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GRAND MASTER
ARTHUR H. WEISS

Restrictions on Masonic-Sponsored Meetings and Events During COVID-19

October 19, 2020

On March 16, 2020, the California Department of Public Health released guidance on the prevention of COVID-19 transmission. The Department found that all non-essential gatherings should be postponed or canceled until further notice.

On October 9, the Department updated its guidance to allow limited, outdoor social gatherings of no more than three households for durations of under two hours. This new guidance still effectively prohibits Masonic-sponsored meetings and events. The new guidance applies to all California counties, regardless of their current risk classification or risk tier.

It is, therefore, my direction that there be no in person Masonic-sponsored meetings or events of any kind in this state until further direction is received from me. This direction includes all Masonic Organizations and Masonic Youth Orders. None of our Masonic Organizations or Masonic Youth Orders may hold an in person Masonic-sponsored meeting or event of any kind in this state until further direction is received from me.

For the purposes of this directive, a meeting or event shall be considered to be Masonic-sponsored unless it is organized and sponsored by an identifiable third party.

Masonic Funeral and Burial Services

If requested to conduct a Masonic funeral or burial services, you should contact the licensed funeral director for the service about your participation. If the licensed funeral director believes that the conduct of the funeral will qualify as an essential activity which you may attend, then members of lodges, Masonic organizations, and Masonic Youth Orders may attend and participate, but only in such numbers and with such social distancing and other precautions as the licensed funeral director for the service shall determine.

Participation in Non-Masonic-Sponsored Events

This decision does not prohibit masons or members of Masonic Organizations and Youth Orders from attending events that are not sponsored by a lodge, hall, Masonic Organization or Youth Order. For example, members of a Job's Daughter's Bethel may attend a church service that is permitted in their county in accordance with the guidelines set forth for that activity. Another example, members of a Rainbow Assembly may attend a volunteer day of service at a soup kitchen or food bank that is permitted in their county in accordance with the guidelines set forth for that activity. Further, this decision does not prohibit a lodge or hall association from aiding the community. For example, a hall may allow American Red Cross to sponsor a blood drive on its premises and lodge members may volunteer to help American Red Cross.

This decision shall have no further force or effect after my term as Grand Master ends.

Sincerely and fraternally,

Arthur H. Weiss
Grand Master