

Topic: **Membership Process**  
Grand Master: M.W. Jeffrey B. Hodgdon  
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Other Notes:

Text of Ruling/Edict:

Proposed changes to the application process should in no way change the quality of the person a Brother wishes to propose as a member. Utmost in the mind of the sponsoring Brother should be that the proposed candidate understands fully the nature, meaning and purpose of Freemasonry. The moral and spiritual aspects and aims of the Craft should be made perfectly clear to the candidate so that all of them will understand that it is a system of morals based upon a belief in God. A full understanding by the applicant that this belief strives to show the duties that every member owes to God, country and their neighbor and the fact that they must be inspired with a sincere desire to perform those duties honorably, thus building their character as well as the character among the Brotherhood of Masons. The reward for their efforts will always be the promise of God of the immortality of the human soul and the fact that they may live respected and die regretted.

As the need not to attend a pre-application interview to obtain an application is one of the primary changes to the process the above principles must be understood by the sponsor and the applicant so as to save embarrassment at the application interview, which is still required. The interview process will not change in any way but before a Lodge can accept the completed application the candidate must answer all questions appropriately and to the approval of the committee and must read, understand, and sign an application statement. Any deviation or refusal on the part of the applicant to live up to these requirements will result in the Lodge simply not accepting the application for processing.

*Application Procedures*

All current and newly distributed applications from the Grand Lodge will be authorized for use and should be available to every Brother of the Craft to carry on their person. Over time, applications may come in many different varieties and for many different reasons, but, ultimately they will all be processed the same way. As a way of clarifying the process the following procedures must be followed:

If a prospective applicant of good character has shown an interest in joining the Craft he should be afforded the immediate opportunity to receive and complete, in his own handwriting, an authorized Grand Lodge application from his sponsor. The sponsor should then take that application and arrange with the Lodge a convenient time for he and the applicant to attend an application interview.

The prospective applicant for the degrees must then appear before the Master and Wardens or before an application committee, of which the Master should be one, for an examination as to his fitness and only after the committee has formed a favorable impression of the applicant and the applicant has read and signed the application statement, may the committee accept the application. Any deviation from this procedure, such as the applicant wanting to take the application statement away for careful reading prior to signing, would prohibit the acceptance at that time of his completed application. If the applicant should fail to sign or decline to sign the application statement, under no circumstances may his application be accepted by the committee.

When the application statement has been signed by the applicant the committee may then accept his application and fees for initiation and immediately forward them, and the application statement, to the Secretary of the Lodge for processing and reading at the next regular communication of the Lodge. However, before an application can be acted upon the applicant must provide three completed copies of the blank provided by the Grand Lodge furnishing information for the investigation committee or in lieu therefore, three completed copies of a similar form prepared by the Lodge itself. Also, as prescribed by Section 406 of the Grand Constitutions, no ballot may be taken on any application until at least a majority of the investigating committee shall have reported to the Lodge in person or writing over their own signatures and that all reports received must be favorable.

All other procedures relating to the current application process as prescribed in the Grand Constitutions must be followed and adhered to.