

THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE OF ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

BECOMING A MASON

Applicability and Responsibility

This document explains to any interested person how to gain membership in a Connecticut Masonic Lodge. The process described is applicable to all Constituent Lodges of the Grand Lodge A.F. & A.M. of Connecticut.

Responsibility for maintaining this document rests with the Grand Secretary, and with the approval of the Grand Master.

References

Grand Lodge of Connecticut Constitution, Masonic Law, Practice, Rules and Regulations:

Section 3301 Residency Requirements for Candidates

Subpart 41 Membership, How Gained

Subpart 42 Ballot

Discussion

Membership in Freemasonry is open to all qualified men. This document explains the qualifications and the process which will be used to approve an applicant for membership and to make him a Mason. Appendix A contains a copy of the "Petition for the Degrees of Masonry" which must be used to apply for membership.

Freemasonry is a fraternal society of men who attempt to maintain high moral standards for themselves and to assist their fraternal brothers to do the same. As such, it teaches moral lessons in its ceremonies and encourages its members to improve themselves as men, husbands, fathers and workers. While not a religion, Freemasonry is religious, its ceremonies based upon the Holy Bible. There is nothing frivolous about Freemasonry, and there is no hazing of candidates.

Freemasonry is not for every man, but for those who are serious about improving themselves and being of service to their fellow men, it is a wonderful and most satisfying experience.

Procedure for Gaining Membership

Internal Qualifications

- a. That every candidate must be a man of at least 18 years of age and under no restraint of liberty, and well recommended.
- b. That he shall not be an irreligious libertine nor an atheist.
- c. That he shall be of honest reputation, of humane disposition, and of temperate and industrious habits.
- d. That he shall be actuated solely by a desire of knowledge, and of being serviceable to his fellow men.
- e. That he shall be of sound mind and memory.

External Qualifications

- a. That he shall be a man – not a eunuch, nor a woman.
- b. That he shall be in sound health, and that he shall possess the full enjoyment of all those faculties which give him the ability, with or without artificial aid or substitution of members, to understand, explain or exemplify the requirements of our ritual.
- c. That he has the capacity to support himself and his dependents.

Residency

In addition to the internal and external qualifications above, a petitioner, unless currently serving in the military, must have been a resident of the State of Connecticut for at least one year prior to the date of the petition. Should a non-resident desire to join a Connecticut Lodge, the Lodge must obtain a Release of Jurisdiction from the Grand Lodge of the territory in which the applicant resides. This may be done only through the offices of the respective Grand Lodge Secretaries.

The Petition

A man who meets the qualifications and who wishes to become a Freemason must petition a Lodge using the form contained in Appendix A. The petition must be accompanied by the fee established by the Lodge, and must be signed by two Freemasons. One of these, the Recommender, must be a member of the Lodge petitioned. The other, the Avoucher, may be any Freemason who is a member in good standing in a Lodge recognized by the Grand Lodge of Connecticut.

The Investigation

The petition will be read in a Lodge meeting and will be referred to a Committee on Investigation consisting of at least three members of the Lodge. It is the duty of this Committee to make inquiry as they may deem necessary into the character and reputation of the applicant in order to determine his suitability to become a member of the Lodge. This will include an interview of the applicant, preferably in his home, and preferably with his wife present, if he is married. The interview also affords the applicant and his spouse an opportunity to ask any questions they may have about the Lodge and the fraternity. A petition may not be withdrawn after it has been referred to the Committee on Investigation.

The Committee on Investigation will make its report to the Lodge at a subsequent meeting of the Lodge. It will recommend either “favorable” or “unfavorable”, but details are not discussed.

The Ballot

Every Freemason in Connecticut has been unanimously elected by the brethren of his Lodge to become a member thereof. Upon receipt of the report of the Committee on Investigation, the Lodge will ballot on the application. This is done using a ballot box which contains white balls and black cubes. The ball is a positive vote and the cube is a negative vote. The box is passed to each member of the Lodge who is present, and each casts his vote in secret. The box is then examined by the three principal officers of the Lodge. If there are no negative ballots in the box, the candidate is declared elected. Should the candidate fail to be elected to membership, he will be notified privately. It is a Masonic offense for any member of the Lodge to disclose how he or any other brother voted. The petitioner and, while he may apply to another Lodge after the same six months, the receiving Lodge must table the application until they have obtained a release of Personal Jurisdiction from the rejecting Lodge. If it declines to release Personal Jurisdiction, then it retains such Personal Jurisdiction for three years.

The Ceremonies of Initiation

The successful candidate will be notified when to present himself at a subsequent meeting for the first of the three ceremonies which constitute the process of making a Mason. These are serious ceremonies designed to educate the candidate into the requirements and standards of conduct of Freemasons. After the first degree, Entered Apprentice, the candidate will be given materials to study so that he can prove himself proficient in the degree, i.e. that he has sufficient knowledge of what happened during the ceremony and understands the purpose thereof. Lodges vary in how they conduct the proficiency examination, but it usually involves answering from memory a series of questions, either during a Lodge meeting or before a committee. Once the Lodge accepts the candidate's proficiency, he will pass to the second degree, Fellowcraft. After passing a similar proficiency examination, the candidate is eligible to receive the third degree, Master Mason. Upon receiving the third degree, the candidate consummates his membership in the Lodge by signing the Roll of Membership, commonly called "signing the bylaws". Finally, upon passing the proficiency examination on the third degree, the brother receives his membership card and is considered a full fledged member of the Lodge.

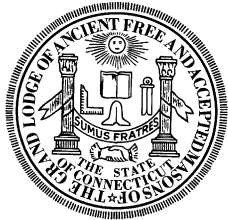
Notification of Candidacy

The Lodge is not permitted to advertise in any manner which might become available to non-members the names of its petitioners until after they have received the first degree. This serves to prevent embarrassment of the candidate; should he fail to be elected to membership, only he and the Lodge will know. After receiving the first degree, there is no such restriction, as the candidate is then a Mason, even though not yet a Master Mason.

Appendix A

Petition for the Degrees of Masonry.

The petition form is a two sided form, thus should be printed on one sheet of paper.



Ancient Free and Accepted Masons

Petition for the Degrees of Masonry



To the Worshipful Master, Wardens, and Brethren of

_____ Lodge No. _____, A.F. & A.M.

The undersigned, being a firm believer in the existence of a Supreme Being, respectfully represents that, unbiased by friends and uninfluenced by mercenary motives, he freely and voluntarily offers himself as a candidate for the mysteries of Masonry and membership in your Lodge; that he is prompted to solicit this privilege by a favorable opinion conceived of the institution, a desire for knowledge, and a sincere wish to be serviceable to his fellow creatures; that he has resided in the State of Connecticut more than twelve (12) months preceding the date of this petition; and he promises, if found worthy, to conform to all the established usages, customs, and regulations of the fraternity.

Print name in full: _____
First Middle Last Suffix

Street Address _____ Area Code & Telephone No. _____

Town _____ Zip Code _____ Cell Phone No. _____

Petitioner's Mailing Address (if different) _____ E-mail Address _____

_____/_____/_____ My age is _____ years.
Date of Birth (Month/Day/Year)

I was born at _____
Town County State/Country

Spouse Name _____
Date of Birth (Month/Day/Year)

My occupation is _____ My hobbies are _____

I am employed by _____

Are you a Senior DeMolay? if yes _____
State, Chapter & Chapter Number

Have you ever been accepted or rejected by this or any other Masonic Lodge or Lodges? _____

If yes, state when and where _____

Signature in full _____ Date: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last) (Month/Day/Year)

Recommender _____ Lodge _____
Signature Name & No. Area Code & Telephone No.

Avoucher _____ Lodge _____
Signature Name & No. Area Code & Telephone No.

(For the use of the Lodge Secretary Only)

PETITION OF

Mr. _____

FOR

The Degrees of Masonry

Petition received: _____ Fee Paid \$ _____
Month Day Year

and referred to a committee consisting of Brothers:

Who, after making a thorough investigation, beg leave
to report favorably / unfavorably. (Cross out whichever does not apply)

Signatures of committee members:

Balloted upon _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)
and petitioner was elected / rejected. (Cross out whichever does not apply)

Petitioner notified _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)

Initiated: _____ Fee Pd. \$ _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)

Passed: _____ Fee Pd. \$ _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)

Raised: _____ Fee Pd \$ _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)

By-Laws signed _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)
consummating membership (per Grand Lodge Rules & Regulations Section 4101)