

Constitution and Bylaws
of the
Grand Lodge of Maryland
Independent Order of
Odd Fellows
Baltimore, Maryland
February 22, 1825

Preface

This revision of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Grand Lodge of Maryland has been prepared by Acting Grand Master Brianna Shuman and Past Grand Master Sandy Shuman, by direction of Grand Master Brenda Hamilton, and submitted with the approval of the Committee on Bylaws for approval at the Annual Session on 5/17/2025.

SEC 1.

- A. The name, style and title of this Grand Lodge, by virtue of the Charter hearing on February 22, 1825 by the Grand Lodge of the United States, now the Sovereign Grand Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, shall be acknowledged and respected as: Grand Lodge of Maryland, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Inc., and shall be hereafter governed by the following laws.
 - (1) The Sovereign Grand Lodge, I.O.O.F. shall maintain reversionary interest of the Order within the jurisdiction.
 - (2) A Grand Lodge may be restructured upon petition by five (5) or more Lodges (Odd Fellows and/or Rebekah), having an aggregate of seven (7) or more Past Grands and/or Past Noble Grands, within the jurisdiction of Maryland. No more than one Grand Lodge may be chartered in the State of Maryland.

SEC 2. **Authority, Objects, and Purposes**

A. **Authority**

- (1) The authority of the Grand Lodge is derived from The Sovereign Grand Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.), to which it shall be accountable.
 - (a) The Grand Lodge of Maryland, instituted in Baltimore, Maryland, on February 22, 1825, maintains jurisdiction over all lodges within the State of Maryland.
 - (b) This Grand Lodge is authorized and empowered to direct, supervise and control all matters pertaining to the Lodges (Odd Fellows and Rebekahs) of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows within its Jurisdiction. No Lodge can exist therein without its sanction. It possesses the right of granting charters to a Rebekah Assembly, [Rebekah Lodges, Theta Rho Girls' Clubs and Theta Rho Assembly where and when there is no Rebekah Assembly], Odd Fellows Lodges, a Grand Junior Lodge, Junior Lodges and United Youth Groups within the Jurisdiction; of suspending or taking away the same for proper cause; to receive, determine and hear appeals; redress grievances and complaints arising in the several Lodges; to originate and regulate means for its support; to grant dispensations; to enact any law not contravening the customs and usages of the Order, as from time to time declared by The Sovereign Grand Lodge, not altering the work of the Order or any of the several degrees belonging thereto, not in conflict with the constitutional authority of The Sovereign Grand Lodge or violating any enactments in pursuance thereof, and not conflicting with the laws of the land, and do all such other acts to promote the interest of the Order or that appertain thereto by ancient usage or custom.
 - (i) The Grand Lodge shall enact a uniform Constitution, to provide for the governance of the Odd Fellow Lodges under its jurisdiction.
 - (ii) Each Odd Fellow Lodge shall enact By-Laws not in conflict with its Constitution, the Constitution and By-Laws of the Grand Lodge and the General Laws of the Order, which shall take effect when approved by the Grand Lodge.
 - (c) The Grand Lodge shall exist as long as it meets the provisions of The Code of General Laws of the Sovereign Grand Lodge, Chapter II – Issuance of Charter(s).

(d) Laws To Be Liberally Construed.

- (i) The rules and regulations as set forth in the Constitution and By-laws shall be liberally construed. The chief concern shall be following the spirit of the law and the good of Odd Fellowship rather than harshly enforcing rules to the letter of the law.

B. Objects

- (1) To promote the principles of Friendship, Love and Truth.
- (2) Seek to improve and elevate the character of man.

C. Purpose

- (1) To have general supervision over the Odd Fellows Lodges, the Rebekah Assembly, [Rebekah Lodges, Theta Rho Girls' Clubs and Theta Rho Assemblies, where there is no Rebekah Assembly], the Grand Junior Lodge, Junior Lodges and United Youth Groups within the jurisdiction;
and:
 - (a) Homes/Housing Projects
 - (b) Camps/Parks
 - (c) Cemeteries
 - (d) Building Associations, lodge hall, property
 - (e) District Associations, Athletic Associations, et cetera
 - (f) Any such entity as may use: Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Odd Fellows, Odd Fellows and Rebekahs, and/or any of the emblems of the Order i.e. the three links.
- (2) The Grand Lodge may authorize the organization of Past Grand's Associations, Veterans Associations, Past Grand Masters Associations, and other kindred and auxiliary organizations, including building or Temple Associations, authorized by the General Laws of the Order, for the promotion of the principles of the Order. The Rules and Regulations governing such organizations, and all amendments thereto shall be submitted to and be approved by the Committee on By-Laws of the Grand Lodge, before becoming effective, after report to, and approval by the Grand Lodge.
- (3) To make recommendations to The Sovereign Grand Lodge for legislation and such other matters that will improve the Order.

SEC 3. Jurisdiction

- A. This Grand Lodge shall have exclusive jurisdiction over all local concerns of Odd Fellows Lodges within the jurisdiction and shall have and exercise all power and authority not reserved to itself by The Sovereign Grand Lodge. This Grand Lodge shall adopt legislation concerning minimum fees, dues and assessments necessary to meet fraternal obligations.
- B. This Grand Lodge's authority shall not be interfered with by The Sovereign Grand Lodge or the Sovereign Grand Master. If the Grand Lodge fails in its responsibilities in supervising local lodges, The Sovereign Grand Lodge or Sovereign Grand Master shall take corrective action against the Grand Lodge, but not the local lodge.
 - (1) This Grand Lodges shall enforce strict adherence to the work of the Order. Neither a the Grand Lodge or Rebekah Assembly nor an Odd Fellows Lodge or Rebekah Lodge

- may adopt or use any charges, lectures, degrees, ceremonies or regalia other than those prescribed by The Sovereign Grand Lodge.
- (2) Lodges may not exhibit in their halls or anteroom any symbols that pertain to any particular faith or creed; but may use music that is generally regarded as religious if it does not cause controversy.
 - (3) Ritualistic work shall not be presented in public meetings.
- C. The Rebekah Assembly of Maryland derives its authority, rights and powers by virtue of its Charter from the Grand Lodge of Maryland and is subject thereto. It shall adopt a Constitution and By-Laws for its government, which shall become effective upon approval by the Grand Lodge, subject to further review by the Sovereign Grand Lodge.
- (1) The Rebekah Assembly of Maryland shall possess all the rights, powers and privilege accorded a Rebekah Assembly under the General Laws of the Order and not denied to it by the Constitution and Laws of this Grand Lodge. It shall exercise the same authority and powers with respect to Rebekah Lodges as this Grand Lodge exercises over Odd fellow Lodges.
 - (2) The Secretary of the Rebekah Assembly shall, within thirty days after the close of the Assembly session, submit to the Grand Master and Committee on Rebekah Lodges a preliminary report of the acts of the Assembly. This report shall include copy of all legislation adopted as well as a report of the financial and membership records of the Assembly and all bodies subordinate there to. The Board of Grand Officers shall promptly review such preliminary report and shall declare suspended any act which is contrary to the General Laws of the Order, the Constitution and By-Laws of this Grand Lodge or which may not be for the Good of the Order, which decision shall be reviewed by this Grand Lodge at its next Annual Session.
 - (3) Associations of Past Noble Grand's and others as included in Section 2 C (2) of this Constitution may be authorized by the Rebekah Assembly in accordance with the same regulations as prescribed in said Section 2 C (2).
- SEC 4. **Headquarters:** The headquarters of the Grand Lodge, (office of the Grand Secretary), shall be at such location as the Grand Lodge may direct. Change of location can only be decided by the body as a whole in regular or special session.
- SEC 5. **Members:** The Officers and members of the Grand Lodge shall be all Past Grands and Past Noble Grands who have attained the Third Degree of an active Lodge, and who have received the Grand Lodge Degree. All members of the Grand Lodge shall have the right to submit legislation, make motions, debate and vote.
- A. To entitle a Past Grand to membership, satisfactory evidence that he or she has served a regular term as Noble Grand of an Odd Fellows or Rebekah Lodge, and is a member in good standing, must be submitted to the Grand Secretary.
- SEC 6. **Representation:** Each active Lodge shall be entitled to one (1) representative, to be elected by each lodge during their regular election.
- SEC 7. **Officers.**
- A. **Elective Officers.**
 - (1) The elective officers of the Grand Lodge shall be those specified in the Grand Lodge Ritual; selected from the Past Grands of an active regularly chartered lodges in good

- standing: Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Warden, Grand Secretary, Grand Treasurer, Grand Representative(s), and Alternate Grand Representative(s).
- (a) The term of office for Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, and Grand Warden shall be one (1) year. The term of office for Grand Secretary and Grand Treasurer shall be three (3) years, not to be run concurrently.
 - (i) Grand Representative(s) terms shall be as set by The Sovereign Grand Lodge.
 - (b) 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.
- (2) The Board of Trustees shall be composed of three members who shall be elected in the manner provided for the election of Officers.
- (a) The term of office for Trustees shall be three (3) years, the term of one expiring at each Annual Session of the Grand Lodge.
 - (b) The Trustee may serve without compensation but may receive reimbursement for expenses authorized by the Executive Board of Grand Lodge Officers and the Finance Committee.
 - (c) Not more than 50% of the Trustees shall be from the same Lodge.
 - (d) Shall elect from their number, a Chairman, within forty-five (45) days of the close of the annual session.
 - (e) Shall keep a record of their proceedings. Shall submit a report showing all investments and monies held by them and the income received to be included in the Advance Report each year.
- (3) The following Officers of the Grand Lodge: Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, Grand Warden, Grand Secretary, Grand Treasurer, Junior Past Grand Master, Grand Representative, Chairman of Trustees, Chairman of Finance; shall compose the Board of Grand Lodge Officers
- (a) The Grand Master shall serve as chairman/president of the Board and the Grand Secretary shall serve as Secretary of the Board.
 - (b) The Board shall direct and promote the operations and general welfare, consistent with the laws, customs and usages of the Order, within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge during the interim of the Grand Lodge Sessions.
 - (c) Shall promulgate plans and programs and work with the officers of all bodies under the immediate supervision of the Grand Lodge for the development and expansion of the Order.
- (4) Joint Executive Board. The Board of Grand Officers and the Executive Committee of the Rebekah Assembly shall constitute the Joint Executive Board. The Executive Committee of the Rebekah Assembly shall be the President, Vice President, Warden, Secretary, Treasurer, ~~and~~ Junior Past President, and the International Association of Rebekah Assemblies Representative. The Joint Executive Board shall meet at least once every four months and act for the Grand Lodge and Rebekah Assembly during the interim between sessions that affect both units, reserving to the Grand Lodge in session for Approval of their action. The Grand Master shall be the chairman, the

President shall be the Vice Chairman, and the Grand Secretary shall be the Secretary of this Joint Executive Board.

B. Appointive Officers.

(1) The appointive officers of the Grand Lodge shall be those officers noted in the Grand Lodge Ritual; selected from the Past Grands of active regularly chartered lodges: Grand Marshal, Grand Conductor, Grand Chaplain, Grand Musician, Grand Guardian, Grand Color Bearer, Grand Instructor, and Grand Herald who shall be appointed by the Grand Master.

(a) Assistant Grand Secretary, who may be appointed by the Grand Secretary at the annual session with the approval of the Grand Lodge, to hold office for one year.

C. Additional Officers.

(1) The Grand Master may appoint additional officers such as Ambassador of Goodwill, etc. The appointed officer must be approved by the Board if not approved in session.

D. Qualifications for Office:

(1) Officers:

(a) Elective: A Past Grand in good standing in an active Odd Fellows Lodge and a member of an active Rebekah Lodge, and in possession of the Grand Lodge Degree is eligible to hold any office.

(b) Appointive: A Past Grand in good standing in an active Odd Fellows Lodge and in possession of the Grand Lodge Degree is eligible to hold any appointive office.

(2) An officer must maintain membership in the jurisdiction to hold office.

(a) A member must be a resident in the Jurisdiction, either with home membership, or by falling under the definition of sojourner.

E. Nominations and Elections:

(1) The Grand Master shall call for nominations, at the annual session, under the regular order of business.

(a) Nominations shall be made by members of the Grand Lodge, with exception being that a member may ask for the Noble Grand of the nominee's Lodge, a nominee's family member or close friend – who may be a member of the Order, but not yet a member of the Grand Lodge to address the Grand Lodge and make a nomination.

(i) The Deputy Grand Master will automatically rise to the position of Grand Master, at the annual session following the completion of their term.
Therefore, there shall be no nomination or election for the office of Grand Master.

(b) Before each nomination can be closed, the call for nominations must be made three (3) times, out loud, before the body, with no further nominations being made.

(c) All nominees must be present to accept their nomination, or provide written acceptance of the nomination in advance of the session. Written acceptance must be specific to the office to which they will be nominated.

- (2) The order of nominations shall be:
 - (a) Deputy Grand Master
 - (b) Grand Warden
 - (c) Grand Secretary/Grand Treasurer, if needed
 - (d) Grand Representative
 - (e) Alternate Grand Representative
 - (f) Trustee(s)
 - (g) Any other officers as needed
- (3) Elections shall follow, at the annual session, in the general course of business.
 - (a) Ballots shall be tallied immediately and out loud, in the session, before the body, by the tellers.
 - (i) Balloting. All elections shall be by ballot (written or electronic), unless there be but one nominee, in which event the Grand Master shall declare the nominee elected. A majority of the votes cast shall be necessary for election. Should no candidate receive a majority on the first ballot, the candidate having the least number of votes shall be dropped at the next ballot, and so on until a candidate receives a majority of the votes cast.
 - (ii) Tellers. The nominees and the Grand Master shall each name one teller at the time of elections, who shall call, aloud, the votes cast. The Teller appointed by the Grand Master shall keep the official count, and declare the result to the Grand Master, by whom it shall be announced to the Grand Lodge.

F. Installation:

- (1) 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.
- (2) 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”.
- (3) The Sovereign Grand Master, or a qualified person designated by the Sovereign Grand Master, may install Grand Lodge officers or the Grand Lodge may designate a Past Grand Master or Grand Representative to install them. Installation by proxy is prohibited.
 - (a) Installing Staff shall be chosen by the incoming Grand Master prior to the Annual Session.

G. Officer Emeritus – is an honorary title which may allow one to advance for presentation; but is not entitled to Honors of the Order or the Degree where extended.

- (1) 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.
- (2) 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.

- (a) The resolution must be signed by at least five (5) Past Grand Masters within the jurisdiction in order to be presented.
- (3) There shall be no limit on Emeritus statuses bestowed upon any one member.

SEC 8. Duties of the Officers

A. Grand Master. (In Session.)

The Grand Master shall appoint committees. Only members of the Grand Lodge shall serve on committees, except on Joint Committees – with the Rebekah Assembly or other Grand Bodies – e.g. museum, D.A.R.E., scholarship, etc.

- (1) At the conclusion of sessions, the Grand Master MAY appoint any or all of the following committees:
 - (a) Appeals and Petitions.
 - (b) By-laws.
 - (c) Communications.
 - (d) Courtesies Extended.
 - (e) Credentials.
 - (f) Distribution of Officers' Reports.
 - (g) Finance.
 - (h) Instruction & Membership.
 - (i) Investigation of Grievances.
 - (j) GL/RA Joint Youth.
 - (k) Judiciary.
 - (l) Legislation.
 - (m) Memorials.
 - (n) Mileage and Per Diem.
 - (o) Miscellaneous Business.
 - (p) Odd Fellow Property.
 - (q) Rebekah Matters.
 - (r) Relief.
 - (s) State of the Order.
 - (t) Pilgrimage for Youth (PforY).
 - (u) Drawing of Seats.
 - (v) Other Committees as authorized.
- (2) At sessions, the Grand Master shall:
 - (a) Preside at all meetings of the Grand Lodge, preserve order and enforce the laws or cause the same to be done during a temporary absence.
 - (b) Cast a vote only when the Grand Lodge is equally divided, except on a ballot for officers, or on a secret ballot.
 - (c) Fill vacancies in office for the remainder of the term.
- (3) **Passwords.** 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 Noble Grand of each lodge under their commission in proper form.

B. Other duties of the Grand Master. (Not in session.)

(1) **Generally.**

- (a) To have supervision over the affairs of the Odd Fellows Lodges, Grand Junior Lodges, Junior Lodges, United Youth Groups and Rebekah Assembly within the jurisdiction.
 - (i) Where there is no Rebekah Assembly, the Rebekah Lodges, Theta Rho Assembly and Theta Rho Girls' Clubs shall fall under the Grand Lodge.
- (b) To require all members to conform to the laws and customs of the Order.
- (c) To remove from office any officer of a Lodge, Board, Committee, or Association who is found to be physically or mentally incapable or is willfully failing to perform the prescribed duties, but only after due notice and hearing and concurrence of the Board.
- (d) To make any recommendations considered necessary for amendment of the By-laws.
- (e) To execute all legal documents which shall be attested and acknowledged as required.
- (f) To instruct, with approval of the Board, the Committee on Investigation of Grievances to make a thorough investigation when of the opinion that the laws and customs of the Order have been violated and no proper action is being taken.
 - (i) The Grand Master may, with the approval of the Board, suspend a member or members for up to ninety (90) days while an investigation is conducted to determine if the member or members should be charged with violating the laws and/or customs of the Order.
 - (ii) The committee shall make a full report to the Grand Master who:
 - (a) If the findings are unfounded – no further action is required.
 - (b) If findings are founded – the Grand Master shall refer the case to the Committee on Judiciary, who shall proceed to act as a Trial Committee, working under the guidance of the provisions in the Trial Code.
 - (c) The Grand Master shall determine venue of the trial.
 - (d) If the Committee on Judiciary finds that the, member(s), officer(s), or component body has violated the laws of the Order, the Grand Master may, with approval of the Board, admonish, reprimand, fine, suspend, or expel the member, or may arrest or suspend the charter of the component body.
 - (e) The accused has all the rights provided by the Trial Code, to receive a copy of all charges and specifications, to present witnesses, to give testimony, and to cross-examine adverse witnesses.
 - (f) Any action taken must be reported in detail and in writing to the next regular session of the Grand Lodge.
 - (g) If an appeal is filed the action taken shall remain in force until reversed by the Grand Lodge.

- (g) Shall visit or cause to be visited by some other elective Officer each Odd Fellow Lodge in the Jurisdiction during the term of office.
- (h) Shall in person or by a District Deputy Grand Master or other qualified Past Grand install the Officers Elect in all Odd Fellow Lodges.
- (2) **Special Representatives.** The Grand Master may commission:
 - (a) A Special Deputy over any lodge under the supervision of the Grand Lodge to perform all the duties specifically designated in the commission. Upon completion of the duty, the Deputy shall report in writing the action taken with recommendations.
 - (b) A Special Deputy to take control and supervision over the affairs of any component body under the supervision of the Grand Lodge which is acting in violation of law, failing to meet its responsibilities, or unlawfully dissipating its assets. The officers of the component involved may continue to perform their duties under the supervision of the Deputy and to the extent allowed. When the situation has been alleviated the Deputy shall be relieved and commission terminated.
 - (c) A Special Deputy to take charge of the property, funds, and affairs of a component under the supervision of the Grand Lodge whose charter has been arrested, suspended, or forfeited. If the charter of a Lodge is arrested, suspended, or forfeited, it shall come under the immediate supervision of the Grand Lodge and remain until the charter is restored.
 - (d) District Deputy Grand Masters. The Grand Master shall appoint a District Deputy Grand Master for each District. The Grand Master may also appoint a Lodge Deputy for each Odd Fellow Lodge in the Jurisdiction. Such District Deputy shall be a Past Grand in good standing. The term of a District Deputy Grand Master shall commence at the end of the annual session and end at the next annual session. The District Deputy shall be the special agent and representative of the Grand Master, shall supervise the affairs of the Order in said district, and perform other duties as the Grand Master may direct. May receive reimbursement for expenses from appropriated funds when approved by the Grand Master. At the expiration of the term shall be entitled to the rank of Past District Deputy Grand Master and may acquire an appropriate jewel.
 - (e) Forms for commissions. They shall be supplied by the Grand Secretary, signed by the Grand Master, and attested by the Grand Secretary.
 - (f) Special Deputies: may be reimbursed for expenses on itemized statements, from budgeted funds, approved by the Grand Master.
- (3) **Expansion and Development – Instruction and Membership.**
 - (a) The Grand Master may appoint: Special Deputies to organize a lodge in a particular area or lodges throughout a District under the Grand Master's direct supervision or in any District or area.
 - (b) Shall visit lodges within the jurisdiction and shall instruct and assist them in all matters for the welfare and business of the Order.

(4) Decisions.

- (a) Decisions shall be rendered in writing by the Grand Master only when requested in writing by a Lodge.
- (b) All decisions of the Grand Master are binding until the Grand Lodge meets. Decisions shall be reviewed by the Committee on Judiciary; their report being acted upon by the voting members of the Grand Lodge. Unless reversed, they become law after being presented in Bill form and adopted by the voting members.
- (c) 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.

(5) Other Responsibilities.

- (a) Enforce the laws of the Order and may not suspend them.
- (b) May not delegate the vested powers except as provided in the Code.
- (c) Has no authority to interfere with the affairs of a Lodge or its Presiding Officer so long as it is in good standing and complying with the laws of the Order.
- (d) May, or upon the request of a majority of the voting members of the Grand Lodge, call special sessions of the Grand Lodge. Notice thereof shall be given at least thirty (30) days, prior to the Special Session, stating the time, purpose, and place of meeting, and no business shall be transacted except as specified in the notice. In the event of an emergency when it is not financially feasible to hold a special session, the Representatives may be polled by mail as to their vote upon the proposition or propositions, not exceeding two (2) in number, with the pros and cons to be disclosed in full.
- (e) May, with written consent of a majority of the Representatives, in the event of war, grave emergency, or other like cause omit the holding of a regular session or may change the regular time and place.
- (f) May receive petitions and grant charters as per sub-section (f) below.
- (g) Shall perform other duties as required of the Grand Lodge.
- (h) May fill vacancies in office, if required, until adjournment of the next session, with approval of the Board.
- (i) Shall issue proclamations and directives requesting observances by appropriate ceremonies of the Anniversary of the Order, Wildey's Birthday, and such other anniversaries and events as deemed necessary.
- (j) May grant dispensations as authorized by the constitution and laws of the Grand Lodge, which do not violate the laws of The Sovereign Grand Lodge.
- (k) The Grand Master may grant dispensations to dispense with regular meetings for a period not to exceed two consecutive months in any one calendar year.
- (l) Shall, by request of a Noble Grand, install the officers elect of any Odd Fellows lodge within the jurisdiction.
- (m) Shall be responsible for ensuring existence of a bond for any officers permitted to sign for or distribute the funds of the Grand Lodge.
- (n) May not compel uniform fee for initiation and degrees.

(6) Issuance of Charter(s).

- (a) An Odd Fellows Lodge may be organized upon receipt of signed petition for a charter by minimum of five (5) or more members of the Third Degree or a minimum of fifteen (15) persons qualified to become Odd Fellows in a community within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, accompanied by the proper withdrawal cards and applications for membership.
- (b) A Junior Lodge may be organized upon receipt of signed petition for a charter by minimum of five (5) or more members of the Junior Lodge Degree or a minimum of fifteen (15) persons qualified to become Junior Odd Fellows in a community within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, accompanied by the proper withdrawal cards and applications for membership.
- (c) A Grand Junior Lodge may be organized upon receipt of signed petition for a charter by seven (7) or more Past Chief Rulers of the Junior Lodge Degree from not less than three (3) Junior Lodges within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, accompanied by the sealed letters from the lodges certifying the rank of the Past Chief Rulers.
- (d) A United Youth Group may be organized upon receipt of signed petition for a charter by minimum of five (5) or more applicants qualified to become a member of the United Youth Group in a community within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, accompanied by the proper applications for membership.
- (e) A Rebekah Assembly may be organized upon receipt of signed petition for a charter by seven (7) or more Past Noble Grand members of the Rebekah Degree from not less than five (5) Rebekah Lodges within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, accompanied by the sealed letters from the lodges certifying the rank of the Past Noble Grands.
- (f) A Rebekah Lodge – when there is no Rebekah Assembly a Rebekah Lodge may be organized upon receipt of signed petition for a charter by five (5) or more members of the Rebekah Degree or fifteen (15) persons qualified to become Rebekah Degree members in a community within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, accompanied by the proper withdrawal cards and applications for membership.
- (g) A Theta Rho Assembly – when there is no Rebekah Assembly a Theta Rho Assembly may be organized upon receipt of signed petition for a charter by seven (7) or more Past President members of the Theta Rho Girls' Club Degree from not less than three (3) Theta Rho Girls' Club Degree within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, accompanied by the sealed letters from the lodges certifying the rank of the Past Presidents.
- (h) A Theta Rho Girls' Club – when there is no Rebekah Assembly a Theta Rho Girls' Club may be organized upon receipt of signed petition for a charter by five (5) or more members of a Theta Rho Girls' Club or fifteen (15) persons qualified to become Theta Rho Girls' Club members in a community within the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge, accompanied by the proper withdrawal cards and applications for membership.

- (i) No more than two-fifths (2/5) [forty percent (40%)] of the members may be associate members, all must be in good standing to keep a Lodge charter active.
 - (j) Petitions for charter shall be on forms supplied by the Grand Secretary.
 - (k) The petition for the charter shall be sent to the Grand Secretary who shall make a copy for the permanent file and then forward the petition to the Grand Master. If satisfied, the Grand Master may issue the charter or reserve action and present it to the Grand Lodge in regular session. The application shall be accompanied by a fee as determined by the Grand Lodge, which shall be refunded if the petition is not granted.
 - (l) In practice – the Grand Master may issue Dispensations/ Warrants in the recess of the Grand Lodge, with the approval of the Board of Grand Lodge Officers, resolving at the Grand Lodge session to issue the Charter.
 - (m) Five (5) regular members must be maintained in good standing to keep a Lodge charter active.
 - (n) The Charter issued by the Grand Lodge shall be inviolate and may not be altered or amended without the consent of the Grand Lodge, except that a photocopy of the Charter may be used for special sessions held outside of the regular meeting place, be at least a minimum of eight and one-half inches by eleven inches (8 ½” x 11”), a copy of which must be furnished to the Grand Lodge for its archives.
 - (o) Charters and dispensations for the institution of Odd Fellows lodges shall be signed by the Grand Master and attested by the Grand Secretary.
- (7) **Institution.**
- (a) The Grand Master, or one designated by the Grand Master in writing, shall institute a Lodge or other unit when the charter/warrant/dispensation is issued.
 - (b) Surrendered, arrested, or forfeited charters may be restored by the Grand Master or the Grand Lodge.
 - (c) Assets of Lodges whose charters are surrendered or revoked vest in the Grand Lodge, which has discretion to return them if the charter is restored, and must return them if an appeal is sustained.
- (8) **Sovereign Grand Lodge Session**
- (a) Shall be reimbursed for attendance at Sovereign Grand Lodge Session.
 - (i) Must attend, at minimum, Welcome Dinner, Officers’ Banquet, and Installation Dinner.
 - (ii) Expenses incurred for registration, travel, parking, lodging, and banquets shall be reimbursed for the Grand Master only, by the Grand Lodge, with receipts provided.
 - (iii) Lodging will be covered up to the session hotel rate, and for the dates necessary to attend required events.
 - (iv) Travel and non-banquet meal expenses will be reimbursed at the federal government daily per diem of the location of the session.
 - (v) Airfare must be pre-approved by the Board of Grand Lodge Officers.

C. Duties of the Deputy Grand Master.

(1) Generally.

- (a) To perform the duties of the DGM as stated in the Grand Lodge Ritual and preside in the absence of the Grand Master.
- (b) To perform all duties assigned by the Grand Lodge, perform the duties and make visitations as may be directed by the Grand Master or the Board.
- (c) To act for the Grand Master in case of the latter's continuing disability to such an extent of being physically or mentally unable to perform the duties as determined by the Board.
- (d) To oversee the District Deputy Grand Masters and be responsible for their effective services.
- (e) Shall instruct the District Deputy Grand Masters to complete a semi-annual report on the status of the lodge(s) assigned to them.
- (f) Shall not serve as a Lodge Representative or Alternate Lodge Representative in this Grand Lodge.

D. Duties of the Grand Warden.

(1) Generally.

- (a) To have charge of the doors, and through the Grand Marshal and Grand Conductor examine and ascertain that all members and visitors are qualified to sit in the session prior to opening. The Grand Lodge shall be the sole judge of qualifications and validity of credentials of Representatives.
- (b) To have charge of the diagrams and unwritten work of the Order during the session of the Grand Lodge. To confer the Grand Lodge Degree upon all Past Grands presenting proper credentials.
- (c) To make visitations and perform such duties as the Grand Master, the Grand Lodge, or the Board may direct.
- (d) To study the programs and projects of all lodges and report and make recommendations concerning them to the Board.
- (e) To assist the Grand Master, and in the event of the absence of both the Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master, officiates for them.
- (f) Shall not serve as a Lodge Representative or Alternate Lodge Representative in this Grand Lodge.

E. Duties of the Grand Secretary.

(1) Generally

- (a) To ensure a bond is executed by the Grand Lodge with corporate surety, to be approved by the Committee on Finance, to account for all funds and property that come into possession of the Grand Secretary's office.
- (b) To employ assistants and others to serve and to be compensated from funds appropriated.
- (c) To have custody of the Seal of the Grand Lodge, attesting necessary documents.
 - (i) A copy of the impression or print of the Seal shall be placed in the archives of The Sovereign Grand Lodge.

- (ii) The design of the Seal shall contain the name and date of institution; and any fraternal emblem or logo as agreed upon by the Grand Lodge.
- (d) To prepare, for use of the Committee on Mileage and Per Diem, a table of mileage of the officers of the Grand Lodge, Past Grand Masters, and a numerical list by Lodge of Representatives expected to attend the session, with any other information deemed necessary for examination and correction by the Committee; where Mileage and/or Per Diem are paid.
- (e) To close the books of the Grand Lodge at the end of the fiscal year, and make proper report thereon at each Annual Session.
- (f) To keep all accounts in accordance with approved accounting methods, keeping a separate account for each appropriation. Payments shall not exceed specific appropriations and no transfers from one appropriation account to another may be made without specific approval of the Grand Lodge. Appropriations shall be made for the fiscal year. All books and accounts shall be promptly posted.
 - (i) Shall draw and attest all orders on the Grand Treasurer for monies appropriated or expended by the Grand Lodge only after approval by the committee on finance.
- (g) To sell copies of the Journal of Proceedings, Code of General Laws and Supplements thereto, and other supplies for cash, on consignment, or for credit not exceeding sixty (60) days, as deemed for the best interest of the Order.
- (h) To transmit to the Grand Treasurer all moneys collected for various funds and obtain receipts.
- (i) To prepare a complete Journal of Proceedings of each session containing statistical and other information directed by the Grand Lodge, properly indexed, to be printed and bound; and distributed within two (2) months from adjournment of the Annual Session and transmit one (1) copy to each lodge, officer of the Grand Lodge, Lodge Representative, Past Grand Master, District Deputy Grand Master, and the Sovereign Grand Secretary.
 - (i) A hard copy shall be kept at the Grand Lodge, and distributed to each Lodge. All others may be distributed electronically.
- (j) To keep a library of the proceedings of the Grand Lodge. To archive all paraphernalia that may come into possession of the Grand Lodge.
- (k) To transmit all appeal papers to the Chairman of the Committee on Appeals and Petitions so as to arrive prior to the annual session.
- (l) To prepare and attest all official papers, documents, and charters of the Grand Lodge and distribute appropriately.
- (m) To prepare forms for annual reports of the Lodges containing information required by The Sovereign Grand Lodge, to be delivered to lodges by December 1. Reports shall be returned to the Grand Secretary by February 28, along with such other information as may be necessary for tax purposes that may be required.
- (n) To require payment of all fees and dues with the reports set forth in sub-paragraph (m) above. Failure to comply shall give the Grand Secretary sufficient reason to take the following actions: (a) Notify the Lodge of its Representative(s) loss of

accreditation; (b) Require monetary penalties of ten percent (10%) as of date stated in the by-laws, based on dues payable and an additional one and one-half percent (1 1/2%) interest per month thereafter until paid. If all dues and penalties are not received, the Representatives may be seated with only the right of debate and to make motions but not permitted to vote. If mileage and per diem are paid, the Lodge shall be billed for mileage and per diem, unless good cause for such failure can be shown to the satisfaction of the Grand Lodge.

- (o) To keep an adequate supply of jewels and items of supply for sale.
- (p) To keep accounts between the Grand Lodge and all components under its jurisdiction and that all accounts to the Grand Lodge which becomes delinquent sixty (60) days shall bear a penalty of one and one-half percent (1 1/2 %) per month which shall be collected on the gross amount of the invoice.
 - (i) Shall transmit quarterly, to each odd fellow lodge, a statement of all monies due to the grand lodge.
 - (ii) Shall submit to the Finance Committee and the Board of Grand Lodge Officers, at the close of each quarter, a statement of accounts in arrears.
- (q) To notify all members of the date, time, and location of any and all sessions of the Grand Lodge.
- (r) Make a full report of the proceedings of the Board to the Grand Lodge at its annual session.
- (s) Receive from the Secretaries, in triplicate, amendments to their respective by-laws together with three (3) certified copies of their current laws. Amendments shall be forwarded to the Committee on By-laws, or appropriate member for review and reporting on at the Grand Lodge Session. The files shall be forwarded within thirty (30) days of receipt.
- (t) Shall not serve as a lodge representative, or alternate lodge representative in this Grand Lodge.

(2) Information.

- (a) The local units of the Order shall annually furnish to their Grand Body, who will in turn annually furnish the same to The Sovereign Grand Lodge, the following:
 - (i) The most current mailing address for the Unit.
 - (ii) The physical location of their meeting facilities.
 - (iii) The Meeting dates and times as reflected in their by-laws.
 - (iv) The full name, date of birth, current mailing address, physical address of residence, telephone number, and e-mail address of each member whether regular, associate, or non-contributing. Said information is to include the member's status of membership.
 - (v) The Grand Lodge shall NOT sell or distribute for any purpose outside the fraternity, any of the member rosters, mailing lists, including personal information held by the Grand Lodge or its local lodges, to any person or persons, institutions or agencies for sales promotions, or for other purposes within or without the Grand Lodge, without the expressed permission of the member. Further any distribution must have the expressed permission of the

voting members of the Grand Lodge present and voting at any regular annual or called special session.

- (b) Each unit of the Order shall furnish to their Grand Body a complete legal description of all real property owned, including property owned by a hall association and any other property that may be owned outright or in cooperation with others, which includes cemeteries. This information shall be furnished by the Grand Body to The Sovereign Grand Lodge upon request.
 - (c) Each Grand Body shall furnish to The Sovereign Grand Lodge a complete legal description of all real property owned including Homes, Camps, Cemeteries or other property that may be owned outright or in cooperation with others.
 - (d) Shall keep a record of all the Lodges in the State with the date of their Institution, keep a register of all the members of this Grand Lodge, the time of their admission into and withdrawal there from, and the Lodge to which they belong. Shall likewise keep a register of all members duly initiated, admitted, or transferred to the Odd Fellow Lodges located in Maryland, together with a record of their withdrawal, transfer, suspension, expulsion or decease.
- (3) When the Grand Lodge is in session:**
- (a) Attend all sessions of the Grand Lodge, keep a record of all proceedings and handle correspondence and business pertaining to the office or as may be delegated.
 - (b) At the opening of each session report to the Grand Master in writing the names of Lodges that are delinquent in reporting, paying dues and fees, or that are indebted for supplies as of sixty (60) days before the session. This report shall be delivered to the Committee on Credentials immediately upon its appointment.
 - (c) Make a detailed financial report of all accounts.
 - (d) Provide for use of committees and Representatives an adequate supply of Codes of General Law, Journals of Proceedings, Robert's Rules of Order, and necessary forms and stationery.
 - (e) Appoint such Assistants as required.
 - (f) Keep a record of the proceedings of each session.
 - (g) In compiling the Journal, to number every bill, resolution, petition and document. At the end of each item, indicate by number the committee report and disposition.
 - (h) Format and print the reports of officers of the Grand Lodge for use by the Committee on Distribution of Officers' Reports; this to include minutes of the Board.
 - (i) Cause to be printed in the Journal, all legislation including those Bills laid over for the next session to be printed in the Advance report of the following Session.
 - (j) Shall include, in an appendix to the journal, all statistical tables and such other information that may be called for by this body.
- (4) Reporting of Lawsuits against the Grand Lodge.**
- (a) Whenever a Grand Lodge is named as a defendant in a civil lawsuit, the Grand Secretary of that jurisdiction shall notify The Sovereign Grand Lodge.

- (b) Such notice and information of the lawsuit, not to include privileged or case sensitive content, shall be provided to The Sovereign Grand Lodge immediately prior to filing an answer to the plaintiff's complaint.

F. Duties of the Grand Treasurer.

(1) Generally.

- (a) To ensure a bond is executed by the Grand Lodge with corporate surety, to be approved by the Committee on Finance, to account for all funds and property that come into possession of the Grand Treasurer's office.
- (b) Attend all sessions of the Grand Lodge and perform the duties of the office and those assigned.
- (c) Keep all monies, securities, and evidence of indebtedness of the Grand Lodge, pay all orders drawn by the Grand Secretary, and submit an annual statement of all accounts forty (40) days prior to the annual session.
- (d) Receive receipts for all monies collected and deposited by the Grand Secretary.
- (e) Sign all checks drawn by the Grand Secretary and duly approved by the Committee on Finance. The Grand Secretary or the Grand Master shall countersign checks.
- (f) Disburse funds collected for General Relief, keeping a proper record thereof.
- (g) Shall keep their accounts duly posted, which shall show the amounts and purpose of all receipts and disbursements, and be ready at all time for examination and audit. Shall keep a report of their receipts and disbursements, and place the same in the hands of the Grand Secretary thirty days prior to annual session. Report shall show the receipts and expenditures of the Temple, the Grand Lodge and all other funds under their control. Shall preserve all vouchers and papers appertaining to their office and ready to submit the same to the Grand Lodge or Committee on Finance when required.
- (h) Shall not serve as a lodge representative, or alternate lodge representative in this Grand Lodge.

G. Duties of Grand Representatives

- (1) Shall attend the meetings of the Sovereign Grand Lodge, the meetings of this Grand Lodge, and the Board of Grand Lodge Officers.
 - (a) Must attend all meetings and sessions required by the Sovereign Grand Lodge.
 - (b) Must attend, at minimum, Welcome Dinner, Officers' Banquet, and Installation Dinner.
 - (c) Expenses incurred for registration, travel, parking, lodging, and banquets shall be reimbursed for the Representative only, by the Grand Lodge, with receipts provided.
 - (i) Lodging will be covered up to the session hotel rate, and for the dates necessary to attend required events.
 - (ii) 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.
 - (iii) Airfare must be pre-approved by the Board of Grand Lodge Officers.

- (d) 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.
 - (2) 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.
 - (3) Shall introduce the Official Representative of the Sovereign Grand Lodge at the Annual Session.
- H. Duties of the Grand Chaplain
 - (1) Shall open and close each meeting of the Annual Session with the prayer used in Odd Fellow Lodge opening and closing ceremonies.
 - (a) Additional prayers or services may be added at the discretion of the Grand Chaplain, or by request of the Grand Master.
 - (2) Perform such other duties as are appropriate for the office.
- I. Duties of the Grand Marshal
 - (1) Shall introduce all official Representatives from visiting jurisdictions, with the exception of the Sovereign Grand Representative, and assist the Grand Warden in the Grand Lodge.
 - (2) Shall attend all of the Grand Master's official visits within this jurisdiction.
 - (3) Shall present Officers-Elect for installation under the direction of the Grand Master.
 - (4) Shall have superintendence of all processions sanctioned by the Grand Lodge.
- J. Duties of the Grand Conductor
 - (1) Shall assist the Grand Marshal in the performance of their duties.
 - (2) Shall attend to the needs of the Grand Lodge during the Sessions.
 - (3) Shall serve all notices that may be delivered to them by the Grand Master, or Grand Secretary, during the Session.
 - (4) Shall perform such other duties as the Grand Master and Grand Secretary direct.
- K. Duties of the Grand Guardian
 - (1) Shall attend the inner door of the Grand Lodge Room, and shall permit no one to enter or depart without the consent of the Grand Master or Grand Warden.
- L. Duties of the Grand Herald
 - (1) Shall attend the outer door of the Grand Lodge Room.
 - (2) Shall receive cards of visiting Brothers and Sisters and deliver them to the Grand Guardian.
 - (3) Shall assist the Grand Conductor.
 - (4) Shall have charge of and arrange the Grand Lodge Room.
 - (5) Shall, under direction of the Grand Master, perform such other duties as may be appropriate to this office.
- M. Duties of the Grand Musician
 - (1) Shall provide appropriate music at the visitations to Lodges, during Grand Lodge Sessions and at all other official Grand Lodge functions provided a suitable instrument is present.
- N. Duties of the Grand Instructor

- (1) Shall have responsibility of the instructions of the Unwritten Work. The Instructor, with the approval of the Grand Master, appoint Deputy Instructors to assist ~~him~~ in the duties of this office.

O. Duties of the Assistant Grand Secretary

- (1) Shall be subordinate to the Grand Secretary.
- (2) Shall discharge such duties as the Grand Secretary may prescribe and perform their duties when they are absent.

P. Duties of District Deputy Grand Masters

- (1) The District Deputy Grand Masters are the representatives of the Grand Master. They shall have general supervision of the Lodges in their respective districts.
- (2) The District Deputy Grand Master also serves as an agent of the Grand Secretary with regards to the completion of the Annual Reports, and submission of per-capita dues.
- (3) Shall visit the Lodges ~~under his jurisdiction~~ assigned as often as possible; see that the laws, customs, and usages of the Order are observed and adhered to, and that the work of the Order is performed uniformly, providing assistance and education as needed.
- (4) Shall, at the beginning of each term, in the absence of the Grand Master, install or cause to be installed by a qualified Past Grand, the regularly elected Officers of the Lodge.
- (5) ~~and~~ Shall report immediately to the Grand Master any condition or violation of Law or usage that should receive prompt attention.
- (6) Shall semi-annually, complete and return the report provided by the Deputy Grand Master on the conditions and needs of the lodge. Urgent needs of the lodge should be reported immediately to the Deputy Grand Master, or other appropriate officer.
- (7) District Deputy Grand Masters may hold office in their respective Lodges.

SEC 9. Vacancy in office of:

- A. The Grand Master. In case of death, resignation, or impeachment of the Grand Master, or should the office be vacated by continued physical or mental incapacity of extreme nature, then the office shall be filled by the Deputy Grand Master, who may, having served a majority of and to the end of the term, be ranked as a Past Grand Master, or has the option to continue for a regular term as Grand Master.
- B. The Deputy Grand Master. In case of death, resignation, or impeachment of the Deputy Grand Master, or should the office be vacated by reason of continued physical or mental incapacity of extreme nature, then the office shall be filled by the Grand Warden, and the Grand Warden, who may, having served a majority of and to the end of the term, be ranked as a Past Deputy Grand Master.
- C. The Grand Warden. In case of death, resignation, or impeachment of the Grand Warden, or should the office be vacated by reason of continued physical or mental incapacity of extreme nature, then the office with approval of the Board shall be filled by appointment of the Grand Master. The appointee who may, having served a majority of and to the end of the term, be ranked as Past Grand Warden.
- D. The Grand Secretary. In case of death, resignation, or impeachment of the Grand Secretary, or should the office be vacated by reason of continued physical or mental

incapacity of extreme nature, then the office with approval of the Board shall be filled by appointment of the Grand Master. The appointee shall be entitled to rank as a Past Grand Secretary.

(1) Should the term be for more than one year, the appointment shall be to the next session of the Grand Lodge. If there be additional time in the term, there shall be an election to fulfill the remainder of the term.

E. The Grand Treasurer. In case of death, resignation, or impeachment of the Grand Treasurer, or should the office be vacated by reason of continued physical or mental incapacity of extreme nature, then the office with approval of the Board shall be filled by appointment of the Grand Master. The appointee shall be entitled to rank as a Past Grand Treasurer at the close of the term.

(1) Should the term be for more than one year, the appointment shall be to the next session of the Grand Lodge. If there be additional time in the term, there shall be an election to fulfill the remainder of the term.

F. Grand Representative. In case of death, resignation, or impeachment of the Grand Representative, or should the office be vacated by reason of continued physical or mental incapacity of extreme nature, then the office shall be filled by the Alternate Grand Representative. The Alternate Grand Representative shall be entitled to rank as a Past Grand Representative at the close of the term.

G. In the event that the Grand Treasurer or Grand Secretary, be unable to perform the duties of his the office because of sickness, or other incapacity, the Board of Grand Lodge Officers may appoint an Officer pro-temp to perform the duties until the Elected Officer can resume their duties, or the term ends, whichever is sooner.

H. 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.

I. 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.

A. All elective officers, and committee chairs shall, at least forty (4) days prior to the annual session of the Grand Lodge, submit to the Grand Secretary a report of their activities during the preceding year.

(1) Appointive Officers can, or may be required, either by the Grand Master or majority vote of the board, to submit a report.

(2) 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.

B. Minutes of the Board shall be a matter of record in the advance reports unless previously distributed.

C. The reports shall be printed for distribution at the annual session and inclusion in the Journal of Proceedings.

- (1) 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.

D. The Grand Master may submit a supplemental report to be printed in the Daily Journal.

SEC 11. **Impeachment:** An officer, member or Representative may be impeached and removed from office, suspended or expelled from membership in the Grand Lodge. A motion to impeach requires a majority vote for passage. Charges with specifications may be filed with the Grand Secretary at any time but no action to impeach shall be taken until the accused has received three (3) days prior written notice. A member under impeachment shall be afforded the opportunity to be heard and present evidence. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Representatives present is required for conviction and punishment.

SEC 12. **Sessions:**

- Exceptional Sessions shall be formatted in similar sequence as designated in Chapter I – Constitution of The Sovereign Grand Lodge, Article VII Sessions.

A. **Annual Sessions**

- (1) 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 at a time and date for the next annual session, to be voted on prior to the close of the current annual session.
- (2) Regular sessions should be held each day until the business of the session is completed.
- (3) 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.
- (4) 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.

B. **Special Sessions.**

- (1) The Grand Master may call Special Sessions of the Grand Lodge at any time, or when petitioned by at least seven (7) Past Grands representing at least three (3) lodges.
- (2) Notice thereof shall be given at least thirty (30) days prior; stating the time; place and purpose of the meeting, and no business shall be transacted except as specified in the notice.
- (3) In the event of an emergency when it is not financially feasible to hold a special session, the Representatives/lodge (members) [Past Grands] may be polled ~~by mail~~ as to their vote upon the proposition or propositions, not exceeding two (2) in number, with the pros and cons to be disclosed in full.

C. **Special Sessions Limited**

- (1) The Grand Master may call Special Session Limited to meet at any time and place for the admission of Past Grands for instruction in the principles and work of the Order.

- (2) No cost shall be incurred by this body for such meeting except the actual expenses of the elective Officers of the Grand Lodge.

D. Quorum.

- (1) **Annual and Special Sessions.** A quorum of the Grand Lodge shall consist of the attendance of at least seven (7) Past Grands who are in good standing from not less than three (3) or a majority of the lodges in good standing.
- (2) **Special Sessions Limited.** 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. Rules and Practices.

- A. All questions before the Grand Lodge shall be determined by a majority of the votes cast by members present, except as otherwise provided by this Constitution and Bylaws, or upon a Roll Call vote, which vote may be called by the Representatives from two-thirds (2/3) of the Lodges.
 - (1) No Roll Call vote shall be taken upon any appeal from the decision of the presiding Officer, or upon any report of the Committee on Appeals, or upon any call for the previous question, or upon any dilatory motion.
 - (2) When a Roll Call vote is taken, the vote of each individual shall be entered in the minutes.
- B. Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail on any parliamentary procedure not addressed in these bylaws.

SEC 14. Revenues.

- A. Revenues shall be from charter fees, per capita dues, assessments adopted in regular session, profit from the sale of supplies, investment income, rent, fundraising activities, devises and bequest and income from any lawful source.
- B. The per capita dues shall be fixed by the Grand Lodge at the Annual Session and shall be calculated and paid with the annual report.
- C. The revenue of the Grand Lodge shall be raised and expended only for such purposes as may be authorized by the General Laws of the Order and by the Bylaws of the Grand Lodge.
- D. No part of the funds shall be loaned to any Grand or Odd Fellow Lodge of the Order.
- E. All funds of the Grand Lodge, which are not invested, shall be deposited and held in approved banking institutions, in which deposits are insured, and funds for different purposes should be accurately accounted for.
- F. Invested funds
 - (1) All Endowment and Trust Funds provided for shall be invested in the name of the Grand Lodge under rules approved by the Grand Lodge and managed by the trustees. Such rules must meet the requirements provided for investments of Trust Funds under control of the courts of Baltimore, Maryland. The investment of different funds shall be kept separate and distinct. No part of any Fund or Income therefrom shall be loaned to this or any other Grand or Subordinate Body or any member of the Order, unless the fund be created and maintained for such specific purpose.

- (2) The income from investments, if requested by the Grand Treasurer, and approved by the Board, should be collected by the trustee and paid to the Grand Treasurer or other persons authorized to receive the same, to be used for the purpose for which designated. Withdraws require the signature of two Trustees.

SEC 15. Authority Over Lodges.

- A. Grand Lodges have sole power to grant charters or dispensations for lodges in their jurisdiction and shall adopt legislation prescribing the methods and procedures.
 - (1) Grand Lodges may designate a local unit or units which have historical and traditional significance as an historical unit.
- B. Lodges may conduct their business in any language authorized by the Grand Lodge if rituals are available.
- C. Grand Lodges shall require all lodges to adopt Constitutions and By-laws which shall be submitted to the Grand Lodge for referral to the proper officer or committee for approval before becoming effective upon vote of the Grand Lodge.
- D. Grand Lodges shall see that by-laws are enforced unless repealed.
- E. Grand Lodges shall require that by-laws provide for fees and dues sufficient to meet fraternal obligations.
- F. The charter of a lodge may be arrested, suspended, or revoked by the Grand Lodge Board after notice and hearing. The charter of a Lodge may be arrested upon request by the Lodge after an investigation by the Board.
- G. It shall be the duty of a Grand Lodge to see that its lodges conform to law, both fraternal and civil and do not dissipate their property and funds.
- H. When a Grand Lodge arrests, suspends, or revokes a charter, the assets and records of the lodge shall be taken by it, and be placed in escrow. After hearing the Grand Lodge may restore the charter and assets. Should the lodge not be reinstated the assets shall be placed in escrow for a minimum of three (3) years. If no petition for reinstatement is received and approved, the assets, etc. shall become the property of the Grand Lodge.
- I. Grand Lodges have no right to compel lodges to elect persons to membership, or restore expelled members, unless the decision to expel is reversed. Its officers cannot grant dispensation to re-ballot on rejected applications for membership. Grand Lodges may not prohibit lodges from receiving members because of advanced age. Grand Lodges shall not compel lodges to accept members by transfer.
- J. Grand Lodges may not designate or select lodge officers but may appoint committees to investigate the actions, books, papers, and records of lodges.
- K. Grand Lodges may permit consolidation of lodges within their jurisdiction under the following regulations, except when five (5) members wish to keep the lodge.
 - (1) The request for such consolidation shall be submitted to each lodge interested, in writing, signed by not less than ten percent (10%) of the membership of each lodge, giving the name and number of the lodge under which the proposed consolidated Lodge shall work, which may be the name and number of either lodge, or the charter name of one and the number of another, or an entirely new name and such number as the Grand Master or the Grand Lodge may award them, together with any other agreements desired between such lodges.

- (2) A written or printed copy of the proposed provisions for such consolidation shall be mailed within three days to the last known address, as shown on the books of the lodge, to all members of each lodge by the Secretary thereof, stating that a vote will be taken on such provisions on the date specified within four (4) weeks.
- (3) At such time as may then and there be fixed, a vote by secret ballot shall be taken, the result duly recorded, and a certified transcript of the entire action taken shall be sent, under seal immediately to the Grand Lodge; office of the Grand Secretary, who shall forward copy to the Grand Master.
- (4) The Grand Master, or the Grand Lodge, may grant and issue the necessary dispensation provided that a majority of the members present and voting in each lodge approve such consolidation.
- (5) The consolidation, if authorized, shall be effected by the Grand Master, or a duly authorized Deputy, whose duty it shall be to receive from each lodge its charter, rituals, books, assets and liabilities. The secretary of each affected lodge shall provide a list of members including dropped, suspended, expelled and deceased since the last report.
- (6) On receiving such property and lists of membership, the Grand Master or his Deputy shall proclaim the lodges duly consolidated, and proceed forthwith to the election and installation of duly qualified members to the various offices.
- (7) All lodge assets and liabilities shall be transferred to the new consolidated lodge.
- (8) Lodges going into consolidation must take the following steps before consolidation can begin:
 - (a) Annual reports must be in
 - (b) Lodge must be paid up and in good standing with their debts and per capita dues
 - (c) All assets (funds and property) must be inventoried and listed
 - (d) Any benefits and membership, escrowed, accounts and death benefits must be listed and presented
 - (e) Benefits to members, if any, must be set aside in escrowed accounts to cover same
 - (f) Resolutions for consolidation must be presented and approved at the next Annual Session
- (9) Day of consolidation. At time of Consolidation all members of both Lodges should be present
 - (a) Merge and revise By-Laws of both Lodges
 - (b) New cards are to be issued for the period of time that the merging Members dues cards show.
 - (c) All members of the closing lodge will sign the register of the remaining lodge. If a new lodge is formed, all members will sign the register of the new lodge.
- L. Procedures for charges regarding offenses, the method of trial, punishment and appeal shall be as set forth in "Chapter XXXVIII" of the Code of General Laws of the Sovereign Grand Lodge.

SEC 16. Funds of the Grand Lodge.

- A. Excess funds of the Grand Lodge shall be invested by the Grand Treasurer and the Finance Committee or such other committee appointed to confer with the Grand

Treasurer. This officer and Committee shall also determine the amount that constitutes excess funds.

- B. The Board may borrow funds, not exceeding the amount previously approved by the Grand Lodge, as may be necessary to meet expenses and appropriations, and to pledge the credit of the Grand Lodge. The chairman of the Committee on Finance shall also attest evidence of the indebtedness. Real or personal property may be mortgaged or pledged if necessary. Funds derived therefrom shall be delivered to the Grand Treasurer. Funds to be borrowed if in excess of the approved amount must be authorized by special resolution adopted at a session of the Grand Lodge.
- C. A complete list of all securities shall be currently maintained by the Grand Treasurer and delivered to the Grand Master. Securities shall be kept in safe deposit boxes. Access shall be limited to any two (2) of the Board.
- D. The raising of funds for particular purposes, by contributions or other legal money-raising activities, must be approved by Grand Master.
 - (1) No unit, officer, or member may petition funds outside the jurisdiction without written approval of the Sovereign Grand Master.
- E. If at any time any Lodge, its Officers, or its members, shall propose, plan, attempt or undertake to dissipate, divest or divide any of its funds so as to prevent or jeopardize their use for the trust purposes provided by the Laws of the Order. It shall be the duty of the grand Master forthwith to take such steps and to institute such proceedings, in the courts or otherwise, as may be deemed necessary or advisable to enforce the Laws of the Order and to prevent the violation thereof, or to follow such funds and recover the same
 - (1) There shall be no sale or transfer of any Grand Lodge Real Property, other than property acquired through closing a defunct Lodge, unless said sale be approved by the Grand Lodge of Maryland meeting in either regular or Special Session. Any proposal for sale of Home Property will be studied by the Board of Grand Lodge Officers, prior to calling a Special Session. The Board will determine whether the proposal warrants a Special Session.

SEC 17. Representatives.

- A. Election, Qualifications and Terms of Office
 - (1) An active Lodge shall be entitled to a Representative for its Charter and the first fifty (50) members; those Lodges with more than fifty (50) members shall be entitled to an additional Representative for each fifty (50) members.
 - (2) An alternate Representative shall be elected at the same time as the Representative to serve in the event that the elected Representative cannot attend the upcoming session.
 - (3) A Representative and an Alternate Representative, elected the first meeting in December, shall be duly certified by the Grand Secretary. Representatives shall not be recognized as such, nor entitled to its rights and privileges, until the credentials have been received and approved by the Grand Secretary. Terms of Representatives commence at the beginning of the Grand Lodge Session for which elected.
 - (4) The Grand Lodge is the sole judge of the qualifications of Representatives.
 - (a) A Representative may be elected to any number of terms.
 - (b) Cannot be seated unless the Representative and the Lodge are in good standing.

- (c) A Representative may hold any other office in the Lodge.
 - (d) Contested elections shall be determined solely by the Grand Lodge.
 - (5) If a Lodge becomes entitled to an additional Representative after the date to certify Representatives to the Grand Lodge Office, the presiding officer may appoint an additional Representative certifying the increase in membership to the Grand Secretary. If a decrease in membership deprives a Lodge of a Representative, then each Representative elected by it shall serve out the elected term and the Lodge shall elect one (1) less Representative.
 - (6) Each Representative and alternate Representative must be a Past Grand, a member in good standing of an Odd Fellows Lodge in good standing; provided that residence is within its own or an adjoining jurisdiction; and further providing that the one elected may qualify after election by obtaining the Grand Lodge Degree at a Regular or Special Session of the Grand Lodge. The Lodge shall furnish the Representative with a certificate of election with a duplicate under seal to the Grand Secretary.
 - (7) If a Representative is prevented from attending one (1) session, the seat is not thereby vacated, but may serve the remainder of the term.
 - (8) If a Representative or Representative-elect becomes disqualified, it shall be the duty of the Lodge to immediately notify the Grand Secretary.
 - (9) Representatives shall not be recognized as such, nor entitled to its rights and privileges, until the credentials have been received and approved.
 - (a) A Lodge that fails or refuses to properly certify its Representative to the Grand Secretary two (2) weeks prior to the Session, shall be billed for mileage and per diem of such uncertified Representatives, if seated by the Grand Lodge, and if the Grand Lodge pays miles and per diem to its representatives.
 - (b) This penalty shall not apply in cases of death or serious illness and the Grand Lodge may rule that the delay was caused by other unavoidable circumstances.
 - (10) When a Representative shall be installed in an elective office of the Grand Lodge, the office, as Lodge Representative shall be vacated.
 - (a) A Representative shall represent only one (1) Lodge.
 - (i) There shall not be proxy representation, nor vote by proxy; one (1) person – one (1) vote.
 - (11) In case of a vacancy occurring in such representation for any cause, not filled according to the prescribed procedure, the Past Grand's of said Lodge present at the session of the Grand Lodge shall by a vote of the majority of them appoint one of their members to fill such vacancy.
- B. The Duties of a Representative are:
- (1) To attend sessions of the Grand Lodge, represent the Lodge and report all legislation and other matters that occurred at the session pertaining to the Lodge.
 - (2) To vote on every roll-call vote. If any member shall be temporarily absent from the hall, the other Representative from the Lodge shall be allowed to cast the vote of such temporarily absent member, in which event the Grand Secretary shall place the word “absent” opposite the name of the absent Representative and thereafter such vote cannot be changed.

- (3) To vote on all matters except on personal qualifications to be seated.
- (4) To serve on all committees to which appointed unless excused by the Grand Lodge.

SEC 18. **COMMITTEES.**

- A. The following are **STANDING COMMITTEES** consisting of not less than 3 members each and their duties. The first named shall be the chairman. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.
 - (1) **Appeals and Petitions.** If authorized by the Grand Master, it meets prior to the Annual Session. The Committee shall consider no appeal unless the record has been filed with the Grand Secretary in the manner and for the length of time prescribed by law, or unless directed to do so by the Grand Lodge. All appeals and petitions of petitioners shall be referred to it.
 - (2) **Banquet and Sessions.** (Combined Drawing of Seats and Courtesies Extended).
 - (a) Shall arrange the meeting place and see that it is properly set up before each daily session, and assign Representative tables, in accordance with plans provided by the Grand Master or Board.
 - (b) Shall invite and coordinate travel and lodging arrangements for guests from other jurisdictions.
 - (c) Plan all activities of the Annual Session, including scheduling of refreshments, Memorial Service, Installation of Officers, Banquet if requested, and help with any special activities
 - (d) The Committee shall submit a report to the Grand Secretary-to be printed in the Journal, no later than twenty (20) days following the close of the Annual Session.
 - (3) **By-laws and Legislation.** Shall receive from the Grand Secretary, on a rotating basis, amendments to and revised by-laws. This committee shall:
 - (a) Review all by-laws and amendments thereto of all Lodges under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge.
 - (b) Every six (6) years, the committee shall complete a review of all Lodges, doing one-sixth (1/6) of these each year. The Grand Secretary shall notify each Lodge to be examined that year to send three (3) copies of its laws for review. If a Lodge fails to comply, the Grand Secretary shall notify it that its Representative(s) shall be deprived of voice, vote, mileage and per diem.
 - (c) The committee shall not only see that the Lodge laws comply with the laws of The Sovereign Grand Lodge and the Grand Lodge, but it shall also point out to the Lodge any failure to take advantage of its rights and privileges available to the Lodge.
 - (d) The committee shall not approve any By-laws or part thereof which may impair the financial strength of the Unit, or which may be contrary to the good of the Order.
 - (e) All By-laws or Amendments submitted need approval of adoption by the Noble Grand and the Secretary, under the seal of the Lodge. One copy, if approved, shall be properly endorsed by the Committee and returned to the Lodge and another copy shall be similarly endorsed and filed in the office of the Grand Secretary. The Committee shall notify the Grand Secretary of change in time or place of

meeting. By-Laws or amendments thereto do not take effect until approved by the committee.

- (f) Examine all legislation proposed and make recommendations with reference thereto, as well as such matters as may be referred to it. 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.
- (4) **Credentials and Lodge Returns.** Shall pass upon the qualifications of Representatives and Members (Past Grands to receive the Grand Lodge Degree). Should any certificate prove informal or incorrect, the Committee shall report wherein the defect lies and whether it affects the validity thereof. Shall examine and report upon the Annual Reports of the Odd Fellow Lodges and see that they are correct. They shall attend to such other business as may be referred to the by the Board of Grand Lodge Officers. Shall communicate to the Committee on Digital Media/Website any changes in a Lodge’s meeting time and address, mailing address, and/or Secretary/Lodge contact information, and any information appropriately requested by the committee. Shall communicate to the Committee on Memorials a list of all deceased members reported on the Annual Reports, including their lodge, highest rank achieved, and the date of passing.
- (5) **Distribution.** Shall recommend reference to appropriate committees of the several parts and recommendations of all reports.
 - (a) Reports submitted for the Advance Report. 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.
 - (b) 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.
- (6) **Finance.** Prepares and submits for consideration a proposed budget, setting out expected revenues and expenditures for the next fiscal year. After approval no appropriation shall be exceeded. 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. If the proposed budget results in a deficit, it shall only be adopted by roll-call vote with two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members present voting in favor. All matters pertaining to finance and appropriations of money shall be referred to it.
 - (a) Committee on Finance shall secure the CPA for the audit of the Grand Secretary and Grand Treasurer, and any additional books of entities of the Grand Lodge.
 - (b) The committee shall pass upon all claim and accounts (except for mileage and per diem and line budget items), against the Grand Lodge, their approval being necessary before payments by the Grand Treasurer.

- (7) **Judiciary.** If authorized by the Grand Master, it meets prior to the annual session. This committee shall review the decisions of the Grand Master and report thereon to the Grand Lodge. Interpretations of the Laws of the Order on other matters shall be reported on at any time during the session.
- (a) This committee shall serve as a Trial Committee when so directed under Chapter XXXVIII of the Code of General Laws of the Sovereign Grand Lodge.
 - (b) The Committee shall be qualified in the laws and usages of the Order and shall advise the Grand Master.
- (8) **Mileage and Per Diem.** Prepare the table of mileage and per diem as outlined under Sec. 22 – Compensation of Officers and Representatives. Prepare and distribute payments to eligible members.
- (a) Shall be chaired by the Grand Treasurer, and include the Grand Secretary and Chair of Finance.
- (9) **Miscellaneous Business.** Shall be referred matters not herein specified for reference to any other committee.
- (10) **Odd Fellows Property.** Shall be referred matters pertaining to the Homes, Camps, Cemeteries and Odd Fellows Lodge owned/sponsored Property of the Order.
- (11) **Rebekah Matters.** Shall be referred matters relating to the Rebekah Degree, and other activities of the Rebekah Branch of the Order.
- (a) Shall work in conjunction with the Rebekah Assembly Secretary to prepare a report on the workings of the Rebekah Assembly and Rebekah Lodges, to be included in the Journal of Proceedings of the Annual Session, to be turned in no later than twenty (20) days following the closing of the Annual Session of the Grand Lodge.
 - (b) When requested to do so, this committee shall consider recommendations from the Rebekah Assembly and shall prepare the necessary Committee Bills or Resolutions for submission to the Grand Lodge.
- (12) **Relief.** Shall be referred matters pertaining to relief and relief projects, or otherwise involving the interests of the Order. The funds for this Committee will be derived from funds budgeted by the Finance Committee of the Grand Lodge of Maryland.-The final approval for expenditure of funds shall be subject to the approval of the Board of Grand Lodge Officers, who shall determine how those funds will be distributed.
- (13) **State of the Order.** Shall be referred all matters and questions in relation to the general welfare and activities of the Order. Shall report on the progress and conditions of the order in this jurisdiction, recommending any measures that they may deem fitting for the good of the Order.
- (14) **Instruction.** Shall be responsible to provide instruction in the unwritten work, rituals, laws, customs and history of the Order. Shall have charge of the Degree Team. Its services shall be available to all lodges, District Deputies, Degree Captains and Staffs. The committee may conduct such schools of instruction as appropriations permit.

B. SPECIAL COMMITTEES and their duties are:

- (1) **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.
- (2) **Digital Media/Website.** Shall maintain and update the website of the Grand Lodge of Maryland.
 - (a) Shall post/update the following:
 - (i) Lodge Directory Updates
 - (ii) 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
 - (iii) Upcoming events within the jurisdiction including date, time and location of the event, and associated flyers.
 - (iv) Photos from recent events submitted by members and approved by the committee
 - (v) 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.
 - (b) Shall be responsible to respond to or forward any messages received on the website to the appropriate person or committee in a timely fashion.
 - (c) Shall obtain from the Committee on Lodge Returns, any changes to meeting time and address, mailing address, and/or Secretary/Lodge contact information.
 - (d) 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.
 - (e) The Chair shall turn over the login information to their successor immediately following the annual session.
- (3) **GL/RA Joint Youth Committee** 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.
- (4) **Pilgrimage for Youth.** The term of the Committee 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. Shall be responsible for:
 - (a) distribution to all lodges, information from the Sovereign Grand Lodge pertaining to the Tour (available on Sovereign Grand Lodge website).
 - (b) Distribution and submission of completed student application and fees by the deadline specified by the Sovereign Grand Lodge.
 - (c) Communicate to students and parents any information regarding the Tour.
 - (d) Coordinate transportation of students to and from drop-off and pick-up locations designated by the Sovereign Grand Lodge.

- (e) Coordinate with Lodges wanting to participate in Tour activities.
- (f) Coordinate other activities within the Jurisdiction during the Tour as desired by the committee.
- (5) **Investigation of Grievances.** At least one (1) member shall be a Past Grand Master. Whenever any situation arises that may be detrimental to the welfare of the Order, the Grand Master shall take necessary action as authorized by the laws of the Order. Members shall be reimbursed as authorized by the Grand Master within the Budget.
- (6) **Publicity and Membership.** It will be the responsibility of this committee to obtain local media contacts and assist the Lodges in preparing press releases to these local media contacts. They will also provide printed and promotional material to the Lodges as requested and provide assistance to the Lodge in participating in Community affairs to aide in the promotion of membership.
- (7) **Memorials.** Shall be referred all matters of commemorating the memory of deceased members of the Grand Body who died in 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.
- (8) **Ways and Means.** The ways and Means Committee shall report to the Grand Lodge Ways and Means of providing financial income for the Grand Lodge. Any deficit budget submitted to the Grand Lodge shall be referred to this Committee and the Committee shall, after proper study, report to the Grand Lodge a balanced budget with supporting data on how the budget may properly funded; if the budget cannot be balanced the Committee will recommend those deletion and or/reductions to the Grand Lodge that would bring the budget into balance. The Ways and Means Committee shall, with the approval of the Grand Lodge, raise funds for the benefit of the Grand Lodge.
- (9) **Arthritis.** The Committee shall assist in raising funds for the National Arthritis Foundation; give council and advice to the Lodges; obtain and maintain records of all donations.
- (10) **Joint Heritage.** The Joint Heritage Committee shall consist of a minimum of 6 members, three of those members shall be the Grand Lodge Heritage Committee and three of those members shall be the Rebekah Assembly Heritage Committee. This Committee shall be charged with maintaining and securing all articles, memorabilia, and assets belonging to the Heritage Room and Library. They shall maintain and keep an accurate inventory of all assets, they shall record all new items received to include the source and ownership, if there be one. As the custodians of the Heritage Room and Library and the assets thereof, they shall not be denied access to either the articles or the Heritage room and Library nor shall they allow or participate in any

disbursement of any assets of the Heritage Room and Library nor shall they allow or participate in any disbursement of any assets of the Heritage Room and Library without the written consent of the Executive Boards of the Grand Lodge and the Rebekah Assembly. The Keys to the Heritage Room and Library shall be under the control of the chairman and the co chairman of the Heritage committee. The location of the Heritage Room and Library shall be at the Grand Lodge of Maryland Building.

C. Duties and responsibilities of committees:

- (1) Only Grand Lodge Members may serve on standing committees. No person shall, simultaneously, serve as chairman of more than one (1) standing committee.
 - (a) All committees shall serve until the close of the annual session following their appointment (except Pilgrimage for Youth, which will serve until the close of that committee's Tour).
 - (b) Third Degree members may serve on any Special Committees, but may not hold the position of Chair.
 - (c) 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.
- (2) Committees are to perform the duties prescribed by law, special assignments by the Grand Master or the Grand Lodge and other duties pertaining to such committees as have been customarily performed in the past.
- (3) A committee chairman is not an officer of the Grand Lodge, but may upon occasion become its agent with the approval of the Board of Grand Lodge Officers.
- (4) Any committee may request from the Grand Master, the appointment of a Past Grand Master to act in an advisory capacity.
- (5) Any expenditures must be approved by the Board of Grand Lodge Officers.
- (6) The chairman of each committee shall submit a report summarizing their activities through the year, in the manner outlined under Section 10.
 - (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.

D. Emergency meetings of committees. The Grand Master may appoint any committee prior to session to serve and act at any time and place that in the opinion of the Grand Master is necessary to preserve the interests of the Order.

E. The Grand Master shall be privileged to attend the meetings of all committees, but without the right to vote.

F. Prior to the Annual session, the incoming Grand Master shall appoint eligible members to all committee positions, and obtain their acceptance.

SEC 19. Defunct Lodges.

- A. If a lodge desires to surrender its charter, a regular or special meeting will be called and all members urged to attend, particularly those whose dues are paid or those who may pay the same. Five members in good standing, one of whom is qualified to preside, will serve as a committee, and this committee will receive all the books, papers, effects, funds and property of the lodge. The committee will select one of its members as acting Noble

Grand and one as acting Secretary and will proceed to issue withdrawal cards to all other members of the lodge who request and who are entitled to receive same; those who are paid to date one-year in advance. The committee will promptly ship all movable effects of the lodge to the Grand Secretary, with all books, papers, funds and deeds to property, or will deliver same to the Grand Master or deputy. Prior to delivery of property and funds, the committee will, if possible, settle all debts of the lodge. After so doing, the members of the committee will each remit \$1.00 of their own funds to the Grand Secretary, and the Grand Secretary will issue withdrawal cards to each member of the committee.

- B. If a lodge continually fails to meet for a period of six months, the Board may, when the Grand Lodge is not in session, arrest the charter of a lodge; and unless the lodge can be revived, they will forward its books, funds and effects to the Grand Secretary. The Board of the Grand Lodge is authorized to sell the personal property of defunct lodges for such price and on such terms as they deem best and funds accruing there from will be delivered to the Grand Secretary, marked for the lodge, to be held for a period of three (3) years.
- C. If a member in good standing of a defunct lodge fails to receive a withdrawal card from their lodge, they may apply to the Grand Secretary therefore. If a member, not in good standing, desires to do so, they may apply to the Grand Secretary for a defunct certificate, which does not confer any rights except the right to apply for membership. Defunct certificates issued in other jurisdictions have the same force and effect as those issued in this jurisdiction. No member expelled or suspended for cause may receive a defunct certificate.
- D. If a lodge, on or before surrendering its charter or having its charter arrested, diverts the property or funds of the lodge from the designated objects and purposes, or divides the same among the members, or uses them for a purpose not recognized by the Order, any member participating therein will be reported to all lodges in the jurisdiction as having acted dishonorably and is forever barred from membership in the Order.
- E. **Property. See Chapter XXXVII – Property** of the Code of General Laws of the Sovereign Grand Lodge.

SEC 20. **Revival of Lodge**

- A. If five or more members who were in good standing when their lodge became defunct shall petition for revival of their lodge, the Grand Master may, if satisfied and if the name or number of the lodge has not been assigned to some other lodge, restore the charter and effects of the lodge, but the funds, securities, and real estate of the lodge may only be returned by the Grand Lodge in regular session. If the name or number of the defunct lodge has been assigned to another lodge, then the lodge cannot be revived, and the members may only petition for a charter for a new lodge.
- B. If the lodge is revived, the Grand Secretary will endorse on the margin or elsewhere on the charter the names of the petitioners for revival and the date the lodge was revived. No fee will be charged for returning the charter of a revived lodge.

SEC 21. Grand Jurisdictional Lodge.

- A. The Grand Lodges shall operate a Grand Jurisdictional Lodge for members of defunct lodges. The Grand Secretary shall transfer the members from a closed Lodge to the Grand Jurisdictional Lodge, so that their membership will be retained. The Grand Jurisdictional Lodge is a non-working lodge.
 - (1) It is not counted in the total of five (5) Lodges being required to hold the charter.
 - (2) It is not entitled to representation at Grand Lodge.
 - (3) The Grand Master shall serve as Noble Grand, the Grand Treasurer as Treasurer, the Grand Secretary as Secretary keeping financial and other records, making reports and returns.
- B. Membership is a matter of right for those whose lodge charters have been surrendered or forfeited and they shall maintain good standing and be entitled to pecuniary benefits if provided by their former lodge; adequate moneys shall be deposited in the Grand Lodge jurisdictional lodge fund upon surrender of the charter to cover such pecuniary benefits. The members may attend Grand Lodge.
 - (1) Dues in the Grand Jurisdictional Lodge shall be ten dollars per year, plus current Sovereign Grand Lodge per capita, payable in advance.
- C. Members must make application for membership in an active lodge within two (2) years.

SEC 22. Compensation of Officers and Representatives.

- A. Elective officers, Appointed Officers, Special Representatives of the Grand Master, Immediate Past Grand Master while on the Board, and Committees shall receive such allowances for expenses from appropriated funds on vouchers accompanied by receipts whenever possible, when performing official duties during recess of the Grand Lodge.
- B. Only the Grand Secretary and the Grand Treasurer shall receive such salaries as may be appropriated.
 - (1) 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.
- C. Elected and Appointed Officers, Representatives, Alternate Representatives, and Past Grand Masters, attending all meetings of an Annual or Special Session of the Grand Lodge, shall receive such mileage and per diem as may be computed
 - (1) 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.
- D. All salaries, expense allowances, mileage, and per diem shall be paid from funds appropriated.
- E. 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. Rules of Order.

- A. A quorum is required for the transaction of business and consists of a majority of the elected Representatives.
- B. Generally.
 - (1) The Grand Lodge shall be opened and closed in the Grand Lodge Degree according to the Grand Lodge Ritual.

- (2) Business of the Grand Lodge shall be conducted in the Third Degree.
- (3) The business sessions of the Grand Lodge shall be conducted in the following manner:
 - (a) The Grand Master shall call the members to order, ascertain by roll call that a quorum is present, direct the Deputy Grand Master to proclaim the Grand Lodge duly opened, require all members to be in proper regalia, and ascertain from the Grand Secretary if all reports have been printed and distributed.
 - (b) The Grand Master shall cause the previous session's journal to be read, or may declare them approved as printed except for corrections that may be brought to the attention of the Grand Lodge.
 - (c) The Grand Master shall preserve order and decorum.

C. Voting, Motions.

The Grand Master shall:

- (1) Permit a member to speak but once until every member who chooses has spoken. No member shall speak more than twice on a question without unanimous consent of the members present.
- (2) Voting for officers shall be by ballot. All other voting shall be by the voting sign, except that two-thirds (2/3) of the Representatives present may demand a roll call vote. Except as otherwise provided, a majority of a quorum shall prevail.
- (3) Upon request of any member, require a motion to be placed in writing.
- (4) Put the motion to defer a particular item to a time certain. This shall be determined without debate.
- (5) Not permit a motion to be entertained during balloting.
- (6) Grant any member the right to protest and have the protest entered in the Journal.
- (7) The presiding officer shall preserve order and decorum during the sessions, pronounce the decision on all questions, except on an appeal of their decision, and decide questions of order without debate, subject to appeal.
- (8) A member who voted on the prevailing side may move for the reconsideration of the vote at the same or next meeting, but no discussion of the main question may be allowed.
- (9) Every member present shall vote on all questions unless excused by the Grand Lodge or otherwise provided for in these laws, and all questions (unless otherwise provided) shall be decided by a majority vote of the members present.

D. Bills, Resolutions, and Reports.

- (1) When a committee reports favorably upon a bill the vote shall be upon passage of the bill. Amendments shall be voted upon first, and then the bill or bill as amended.
- (2) Majority reports will normally be considered first, unless there is a motion to adopt the minority report.
- (3) Motions to table, lay-over, indefinitely postpone, or subsidiary motions are always in order.
- (4) When a Committee submits an adverse Report on a subject (Bill, Resolution or Report) referred to it, the subject shall be placed before the Grand Lodge as a committee of the whole. A proponent of the subject shall have five (5) minutes to

speak to the subject. A vote shall then be taken to place the subject upon passage. If the vote is favorable, then the subject shall be open to debate. After debate the vote shall be upon the subject.

- (5) A bill, resolution, or other proposition that is to be referred to a standing committee shall be submitted in triplicate, on standard letter or legal-size paper, either printed or typewritten.
- (6) Resolutions involving appropriation of funds must be referred to the Committee on Finance.
- (7) The proponent of a bill, resolution, or report is privileged to speak for three (3) minutes in explanation thereof, prior to final action.
- (8) The adoption of an officer's report containing recommendations or proposed expenditures must be implemented by a resolution approved by the Grand Lodge, following a committee report.

E. Order of Business.

- (1) The order of business shall be set forth in the ceremony for opening and closing the Grand Lodge.
 - (a) Prior to the formal opening, the Committee on Credentials shall report to the Grand Secretary, any members eligible for the Grand Lodge Degree.
 - (b) Before proceeding with the Order of Business, as outlined in the ritual, the Committee on Credentials shall make their formal report.
- (2) 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.
- (3) Any procedure not provided for herein shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.

F. Members in Debate

- (1) A member desiring to speak or deliver any matter to the Grand Lodge shall rise and respectfully address the presiding officer and on being recognized may address the Grand Lodge. Members shall confine themselves to the question under discussion.
- (2) When two or more members rise to speak the presiding officer shall name the member who is entitled to the floor.
- (3) While a vote is being held, no member shall leave the room. While the Presiding Officer is addressing the Lodge, no member shall walk across the room or engage in private discourse. When a member is speaking, no member shall pass between them and the Presiding Officer.
- (4) If a member, while speaking, is called to order, they shall take their seat until called on.

SEC 24. Laws of the Grand Lodge.

- A. Laws to be passed by Bills/Notice of Motions – Bills and Notices of Motion shall be deemed to be one in the same – (congressional style vs parliamentary style).
- (1) Form. Bills proposed by one (1) or more members shall begin with a title followed by the enacting clause, "Be it enacted by the Grand Lodge", and contain only one (1)

subject. The Bill shall reference the chapter number, Article and/or Section of the chapter and if applicable, the subsection(s) and/or paragraph(s) and page number (i.e., II-25 of the By-laws to be enacted, amended or repealed).

- (a) Striking through that portion to be deleted and underlining the portion being added.
- (2) Amendments. Bills may be amended but no amendment shall be considered which changes the original purpose of the Bill.
- (3) Bills must be referred to the Committee on Legislation and any additional Committee(s) as essential before action can be taken.
- (4) Bills held over from the previous annual session may be acted upon on the reading of the Committee(s) Report.
- (5) Voting. The vote shall be taken and the number for and against entered upon the Journal. No Bill shall become law unless two-thirds (2/3) present and voting shall vote in its favor.
- (6) Roll Call Vote. On demand of two-thirds (2/3) of the Representatives present, a roll call vote shall be had with the yeses and noes recorded. Only Representatives, Grand Lodge Officers, and Past Grand Masters shall vote on a roll call vote. No vote by Lodges shall be permitted.
- (7) Effective Date. Bills become effective upon ratification by The Sovereign Grand Lodge.
- (8) When and How Submitted. Bills must be submitted in triplicate, typewritten or printed, in the form stated in Sec. 24 (A) (1) above and mailed to the Grand Secretary a minimum of forty-five (45) days prior to the annual session.
- (9) Procedure. The Grand Secretary shall reproduce the bills after review by the Committee on Legislation and send copies to each Representative, Representative-elect, Past Grand Master, Grand Lodge Officer, and to the Secretarial Officer of each Lodge, in the Advance Report, at least thirty (30) days prior to the annual session.
- (10) Bill Introduced at Session. A Grand Lodge member may introduce a bill at the session if two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members agree. The bill must be presented in triplicate.
- (11) Hearings. The Chairman of the Committee on Legislation shall announce the time and place of the meeting of the committee each day. Anyone may appear before the committee and be heard for or against a Bill.
- (12) Legislative functions of a Grand Lodge cannot be delegated to a committee.
 - (a) Code changes adopted by The Sovereign Grand Lodge shall be edited into the Grand Lodge Constitution and By-laws as mandated without layover.
- (13) 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.
- (14) Fiscal Years. The fiscal year for the Grand Lodge of Maryland, Rebekah Assembly of Maryland, all Odd Fellow Lodge, all Rebekah Lodges, and other Associations, Board, committees or other organizations subordinate to the Grand Lodge of Maryland shall be that of the calendar year June 1 through May 31.

B. Judicial Powers.

- (1) A Grand Lodge shall construe and interpret its laws, for the good of the Order, and its decisions shall be final unless appealed. A Grand Lodge is best qualified to interpret its laws, which interpretation shall not be reversed unless there is a violation of justice.
- (2) A member may form an interpretation of the laws, but only the following have official authority to interpret the laws of the Order: the Noble Grand, whose rulings may be appealed to the lodge, and a District Deputy Grand Master, whose rulings must be adhered to until the will of the Grand Master is known. The Grand Master's decisions must be adhered to unless reversed by the Grand Lodge, the Sovereign Grand Master, or The Sovereign Grand Lodge.

SEC 25. Visiting the Grand Lodge Sessions.

- A. A member in good standing in an Odd Fellows Lodge may visit Sessions of the Grand Lodge upon being vouched for by a Representative of the lodge or by presenting an Official Certificate to the Grand Guardian or Committee on Credentials showing dues paid up-to-date.
- B. A Third Degree member in good standing may visit Sessions provided:
 - (1) The member presents an Official Certificate showing dues paid in advance.
 - (2) A Third Degree Member of an active Lodge will have voice when recognized by the presiding officer but is not entitled to present Bills, make Motions nor be entitled to vote during the Sessions of the Grand Lodge.

SEC 26. Term of Office.

- A. The term of officers shall be one (1) year, unless otherwise specified.
- B. The terms of the Grand Secretary and Grand Treasurer shall not run concurrently.
- C. Trustees as deemed necessary in the By-laws shall be elected for a term of not more than three (3) years. (The Trustees are not entitled to receive the Honors of the Order or Honors of the Degree.)

SEC 27. Archives. The Grand Secretary and the Joint Heritage Committee shall maintain the archives of the jurisdiction, reporting to the Board, when the Grand Lodge is not in session, informing the completed action and progress.

SEC 28. Property – See Chapter XXXVII of the Code of General Laws of the Sovereign Grand Lodge.

SEC 29. Privacy Policy. The Grand Lodge shall NOT sell or distribute for any purpose outside the fraternity, any of the member rosters, mailing lists, including personal information held by the Grand Lodge or its local lodges, to any person or persons, institutions or agencies for sales promotions, or for other purposes within or without the Grand Lodge; without the expressed permission of the member. Further, any distribution must have the expressed permission of the voting members of the Grand Lodge present and voting at any regular annual or called special session.

SEC 30. Amendments.

- A. Any member of the Grand Lodge of Maryland, or lodge under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge can submit amendments for consideration.

- B. 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.
 - (1) No Bill shall become law unless two-thirds (2/3) present and voting shall vote in its favor.
 - C. 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.
 - D. 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.
 - E. Code changes adopted by The Sovereign Grand Lodge shall be edited into the Grand Lodge Constitution and By-laws as mandated without layover.
 - (1) 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.
 - (a) If any change requires creation of a new law, it shall be proposed at the Session by the Committee on Legislation, and adopted by 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.
 - F. 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.
 - G. The Grand Secretary shall forward to the Sovereign Grand Secretary three (3) certified copies in triplicate of amendments to their respective constitutions and/or by-laws along with the current documents being amended. Certification shall be on Grand Lodge letterhead, stating the date of adoption at the recent Grand Lodge session, attested by the Grand Secretary with the seal of the Grand Lodge.
 - H. The file may be submitted by electronic file – see Chapter II, Sec. 5 A (25) of the Code of General Laws of the Sovereign Grand Lodge.
- SEC 31. **Membership.** Membership shall be as defined in Chapter III of the Code of General Laws of the Sovereign Grand Lodge.
- A. 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.
 - B. Lodges may offer non-contributing membership to its eligible members as defined in the Code of General Laws.
 - C. The Grand Lodge does not permit Life Membership within the Jurisdiction.
 - D. 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. Shall be awarded as outlined in Chapter XXVIII of the Code of General Laws of Sovereign Grand Lodge.

A. A resolution outlining the member's exemplary contributions to the Order must be submitted and adopted at the Annual Session by a majority vote.

(1) The resolution must be signed by at least five (5) Past Grand Masters within the Jurisdiction in order to be presented.

REGALLA: GRAND LODGE INSIGNIA FOR JEWELS:

Past Grand Master - Sun with Hand and Heart

Grand Master - Sun with Scales of Justice impressed or engraved

Deputy Grand Master - a Half Moon

Grand Warden - Crossed Gavel

Grand Secretary - Crossed Pens

Grand Treasurer - Crossed Keys

Grand Representative - Seal of the Sovereign Grand Lodge

Grand Marshall - A Baton

Grand Conductor - A Roman Sword

Grand Chaplin - Open Bible

Grand Guardian - Crossed Swords

Grand Herald - Old Fashioned Trumpet

Grand Color Bearer - Flag

Grand Instructor - Closed Book

Grand Musician - Lyre