

**Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge  
Free and Accepted Masons of  
Texas and Jurisdiction**

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**Organized August 20, 1875**

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To: All Beholding to the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Texas and Its Jurisdiction.

From: Hon. Wilbert M. Curtis, Most Worshipful Grand Master

Date: May 4, 2021

Subject: Jurisdiction Revitalization Plan for 2021

Greetings Worshipful Master, Wardens, Past Masters and Brethren,

This letter is to update all on the status of the Grand Lodge as it relates to the Corona Virus Pandemic and to provide you with the directive for getting back to normalcy for our Lodges as we move forward. With the future outlook looking positive with the administering of the Corona Virus vaccine as stated by *The Texas Department of State Health Services* in a news release as of May 1, 2021:

*The Texas Department of State Health Services is allocating 446,460 first doses of COVID-19 vaccine to providers that requested it for next week. That represents 753 sites in 101 counties and leaves more than 500,000 additional doses available to providers. Those doses will be shipped to the DSHS pharmacy in Austin and used to fill vaccine requests starting next week.*

*DSHS Commissioner John Hellerstedt, MD, [sent a letter to all vaccine providers Friday](#) encouraging any who need vaccine to make requests by Tuesday so vaccine can be delivered next week. "Additionally, if you have any new strategies for reaching additional people," wrote Dr. Hellerstedt, "please also let us know by Tuesday - including whether we can support you with vaccines, technical support, or even personnel."*

To date, all the Lodges have held your annual elections. I commend you for being flexible and holding your elections a bit different this year. Thanks to those Officers that remained in office for an additional year because of the pandemic. It shows their commitment to their Masonic Lodge. The 2020-2021 Officers should be performing their last duties of completing their 2021 May Relief Reports and sending them up to the Grand Secretary's Office. Congratulations to the Officers-Elect and newly appointed Officers!

Lastly, I thank the District Deputies and your staff and those brothers that assisted for facilitating the training, nominations and elections of your assigned Lodges. You should now be wrapping up your revised District Deputy Report and getting them turned in over the next two weeks.

Now that we have made it to the new Masonic Year, how do we go forward? I am glad that you asked! The first milestone date is as follows:

On **May 15, 2021**, the following

- **May Relief reports** are due in the Grand Secretary's office.
- **Past Master Degree Workshop Application** for Worshipful Masters-Elect are due in the Grand Secretary's Office with the appropriate fee
- **District Deputy Reports** for all Lodges are due in the designated online folders
- **District Deputies** submit request for newly appointed Special District Deputies.

**Effective May 15, 2021, Lodge Secretaries** may submit those **Background Checks** that you have been holding, to the Grand Secretary's Office for processing. (Note: The top priority of the Grand Secretary's Office will be processing May Relief Reports so the turn-around time will be as time permits and may take as much as 3 weeks).

**On May 24, 2021** thru the remainder of the month of May, online Membership System training for Lodge Secretaries. The training team is scheduling the training.

**On June 5, 2021**, the **Past Master Degree** will be administered virtually to all Worshipful Masters Elect, who have submitted the form to the Grand Secretary's Office. Any Texas Past Masters Workshop commencing at 8:30am. All Actual and Honorary Past Masters and are invited to attend.

**On June 12, 2021**, the Grand Lodge will host the **Jurisdictional Saint John Day, Memorial Lodge of Sorrow and Local Lodges Officers Installation program**, commencing at 9:00am and concluding NLT 12:00, High Noon. The installation ceremony is mandatory for all Local Lodge 2021-2022 Elected and Appointed Officers. This will symbolize the Revitalization of Texas Prince Hall Freemasonry after the Corona Virus Pandemic.

**Effective June 15, 2021**, In-Person Meeting and the other Masonic activity restrictions will be lifted for the Masons and Lodges in the jurisdiction. It will be restricted only by the local CDC stated rules for that area. CDC guidelines for meeting facilities are to be strictly followed. In-Person Meetings will not be mandated at this point for elderly and health challenged member. Those members that decline to meet in person, such as elderly and/or health challenged are not to be penalized for not meeting at this time. Worshipful Master, your prudent decision to hold in person meetings need to be the will and pleasure of your membership. You are to ensure that they are kept abreast of the Lodge activities.

**Effective July 1, 2021**, Local Lodge Secretaries **may start sending membership applications for new members, reinstatements, and demits to the Grand Secretary's office** for processing. Note: As per the constitution; a Lodge is not to start the initiation process of a candidate until the Lodge has sent up completed application and fees and have received back the Initiation Completion form. This will be strictly enforced. If a notification that a new member has been initiated, passed and raised in any other manner than via a completed Initiation Completion form, the Lodge will be fined one-hundred dollars (\$100) for each violation. The reason this action is being taken is because some Lodges are holding the initiation fee of a candidate and if the candidate does not complete the 3<sup>rd</sup> degree, the Lodge is keeping not only the local Lodge fee but the Grand Lodge's initiation fee as well. This is actually a form of defrauding the Grand Lodge. **Article XV -Membership, Section 4.** The Worshipful Master and Secretary can be brought up on un-Masonic Charges.

**Effective August 1, 2021**, Lodges may **resume performing degree work** in accord with CDC meeting guidelines. The initiation dates schedule is hereby suspended for this Masonic Year. The Grand Secretary may still schedule dates that background checks and applications may be processed by his office.

**September 1, 2021**, the **September reports and Grand Lodge Annual Session registration** information will be mailed out to Lodges for completion and resubmission.

**October 15, 2021**, the **Annual Session registration is due in the Grand Secretary's Office.**

**November 12-14, 2021**, the **One Hundredth Forty-Sixth Annual Session.** The actual format is still under advisement. Details will be submitted at a later date.

As we make preparation to start back meeting and participate in other activities it is very important that we remain safe and make sound decisions.

**Isaiah 40: 31** *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.*

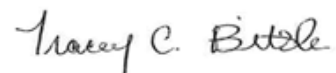
Take due notice thereof, and govern yourself accordingly.

Fraternally yours,



Hon. Wilbert M. Curtis,  
M.W. Grand Master

Attested by:



T. C. Bittle,  
R.W. Grand Secretary



CC: GL Board of Directors



**Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Texas**  
**Dates from May 1, 2021 - November 30, 2021**  
**(Summary of Activity Dates)**

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**May 15, 2021**

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**MOST WORSHIPFUL PRINCE HALL GRAND LODGE  
F. & A. M., JURISDICTION OF TEXAS  
Wilbert M. Curtis – Grand Master**



**Pandemic (COVID-19) Degree Work and Lodge Reopening**

## Table of Contents

Purpose	Page 3
Activities Prior to Initiation	Page 4
Medical and Sanitation Protocols	Page 5
Medical Supplemental Documents	
COVID Warning Letter	Page 6
Medical Waiver	Page 7-8
Temperature Record Form	Page 9

### **Purpose**

As prescribed in the original charge, this committee has compiled and reviewed the recommendation and supporting documentation from the Administrative, Medical, Ritualistic and Technical sub-committees. This document is meant to serve as an outline of how the initiation, passing, and raising on candidates should be handled during the pandemic. This document will remain in use until that time deemed by the Grand Master of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Texas.

Strict adherence to this document must be followed, and any deviations must be approved by the Grand Master or his delegate.

The same rigor noted in degree work for sanitation protocols should be implemented for lodge meetings when allowed by the Grand Lodge.

## Activities Prior To Initiation

### Contact with Candidates

Any contact with candidates prior to initiation should be under the auspices of local CDC guidelines.

### DDGM Approval

DDGMs must approve degree work prior to the initiation request forms being sent to the Grand Lodge. It is best to inform the DDGM of intent to perform degree work as soon as your lodge makes a decision to proceed with the initiation or subsequent work.

### Medical Waivers

Each candidate and brother participating in degree work should be provided with a copy of the medical waiver. This must be completed prior to entering the lodge room and should be maintained by the secretary. If anyone refuses to sign the waiver, they will not be allowed to partake in degree work. **Worshipful Masters and Secretaries should ensure that a completed waiver is available for each participant (candidates and members)**. Secretary should ensure that waivers are maintained and available at each session. It is not necessary for participants to sign a waiver for each degree if one was previously completed.

### Technical Support

Technical support is available for those who may not have online platforms to conduct study sessions, meetings, or other electronic communications. These platforms include (but are not limited to):

- Google Meet
- Zoom
- Webex
- Microsoft Teams
- Tutorials can be made available on how to use these products.

If your lodge or district needs any of these platforms, please contract the Grand Webmaster at [wgweb@mwphglotx.org](mailto:wgweb@mwphglotx.org).



## Sanitation and Medical Protocols

1. If you are sick, stay at home.
2. If you have had COVID-19 or been in contact with someone who has had COVID-19, please consult the most recent CDC guidelines for activity after infection. Contact your primary care physician who can advise you when it may be safe to venture out. Until then, please stay at home.
3. Facemasks are to be worn by all at all times. Social distancing will also be practiced.
4. The Tiler or qualified designee will check temperatures on all entering the building. Those with temperatures of 100.4 or greater will not be allowed to enter. All names and temperatures should be recorded on a form.
5. Each member will be responsible for cleaning their seat/station prior to and at the close of the meeting under authority of the Junior Warden. He may further delegate responsibilities.
6. Each Lodge should be responsible for purchasing additional cleaning supplies, masks, gloves as well as a method for checking temperatures.
7. Where applicable, Lodges are encouraged to use bottled water versus using water fountains for the time being.
8. Immediately after the meeting, members are to clean stations and equipment (staves, gavels, etc), remove soiled gloves and place them in one trash can and leave the building. The Tiler will remove trash and secure the building.
9. The COVID-19 warning shall be placed on all buildings within the Jurisdiction and on the website. (See Supplemental Documents)
10. Degree work should be limited to local CDC guidelines for meetings/gatherings.
11. The passing and sharing of documents during a meeting should be minimized. Copies of reports should be placed in chairs prior to meeting and removed prior to closing of meeting. A better alternative would be electronic distribution of documents.
12. The use of verbal passwords in typical ritualistic means (mouth to ear) should be performed **ONLY WHILE WEARING A MASK.**

# COVID-19 WARNING

We, the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Texas and its Jurisdiction, have taken enhanced safety measures for all its members by requiring all to wear face masks and gloves when necessary, practice social distancing (6ft) and frequent handwashing whenever possible.

An inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 exists in any public place where people are present. COVID-19 is an extremely contagious disease that can lead to severe illness and death. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, senior citizens and people with underlying medical conditions are especially vulnerable.

By participating in activities, visiting lodges or other locations within the state of Texas or any within its Jurisdiction, under which the MWP HGL has authority, you voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to COVID-19.

## **COVID-19 WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY**

This COVID-19 Waiver and Release of Liability is being instituted as a result of inherent dangers related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

IN CONSIDERATION OF the possible risk of contamination caused by personal interaction between individuals during the initiation process that exists while participating in the initiation process (hereinafter the "Activity"); and

IN CONSIDERATION OF my desire to participate in said Activity and being given the option to participate or not participate in same, I hereby acknowledge that I am aware of possible contamination during the initiation process and accept any and all liability related to COVID-19 contamination, illness or death.;

I HEREBY, for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators, assigns, or personal representatives (hereinafter collectively, "Releasor," "I" or "me", which terms shall also include Releasor's parents or guardian if Releasor is under 18 years of age), knowingly and voluntarily enter into this COVID-19 WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY and hereby waive any and all rights, claims or causes of action of any kind arising out of my participation in the Activity; and

I HEREBY release and forever discharge MOST WORSHIPFUL PRINCE HALL GRAND LODGE FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF TEXAS AND JURISDICTION , headquartered at 3433 Martin Luther King Fwy, Fort Worth, Texas ,their affiliates, managers, members, agents, attorneys, staff, volunteers, heirs, representatives, predecessors, successors and assigns (collectively "Releasees"), from any illness and resulting complications that I may suffer as a direct result of my participation in the aforementioned Activity.

I AM VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATING IN THE AFOREMENTIONED ACTIVITY AND I AM PARTICIPATING IN THE ACTIVITY ENTIRELY AT MY OWN RISK. I AM AWARE OF THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH PARTICIPATING IN THIS ACTIVITY, WHICH MAY INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO: PHYSICAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL INJURY, PAIN, SUFFERING, ILLNESS, DISFIGUREMENT, TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT DISABILITY (INCLUDING PARALYSIS), ECONOMIC OR EMOTIONAL LOSS, AND DEATH. I UNDERSTAND THAT THESE INJURIES OR OUTCOMES MAY ARISE FROM MY OWN OR OTHERS' NEGLIGENCE, CONDITIONS RELATED TO TRAVEL TO AND FROM THE ACTIVITY, OR FROM CONDITIONS AT THE ACTIVITY LOCATION(S). NONETHELESS, I ASSUME ALL RELATED RISKS, BOTH KNOWN AND UNKNOWN TO ME, OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS ACTIVITY.

I FURTHER AGREE to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Releasees against any and all claims, suits or actions of any kind whatsoever for liability, damages, compensation or otherwise brought by me or anyone on my behalf, including attorney's fees and any related costs.

I FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGE that Releasees are not responsible for errors, omissions, acts or failures to act of any party or entity conducting a specific event or activity on behalf of Releasees. In the event that I should require medical care or treatment, I authorize Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of Texas and Jurisdiction to provide all emergency medical care

deemed necessary, including but not limited to, first aid, CPR, the use of AEDs, emergency medical transport, and sharing of medical information with medical personnel. I further agree to assume all costs involved and agree to be financially responsible for any costs incurred as a result of such treatment. I am aware and understand that I should carry my own health insurance. I agree that this Release shall be governed for all purposes by Texas law, without regard to any conflict of law principles. This Release supersedes any and all previous oral or written promises or other agreements.

THIS WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY SHALL REMAIN IN EFFECT FOR THE DURATION OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THE ACTIVITY, DURING THIS INITIAL AND ALL SUBSEQUENT EVENTS OF PARTICIPATION.

THIS AGREEMENT was entered into at arm's-length, without duress or coercion, and is to be interpreted as an agreement between two parties of equal bargaining strength. Both Participant, and Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons of Texas and Jurisdiction agree that this agreement is clear and unambiguous as to its terms, and that no other evidence shall be used or admitted to alter or explain the terms of this agreement, but that it will be interpreted based on the language in accordance with the purposes for which it is entered into.

In the event that any provision contained within this Release of Liability shall be deemed to be severable or invalid, or if any term, condition, phrase or portion of this agreement shall be determined to be unlawful or otherwise unenforceable, the remainder of this agreement shall remain in full force and effect. If a court should find that any provision of this agreement to be invalid or unenforceable, but that by limiting said provision it would become valid and enforceable, then said provision shall be deemed to be written, construed and enforced as so limited.

I, THE UNDERSIGNED PARTICIPANT, AFFIRM THAT I AM OF THE AGE OF 18 YEARS OR OLDER, AND THAT I AM FREELY SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT. I CERTIFY THAT I HAVE READ THIS AGREEMENT, THAT I FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENT AND THAT THIS RELEASE CANNOT BE MODIFIED ORALLY. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT AND THAT I AM SIGNING IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

Participant's Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature (if under 18): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

