



**GRAND LODGE
FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS
OF WASHINGTON**

Chris J. Coffman
Grand Master
4970 Bridgeport Way W
University Place, WA 98467
(253) 820-1776
ccoff4269@comcast.net

August 6, 2020

Dear Brothers,

Three times in the last month our buildings or past Lodge activities have been the subject of news broadcasts. In one case, the issue involved activities by a business that rented space from a Lodge building. Another, involved a Lodge Building being tagged with vulgar and racist language. In the third case, a Lodge honored a police officer at the recommendation of his superior. That officer was later brought into some controversy.

If any Lodge or Brother is contacted by the news media concerning anything related to the policies, practices, and positions of Washington Freemasonry, they are to refer such inquiries to the Grand Lodge Office, specifically R.:W.: Clinton M. Brown, Jr., our Grand Secretary.

Each of us has the right to make our personal beliefs known and participate in peaceful and lawful gatherings advocating for or against matters of importance to our society. That being said, Freemasonry does not take positions on partisan politics. We have members who are of every political belief. One of the great things about our Gentle Craft is that men of diverse opinions can meet and be Brothers where otherwise they would not have that opportunity.

Therefore, I direct that we shall not use our Fraternal communication as a means to advocate for political actions. I have seen statements posted on District newsletters, social media and elsewhere that suggest Brothers participate in gatherings on political matters. Even if the suggestion clearly states that the Brother's participation is as an individual and not as a Mason, it is inappropriate to use a District, Lodge, or other Masonic communication channels for partisan political activities.

Lastly, I remind all Brothers that the Grand Lodge has adopted Social Media Guidelines which I have attached to this letter. I encourage each of you to review them and apply them to not only Social Media sites, but also your use of Masonic Communication channels.

Remember the Past, Visualize the Future,



Chris J. Coffman
Grand Master
Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Washington



cc: Clinton M. Brown, Jr., Grand Secretary

The Grand Lodge of Washington recognizes that the use of social media has grown exponentially in recent years and has a goal of supporting the appropriate, regular and extensive use of these communication media. Many Brethren regularly connect by social media platforms. Remember members of the general public as well as the Masonic Fraternity are reading your posts online. As Masons, we must be mindful that our individual postings not only reflect our own individual character but reflect on Freemasonry across the Grand Jurisdiction, our nation, and the world at large. We must be aware that our postings are a permanent record; therefore, our conduct with a positive or negative post may influence the world opinion about not only the author, but the organizations to which he belongs.

For example, posting a comment related to the Fraternity and then later posting a separate, disparaging comment about a social or political stance can easily be misconstrued by readers that your stance is representative of Masonry and all Masons.

Ultimately, because you are a Mason, your actions online should promote the highest standards of civility, morality and integrity. A Mason is always a Mason and should always conduct himself as a Mason in all of his interactions regardless of whether those interactions are in person, or through social media. This includes compliance with the Washington Masonic Code and all of your obligations.

Social Media Guidelines:

1. A Mason:

Should conduct himself with the same courtesy on social media as he would in front of the general public;

Should never use disparaging comments, obscene, vulgar, etc. when posting; including, but not limited to, graphics, photographs, video and audio recordings which may be referred to in your posts;

Must never post "ritual" or "tyled" information;

Should not use social media to obtain personal advantage in promoting political, religious or business activities by targeting other Masons; and

Should not use social media to contact other Grand Jurisdictions unless you are also a member of that Grand Jurisdiction. Remember, all inter-jurisdictional communication is to be conducted by and between Grand Secretaries.

2. Masonic pages are to be supportive of the organization and its members, promote upcoming events, discuss past events, video sharing and discussion of times of fellowship and promotion of Masonic bodies.
3. A Lodge maintaining a social media page or platform should always ensure a minimum of two (2) officers have all necessary usernames and passwords and are established "administrators" of said page or platform.

4. The Washington Masonic Code prohibits certain actions including:
 - Discussion or other sharing of information regarding an application, background or investigation of an applicant for the Degrees of Masonry or
 - Disclosure of how a Brother balloted on a candidate.

5. Brother-to-Brother intervention should be the first course of action if something improper has been posted.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Grand Secretary, at (253) 625-7891 or at grandsecretary@freemason-wa.org.