdiction.”
“Shall be responsible for the safe keeping of the bonds of the grand secretary, grand treasurer, and trustees, and all other persons bonded in favor of the Grand Lodge: such bonds to be kept in the designated Grand Lodge safe deposit box.”	“Shall be responsible for ensuring existence of a bond for any officers permitted to sign for or distribute the funds of the Grand Lodge.”

- Added Sec 8. B (8) – Sovereign Grand Lodge Session (Grand Master)
  - Shall be reimbursed for attendance at Sovereign Grand Lodge Session.
    - Must attend, at minimum, Welcome Dinner, Officers’ Banquet, and Installation Dinner.
    - Expenses incurred for registration, travel, parking, lodging, and banquets shall be reimbursed for the Grand Master only, by the Grand Lodge, with receipts provided.
    - Lodging will be covered up to the session hotel rate, and for the dates necessary to attend required events.
    - Travel and non-banquet meal expenses will be reimbursed at the federal government daily per diem of the location of the session.
    - Airfare must be pre-approved by the Board of Grand Lodge Officers.
- **Sec 8. C. – Duties of the Deputy Grand Master**
  - Added Sec 8. C. (1) (e) - not previously mentioned
    - “Shall instruct the District Deputy Grand Masters to complete a semi-annual report on the status of the lodge(s) assigned to them.”
- **Sec 8. E. – Duties of the Grand Secretary**

Current	Proposed
“prepare a complete Journal of Proceedings... distributed within four (4) months from adjournment of the Annual Session...”	“prepare a complete Journal of Proceedings... distributed within two (2) months from adjournment of the Annual Session...”
(not previously addressed)	“A hard copy [of the Journal] shall be kept at the Grand Lodge, and distributed to each Lodge. All others may be distributed electronically.”
(not previously addressed)	“annual reports... to be delivered to lodges by December 1”
“[Annual Reports to be] due February 15”	“Reports shall be returned to the Grand Secretary by February 28...”

- **Sec 8. H. – Duties of Grand Representatives**

Current	Proposed
“He shall prepare and introduce at the annual sessions all needful legislation to make the Laws of this Grand Lodge conform to the enactments of the Sovereign Grand Lodge at its next previous session.”	“Shall prepare a report of the enactments of the Sovereign Grand Lodge at its previous session, to be submitted for inclusion in the Advance Report.”

- Reimbursement of expenses for SGL Session was not previously addressed. Suggest the following:
  - Must attend all meetings and sessions required by the Sovereign Grand Lodge.
  - Must attend, at minimum, Welcome Dinner, Officers' Banquet, and Installation Dinner.
  - Expenses incurred for registration, travel, parking, lodging, and banquets shall be reimbursed for the Representative only, by the Grand Lodge, with receipts provided.
    - Lodging will be covered up to the session hotel rate, and for the dates necessary to attend required events.
    - Travel and non-banquet meal expenses will be reimbursed at the federal government daily per diem of the location of the session, and only for reimbursement not covered by the Sovereign Grand Lodge.
    - Airfare must be pre-approved by the Board of Grand Lodge Officers.
  - Shall be reimbursed for the cost of purchase of the required Representative regalia, which will be kept by the representative at the conclusion of their term.

• **Sec 8. I. – Duties of the Grand Chaplain**

Current	Proposed
"Shall open and close each meeting of the Annual Session with the Prayer used in Odd Fellow Lodge opening and closing ceremonies"	Add: "Additional prayers or services may be added at the discretion of the Grand Chaplain, or by request of the Grand Master."

• **Sec 9. – Vacancies in Office**

Current	Proposed
"If an Officer or Officer-elect, fails to attend a Session of the Grand Lodge, the office may be declared vacant and the same shall be filled by a majority vote of the members present; provided, however, that absence caused by sickness or disability may be excuse by a majority of the members present."	"If an Officer fails to attend a Session of the Grand Lodge, the office may be declared vacant and filled by appointment of the Grand Master."
(Not previously addressed)	"Officers impeached or resigning for reasons other than continued physical or mental incapacity of extreme nature, shall not receive the rank of Past Officer of that office under any circumstances."

• **Sec 10. - Reports of Elective and Appointive Officers**

Current	Proposed
"Appointive Officers may be required to make a report by their respective Grand Body."	"Appointive Officers can, or may be required, either by the Grand Master or majority vote of the board, to submit a report."
(Not Previously Addressed)	"Any Elected or Appointed Officer or Committee Chair who does not submit their report to the Grand Secretary by the

	deadline, must read, or cause to be read, the report, on the floor, at the Annual Session.”
“The report shall be printed, and one (1) copy sent to each officer, accredited representative ten (10) days prior to the annual session.”	“The Advance report shall be sent to each Grand Lodge Officer, Lodge Representative, Representative-Elect, Past Grand Master, Lodge Secretary, and District Deputy Grand Master thirty (30) days prior to the annual session.”

• **Sec 12. A. - Annual Sessions**

Current	Proposed
“There shall be one annual session of the Grand Lodge held on a Saturday in the month of May, at a time and place voted on at the previous annual session.”	“There shall be one annual session of the Grand Lodge held on a Saturday in the month of May, at the Grand Lodge building. The incoming Grand Master shall select a time and date for the next annual session, to be voted on prior to the close of the current annual session.
“in the event that any existing conditions make a meeting at the time given inadvisable, the Grand Master, with the approval of the Board of Grand (Lodge) Officers, shall have the authority to postpone the annual session for a period not to exceed thirty days.”	“In the event that any existing conditions make a meeting at the time given inadvisable, the Grand Master, with the approval of the Board of Grand Lodge Officers, shall have the authority to postpone the annual session to a Saturday within the thirty (30) days following the original session date.”
“Request for change due to Religious Holidays must be made at this time.” (Prior to the close of the session)	“Request for change of the date of the next annual session shall be submitted to the Board of Grand Lodge Officers within ninety (90) days of the close of the annual session, and receive majority vote of the Board of Grand Lodge Officers at the next Board meeting, or within forty-five (45) days, whichever is sooner.

• **Sec 12. D. (2) - Quorum, Special Sessions Limited**

Current	Proposed
“...there shall be a representation from at least three Odd Fellow Lodges.”	“A quorum of a Special Sessions Limited shall consist of the Grand Master, or a Past Grand Master designated by the Grand Master to fill the role of Grand Master, and at least two Grand Lodge Members to fill the roles of Grand Warden and Grand Marshal.”

• **Sec 13. A. – Call for vote by Lodges (Representative vote)**

Current	Proposed
“...may be called by the Representatives from ten of the Lodges.”	“...may be called by the Representatives from two-thirds (2/3) of the Lodges.”

• **Sec 18. – Committees**

Current	Proposed
Committees have various minimum member requirements ranging from 3-7	All committees will require at least 3 members.
Committee on Legislation (Not addressed)	“If legislation has been submitted for inclusion in the Advance Report, the committee must meet and review, no later than forty (40) days prior to session, any legislation submitted, providing a report, to be included in the Advance Report, “in favor” or “against” adoption of each piece of legislation.”
Committee on Distribution “Shall prepare their report and place the same in the Hands of the Grand Secretary at the opening of the Annual Session.”	“Shall meet and review reports submitted. Shall prepare their report and submit it to the Grand Secretary at least forty (40) days prior to the Annual Session for inclusion in the Advance Report.”
Committee on Distribution (Not Addressed)	“[Reports submitted on the floor] Shall be distributed, at time of submission, to the appropriate committee(s) to be reviewed during a recess. Shall prepare an addendum to their report, within twenty (20) days following the Annual Session, to be included in the Journal of Proceedings. “
Committee on Finance “This budget shall be presented at the annual session.”	“This budget shall be submitted for inclusion in the Advance report, and presented at the annual session in detail, explaining all changes, additions, and subtractions from the previous year’s budget.”
Committee on Mileage and Per Diem (Not addressed)	“Shall be chaired by the Grand Treasurer, and include the Grand Secretary and Chair of Finance.”
Joint Youth Committee	Remove and Replace with: “Should a Youth Branch be established in the jurisdiction, a committee will be formed following the guidelines set forth in the Code of General Laws of the Sovereign Grand Lodge, until such time that the By-laws can be updated.”
Pilgrimage for Youth “Shall enter upon their duties on September 1st following the session and serve until the following August 31”	“shall commence at the close of the Annual Session at which they were appointed, and follow that year’s students through the end of their tour.”
Committee on Memorials “Shall be referred all matters of commemorating the memory of deceased	“Shall be referred all matters of commemorating the memory of deceased members of the Grand Body who died in

members of the Grand Body who died in good standing to be referred to this committee for their action and report, and it shall be their duty to secure any available statistics in regard to death and report on same."	good standing. It shall be their duty to secure any available statistics from the Committee on Lodge Returns, The Grand Secretary, and The Rebekah Assembly Secretary, in regard to death and report on same. Shall perform a memorial service at the Annual Session honoring any members who passed away since the previous Session. Past Grand Masters, Past Presidents, and higher ranked officers, shall be honored by a red flower. Past Grands and Past Noble Grands shall be honored by a white flower. All other members shall be honored with any other color. If a Lodge or member requests permission to honor their deceased member, the Committee will do their best to accommodate their wishes."
"Third Degree committee members shall be able to hold any position except Committee Chairperson. The number of Third Degree committee members shall not exceed one-third (1/3) of the number of the members on that committee."	"Third Degree members may serve on any Special Committees, but may not hold the position of Chair."
"All committee appointments in each successive term must include the chair person of retiring term's committee as a member of the same committee for the current term."	"The Chairperson of the previous year's committee shall be offered a position on that same committee for the current term for the purpose of continuity. Any exception shall be with the approval of the Board of Grand Lodge Officers."
(Not addressed)	<p>"The chairman of each committee shall submit a report summarizing their activities through the year, in the manner outlined under Section 10.</p> <p>(a) Reports must be signed by the Chairperson, and list all members of the committee. Should any member other than the Chairperson author and sign the report, the Chairperson must attest."</p>

- Creation of New Committees
  - **Newsletter/Maryland Odd Fellow.** Shall compile information, news articles, etc. into a regularly published newsletter (The Maryland Odd Fellow), the schedule to be determined by the committee. Any article submitted by an Elected or Appointed Officer of the Grand Lodge, pertaining to their office, must be published in the next Newsletter.

- **Digital Media/Website.** Shall maintain and update the website of the Grand Lodge of Maryland.
  - Shall post/update the following:
    - Lodge Directory Updates
    - The programs of the Heads of the Order including Elected and Appointed Officers, District Deputy Grand Masters, Project information, Visitations, Board Meetings, and Session dates
    - Upcoming events within the jurisdiction including date, time and location of the event, and associated flyers.
    - Photos from recent events submitted by members and approved by the committee
    - Resources that may be beneficial to members. Any resources containing secrets of the Order shall be in a Members-only area, accessible by the Password of the Current Term.
  - Shall be responsible to respond to or forward any messages received on the website to the appropriate person or committee in a timely fashion.
    - Shall obtain from the Committee on Lodge Returns, any changes to meeting time and address, mailing address, and/or Secretary/Lodge contact information.
  - Shall monitor and address any violations of Chapter XLVI of the Code of General Laws of the Sovereign Grand Lodge made on websites and/or social media maintained by a Lodge within this jurisdiction.
  - The Chair shall turn over the login information to their successor immediately following the annual session.

• **Sec 22. – Compensation of Officers**

Current	Proposed
(not addressed)	“Salaries must be established by the Board of Grand Lodge Officers, and cannot be changed without approval of the Board, and must be presented in the budget, and approved by the body as a whole, at the Annual Session.”
“The distance traveled is to be paid for one (1) round trip and to be computed by the shortest usually traveled route between the place of meeting of their Lodge and the place of meeting of the Grand Lodge minus thirty (30) miles. Per Diem shall be paid at a rate of Thirty Dollars per day for the Annual Session.”	“Mileage to be calculated from the member’s home residence listed on file with Grand Secretary, to the place of meeting, for one (1) round trip.” “Mileage and per diem shall be computed in accordance with the Federal mileage and breakfast and lunch per diem rate for Baltimore, Maryland.”

• **Sec 23. E. – Order of Business**

Current	Proposed
(Not addressed)	“The Grand Lodge shall recess for lunch only after all reports, bills, resolutions, etc. have been distributed in order to provide committees time to review items and report back after the Grand Lodge has reconvened.



	(a) Any reports or legislation not submitted in the Advance Report shall be read on the floor and distributed prior to addressing items in the Advance Report.”
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• **Sec 24. A. – Laws of the Grand Lodge**

Current	Proposed
“Bills presented by special or standing committee, or as an emergency which do not layover two (2) days shall be required a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote for passage”	“Any bill presented as an emergency bill shall require a three-fourths (3/4) majority to be considered. If heard, shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority for passage.”

• **Sec 30. – Amendments**

Current	Proposed
<p>“This Constitution or any part thereof may be altered, amended, or repealed at an Annual Session by a two-thirds affirmative vote of Representatives present. Any proposition to alter, amend, or repeal must be proposed in writing at an Annual Session by at least five Past Grands from as many different Lodges, which proposition shall be entered on the minutes and shall be acted upon at the next Annual Session; provided also that when the Grand Lodge provides for the appointment of a Committee to prepare a revision or revision or amendments, the report of the Committee may be considered and acted upon at the Annual or Special Session to which it is submitted. Code changes adopted by The Sovereign Grand Lodge shall be edited into the Grand Lodge Constitution and By-laws as mandated without layover.”</p> <p>“Any amendment necessary to conform to the Constitution and Laws of the Sovereign Grand Lodge may be offered and adopted at any session. When an amendment is adopted which conflicts with any part of the Constitution not so amended and a clerical change is thus made necessary to make this instrument conform to the amendment adopted, such change or changes may be made by a majority vote of the Members present. A proposition to amend this Constitution may be amended when under consideration provided it does not add or materially alter the original intent thereof.”</p>	<p>“Any proposition to alter, amend, or repeal must be submitted to the Grand Secretary in writing more than forty-five (45) days prior to the Annual Session to be distributed and included in the Advance Report. Any submitted proposition shall be voted on at the Annual Session to which it was submitted, after proper review and report from the appropriate committees.</p> <p>No Bill shall become law unless two-thirds (2/3) present and voting shall vote in its favor. Any proposition, to alter, amend, or repeal that is submitted on the floor at the Session, will be distributed to the appropriate committees, and acted on at the next Annual Session.</p> <p>Any amendment that does not alter the original intent, and does not conflict with the Code General Laws, can be acted on at the same Session, with a majority in favor needed to amend. The bill shall require two-thirds (2/3) present and voting to be adopted.</p> <p>Code changes adopted by The Sovereign Grand Lodge shall be edited into the Grand Lodge Constitution and By-laws as mandated without layover.</p> <p>Should any part of this Constitution and By-laws become in violation of the Code of General Laws, it must be struck, amended, or changed, immediately, without vote of the membership.</p> <p>If any change requires creation of a new law, it shall be proposed at the Session by the Committee on Legislation, and adopted by</p>

	<p>two-thirds (2/3) present and voting. If two-thirds (2/3) majority cannot be reached, amendments must be proposed until a conforming bill is passed.</p> <p>When any change is made to the Constitution and By-laws, a new, full, electronic copy of the Constitution and By-laws shall be sent to all Secretaries, Representatives, Grand Lodge Officers, and Past Grand Masters.”</p>
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- **Sec 31. - Membership** (added)
  - Membership shall be as defined in Chapter III of the Code of General Laws of the Sovereign Grand Lodge.
  - Change of Classification. Members shall request a change of membership classification with the Secretary of their lodge at the time of paying dues for the upcoming year. The change shall take effect at the start of the new year.
  - Lodges may offer non-contributing membership to its eligible members as defined in the Code of General Laws.
  - The Grand Lodge does not permit Life Membership within the Jurisdiction.
  - The Grand Lodge permits Associate Membership in all component units within the Jurisdiction regardless of explicit mention in their bylaws. If not otherwise outlined by the bylaws of the lodge, dues shall be ten (10) dollars.
- **Sec 32. - Meritorious Service Jewel** (added)
  - Shall be awarded as outlined in Chapter XXVIII of the Code of General Laws of Sovereign Grand Lodge.
  - A resolution outlining the member’s exemplary contributions to the Order must be submitted and adopted at the Annual Session by a majority vote.
    - The resolution must be signed by at least five (5) Past Grand Masters within the Jurisdiction in order to be presented.