



**Grand Council of Cryptic Masons
State of New York
Office of the Most Illustrious Grand Master**

July 22, 2020

To: ALL OF THE OFFICERS OF THE ELECTED AND APPOINTED GRAND LINE, PAST MOST ILLUSTRIOUS GRAND MASTERS, DISTRICT DEPUTY GRAND MASTERS, TRUSTEES OF THE GRAND COUNCIL, DIRECTORS OF THE NEW YORK CHARITY CORPORATION, INC., GRAND COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERS, GRAND REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER GRAND COUNCILS, ASSISTANT GRAND LECTURERS, AND TO ALL ILLUSTRIOUS MASTERS, DEPUTY MASTERS, PRINCIPAL CONDUCTORS OF THE WORK, TREASURERS, SECRETARIES AND COMPANIONS OF EVERY SUBORDINATE COUNCIL UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THIS GRAND COUNCIL

MIGM Edict No. 2 - July 2020

Dear Companions:

In my capacity as Most Illustrious Grand Master, and in accordance with the Grand Council of New York Constitution and General Regulations Section 5 and Section 6, subsection “m” and “n” which grants a Most Illustrious Grand Master broad powers when the Grand Council is not in session, and in compliance with the Edict issued by the Most Worshipful Grand Master William M. Sardone on July 1, 2020 which allows Lodges and Masonic activities to resume on July 11, 2020 under a strict protocol for opening lodges responsibly and safely according to Federal, State and Local government health guidelines because of the Covid-19 pandemic; and for the best interests of the Masonic Fraternity and the safety of all of its members throughout this state, I declare the following actions to take effect with this EDICT:

- 1. WHEREAS the Grand Council of New York has not been able to open and conduct regular business at its Annual Assembly; and**
- 2. WHEREAS individual Councils have similarly not been able to conduct an Annual Assembly as required by the Constitution and General Regulations, including the adoption of budgets, elections and installation of officers; and**
- 3. WHEREAS individual Councils must be able to operate to achieve both business and Masonic objectives; and**
- 4. WHEREAS the successful implementation of safety and health measures to reduce the dangers of the COVID-19 virus requires new and unique protocols; and**
- 5. WHEREAS there is no existing provision or precedent in our Constitution or General Regulations to accommodate these unique situations we are facing; and**
- 6. WHEREAS it is the ardent desire as well as the objective of our Cryptic Craft to resume our labors in the Cryptic Vault,**

Now, Therefore, I, M.:I.: Phillip J. Chandler, Most Illustrious Grand Master of the Grand Council of Cryptic Masons in the State of New York, Do Hereby Order and Direct the following:

- 1.) Councils are authorized to resume regular activity as of July 27, 2020 and are to be in Complete Compliance with the guidance and guidelines established by the Grand Lodge of NY for reopening of Lodges to ensure that all proper and prudent safety and health measures are followed. Each Council Must Adhere to any policy the owner of the facility has established as well in regards to the safety and health/well being of the facility for use. A copy of the Guidance and Guidelines of the Grand Council is attached to this Edict for the Council's edification and governance.
- 2.) All attendees of a Cryptic Assembly or function Must Always wear a mask and Social Distance requirements are absolutely necessary and are to be implemented. **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS.** There will be No physical contact whatsoever.
- 3.) Each Council is required to SUMMON its membership in a timely manner for its Annual Assembly. This may be at a STATED Assembly, or a SPECIAL Assembly should Council By-Laws not provide for assemblies prior to September. This Annual Assembly should include receipt of Annual Reports, the official adoption of a budget for the Cryptic year, the election and installation of officers. There will be No public installation of officers. A Certificate of Election for each Council must be submitted to the Grand Recorder's Office as soon as possible.
- 4.) The Thrice Illustrious Master Degree for newly installed Illustrious Masters requiring such to officially preside is being worked upon for the Fall. A future announcement of place, date and time will be forthcoming. The Newly Installed Illustrious Master will be able in the meantime to preside over his Council until then.
- 5.) Balloting upon petitions for membership may be conducted at a Special Assembly until such time the Council resumes normal Stated Assemblies per its By-Laws.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Order and Direct that this Edict be distributed to the membership of each Council throughout the State of NY, and entered in full upon the Permanent Records of the Council thereof, and to be read in every Council at its first Assembly, Stated or Special, and to be spread in full upon the minutes of such.

Witness my hand and that of the Grand Recorder's under the seal of the Grand Council Cryptic Masons of the State of New York this 22th Day of July, 2020, A.: Dep.: 3020.

M.:I.: Phillip J. Chandler

M.:I.: Phillip J. Chandler
Most Illustrious Grand Master

RI Kenneth R. Howe, Jr

R.:I.: Kenneth R. Howe, Jr.
Grand Recorder



Enc: Guidance and Guidelines For Re-opening of Councils Based upon Grand Lodge of NY protocols.

GUIDANCE AND GUIDELINES FOR RE-OPEING OF COUNCILS IN NEW YORK STATE

The Most Worshipful Grand Master William Sardone issued his protocols for re-opening Lodges in New York State on July 1, 2020 in his letter to the Brethren of which the Grand Council of the State of NY strongly endorses and encourages all Councils of this jurisdiction to adhere to for re-opening of a Cryptic Council in this state. The below guidelines are in compliance with Most Worshipful Grand Master Sardone's letter to the Craft.

Guidelines To Implement And Adhere To

- 1.) Assemblies in July and August are purely optional.
- 2.) As Masons we will act in accordance with the occupancy parameters and rules established for "houses of worship" of the specific phase assigned to your location. Bear in mind, if parts of the state revert back to a "pause" situation, we will adhere to the local and state parameters.
- 3.) Those Councils that are interested in holding a Special Assembly this summer in areas of the State where such is permitted, a general dispensation will be granted, as long as the Council will followed the precise established rules and guidelines of the Grand Lodge of NY and the facility of use to ensure that all proper and prudent safety and health measures are followed. We must and we will strictly adhere to the new set of policies established by the Grand Lodge for safely holding a Masonic meeting or gathering.
- 4.) If a Council decides to hold a Special Communication which their by-laws don't permit they must seek a dispensation through the Grand Recorder's Office either by Email or US mail at least two weeks before the scheduled assembly in order that the Council meet all necessary safety & health measures.
- 5.) Each Council is required to Summon its membership for its annual assembly, which may be a Stated or Special Assembly and should be accomplished as soon as it is feasibly possible by the Council.
- 6.) All attendees of an Assembly must wear masks at ALL times. No Mask, No Meeting. No Exception. Why not provide an ample supply of face masks in order to accommodate others .
- 7.) There will be NO physical Contact -NO hand shaking, NO Hugging, NO Embracing. Just say hello to each other through the mask at a safe distance.
- 8.) Hand washing and paper towels for use are strongly encouraged wherever possible.
- 9.) Hand sanitizers are to be made available as an alternative for cleansing use for all attendees. They should be located at various places throughout the facility.
- 10.) Social Distancing will take place for the opening and closing ritual in each Council. A minimum of six feet is required and the Secret Vault should be clearly arranged or marked as such--for Sitting or Standing, Side to Side or Back to Back.
- 11.) Light weight clothing should be worn for summer assemblies to avoid being uncomfortable and heat-related health issues. You are permitted to wear collared short-sleeved dress shirts or collared golf/polo shirts and summer weight slacks.
- 12.) Balloting must be done in accordance with the parameters of the number attendees in a given room and for social distancing. Therefore you may need to rotate individuals in and out of the Secret Vault in order to accommodate all for balloting.
- 13.) Attendance at Council Assemblies should be for their members only. Visitors should be discouraged for now from attending, unless it is absolutely necessary, in order to meet the required number for opening or a necessary visitation by the DDGM or AGL as requested.
- 14.) There will be NO Public Installations.
- 15.) Councils that want to meet "outdoors" can do so if the proper security and dispensation is in place.

- 16.) With regard to conferral of Cryptic Degrees, you will be receiving updated options regarding this work.
- 17.) My Companions, please use common sense and travel upon the higher road with the best welfare of your fellow companions in mind. Signage will be in place at the entrance of all doors to buildings, instructing anyone with a fever or flu-like symptoms not to enter. As an option you may wish to take the temperature of each attendee upon arrival.
- 18.) Attendance of everyone at a Stated or Special Assembly is required and should be noted in the minutes in case of any future tracing notification needs to take place.
- 19.) It should be no surprise that Masons love to eat. Be smart and ensure that your fellow Masons and guests sit 6 feet apart in all directions. The distribution of food is complicated and will need special attention with disposable utensils, plates and cups; and absolutely no self-serve buffets.
- 20.) Picnics, BBQ's and other Fund Raisers are permitted provided all Social Distancing and sanitizing methods are strictly adhered to in accordance with the phase assigned to your region/location for such activities.
- 21.) Virtual Social meetings are encouraged now and in the future for committee meetings, caucuses, and with members who cannot get to Council for any reason, the Virtual Social Meeting will remain a viable option.

Companions, as our Grand Master Sardone has stated: "Masonry does not Stop," but we only continue with level heads and following these necessary guidelines in order for us to stay well and be safe as we live out our Masonry in the Secret Vault of our Councils. It is our hope and desire that you, your family, friends and neighbors stay healthy and keep safe always.