

THE MOST WORSHIPFUL GRAND LODGE OF ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

FRIENDLY CALLER PROGRAM

Applicability and Responsibility

This document describes a program for maintaining contact with all members of a Lodge to ensure that they know the Lodge cares about them. It is encouraged for use in every Lodge.

Responsibility for maintaining this document rests with the Committee on Community Action, with the approval of the Grand Master.

Discussion

It has been said that the purpose of a *Masonic Lodge* is to *Make Masons* (not raise them but **make** them). A Mason is a brother who is obligated to freely give of his time to help others. *Every Master Mason, and especially every Lodge Master* is charged with *a primary Duty and Obligation to Find, Help, Aid and Assist* all brothers, widows and families of his Lodge. The key, here, is to FIND those Brothers who need the assistance. It is difficult to *Make Masons* if you do not teach them proper attention to the welfare of their brothers.

A successful "Friendly Caller Program" is a vehicle to the following:

- 1) Lodges can truly make Masons who freely give of their time to help others,
- 2) Every Mason can practice his craft and become a true brother with inactive Lodge members,
- 3) Masters can set the Craft to work to FIND; enabling help, aid and assistance from the Lodge.
- 4) Friendly Callers/officers concentrate each year to become brothers with a specific small group.
- 5) Rotation of Friendly Callers/officers each year exposes them to entire Lodge membership.
- 6) Competition can be fostered between groups to promote Lodge programs and community service.
- 7) Numerous smaller groups facilitate better tracking of inactive brothers and individual attention.
- 8) The small group dynamics promotes involvement and the practice of brotherhood.

Procedure

The Master commits to forming Friendly Calling Groups. He requests the Secretary to separate the Lodge roster into Calling Groups, containing a MAXIMUM of (15) fifteen to (20) twenty brothers each: (5) five active-local, (5) five inactive-local, (5) five over-age-75, and (5) five out-of-state brothers (or any similar mix). The Master should then appoint one person to be in overall charge of the Friendly Caller Program.

The Master informs his officers that the Lodge will engage in an Outreach Program to all members and asks them to be a Friendly Caller during his year. He also enlists newly made Masons and other dedicated Brothers who he may wish to get involved in the process to assist the Caller. The size of the Lodge roster will determine the eventual number of Friendly Callers needed, but start with the Officers. The number of members included in each Friendly Caller Group can be reduced if you have more than enough Callers... but never below (10) ten or the benefits of group interaction will not be realized.

A Calling-Log Worksheet should be created and printed for each Lodge member, arranged by Calling Groups and placed into a NOTEBOOK for each Friendly Caller. The Worksheets will guide the Caller through the initial contact and facilitate logging of follow-up contacts. The process, along with the Worksheet, should be customized to inform the Brothers being called of the Lodge's programs for the year and how they can help.

As an Officer progresses through his Lodge Line, he will pass on his Notebook to the next years Group Caller and get a different Calling Group to become acquainted with as a Brother.

The Chairman will manage the group assignments of the Brothers as needed to provide parity of brotherhood action in each group. This would include assigning new Masons and reassignment of other active brothers to assist each Friendly Caller.

The Calling Process

Local Brothers should be called every month during the weekend before the first Stated Communication. **Avoid trying to talk them into coming to Lodge.** The goal is to gain their trust, to get to know them as a Brother, and to find out what they are interested in. Explore if the Lodge can offer any programs directed at their interests. Ask if they would like to be involved in helping you with the Friendly Calling within the group. Answer any questions they may have about the Lodge or with news of other Brothers. Tell them you are available and how you may be contacted and that you will call back in the near future. Enter the contact in Worksheet Log.

Brothers over the age of 75 should also be called every month during the weekend before the first Stated Communication. In addition to the typical conversations with the local Brothers, ask the older Brother if the Lodge can assist them in any way. Again, encourage them to call you if they need ANYTHING, or if they want to chat about the Lodge. Tell them you will be contacting them again in the near future. Enter Contact in Log Worksheet. After the third call, arrange to visit these Brothers at home or out for Lunch at a mutually convenient time.

Out-of-state Brothers should be called a few times each year to verify their well-being and provide a contact with the Lodge and its members (Also verify accurate mailing address).

YOU ARE ONLY A FRIENDLY CALLER! Refer any inquires about care assistance or needed services to RW Richard Memmott of Masonic Community Services at 1-800-982-3919.

Support at Lodge Meetings and with Lodge Programs

Friendly Callers should REPORT to the Chairman anything noteworthy from their group. The Chairman should make a summary report at each Stated Communication of the Lodge. The Master should also include Friendly Caller News in his Trestleboard or other Lodge communications.

Friendly Callers may coordinate efforts to promote daytime gatherings of older Brothers, organize rides to Lodge functions and facilitate the Lodge performing acts of Brotherhood by helping Brothers (leaf raking parties, porch railing repairs, weekly breakfast gathering etc.).

Lodge programs may be tailored to provide a reason for visiting and also to foster competition:

- 1) Deliver holiday plants with greeting from Lodge,
- 2) Collect & recycle cans/bottles as a group competition/fund raiser. Remove/save aluminum tabs from cans for Shrine hospitals. Have each group return their own for donation to youth fund.
- 3) Reward best group brotherhood action or best fund raising with a special dinner for the group.

Expansion of Outreach to Include Widows

Solicit help from older and/or home-bound Brothers interested in making Friendly Calls.

Obtain the latest list of your Lodge Widows from the Grand Lodge Office and compare the contents with your current list of Widows for accuracy.

Develop a customized Calling-Log Worksheet for your Widows to refer updated status and mailing information to your Secretary and he back to the Grand Lodge Office via the MONTH END REPORT.

To avoid overburdening the Officers and Friendly Callers, the Master should appoint two (2) co-chairmen to manage the Widows calling efforts. They will be needed to work with the Lodge Secretary in updating information, with Masonic Community Services in any potential referrals or other support needs and with the Master in encouraging Widows to participate in Widows Programs and accessing and meeting widows' needs.