



GRAND LODGE FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS OF CALIFORNIA

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Reopening Directive **Permission to Hold In-Person Meetings and Events, Subject to Limitations**

April 13, 2021

Dear Brethren,

On April 2, 2021, the California Department of Public Health issued new guidance on gatherings, private events and meetings. This guidance updates California's COVID-19 Blueprint for a Safer Economy, also known as the state's reopening plan. The reopening plan assigns each county in California to a risk tier based upon the level of COVID-19 spread in that county. As part of these updates to the state's reopening plan, indoor private events and meetings will be allowed, with limitations, beginning on April 15 in counties assigned to the red, orange and yellow tiers, but not to the purple tier. (A description of the reopening plan's limitations on private events and meetings can be found in *Exhibit A* of this directive.)

At a high level, the applicable limitations are:

1. Indoor private events and meetings are not permitted in counties assigned to the purple tier.
2. There must be a guest list and a seating chart for any meeting or event.
3. Attendees must show proof of full COVID-19 vaccination or proof of a negative test within the last 72 hours.
4. The facility must create and implement a COVID-19 site prevention plan.
5. Under the California mask mandate, attendees must wear a face mask unless they are specifically exempted under the mandate.

Therefore, **effective April 15, 2021**, my October 2020 directives regarding in-person meetings are amended as follows:

(1) Masonic lodges may, but are not required to, resume holding in-person meetings and events, provided that all of the following requirements are satisfied:

Prior to the lodge resuming in-person, indoor meetings and events:

- The county in which the lodge holds its meetings is *not* in the purple tier of the state's reopening plan.
- The master of the lodge determines that the county in which the lodge holds its meeting permits in-person private meetings and events. Individual counties may issue limitations that are stricter than state restrictions, in which case the county limitations supersede the state regulations.

Grand Master's Reopening Directive

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- The master of the lodge concludes that resuming in-person meetings and events can be done safely and in compliance with this directive.
- The hall association (in consultation with the lodge) conducts a risk assessment of the meeting site; prepares a written COVID-19 site prevention plan that includes on-site guidelines to be followed by lodges; and takes steps necessary to effectuate the prevention plan. (*A template for risk assessment and prevention plans will be provided by the grand secretary for reference.*)
- At each in-person meeting and event, the master must ensure that the event adheres to the limitations for private events contained in the state's reopening plan (*see Exhibit A attached to this directive*), the applicable county's orders and guidance, and the site's COVID-19 prevention plan.

Lodges may also conduct outdoor events provided that the event complies with the state's limits (*see Exhibit A attached*) and applicable county orders and guidance for outdoor events.

(2) Masonic Organizations may conduct in-person meetings and events under the same limitations and conditions set out above for lodge meetings (*as applicable*).

(3) Masonic Youth Orders may conduct in-person meetings and events provided that such meetings and events are permitted by the state and the applicable county and the Youth Order follows state and county restrictions and guidance.

(4) Pursuant to my October 2020 directives:

- Lodges may continue, at their discretion, to hold virtual stated meetings.
- Masonic funeral and burial services may be conducted consistent with the directions of a licensed funeral director.
- Masons and members of Masonic Organizations and Youth Orders may continue to attend events that are not sponsored by a lodge, hall, Masonic Organization or Youth Order.

Today's reopening directive is the first step in our return to in-person Masonic meetings and activities. As the state provides additional information on safe in-person meetings, I may issue further directives. I have asked the grand secretary to provide additional guidance, consistent with today's directive, regarding in-person meetings.

This directive and additional guidance provided by the grand secretary including a template prevention plan is attached and can be found online at <https://freemason.org/covid19>.

My directives have no force or effect after my term as grand master ends.

Sincerely and fraternally,



ARTHUR H. WEISS
Grand Master

EXHIBIT A

Grand Master's Reopening Directive

EXCERPTS FROM
CALIFORNIA'S REOPENING PLAN REGARDING PRIVATE
EVENTS
(Effective **April 15, 2021**)

	Tier 1 Widespread Purple	Tier 2 Substantial Red	Tier 3 Moderate Orange	Tier 4 Minimal Yellow
<p>Private Events (meetings / receptions / conferences)</p> <p><u>Required</u> mitigation measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase tickets or defined guest list • Seating chart / assigned seating • Testing and vaccination can increase capacity • No intermingling of multiple private events 	<p>Outdoor only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum 25 people • If all guests are tested or show proof of full vaccination: Max 100 	<p>Outdoor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum 50 people • If all guests are tested or show proof full vaccination: Maximum 200 people <p>Indoor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If all guests are tested or show proof of full vaccination: Maximum 100 people 	<p>Outdoor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum 100 people • If all guests are tested or show proof full vaccination: Maximum 300 people <p>Indoor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If all guests are tested or show proof of full vaccination: Maximum 150 people 	<p>Outdoor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum 200 people • If all guests are tested or show proof full vaccination: Maximum 400 people <p>Indoor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If all guests are tested or show proof of full vaccination: Maximum 200 people