

Masonry is the world's first and largest fraternal organization, and is based on the belief that each man has a responsibility to help make the world a better place. Through our culture of philanthropy, we make a profound difference for our brothers, our families, our communities, and our future.

There are more than 60,000 Masons in California. Our members represent the entire spectrum of diversity. We welcome men of all faiths, nationalities and cultures.

## **Mission**

The mission of Freemasonry in California is brotherhood, community involvement, and self-improvement through education, family values, moral standards, and charity. We invest in children, our neighborhoods, and our future. Our mission is guided by the enduring and relevant tenets of our fraternity: brotherly love, relief, and truth.

## **Membership**

California Masonic membership is open to men age 18 or older who meet the qualifications and standards of character and intention, and who believe in a Supreme Being. One of Masonry's customs is not to solicit members; men must seek membership on their own through a Mason they know or a local lodge.

For more information, visit [FREEMASON.ORG/DISCOVERMASONRY/APPLYING.HTM](https://freemason.org/discovermasonry/applying.htm).

## **What Do Masons Do?**

The Masons of California are committed to personal growth and making a profound difference in the lives of others. For members: We are committed to engaging and retaining members and their families through an enhanced, sustaining, and relevant membership experience. Fellowship, family, and lifelong learning are important to us. Leadership development and Masonic education are offered in a variety of formats to assist members in their continuous pursuit of knowledge, helping them excel both inside and outside the fraternity. For California public education: Masons have been at the forefront of American public education for more than a century. Today, we continue to be leaders in statewide support of public schools through targeted, relevant initiatives that reach the most vulnerable children and families in our state. For those in need: Relief is one of our enduring and relevant values. We take responsibility for the well-being of our brothers, our families, and our communities. Our philanthropic causes are supported entirely by our members' generous contributions, and include the Masonic Homes (residential communities for seniors), Masonic Outreach Services (statewide outreach and critical services for seniors and families in need), and the Masonic Center for Youth and Families (innovative, integrated help for youth who struggle with behavioral or mental health issues). Learn more about California Masonry at [FREEMASON.ORG](https://freemason.org).

The Masonic Homes of California have been committed to fraternal care for more than a century. Established in 1898, the Homes provide housing and health care to Masons and their wives or widows at campuses in Union City and Covina. Masonic Senior Outreach provides ongoing care management and financial support to help older members stay healthy and safe in their homes or in retirement facilities in their home communities. Masonic Family Outreach offers services and programs to California Masons and their families who need help dealing with today's complex issues, such as the impact of divorce, the stresses of a special needs child, and other significant life challenges.

**Allied Organizations**

Freemasonry is made up of many organizations, each with a special social, educational, or philanthropic focus. After a man has been awarded the three degrees of Masonry, he may join any of the other affiliated organizations. The best known in the United States are the Shrine, Scottish Rite, and York Rite. There are allied Masonic organizations for women and others that admit both men and women. Eastern Star is the largest coed fraternal society in the world. Youth orders include DeMolay for young men and Rainbow for Girls and Job's Daughters for young women.

**Contact Information**

Phone 800/831-8170

Email: [COMMUNICATIONS@FREEMASON.ORG](mailto:COMMUNICATIONS@FREEMASON.ORG)

Media questions should be directed to Emily Limón, Director of Communications,  
[ELIMON@FREEMASON.ORG](mailto:ELIMON@FREEMASON.ORG).

## How Freemasonry Began

In the Middle Ages, the term “freemason” was awarded to highly skilled stonemasons hired as free agents to build castles and cathedrals in England and Scotland. Because of the inherent danger of their work, stonemasons formed local organizations, called lodges, to take care of sick and injured members as well as the widows and orphans of those killed on the job. Lodge members met in temporary buildings, built next to the cathedrals, to receive their pay, plan their work, train new apprentices, and socialize.

The first grand lodge was established in 1717 in London. In 1718 English Freemasonry spread to France and Spain, and after 1729, to India, Italy, Poland, Sweden, other parts of Europe, and eventually the American colonies. In 1733 the first American lodge was established in Boston under the authority of the Grand Lodge of England. Of the 39 men who signed the U.S. Constitution, 13 were Masons.

## Freemasonry In California

Freemasonry has been an integral part of California for more than 150 years. During the gold rush of 1849, thousands of settlers came to California in search of fortune. Those who were Masons brought their rich traditions with them, soon establishing some of California’s first Masonic lodges in the mining towns of the Gold Country. In 1850 — the same year that California became a state — the Grand Lodge of California was established in Sacramento. Within 10 years, the number of Masonic lodges had grown from 11 to 130, while membership soared from 258 to more than 5,000. Over the years, the Masons have played a key role in shaping the history of California. To date, 19 California governors have been Masons and at least four California Masons have been elected to the U.S. Senate. Today, the Grand Lodge of California has more than 60,000 members and about 340 lodges located throughout the state, making it one of the largest jurisdictions in the world.

## A Legacy of Philanthropy

Throughout their 150-year history, California Masons have remained steadfast in their commitment to helping others and serving the California communities. Among the fraternity’s first charitable activities was helping victims of the great cholera outbreak in Sacramento in 1850. Roughly 300 California Masons raised more than \$32,000 within 10 months to help build and maintain a hospital at Sutter’s Fort. Today, our members volunteer hundreds of thousands of hours and donate millions of dollars to provide a wide range of critical services to families statewide.

Learn more at [FREEMASON.ORG](http://FREEMASON.ORG).

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California Masonic membership is open to men age 18 or older who meet the qualifications and standards of character and intention, and who believe in a Supreme Being. Men of all ethnic and religious backgrounds are welcome.

A Mason who recommends you for membership will assist with completing and submitting the application. After submitting the application, you will be interviewed by members of the lodge you wish to join so they can learn more about you and you can learn more about Freemasonry. If the interview is favorable, your application is presented to the lodge for a vote. If the vote is affirmative, you receive the Entered Apprentice degree - the first degree of Freemasonry. When you advance through the next two degrees, you are a Master Mason and a full member of the fraternity.

To locate a lodge, use the Lodge Locator on [freemason.org](http://freemason.org) or contact the Grand Lodge of California at 800/831-8170.

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Email: [COMMUNICATIONS@FREEMASON.ORG](mailto:COMMUNICATIONS@FREEMASON.ORG)

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[ELIMON@FREEMASON.ORG](mailto:ELIMON@FREEMASON.ORG).

In 1898, the spirit of Masonic charity and the need to assist the widows and orphans of Masons led to the creation of the Masonic Homes of California. Today, California Masonic Assistance continues to protect and nurture the most vulnerable members of our fraternal family through compassionate, values-based care, helping members age successfully at all stages of life.

#### **Masonic Home at Union City**

Founded in 1898 and located on 267 acres in the San Francisco Bay Area, our first residential community continues to provide independent living, assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing care to about 300 senior residents.

#### **Masonic Home at Covina**

Originally established in 1909 as an orphanage, the 33-acre Masonic Home at Covina in Southern California provides independent and assisted living for about 80 seniors in a neighborhood setting.

#### **Masonic Senior Outreach**

Our senior outreach services connect eligible members of our California fraternal family with the services and resources they need to stay healthy and safe in their homes or in retirement facilities in their home communities.

#### **Masonic Family Outreach**

Our family outreach services help California Masonic families deal with a variety of complex life challenges including the impact of divorce and job loss. Broad, flexible services reach families in their home communities.

Learn more about the Masonic Homes and California Masonic Assistance by calling 888/466-3642, emailing [MASONICASSISTANCE@MHCUC.ORG](mailto:MASONICASSISTANCE@MHCUC.ORG) or visiting [MASONICHOME.ORG](http://MASONICHOME.ORG).

#### **Masonic Center for Youth and Families**

Masonic Center for Youth and Families (MCYAF). MCYAF provides integrated psychological care for struggle with behavioral, academic, emotional or social difficulties. Services are available for Masonic families statewide. To learn more, visit [MCYAF.ORG](http://MCYAF.ORG), call 877/488-6293 or email [INFORMATION@MCYAF.ORG](mailto:INFORMATION@MCYAF.ORG).

#### **California Masonic Foundation**

Formed in March 1969. California Masonic Foundation's mission is to make a profound difference through support for education. CMF invests in California's communities and its future with programs that touch the lives of thousands across the state each year. These programs include statewide support for early literacy, middle school math, and pathways to college or careers.

#### **Acacia Creek**

Acacia Creek opened April 2010 in Union City and is a continuing care retirement community for non-Masons and Masons, their wives and widows. Acacia Creek enriches the independence, well-being, and security of its residents through exceptional services and care based on Masonic values.

**California Masonic  
Memorial Temple**

California Masonic Memorial Temple owns the building at the top of San Francisco's Nob Hill which houses the headquarters for the Grand Lodge and other affiliates along with administrative offices, a library and museum of Freemasonry, and an auditorium and public spaces. Since opening in 1958, CMMT has hosted concerts, entertainment, graduations, immigration proceedings, and private functions. It was formed in 1954.

**Nob Hill Masonic  
Center, Inc.**

A California for-profit corporation, Nob Hill Masonic Center was formed in October 2006. NHMC operates a public parking garage located in the lower levels of the CMMT building.

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## What's a press release?

A press release is an official notification to the media about news or an event. The release should provide the necessary information about your event or news, and should explain who you are and why it's important. Send the release before or after your event, depending on whether or not you want people to attend.

## What information should a press release include?

### All press releases:

- Headline succinctly explains your news or event
- Subhead describes the purpose of the event or news
- Dateline that includes full date and year, and the city and state, even if the lodge is in a small community.  
A large conglomerate could own your local media and misfile your story.
- Limit event or news descriptions to short paragraph
- If the release is about a donation, use the phrase “more than” and round down to the closest larger number — this helps readers focus on the base of the donation and actually makes it seem larger. (For example, rather than “Masons donate \$312 dollars” say “More than \$300 dollars”; change “\$13, 230” to “more than \$13,000,” etc.)
- When applicable, briefly explain how your news or event reflect Masonic values or traditions (important for cornerstone ceremonies)
- Link to online press kit
- Lodge name and number
- Link to the lodge website
- Links to any social media platforms that are actively maintained
- Contact for questions (include phone number and email address)
- A brief description of Freemasonry and link to the Grand Lodge website

### Event notifications:

- Include the day of the week with the event date to help avoid confusion.
- Include event entertainment, food/drinks, or educational component, if applicable.
- When possible, include an end time as well as a start time.
- If children are invited (or not), include this information in the release to inform parents.
- If there is a fee to attend the event, include it in the press release. If collected funds will be used for charitable purposes, explain how/what organization will receive the funds.
- Contact for questions about the event
- Lodge address (including street and city)
- RSVP information, if applicable

For help writing a press release, see the Sample Press Releases.

### **Who should I send the press release to?**

#### Media outlets:

Select the media outlets and other resources that cover news in your community. Common media outlets include:

- Newspapers, including daily, weekly, and monthly
- Radio and television stations (commercial and public)
- Local news websites and blogs
- Community organizations, such as churches or clubs

#### Within your lodge:

Send the release to lodge brothers. Sharing the press release with the lodge via email or your Trestleboard makes it easy for members to tell their friends about an upcoming event, as it includes all the necessary information. Consider making a less formal version of the press release for brothers to distribute.

Additionally, post your release on your lodge's website. Then, link to it on social media and share it on your page. If appropriate, tag neighboring lodges or post a link to it on their social media accounts as well.

#### Log your results:

Researching media outlets and developing local media contacts can be a time-consuming process. Ask the brother who takes on this task to log the identified contacts for future use.

### **How do I distribute the press release?**

Different media outlets prefer to receive information in different formats. Today, most newspapers and radio stations prefer to receive press releases by email, but some still prefer fax and others may ask you to mail the release, or to submit it via an online form. By following the guidelines set forth by each outlet, you are most likely to have your news distributed.

If you will be sending the press release by mail or fax, print the release on lodge letterhead. If you will be emailing the release, send it both within the body of the email and as a formatted attachment. By sending it within the email body, the recipient will see that your message is not spam and he or she can review the details on line; sending an additional, formatted copy offers the media contact a print-ready version, in case that is preferable.

### **When should I send the press release?**

Some media outlets prefer to receive event information as far in advance as possible, while others would rather receive information close to the event date. To maximize your lodge's chance of coverage, research each media outlet's preferences well in advance of your event and send information to each outlet in the preferred timeframe.

Research the publication's frequency. If a paper only comes out once a week, make sure that they receive your event information in time to print it before your event.

If you're unable to reach a contact at the media outlet, a general rule of thumb is to send the release three times: two weeks before the event, two days before the event, and the morning of the event (or the evening before if it is an early-morning event).

If you do not wish to invite the community to your event, it may be advisable to send the release after the event, to avoid any confusion.



**Additional tips for press releases:**

- Designate a media contact at your lodge who can be listed as a contact on your press release. Make sure this person is comfortable and knowledgeable to act as a spokesperson for your lodge. He will likely need to answer questions about the history of the event or lodge and about Freemasonry in general.
- If the event organizer and media contact are different people, make sure the distinction between them is clear within the press release.

## Basic Press Release Template

Below is a basic template you can use to help draft a press release for a lodge event. Fields highlighted in yellow indicate where details about the event are to be inserted.

### **(Lodge name) (Description of event)**

*(Additional description - briefly explain primary event focus)*

(DATE) – (CITY), California – The Masons of (lodge name and number) are pleased to invite members of the (town or region name) community to (description of event), which will take place on (day of week), (date) at (time).

(Insert a brief explanation of the event, including activities [such as a meal or entertainment] and the event’s purpose [such as to celebrate an accomplishment or provide information about Freemasonry].)

The event will be held at (lodge name), located at (lodge address, including city but not state). (There is no charge/Tickets are \$[XX] per person). (Advance reservations are not required/Please RSVP by [date] to [name]). For more information about this event, contact (name) at (phone) or (email).

To learn more about (lodge name), visit (lodge website) or connect with us on (links to lodge social media platforms).

(Optional [About (Lodge Name)])

(Short descriptive paragraph about lodge, including how many years it has been part of the community and any other information that local residents may find relevant, such as historic figures)

### **About the Masons of California**

Freemasonry is the world’s first and largest fraternal organization, based on the belief that a man who strives to improve himself can also improve his community and the world at large. The Masons of California have more than 60,000 members and over 340 lodges located throughout the state. The California Masonic Foundation is committed to making a profound difference for our communities, and touches the lives of thousands of Californians each year. Learn more at freemason.org and follow us on Twitter. You can also visit us on Facebook and YouTube.

### **Media Contact**

(Name)(Phone number)

(Masonic office, if any)

(Lodge name and number)

(Email of contact)

Press Information

**Sample Press Releases**

Sample press releases for particular lodge events are provided on the following pages:

1. General lodge event (breakfast/dinner/social)
2. Charitable cause
3. Lodge anniversary
4. Cornerstone ceremony
5. Scholarship awards (sample media alert)

**Sample Press Release 1: General lodge event****Marin Masonic Lodge No. 191 Invites Members of the  
North Bay Community to an Ice Cream Social**

*Local Masons open lodge for community-focused event*

OCT. 1, 2015 — SAN RAFAEL, California — The Masons of Marin Lodge No. 191 are pleased to invite members of the North Bay community to an ice cream social on Sunday, Oct. 11 at 3:00 p.m.

Held every second Sunday of the month, this fun-filled event is an opportunity for interested community members to learn more about Freemasonry and to meet and socialize with local Masons. Learn a brief history of Freemasonry in the North Bay, including an overview of the lodge's current charitable initiatives. Complimentary ice cream and other desserts will follow the presentation.

All members of the North Bay community, including children over age 5, are invited to attend. Marin Lodge is located at 1010 Lootens Place in San Rafael. Please RSVP by Oct. 8 to James Fake at 555-555-5555 or [james@fake.com](mailto:james@fake.com).

To learn more about Marin Lodge, visit [marinmasoniclodge.org](http://marinmasoniclodge.org) or connect with us on Facebook.

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**Media Contact**

John Bogus, 555-555-5555  
Secretary  
Marin Lodge No. 191, F. & A.M.  
[johnbogus@fake.com](mailto:johnbogus@fake.com)  
Press Information

**Sample Press Release 2: Promoting charitable cause****Coastside Masonic Lodge Collects Winter Coats for the Homeless**

*Community members are encouraged to participate in Masonic lodge's annual clothing drive*

OCT. 14, 2015 — PACIFICA, California — The Masons of Coastside Lodge No. 762 are once again gearing up for their annual winter coat drive. Starting on Saturday, Nov. 1, community members are invited to bring donations of gently used winter coats to Coastside Lodge, located at 311 Waterford Street in Pacifica.

As our community includes many local homeless families, all sizes of coats are accepted (including children's sizes). Donations should be clean and in wearable condition. Surplus gifts will be donated to the Salvation Army.

The Masons of Pacifica have held an annual winter coat drive each year since 1997. This important annual campaign is organized as part of the lodge's commitment to the Masonic tenets of charity and relief. Last year, Masons and community members donated more than 200 coats to individuals in need.

To learn more, volunteer, or donate, contact Jim Fake at 555-555-5555 or email [jim@fakeemail.com](mailto:jim@fakeemail.com). For more information about Masonry in Pacifica, visit [coastsidemasoniccenter.org](http://coastsidemasoniccenter.org).

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**Media Contact**

James FakeName, 555-555-5555

Secretary

Coastside Lodge No. 762, F. & A.M.

[james@fake.com](mailto:james@fake.com)

Press Information

**Sample Press Release 3: Lodge Anniversary****Manteca Masons Celebrate 150 Years**

*Tyrian Lodge No. 439 has made a profound difference in the  
Manteca community for more than a century*

JULY. 22, 2013 — MANTECA, California — On Sunday, July 27, the Masons of Tyrian Lodge No. 439 will celebrate 200 years of Freemasonry in Manteca with a festive community celebration at the historic lodge building, located on the square at 123 Main Street.

The Manteca High School Choir will perform a variety of patriotic songs and local Masonic poet Robert Burns will read from his forthcoming collection, “Of this Old Masonic Light.” A spaghetti dinner will be served.

There is no cost and no reservations are required to attend the celebration. Tickets for the spaghetti dinner are \$10 each (\$3 for children under age 5) and must be reserved by June 1. To make your reservation, contact Jim Fake at 555-555-5555 or email [jim@fakeemail.com](mailto:jim@fakeemail.com).

Learn more about Masonry in Manteca, and view a slideshow of historic Manteca photographs, at [fakemantecalodge.org](http://fakemantecalodge.org).

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**Media Contact**

James FakeName, 555-555-5555  
Secretary  
Coastside Lodge No. 762, F. & A.M.  
[james@fake.com](mailto:james@fake.com)  
Press Information

**Sample Press Release 4: Cornerstone Ceremony****Ventura Masons Celebrate the Centennial**

*The Masons of California and Channel Islands Lodge No. 214 will hold a historic cornerstone rededication at San Buenaventura City Hall*

JULY. 22, 2013 — VENTURA, California — On Thursday, July 25, 2013, the City of Ventura, California will celebrate a historic milestone: the 100th anniversary of San Buenaventura City Hall. Local Freemasons, who have been part of the Ventura community since 1871, have been invited by civic leaders to join in the festivities. The Masons of Channel Islands Lodge No. 214, along with officers of the Masonic Grand Lodge of California, will commemorate this event by conducting a formal rededication of the building's cornerstone.

The Masonic cornerstone ceremony is a time-honored tradition, which has taken place for hundreds of years, in the United States of America. President George Washington, a Freemason, dedicated the United States Capitol Building during a cornerstone ceremony in 1793. In 1850, California Masons laid the cornerstone of the California State Capitol in Sacramento.

The rededication of the San Buenaventura City Hall cornerstone will take place at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 25. Members of Channel Islands Lodge No. 214 and the Masons of California Grand Lodge will be dressed in formal Masonic regalia as they process from the Ventura Masonic Center (at 482 E Santa Clara Street) to San Buenaventura City Hall.

The Masons of Channel Islands Lodge No. 214 engage in a number of charitable and philanthropic initiatives in Ventura throughout the year, including a robust scholarship program that rewards local high school seniors for academic achievements. To learn more about the lodge, visit [lodge214.com](http://lodge214.com).

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**Media Contact**

James FakeName, 555-555-5555  
Secretary  
Coastside Lodge No. 762, F. & A.M.  
[james@fake.com](mailto:james@fake.com)  
Press Information

**Sample Press Release 5/Media Alert: Scholarship Awards****Irvine Masons Celebrate Local Public Schools with \$12,000 in Scholarships**

*Masons recognize local students' accomplishments with community-oriented celebration*

MARCH. 12, 2013 — IRVINE, California — On April 16, 2014, the Masons Irvine Valley Lodge No. 671 will be joined by local students, parents, teachers, and school administrators for the lodge's 15th annual Masonic Scholar Recognition Night.

This highly anticipated annual event celebrates the accomplishments of Irvine-area high school seniors who have received academic scholarships from the lodge for exemplary academic performance. This year's 33 Masonic scholars will receive more than \$12,000 in financial assistance for future academic expenses, including college tuition and classroom materials.

The lodge will also recognize its teacher of the year, Mary Fake, for her contributions to elementary literacy education in Irvine Unified School District. Irvine Unified School District Superintendent Morris Faker will present Ms. Fake with a \$200 gift certificate for supplies.

Members of the Irvine community and local media are invited and encourage to attend to show support for local students, teachers, and public schools. There is no entry fee and reservations are not required. Children of all ages are welcome. Refreshments will be available for purchase.

**MEDIA ALERT**

What: 15th Annual Masonic Scholar Recognition Night  
When: Wednesday, April 16 at 7:00 p.m.  
Where: Irvine Valley Lodge No. 671  
23685 Birtcher Drive, Lake Forest, CA 92630-1770  
Press Contact: Tony Fake, Lodge Secretary, 555-555-5555  
tonyf@fakelodge.com

**\*\*PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE AVAILABLE\*\***

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**Media Contact**

James FakeName, 555-555-5555  
Secretary  
Coastside Lodge No. 762, F. & A.M.  
[james@fake.com](mailto:james@fake.com)  
Press Information

The secret to a great social media following? Provide a continuous stream of relevant, interesting information about your lodge. Once you have an online following, social media can be an effective and simple tool for sharing news about your lodge and connecting members.

Here are some guidelines to help get you started:

## 1. Designate a team

In order to succeed at social media, approach it like any other important lodge initiative – by designating a team of members (or at least one member) as your social media manager or committee.

- Ask this person or committee to report on progress during each stated meeting to help ensure progress and accountability, and to give other members a chance to weigh in on strategies.
- Invite new members to join the committee to provide their perspective of what information they would have found helpful when seeking out your lodge.
- Make sure all team members, especially those with the ability to post, are in agreement with the posting rules (see #4, below).

## 2. Ask WHY

Why is your lodge putting energy into social media? Develop a list of priorities to help guide your initial posts. Refer to it when developing content, and make adjustments as time goes on. Common reasons lodges use social media include:

- Increasing engagement with existing members, some who may not live locally,
- Attracting new members by showing the lodge's various activities, and
- Promoting the lodge's educational programming to members or the community.

## 3. Start small

A good rule of thumb is to participate on two to three social media platforms to gain the widest reach in your potential audience. But you may find it easiest to master one platform before moving on.

- Remember: You don't need to be everywhere! It's better to have a stronger presence on fewer platforms than a larger reach with limited content.

## 4. Cover the basics

It can be tempting to start posting right away. But before you dive in, take time to develop a well-rounded profile.

- Include basic information about the lodge, including the location, phone number, and a contact email address.
- Include links to the lodge's website, freemason.org, and the lodge's other social media platforms (if any).
- Add photos: If you already have written photo releases from members, include photos from recent events and installations. Otherwise, post photos of the inside and outside of the lodge building, including any interesting architectural features. You can also post photos of Masonic symbols in other local or state buildings.



## **5. Set some rules**

As recent publicity scandals have shown, what's posted to the Internet can linger forever. Remember that social media is the public, online face of your lodge. Make sure your content is an accurate reflection of your lodge's culture.

- Keep your tone friendly and conversational, but also professional and respectful.
- Determine what is appropriate and not.
- Edit and proofread all posts before sharing them.
- Need help developing content? See "Social Media Posting Tips."

## **6. Create a schedule**

Choose a schedule helps ensure accountability.

- Post fresh content on a regular basis – ideally once a day; at least a few days a week.
- Take time every week to plan the upcoming week's posts.

## **7. Write for each platform**

Readers tend to scan, so posts should be short and direct. Keep your audience in mind when drafting posts, and include content that your target audience will find engaging.

- Note: Some platforms, like Facebook, can post to various other platforms on your behalf. But this strategy isn't always effective. Consider your content and audience for each platform before cross-posting information.

## **8. Analyze your progress**

Monitor each platform, track your results and consider engagement. Tracking results and engagement means more than just measuring how many people have liked you or followed you. Watch what people are saying in response to your posts, see who comments and how often, and take note of what content is shared. Determine which types of posts are most popular and adjust your content plan accordingly.

- Facebook Insights is a great, FREE tool to help you track these metrics within Facebook.

## **9. Engage, engage, engage!**

Just because you build it doesn't mean they will come. You must constantly and consistently invite people to join you in the conversation.

- Answer any questions posted to your page.
- Reply to comments on your page – just to say thank you or to provide additional information.
- Include social media links and handles in every non-social communication you create.
- Encourage your audience to join you whenever you can.

### **10. Reciprocate. Follow, like, and subscribe**

A great way to get more followers is to increase your own online presence within similar organizations. Consider “liking” and “following”:

- Neighboring lodges: Tag nearby lodges in posts about upcoming lodge events and fundraisers
- Other California lodges
- The Grand Lodge of California
- Sister lodges in other states and countries
- Other grand lodges throughout the United States and beyond
- Local and national chapters of Masonic youth orders
- Local public schools
- Local charities that your lodge supports
- Friends and family members

### **11. Stay current**

The social media landscape is changing quickly. Make sure your strategy is agile as well. Reevaluate the platforms you’re using and your lodge’s initiatives. Research new tech tools that can help tell your story.

**Basic social media posting ideas**

- Aim for a variety of posts that will be interesting to lodge members, other Masons, and the general public
- Advertise upcoming events and special programs.
- Repurpose Trestleboard articles, like member recognition or an event recap (condense information into a sentence or two)
- Share trivia about your lodge (or “today in history” tidbits)
- Did your lodge recently host a Masonic education night? Quiz followers on the presentation.
- Support youth orders and concordant bodies: Recognize new officers and promote community service activities and other accomplishments
- Ask questions regarding Masonry, such as:
  - What’s your favorite Masonic book/building?
  - Who is your favorite historic Mason/Masonic writer/Masonic actor?(Ask members to comment to keep the thread going.)
- Ask “generic” questions that anyone in the public could answer like:
  - What are your weekend plans?
  - Why is tolerance important?
  - When was the last time you felt inspired?
- Post inspirational quotes by famous Masons (consider asking members to email quotes and then tag each member when posting the quote)
- Create a “contest” — Post a photo and host an impromptu caption contest, or name a theme and challenge followers to submit the best quote.

**Play tag**

An easy way to increase engagement is by using tags to proactively include other organizations’ and individuals’ social media platforms. Ideas for tagging include:

- Tag members in posts about their accomplishments or about events that they attended
- Concordant bodies: See the Scottish Rite mentioned in an online article? Share it and tag them. Did Job’s Daughters help you set up for an event? Tag them in a thank-you message.
- Thank (and tag) nearby lodges for participating in shared events or inviting your lodge to one of their events
- After participating in community events, tag the event’s sponsors (or donation recipients)

### **Boost engagement with multi-media**

The number of images shared on Facebook alone is measured in the *billions per second*. Images and video are powerful and engaging — even if they’re not professionally created.

Multi-media tips:

- Ask members to share photos of Masonic travel destinations
- Did your officers attend Annual Communication or the California Masonic Symposium? Post photos on Facebook (and tag Grand Lodge)
- Post photos from installations, parades, volunteer activities, social events and other activities. “Tag” members in the photos so the photos will show up on members’ pages as well.
- Consider buying an inexpensive video camera or use your phone’s video camera for your lodge to capture short videos of lodge events (under 3 minutes)

### **Encourage sharing**

Social media is about engaging your audience with posts that are interesting to them — not you. It is very much about enabling them to help you tell your story.

- Make it easy for followers to share your content by including “share” buttons on your website.
- Develop hashtags to brand events and repeated content. Use these hashtags on every communication you create around that content or event.
- Include your Twitter handle or website in posts whenever possible.

### About [lodge name] No. [lodge number]

[Lodge name] has been a part of the [town/region name] community for more than [XX] years.

The lodge was originally founded by [founding members name] in [founding year] to [purpose for founding — can be generic like, “to provide a gathering place for local Freemasons” or can include specific historic details, such as to “unite Masons who came to California to work in mines during the 1850 gold rush”].

The current master of [lodge name] is [master’s name].

[Optional: Historic members include (names of any notable local Masons).]

[Lodge name and number] is located at [address].

For more information, contact [email] or [phone number].

Please visit us online at [lodge website].

And, search for “[lodge name]” on [social media platforms] to connect with us online.

For more information about Freemasonry in California, visit [FREEMASON.ORG](http://FREEMASON.ORG).

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