

# Subordinate Officers Training

Virginia Masonic University

Grand Lodge Committee on Education

**The Methodical Digest**

# What is The Methodical Digest?

**A set of rules and requirements that guide the conduct and operation of the Grand Lodge and subordinate Lodges.**

# Why have the Methodical Digest?

- 1) To set direction and process for Lodge operations
- 2) To set set constraints on member conduct.
- 3) To gain alignment

“You don’t remember your own number?” a man asked Albert Einstein.

“No,” Einstein answered. “Why should I memorize something I can so easily get from a book?”

# What is in the Methodical Digest ?

1) Constitutions of Masonry

2) Methodical Digest

- The Grand Lodge – Section 1.00
- The Subordinate Lodges—Section 2.00
- The Individual Mason—Section 3.00
- Masonic Offenses—Section 4.00
- LMIP – Section 5.00
- Edicts

# Example of Decisions in the Methodical digest

**Sec. 2.42. Every Elective Officer Must Be Installed. —**  
Every elective officer of a Lodge shall be duly installed into office before he can enter upon the discharge of the duties or be entitled to the privileges of his office.

## DECISIONS

1961 D-25, §-2.42, §-2.45

If the Master-elect of a Lodge suffers a physical mishap prior to his installation he may be installed when his physical condition permits. The installed Master holds over until his successor is installed. (C. M. Flintoft)

1991 D-2, §-2.33, §-2.42

Junior Warden served as Junior Warden the entire year, but not installed until June 1990, eligible to be elected and installed as Worshipful Master. (G. W. Farley)

# **The Constitutions of Masonry**

**The Book of Constitutions you are to search at all times, cause it to be read in your Lodge, that none may pretend ignorance of the excellent precepts it enjoins.**

# **The Methodical Digest**

**I promise upon my honor as a Master Mason -  
that I will to the best of my ability - conform  
to and abide by - the Ancient Landmarks,  
customs and usages of Masonry - the laws,  
rules, edicts and resolutions of the Grand  
Lodge - Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of  
the Commonwealth of Virginia**

# The Methodical Digest

**You promise to pay homage to the Grand Master, and to his officers when duly installed; and strictly to conform to every edict of the Grand Lodge**



# Section 1.00 of the Methodical Digest

## The Grand Lodge

### What you need to know

- Grand Lodge—how resolutions are submitted and how votes are taken (1.00 – 1.19)
- Charters – ( 1.20 - 1.28)
- Qualification of Grand Lodge officers (1.29 - 1.72)
- Committees and their makeup (1.73 – 1.84)
- Districts and DDGMs (1.75 – 1.103)

# **Section 2.00 of the Methodical Digest**

## **Subordinate Lodges**

### **What you need to know**

- Defining Lodge duties and operations (2.01 – 2.43)
- Worshipful Masters & officers – ( 2.44 - 2.70)
- Creation and removal of Lodges -- (2.71 - 2.85)
- Fees/petitions/dues/membership (2.86 – 2.159)

# Question 1?

Suppose your Lodge officers have been elected, and just before election the incoming Master –elect has decided that he does not want the job – what happens?

# ANSWER 1

**Sec. 2.32. Any Officer-Elect May Decline Installation.** — Any officer-elect may decline installation.

When the Master-elect does not accept the office and is not installed, the Master in office continues until his successor has been elected and installed. A Lodge can never be without a Worshipful Master. (1973)

# Question 2?

Suppose an entered apprentice has not made progress with his degree proficiency and seven months has elapsed.

Does any action have to be taken?

# ANSWER 2

**Sec. 2.112. Granting Extension of Time to Entered Apprentice or Fellowcraft After Expiration of Six Months From Date of Receiving His Last Degree. —** When six months have elapsed since he received his last degree an Entered Apprentice or a Fellowcraft who has not advanced solely because of lack of Masonic proficiency, and has not been granted an extension of time as provided for in Section 2.111, may apply for the right to further instruction. His application must be made in writing at a stated communication of the Lodge having personal jurisdiction over him or, if it be suspended or extinct, to another chartered Lodge in the same Masonic district. (1975)

# **Section 3.00 of the Methodical Digest**

## **The Individual Mason**

### **What you need to know**

- Department (3.01 – 3.09)

# Example—Section 3.03

**Sec. 3.03. Must Not Engage in Private Conversation While Lodge is Engaged in its Usual Labors, etc.; Must Not Interrupt Officers or Members, etc.** — While the Lodge is engaged in its usual labors Masons must not hold private conversations or committees without leave from the Master; nor introduce any remarks irrelevant to the business before them. They must not interrupt the Master or Wardens or any Brother addressing the presiding officer nor act ludicrously while the Lodge is engaged in what is serious and solemn; but every Brother shall show due respect to the Master and Wardens and other Brethren.



# **Section 4.00 of the Methodical Digest**

## **Masonic Offenses**

### **What you need to know**

- Trials and Penalties for un-Masonic Conduct (4.01 – 4.30)

# Example—Section 4.01

In addition to the requirements related to Masonic conduct outlined in this Section, in the Decisions related to this Section, and elsewhere in the Methodical Digest, **including those offenses and charges set forth in Chapter I, Section III and Chapter II, Section IV of The Constitutions of Masonry**, a Masonic Offense shall be defined to include: slander or defamation of character by one Mason against another; behavior or actions by one Mason resulting in physical or substantial emotional harm to another Mason; and oral, verbal, written or electronic communication by any Mason which brings dishonor to the Fraternity or any of its members or creates disharmony or discord in the Fraternity or among its members.

# Section 5.00 of the Methodical Digest

## LMIP

### What you need to know

- The LMIP program is described in this section – (5.01 – 5.21)

**Methodical Digest**  
**Grand Masters Decisions**  
**Edicts**  
**What you need to know**

- Edicts of Past Grand Masters that are a part of Masonic Law.

## How do I use the Methodical Digest?

- 1) Go to the Index – look up you issue or topic area.
- 2) Read the sections pertinent to you issue or question.
- 3) Read the Decisions associated with those sections.
- 4) Consult your DDGM if you have questions.

# Index

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# Key Principles for Success in Using the Methodical Digest

- Keep a copy of the Methodical Digest close.
- Use the Index as your first source for where to go in the Methodical Digest.
- Read sections of the Methodical Digest from time to time—including the Constitutions of Masonry.
- Read decisions as well as the text to ensure you have knowledge of specific unusual situations.
- **USE IT!**

# Application Exercises

**7 Exercises  
That Train  
Your Brain to  
Stay Positive**

