

GRAND LODGE OF MASONS IN MASSACHUSETTS

Outline of Information for Lodges Considering Merger

1. Following preliminary consideration by the Officers of a Lodge considering merger, and discussion with Officers of the other Lodge, the Master of each Lodge should appoint a Committee to look into the feasibility of the same.
2. If it appears that a merger would be beneficial and the key Past Masters of the respective Lodges are in agreement, it is recommended that the Worshipful Masters of the Lodges arrange for a meeting to discuss tentative plans with the Grand Master and Grand Secretary. The name of the combined Lodge must be approved by the Grand Master.
3. The membership of each Lodge must be advised in the Lodge notice that the proposed merger will be discussed at the Regular Communication and that the Committee will report on their findings to the respective Lodges.
4. The Committees should be prepared to recommend to their respective Lodges which Lodge is to be the continuing Lodge. Ordinarily, it is recommended that the older Lodge be the continuing Lodge because of earlier precedence.
5. If the older Lodge is not to be the remaining Lodge, precedence can be preserved by consolidating under the Charter of the older Lodge and then amending its Charter to change the name of the Lodge to the name of the junior Lodge, or to any other name agreed upon. A change in name of the consolidated Lodge can be accomplished by amending the Charter under which the Lodges merge, after the merger has been consummated. NOTE: Name should not be a hyphenated combination of the old Lodge names. The name of the combined Lodge must be approved by the Grand Master.
6. If it appears that the membership of both Lodges is in favor of proceeding, a Joint Petition for the Merger should be drawn up by the Officers of the Lodge, signed by the Master and Wardens and attested to by each Lodge Secretary. (See sample enclosed.)
7. A vote to present this Petition to the Grand Lodge must then be taken at the Regular Communication of each Lodge, notification of such vote to be included in the notice for the Regular Communication at which the vote is to be taken. The prevailing affirmative vote by each Lodge should be at least that required for the amendment of the By-Laws of the respective Lodges, i.e., majority, two-thirds, three-fourths, as specified in each of the Lodge By-Laws.
8. The By-Laws of the continuing Lodge will remain in force. Any required amendments with reference to the name of the Lodge, funds, etc., should be agreed upon before the merger and acted upon by the consolidated Lodge after the merger has taken place.
9. Upon favorable action by both Lodges, the Petition should be forwarded to the Office of the Grand Secretary, together with appropriate certification of the action by the respective Lodges, so that the Petition and Certifications can be brought before the Grand Lodge at the next Quarterly Communication. (Sample certification enclosed.)
10. Upon approval by the Grand Lodge, the two Lodges will be so notified, and arrangements then can be made for the formal merger ceremony to be conducted by the Grand Lodge. (For merger ceremony, see Grand Lodge Proceedings.)

11. In the consolidation of two Lodges, all property of the discontinuing Lodge becomes the property of the merged Lodge (except the Lodge Charter and Seal, which are returned to the Grand Lodge). The Grand Master declares all members of the discontinuing Lodge, members of the continuing Lodge, at the merger and, therefore, it is not necessary for them to sign the by-laws of the continuing Lodge.
12. Arrangements should be made for an audit of the books of the Trustees, Secretary, Treasurer, etc., of the discontinuing Lodge well in advance of the formal merger.
13. The final monthly report of the discontinuing Lodge will be dated as of the date of the merger ceremony. An alphabetical listing of all active members of the discontinuing Lodge will be prepared by the Lodge Secretary, and forwarded to the office of the Grand Secretary with the final Report after the merger ceremony. Membership listing forms will be furnished by the office of the Grand Secretary for this purpose.
14. The monthly reports of the continuing Lodge will be filed in the normal manner. The Grand Secretary's office will furnish to the Lodge Secretary a listing of the names of the membership of the discontinuing Lodge, who became members of the consolidated Lodge upon the merger. The listing of members of the discontinuing Lodge, less any dual members of the two Lodges, will be incorporated in Part II of the monthly report of the continuing Lodge by reference.
15. Well in advance of the merger ceremony, the Secretary of the Lodge to be discontinued should notify those members whose Lodge dues are not currently paid that final action to suspend will be taken at a particular Regular Communication of the Lodge if payment of their dues has not been received on or before that date.
16. Immediately after the merger ceremony a By-Law revision Committee should be appointed by the Master of the merged Lodge to review and revise any changes needed to the By-Laws to incorporate any needs of the new membership.
17. If the name, meeting location or night of meeting will be changed as part of the merger, the Charter will need to be returned to the Grand Lodge for a certified endorsement by the Grand Secretary as to the change.
18. Once the merger ceremony, By-Law revisions (if any), and Charter Endorsements (if any) have been completed, the merger can be assumed complete.

SAMPLE OF JOINT PETITION FOR LODGE MERGER

Joint Petition to
The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge
of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons
of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

by _____ Lodge
and _____ Lodge
for the Right to Merge

Whereas the.....(reason for merger)

Now, therefore, said _____ and _____ Lodges respectfully and jointly petition the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts for the authority to unite and work as a single Lodge under the charter of (continuing Lodge), to be situate in the Town of _____ and meet on the _____ day of each month, under such terms and conditions as said Grand Lodge shall prescribe, it being the desire of both Lodges that on the completion of such union all members of both Lodges shall have, in the united Lodge, all the rights and privileges now enjoyed by them in their respective Lodges, and that the united Lodge shall own all the property and have all the rights and privileges now separately owned and enjoyed by said Lodges. The united Lodges shall be known now as _____ Lodge.

_____ Lodge

_____ Lodge

_____ W.M.

_____ W.M.

_____ S.W.

_____ S.W.

_____ J.W.

_____ J.W.

Attest:

Attest:

_____ Sec.

_____ Sec.

(Seal)

(Seal)

SAMPLE CERTIFICATION FOR LODGE MERGER

[On Lodge Letterhead]

To The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

This is to certify that at a Regular Communication of (your Lodge) Lodge held at (meeting place) on (full date), it was voted according to our By-Laws to petition the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts, as per the attached joint petition.

Attest:

(Lodge Secretary)

(Seal)

(Both Lodges are to send certifications as such.)