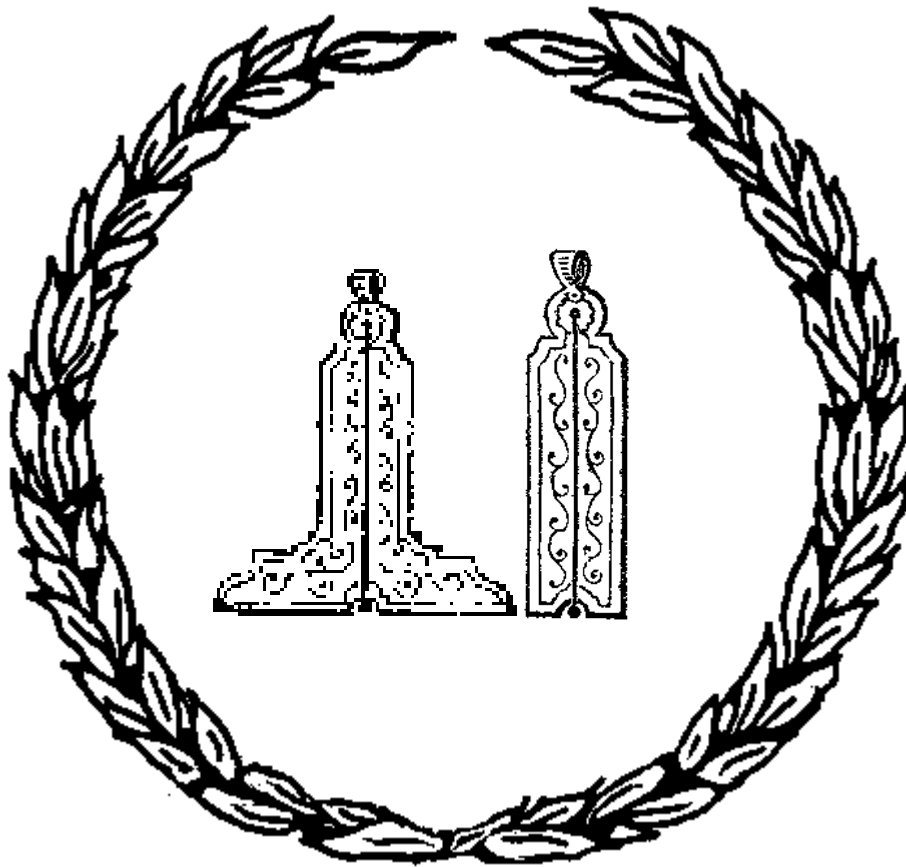


**A Primer
for
Masonic Lodge Wardens**



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Table of Contents

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	1
<i>Junior Warden</i>	
A Primer	5
Seminars and Workshops	5
Your Charge	6
Work on Ritual Proficiency Certification.....	7
Skipping Chairs	7
Work with a Coach/Mentor	8
Past Master's Degree.....	8
Oversight of Entered Apprentices.....	9
Start to Focus on the Future	9
Committee Oversight.....	10
Lodge Audit Committee	10
Investigating Petitioners	11
Lodge Bulletin.....	11
Recommended Exercises	12

Senior Warden

Lead by Example	14
Your Charge	14
Lodge Member's Contributions	15
Warden's Certificate	15
Master's Theme	15
Chairman of the Audit Committee	16
Appointment of Officers	16
Installation Plans	17
Oversight of Fellowcrafts	19
Coordinate Catechism Instructors	19
Promote Lodge Inter-Visitation	19
Committee Oversight.....	20
Write for the Lodge Bulletin.....	20
Grand Annual Communication	20
Recommended Exercises	21
Notes	22

Introduction

Wardens' duties are complex and varied. The Lodge may not prescribe Wardens' duties. Their responsibilities are exclusively designated by our Masonic law or the Worshipful Master to assist in the conduct of Lodge business.

A Limerick

There was a young Warden named Derek
Who was proficient in ways esoteric,
But in purpose 'n law,
He had a great flaw,
For he had only been trained as a parrot.

Each Lodge officer, prior to being installed, takes an obligation:

“I promise upon my honor as a Master Mason that I will, to the best of my ability, conform to and abide by the Ancient Landmarks, customs and usages of Masonry, the laws, rules, edicts and resolutions of the Grand Lodge, Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the by-laws of this Lodge, and that I will faithfully perform the duties of the office to which I have been elected or appointed for the ensuing Masonic year and until my successor shall have been chosen and installed. So help me God, to keep this, my solemn obligation.”

This obligation binds each officer to learn a number of things in order to carry out his duties to the best of his ability. Among the things he should be thoroughly familiar with, or know where to find, are the Grand Lodge laws, rules, edicts and resolutions and the by-laws of his Lodge. To fulfill this obligation, he must study and be well acquainted with the Methodical Digest.

Section 2.34 Qualifications
Must have the Past Master's
Degree prior to election

Section 2.52 Warden's Duties

Each officer must learn all he can about the duties of his office in order to be able to perform them and maintain the standards of the Lodge, keeping faith with those who have served in his Office since the founding of the Lodge and passing on those functions unimpaired to those who will serve in the future.

Worshipful Allen E. Roberts stressed that there was nothing wrong with any Lodge that could not be corrected by leadership and management training of the Lodge officers. Your Mentor can provide an incalculable service in your education and training. In this regard, in March 2001, Most Worshipful James Dean Cole authorized the Committee on Masonic Education to prepare and publish a District Educational Officer's Manual for Training of Subordinate Lodge Officers.

The manual contains a series of practical exercises to better prepare you for the duties of each Lodge station and position. The Manual is based on the Masonic educational precept, “learn by doing,” and completing the exercises in that Manual will go a long way in building self-confidence in performing the duties of your Office. You or your Mentor can order your own personal copies from Grand Lodge for a very modest cost, or if you or your Mentor has Internet access, you can download it from the Grand Lodge website at:

www.grandlodgeofvirginia.org/committee/DEO_Officer_manual.PDF.

The more preparation and planning you do for the responsibilities of your position, the more confidence and comfort you will feel in performing them, the more fun you will have while successfully fulfilling them, and the fewer regrets you will have, in the future, over things not done well after your term is completed.

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THE JUNIOR WARDEN

A Primer:

This publication was prepared as a primer or first book to introduce some of the important duties and responsibilities of your Office. As such, it is not designed to teach you all that you need to know to be a successful Lodge officer. It is intended to make you aware of your duties and encourage you to diligently seek other resources to learn more.

Seminars and Workshops:

Endeavor to expand your horizons as much as possible. Do not use this primer as the sole source of your Warden training regimen. There is much to be gained by attending Lodge education seminars sponsored by your LEO and/or Lodge Education Committee, and district education workshops conducted by your DEO. By attending training classes and using the guide as a basis for discussions, you will benefit and learn from the experience of others who have gone through the chairs before. You also will benefit from discussions with those who are learning for the first time, as there is a synergy that is derived from these “think-tank like or brainstorming” sessions. One person's idea tends to spark another to come up with a different idea that he would not have had if he were working alone. This is a good example of

how teamwork makes our work-in-the-quarry less tedious and more profitable.

Your Charge:

The Junior Warden is charged at installation to ensure rectitude of conduct and to supervise the Craft at refreshment. These same duties are repeated during opening and closing ritual. Because he is charged with ensuring correctness of conduct, it is his responsibility to conduct Masonic trials, should any be needed. If you haven't completed Masonic Leadership Correspondence Course No. 3, dealing with Masonic trials, during your Deacon's term; do it now. It will prepare you to fulfill this responsibility. You also will want a copy of the 2007 Grand Lodge publication, "Manual for Masonic Trials."

Because the Junior Warden is charged to supervise the Craft at refreshment, you will probably play a primary role in overseeing Lodge special events and refreshments such as picnics, Table Lodges, Ladies' Night Dinners, Ice Cream Socials, or whatever fun events the Lodge traditionally holds. If assigned this oversight task, the Junior Warden should maintain a "Pass Down Log" to provide historical data for Brethren responsible for planning and implementing similar future events.

Work on Ritual Proficiency Certification:

The Junior Warden should continue taking an active role in ritual degree work and finish learning the ritual needed to earn his Warden's Certificate.

“Junior Warden's Night” is observed in many Lodges to afford an opportunity to demonstrate their proficiency in the next Chair. The Junior Wardens often invite the Wardens from other Lodges to come and be recognized or (preferably) to participate. During some Warden's Nights, the Senior Warden presides in the East and the Junior Warden assumes the West to open the Lodge. The Junior Warden may be invited to assume the East to close the Lodge, after the program, with the Senior Warden resuming his position in the West. This places added emphasis on the preparation of both Wardens to assume the higher Office.

Skipping Chairs:

It sometimes happens that you may be required to skip chairs in your progression to the East, for the good of the Lodge, due to unplanned vacancies that may occur. Completion of, or at the very least review of, the exercises in the District Educational Officer's Manual for Training of Subordinate Lodge Officers with your Mentor, for the missed positions, will help to fill in the gaps in your training and reinforce your confidence and comfort

level. As with all Lodge stations and places, leadership by excellent example is your goal.

Work with a Coach/Mentor:

We can't stress strongly enough the importance of working with a trusted Mentor, Coach, or Counselor. One who has held Offices in a Lodge and has personal experience will be able to share graphic examples that will help you to better learn the duties of the Office to which you have been elected. The close, warm relationship that you develop with your Mentor is an essential element in energizing that part of Freemasonry from which the light will shine to illuminate the path that you are traveling. As you exercise the duties of your current Office, it is imperative that you also continue to make a daily advance in Masonic knowledge and continue to seek "More Light in Masonry."

Past Master's Degree:

Prior to election, the nominee for Junior Warden must complete the Past Master's Degree either by joining a Royal Arch Chapter or in a Provisional Lodge of Past Masters.

He will probably find this degree more meaningful if he has previously completed at least Masonic Leadership Correspondence Course Number One. He must be prepared, early in the

year, to assume the Chairs of the Senior Warden and the Master, if needed.

Oversight of Entered Apprentices:

In many Lodges, the Junior Warden may be assigned to oversee the progress of the Lodge's Entered Apprentices and to help them to feel that they're a “real” part of the Lodge by assigning them meaningful tasks they can perform. He can also be a valuable assistant to the Worshipful Master by volunteering to the Master to perform this same function for newly made Master Masons. The first months after his initiation and raising can set the tone for the new member's feelings toward Masonry for the rest of his life and heavily influence his future active membership and support of the Lodge. It is critical that he be made to feel welcome and needed. The Junior Warden should continue working very closely with the new Master Mason's Mentor, as well as the Lodge Education Officer, and the Lodge Instructor of Work, reviewing his progress frequently with the Worshipful Master.

Start to Focus on the Future:

The Junior Warden should start to develop his Master's theme and plan the programs and speakers he would like to present to the Lodge in support of his theme during his expected year as Master. He should be aware that, should an unplanned

circumstance arise, he may be elected as Master the following year, and should plan for this contingency. Being taken by surprise by this unfortunate turn of events, has made a very uncomfortable year for those who postponed their planning until they expected to be Senior Warden but found themselves serving as Master of the Lodge.

Committee Oversight:

In many Lodges, the Master appoints the Senior and Junior Warden to each oversee half of the Lodge committees. This offers an opportunity to gain valuable insight into the behind-the-scenes operations of the Lodge and to become better acquainted with capabilities of the committee members appointed by the Worshipful Master. These are usually Past Masters or other Brethren, who are the mainstays of the Lodge, and they have much to offer to their preparation to serve his Lodge as Master in the future.

Lodge Audit Committee:

The Junior Warden will probably be assigned to the mandatory Lodge Audit Committee. Some Lodges enjoy the luxury of having a Brother who is an experienced accountant to serve on this very important committee but others may not. If no experienced auditor is available to assist them, the Junior and Senior Wardens will find the primary

burden falls to them to ensure that the records of the Secretary and Treasurer are being properly maintained and are in agreement with each other, in a proper manner, and that all required routine reports to Grand Lodge have been submitted on time and correctly.

Investigating Petitioners:

The Junior Warden is likely to be named to serve on an Investigating Committee to visit petitioners in their homes and report the committee's recommendation regarding the petitioner's suitability for membership in the Lodge. An experienced Past Master normally chairs the Investigating Committee. However, it is the responsibility of each committee member to satisfy himself regarding the purpose and methods of the committee and mutual agreement on these matters needs to be reached prior to the visit.

Petitioners warmly remember the members of the Investigating Committee, and it will help them feel welcome in the Lodge if one or more of the committee members are present and serve on his welcoming committee when he comes for each of his degrees and even after he is raised.

Lodge Bulletin:

If the Lodge publishes a monthly Lodge bulletin, the Junior Warden may be invited to

periodically prepare short articles regarding special Lodge events or other assignments. This affords an unequalled opportunity to learn-by-doing in writing for the Brethren and punctually meeting publication deadlines, and introducing themselves to the membership. Some Masters find preparation of the Lodge bulletin a daunting task. Starting to write articles while Junior Warden can make it less intimidating.

Recommended Exercises:

Chapter 4 of The District Educational Officer's Manual for Lodge Officers Training details a series of important skill-development exercises designed to increase your self-confidence in meeting your responsibilities. These exercises address the following broad areas:

- a. Family Obligations
- b. The Warden's Certificate
- c. Involving New Master Masons
- d. Masonic Education of New Candidates
- e. Examination of Visitors
- f. Masonic Law/Masonic Tradition
- g. Use of Committees
- h. Learning from other Lodges
- i. Investigating Committees
- j. The Lodge Bulletin (Trestleboard)
- k. Financial Plans and Budget Preparation
- l. Help from the District Team
- m. Grand Lodge Operations

Successful completion of these education-oriented drills under the supervision and guidance of a dedicated Mentor will greatly enhance your ability and increase your comfort level to assume additional responsibilities. In addition, Appendix B of the Manual provides valuable guidance regarding suggested officer duty assignments. The short time needed to carefully study it will be well rewarded.

THE SENIOR WARDEN

Lead by Example:

The importance of showing leadership increases as the responsibilities of Office increase. The wages of a Master Mason are the approbation and gratitude of the Brethren, and they can be earned without limit in positive proportion to the efforts extended in planning, learning and executing the increased responsibilities and duties of Office.

Your Charge:

The Senior Warden is charged at installation to ensure equality of treatment of all Masons, to assist the Master in the government of the Lodge, and to be ready to assume the Master's chair, if needed. During the opening and closing ritual he is charged to pay the Craft their wages as due and ensure the satisfaction of all Brethren.

The wages of a Master Mason are the approbation, respect, and gratitude of his Brethren, and the Senior Warden is to set the example for all Lodge members to ensure that all who earn their wages are justly and publicly accorded that respect, gratitude and approval.

Lodge Member's Contributions:

All guidelines written for the Junior Warden apply with even greater emphasis to the Senior Warden, and he should periodically review them. He should be alert to notice the contributions made by each member to the well-being of the Lodge and his Brethren and give them private and public recognition. Such recognition gives every Brother a warm feeling toward the Lodge, its Officers and his Brethren and further encourages such behavior.

Warden's Certificate:

The Senior Warden should endeavor to complete working on his Warden's Certificate at the beginning of his year in the West, so the Master can be assured that his successor is duly and truly prepared. If he has been advanced to the West without spending a year in the South due to an unexpected vacancy in the Chairs, the Senior Warden will need to work hard to complete these requirements, but he should not skip any of the preparatory steps if he wants to feel comfortable and self-confident in his Office in the West and in his year as Master.

Master's Theme:

He should finalize the detailed plans and work on the development of his Master's theme and schedule the programs to support the theme and

confirm the availability of scheduled speakers invited during the preceding year. Additionally, the Master may ask him to plan and present the program for a Warden's Night when he will open and close the Lodge or share these duties with the Junior Warden.

Chairman of the Audit Committee:

The Senior Warden in most Lodges is appointed by the Worshipful Master as the Chairman of the Audit Committee; however, this is at his discretion. To do the job responsibly, the chairman needs to be familiar with the records being maintained by the Secretary and the Treasurer and of the budgeted income and expenses of the Lodge during the preceding year. He should prepare a detailed draft budget for his year and carefully review it with the Secretary and the Treasurer.

Appointment of Officers:

One of the key functions performed by a newly installed Master to ensure the continued future prosperity and happiness of the Lodge is the appointment of officers, committee chairmen, and committee members.

The Senior Warden must be prepared with his confirmed appointments when he is elected to serve as Master. To be prepared, he must contact his

prospective appointees privately to discuss the planned responsibilities of their proposed position and to ascertain their willingness to carry out those responsibilities in the manner desired by the prospective Master. Each appointment should be considered in the same light as hiring a man to perform a job with a clear understanding on the part of both parties as to what is expected of the other in order to avoid later misunderstandings about the assignment.

Installation Plans:

The Senior Warden must also complete plans for the installation of Lodge officers for the ensuing year. The plan, like all good plans, should answer the reporter's maxim, "who, what, where, when and how."

Who: Includes the installing officer, installing marshal, assistant installing marshal, installing secretary, installing chaplain, and guests who will be present. Invitations to the installing team should be sent and confirmed early, as they may be involved in other installations during the same time period. Telephone re-confirmations should be made with them one or two days prior to installation to ensure their availability and avoid any misunderstandings and embarrassment.

- What:** Includes determining whether it will be a public (open) or a private (closed) installation ceremony. The ceremony for the installation of officers is provided in the Manual of Ceremonies.
- Where:** Will be governed by the space limitations of your Lodge facilities and the number of anticipated attendees. If you are holding a public installation in a facility that you have never used before, it is advisable to contact your District Deputy Grand Master for his opinion/approval as to the suitability of the facility.
- When:** Your installation date should be carefully coordinated with other Lodges in the district to minimize conflicts to the extent possible, so the District Deputy Grand Master and others can attend as many installations as they are able.
- How:** Never underestimate the collective power of your Lodge officers and committees. They can help with the logistics of pulling the myriad and varied details together. Planning and executing a successful installation is testimony of your leadership and management skills.

Oversight of Fellowcrafts:

Many Lodges have traditional roles assigned to each officer in the progressive line. The Senior Warden may be charged with overseeing the progress of the Lodge's Fellowcrafts, assigning them meaningful tasks, and helping them to feel like a valuable part of the Lodge.

Coordinate Catechism Instructors:

The Senior Warden may be assigned to coordinate the catechism instructors and mentors, maintain a record of the progress of all candidates and ensure advancement preparation is completed within the time allotted. He may be assigned to work with the Lodge Instructor of Work, on behalf of the Master, to encourage Lodge members to prepare themselves for the needed ritual parts and then provide them the opportunity to perform the parts once they are qualified.

Promote Lodge Inter-Visitation:

The Senior Warden may be asked to act as the Lodge's "traveling ambassador" to coordinate with members and other Lodges to promote and schedule visits to other Lodges and stimulate competition for the Traveling Gavel.

Committee Oversight:

The Senior Warden may be assigned to assist with planning Lodge community projects and to superintend the Lodge Community Blood Committee, Child Identification Program Committee, membership calling tree for funerals, and other Grand Lodge Program Committees. It is far better, however, for him to not be asked to actually chair various committees so long as other Brothers, not serving as officers, can be assigned to these committee responsibilities. Such experience and responsibility provides them an opportunity to earn Master's wages, and this broad ranging participation strengthens the Lodge.

Write for the Lodge Bulletin:

The Senior Warden may be asked to write a paragraph or two "From the West" for the Lodge bulletin dealing with his assigned responsibilities or upcoming Lodge events, if there is sufficient space. This provides a valuable "learn-by-doing" opportunity to write for the Lodge and to meet the publication deadlines.

Grand Annual Communication:

While it is particularly important for the Senior Warden to attend the Grand Annual Communication of Grand Lodge, both Wardens should make an effort to attend. The Senior Warden will be

preparing himself for representing his Lodge the following year as Master, when he will be charged with the responsibility of voting on Grand Lodge business. It is also an excellent opportunity to hear the newly installed Grand Master's vision and goals for the Craft.

Recommended Exercises:

Chapter 5 of The District Educational Officer's Manual for Training of Lodge Officers details a series of nine important learn-by-doing skill-development exercises designed to continue increasing your self-confidence to meet your responsibilities. These exercises address the following areas:

- a. Family Obligations
- b. Selection of Lodge Officers
- c. Installation of Lodge Officers
- d. Planning Community Projects
- e. Recognition of Members and Others
- f. Masonic youth group support
- g. Grand Lodge Proceedings
- h. Appendant Bodies, and
- i. Planning Lodge Programs

Also, Appendix B of the Manual provides additional useful guidance to the Senior Warden concerning the performance of his duties. The Senior Warden who conscientiously studies and diligently completes these exercises with his Mentor will be amply rewarded with increased comfort and

