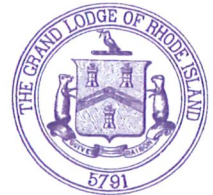




THE GRAND LODGE

of Free and Accepted Masons for the
State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations



GARY S. KAUFMAN

GRAND MASTER

2020-2021

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July 30, 2020

Worshipful Masters, Wardens, Treasurers and Secretaries:

Thank you for your dedication to Freemasonry during this pandemic. We are all working to keep the craft moving in a positive direction- having lodge meetings, rehearsing, performing degree work and when possible, having small social events outside. Keep up the GOOD work!

I write to you today to update you on where the Grand Lodge stands with respect to the recent announcement from the Governor regarding Covid-19 and on-going restrictions. As of the beginning of July, Phase 3 went into effect allowing up to 25 people to social gather in one place. This opened the door for lodges to meet in person and do degree work. This was good news and we all were hoping that the numbers would increase as we approached August. However, the Governor rolled back the 25 people to 15 people for indoor social gatherings due to increasing hospitalizations of Covid patients. None of the other restrictions of Phase 3 changed.

During July, the Grand Lodge has been actively pursuing a characterization of our fraternity from several state offices. No response has been received to our several requests. As such, and with consultation with the Grand Council, I am now considering our fraternal buildings to be Venues of Assembly. The status of venue of assembly is more what our buildings represent for the work we do within. The work we perform in lodge is not a social gathering. The ceremonies are prescribed, and seating is required. This status provides for up to 66% of lodge room capacity or a total of 125 people. With that comes restrictions. The 66% lodge room capacity is for Lodge Communications, Special Communications, rehearsals and degree work only. It is not for any social gathering of any kind. Lodges can have up to 15 people in the building for a social gathering. At all times, temperature taking, contact tracing, face masks, hand washing, hand sanitizing and social distancing must be adhered to.

To assist the lodges, Grand Lodge Charities has purchased PPE for all lodges. The Grand Lodge will be sending out a notice when and where to pick it up.

If there is anything the Grand Lodge or I can assist you with, please do not hesitate to call.

Thank you for your continued support during this difficult time. Please add this letter to your Covid-19 Guidelines and have it available for state personnel should they pay you a visit.

Stay Safe!

Sincerely and Fraternaly,

Gary S. Kaufman
Grand Master