

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
OF THE
GRAND COUNCIL
OF
ROYAL AND SELECT MASTERS
OF
ALABAMA

(Revised, 1 October 2008, amended at the 2009, 2023 & 2024 Annual Session)

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. NAME, TITLE, AND AUTHORITY

Section 1. This Grand Council shall be known and hailed by the name and title of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama. The Grand Council shall be legally referred to as: A non-profit corporation incorporated under the Alabama Non-Profit Corporation Act. The corporation shall have a corporate seal with such symbols, wording, and dates as are necessary for conducting the business of the Grand Council and as a corporation.

Section 2. The Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama is the highest source of authority on Cryptic Masonry in the State of Alabama. It shall have the sole governance and superintendence of all Councils of Royal, Select and Super Excellent Masters within the State of Alabama.

Section 3. All charters now existing or hereinafter issued to Subordinate Councils in the State of Alabama are the property of this Grand Council, which alone has the power to issue, arrest, annul, revoke, or amend such charters.

Section 4. At the opening of each annual or special Assembly of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama, the Most Illustrious Grand Master (hereinafter referred to as the Grand Master), who is also designated as the President of the non-profit corporation, shall make the announcement that this Assembly of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama shall also be an annual or special meeting of the Directors of the Non-Profit Corporation of the same name, and the proceedings of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama shall constitute the minutes of such annual or special meeting of the corporation Board of Directors.

Section 5. The Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama shall have a residuary interest in all real and/or personal property now or hereafter acquired or vested in its Subordinate Councils and the prior written approval of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama, acting by and through its first three principal officers is and shall be prerequisite to any valid sale, lease, exchange, mortgage, pledge or other encumbrance of any such real and/or personal property by any Subordinate Council.

ARTICLE II. ORGANIZATION

Section 1. The Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters shall consist of the several officers as provided for in a subsequent Article of this Constitution. Likewise, all Past Illustrious Grand Masters of the Grand Council; all Past Illustrious Masters of the several Subordinate Councils of this Grand Jurisdiction, together with the current three principal officers (or their duly accredited proxies) of each Subordinate Council holding a charter from this Grand Council, all of whom must retain membership in said Subordinate Council.

Section 2. The first three officers of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama, namely, the Grand Master, Right Illustrious Deputy Grand Master (hereinafter referred to as the Deputy Grand Master), and Illustrious Grand Principal Conductor of Work, and their successors, shall constitute the Board of Directors, as provided in the Articles of Incorporation of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama, as a non-profit Corporation under the laws of the State of Alabama, and shall function as such.

ARTICLE III. ASSEMBLIES

Section 1. The Annual Assembly of this Grand Council shall be held on the last Friday in February of each year, at such place as may be selected at the preceding Annual Assembly. Where joint meetings are in effect the Grand Council shall adopt a system of opening first on a rotating basis (with the Grand Chapter opening first in 1989, the Grand Council in 1990, and the Grand Commandery in 1991, and this plan to be followed in subsequent years). In case of necessity, of which a majority of the elective officers of the Grand Council shall be the judge, the Annual Assembly shall be at such time and place as may be determined by the Grand Master. Thirty days written notice of said Assembly shall be given each chartered Subordinate Council by the Grand Recorder.

Section 2. Special Assemblies may be called by the Grand Master or in his absence or disability, the Deputy Grand Master, or in his absence or disability, the Grand Principal Conductor of Work, shall have the power to convene the Grand Council whenever it may be necessary; and be bound to do so whenever requested in writing by not less than six Subordinate Councils. Thirty days written notice of said Assembly shall be given to each chartered Council by the Grand Recorder; and provided that only such business as is clearly stated in such call shall be transacted at a Special Assembly.

ARTICLE IV. QUORUM

Section 1. An Annual or Special Assembly shall not be held unless there is present representation from a majority of the chartered Subordinate Councils.

Section 2. The Grand Council shall not be dissolved so long as three chartered Subordinate Councils are willing to continue its organization.

ARTICLE V. GRAND OFFICERS--ELECTIONS AND INSTALLATION

Section 1. The officers of this Grand Council shall be:

- Most Illustrious Grand Master.
- Right Illustrious Deputy Grand Master.
- Illustrious Grand Principal Conductor of the Work.
- Illustrious Grand Treasurer.
- Illustrious Grand Recorder.
- Illustrious Grand Captain of the Guard.
- Illustrious Grand Conductor of the Council.
- Illustrious Grand Steward.
- Illustrious Grand Marshal.
- Illustrious Grand Chaplain.
- Illustrious Grand Sentinel.

Who, (with the exception of the Illustrious Grand Marshal, Illustrious Grand Chaplain, and Illustrious Grand Sentinel who shall be appointed by the incoming Grand Master) shall be elected at each Annual Assembly by ballot without nomination and shall require a majority of the votes cast for election, provided that by unanimous consent of the Assembly, any designated member of the Grand Council may cast the entire ballot of the Grand Council for any office.

Section 2. In the election of officers, and on all questions requiring a vote of this Grand Council, except on amendments or alterations to the Constitution, each chartered Subordinate Council shall be entitled to three votes. Each vote shall be represented by one or more Companions, and each elected Grand Officer. Each permanent member of the Grand Council shall have one vote. A majority of all votes cast shall be necessary for a decision.

Section 3. To be eligible for election to any office of this Grand Council, the companion shall have been regularly elected and installed as an Illustrious Master in a subordinate Council. The offices of Grand Marshal,

Grand Chaplain, and Grand Sentinel are appointed offices.

Section 4. No Companion shall be eligible to succeed himself as Grand Master.

Section 5. All Grand Council officers shall be installed at the Annual Assembly at which they are elected and shall hold office until their successors have been elected and installed. Any elected Grand officer who is unavoidably absent at the regular time of installation may be installed in a Subordinate Council under the direction of the Grand Master (or Past Grand Master appointed by him) who shall convene the Grand Council in Special Assembly for such installation. The minutes of this Special Assembly shall be taken either by the Grand Recorder or, in his absence, by a Companion appointed pro-tem as Grand Recorder. The minutes of such Special Assembly shall be included as part of the Annual Proceedings of the Grand Council.

ARTICLE VI: DUTIES AND POWERS OF GRAND OFFICERS

Section 1. The Grand Master shall convene the Grand Council as provided herein, and preside over its deliberations when present, but may call any member to the chair temporarily; shall appoint all committees not otherwise provided for; shall perform such other duties as the nature of his station may require or the ceremonies and rituals of Cryptic Masonry imposes; shall exercise the executive functions of the Grand Council when it is not in session and shall report all of his official acts to the next Annual Assembly, and such acts shall be subject to review and revision by the Grand Council. In the event of the death, absence, or disability of any Grand Officer(s) the Grand Master shall be empowered to advance or appoint (as appropriate) other officers to fill the vacant position(s).

Section 2. The Deputy Grand Master shall perform such duties as may be required by the Grand Council or the Grand Master, and in the event of the death, absence, or disability of the Grand Master, he shall perform the duties and have all the powers and prerogatives of the Grand Master.

Section 3. In event of the death, absence, or disability of both the Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master, these duties shall devolve on the Grand Principal Conductor of the Work.

Section 4. The Grand Treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds and securities of the Grand Council; shall pay all orders approved by the Grand Council and attested to by the Grand Recorder; shall keep an itemized record of all moneys received and disbursed by him, and shall submit such records and vouchers annually or oftener if requested by the Grand Council, or an accountant appointed by the Grand Master to audit same.

Section 5. The Grand Recorder shall attend all annual and special Assemblies of the Grand Council; keep a true and faithful record of the proceedings; furnish a copy thereof and superintend the publishing and distribution of the same no later than 7 months after the closing of the Annual Assembly; he shall keep a book in which he shall record a copy of all dispensations and charters issued by the Grand Council for the organization of new Subordinate Councils; shall keep regular accounts with each Subordinate Council, receive all reports and collect all money due the Grand Council and pay them over to the Grand Treasurer. He shall perform such other duties and keep other records as the duties of his office may require, or as may be ordered by the Grand Council or the Grand Master. He shall have custody of the seal of the Grand Council and affix same to and attest all proper official papers and documents of the Grand Council; shall, prior to opening the Annual Assembly of the Grand Council, submit all receipts and other records of the financial transactions of the Grand Council to an accountant appointed by the Grand Master to audit the same.

Section 6. The duties of the remaining Grand Officers shall be such as are traditionally appropriate to their respective stations and such as may be allotted to them from time to time by the Grand Council or the Grand Master.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

Section 1. The newly elected Most Illustrious Grand Master of this Grand Council shall appoint the following STANDING COMMITTEES to serve for the ensuing Cryptic year or at the pleasure of the Grand Master:

1. Credentials and Registration Committee.
2. Finance Committee.
3. Fraternal Correspondence.
4. Jurisprudence Committee.
5. Ritualistic Work Committee.
6. Necrology Committee

The above standing committees shall each consist of 3 or less members, except the Foreign Correspondent Committee, which shall consist of only one member, and the Necrology Committee, which shall consist of the Grand Chaplain and / or two Past Grand Masters. The Grand Master shall appoint special committees as in his judgment would be to the best interest of this Grand Council. Special committees usually have few or no duties to perform except to read a short report at the Annual Assembly of this Grand Council, which is done with love and affection for their membership in the Cryptic Rite of Freemasonry.

Section 2. Any member in good standing in a Subordinate Council of Royal and Select Masters in Alabama is eligible to be appointed a member of a Committee.

Section 3. It shall be the duty of each Standing Committee to receive, consider, and report to the Grand Council at each Annual Assembly such matters as have been referred to it.

ARTICLE VIII: SUBORDINATE COUNCILS

Section 1. A subordinate Council of Royal and Select Masters shall not be opened or convened unless it has received a dispensation or charter from this Grand Council.

Section 2. Dispensations to form a new Subordinate Council may be granted by the Grand Council, or when not in session, by the Grand Master, on the petition of not less than nine qualified Companions. Such petition must be accompanied by a certification from the chartered Subordinate Council nearest the locality of the proposed new Council, recommending that the dispensation be granted and vouching for the character and ability of the petitioners. Before such dispensation shall be issued, the sum of one hundred and forty dollars (\$140.00) shall be deposited by the petitioners in the hands of the Grand Recorder. When such petition is granted, it shall be in full force and effect until the next Annual Assembly of the Grand Council at which Assembly the Grand Council may continue the same for a period of one year only; or a charter may be issued.

Section 3. The returns of each constituent Council shall be made in such form as shall be prescribed by the Grand Council and shall be delivered to the Grand Recorder no later than December 31 with the requisite fees and dues. Any Council that shall neglect to make returns or to pay its fees and dues for two successive years, shall be stricken from the roll of the Grand Council, and its charter declared forfeited; but upon proper application to the Grand Council at its next Annual Assembly, and upon making due returns and paying its fees and dues, together with such interest as may have accrued thereon, then such Council may be restored to its former rank and privileges.

Section 3a. All Subordinate Councils shall make a supplemental report to the Grand Recorder on or before June 30th of each year, showing all additions or deletions to their rolls since their last report the previous December.

Section 4. Every Subordinate Council in this Grand jurisdiction shall be governed by the Constitution, By-Laws and other rulings, including the Edicts, of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama.

Section 5. Before acquiring title to real estate, each Subordinate Council in this Grand jurisdiction shall become a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Alabama, after first obtaining the prior written approval of the Board of Directors of the Grand Council. The Grand Council of Royal and Select

Masters of Alabama shall retain a residuary interest in all real estate acquired by any Council in this Grand jurisdiction, and, hence, every Council shall first obtain the written approval of the Board of Directors of the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama before sealing, leasing, exchanging, mortgaging, pledging or otherwise encumbering or disposing of any of its real estate.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS

Section 1. When it shall be necessary or desirable to alter or amend this Constitution, the alteration or amendment shall be proposed in writing and received at the Grand Office not later than December 1 preceding the Annual Assembly of the Grand Council. The alteration or amendment shall be referred to the Committee on Jurisprudence and if approved as being in proper form, all Subordinate Councils shall be notified in writing not later than January 15th preceding the Annual Assembly. Such proposed amendments and alterations shall identify each section or sub-section which it is proposed to amend or alter in its entire form as it is intended to read after such amendment or alteration. If desirable, such proposed amendments or alterations may be numbered as additional sections or sub-sections thereof. The Committee on Jurisprudence shall carefully consider all such proposed amendments or alterations and shall report on the same before the close of the Annual Assembly at which proposed, and if such proposal is accepted by a majority of the members present it shall lay over until the next Annual Assembly at which time it shall be voted on and if approved by two-thirds of the members present it shall become a part of the Constitution. Provided, however, that such amendment, after being reported on by the Committee on Jurisprudence, shall be unanimously concurred in by all members present shall be declared adopted at once.

Section 2. From time to time it becomes necessary to adopt resolutions or edicts to permit the successful and harmonious conduct of the affairs of this Grand Council and/or of its Subordinate Councils. All resolutions and edicts previously issued and legally adopted by this Grand Council and all resolutions and edicts which hereafter may be regularly adopted shall continue in full force and effect unless and until such resolutions or edicts be changed, amended or repealed by regular action of this Grand Council in Annual Assembly. Any action to present, amend, repeal, or change any resolution or edict shall be presented in writing in keeping with Section 1 of this Article.

ARTICLE X

All former Constitutions of this Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama are hereby repealed.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I: ORDER OF BUSINESS

Section 1. Order of Business:

- 1 Opening.
- 2 Report of Grand Recorder on Delinquent Subordinate Councils.
- 3 Report of Committee on Credentials.
- 4 Reception of Distinguished Visitors.
- 5 Reception of Grand Representatives.
- 6 Grand Master's Address.
- 7 Report of Grand Treasurer.
- 8 Report of Grand Recorder.
- 9 Report of other Standing Committees.
- 10 Report of Special Committees.
- 11 Unfinished Business.
- 12 New Business.
- 13 Election and Installation of Officers.
- 14 Closing.

This Order of Business may be interchanged by the Grand Master when necessary to expedite the business of the Grand Council. Further, the Reception of Distinguished Visitors may be held jointly with the Grand Chapter and Grand Commandery, and Installation of Officers may be deferred until the last day of joint meetings with the Grand Chapter and Grand Commandery.

Section 2. The Grand Recorder shall, as the first order of business at the Annual Assembly read a list of the Subordinate Councils which have failed to render their Annual report and to pay in full the annual dues for that year. It shall then be the duty of the Grand Master to declare the charters of such Subordinate Councils arrested. The charters so arrested shall stand suspended until all delinquent reports are rendered and dues paid in full.

ARTICLE II: FEES AND OPERATING BUDGET

Section 1. The following fees shall be payable to the Grand Council:

For dispensation for new Subordinate Council.....	\$140.00
For annual dues from each member.....	\$ 11.00
For each Candidate Received and Greeted.....	\$ 5.00
For every Grand Council Certificate in the nature of a Demit....	\$ 1.00
For every Charter.....	\$ 25.00

The annual dues amount shown in this section will be adjusted for inflation each year as put forth by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) as of December 31st of each year for each Companion of the subordinate Councils.

Section 2. The Committee on Finance shall meet in January of each year and, after carefully considering the estimated income of the Grand Council, shall at the next Annual Assembly make recommendations for such expenditures for salaries and other necessary expenses as the condition of the Treasury will permit and the welfare of the Grand Council demand.

ARTICLE III: BONDS AND FISCAL YEAR

Section 1. The Grand Treasurer and the Grand Recorder shall be required to give bond in such amount as may be prescribed by the Grand Council. These bonds are to be issued by a Security Company authorized to do business in Alabama. These bonds and certificates of Renewal shall be kept by the Grand Master and transmitted to his successor at each Annual Assembly. The premiums on these bonds shall be paid by the Grand Council.

Section 2. The fiscal year of this Grand Council shall begin on the first day of January of each year, and end of the 31st day of December of each same year.

ARTICLE IV. OF SUBORDINATE COUNCILS

Section 1. A Subordinate Council of Royal and Select Masters shall consist of:

- Illustrious Master
- Deputy Illustrious Master
- Principal Conductor of the Work
- Treasurer
- Recorder
- Captain of the Guard

who shall be elected by ballot by a constitutional number of Companions without nomination at the regular Assembly next preceding the 24th day of June annually and may be installed on the same day. The officers who shall be appointed by the Illustrious Master at the time of installation, namely, Conductor of the Council, Steward, Chaplain, and Sentinel; provided that any Subordinate Council may by its By-Laws, make any of the above appointive officers elective. A duly elected and installed Illustrious Master shall hold office until the next following Annual Assembly and thereafter until his successor is elected and installed.

Section 2. It shall be the duty of the Recorder of each Subordinate Council to read in open Council at the Assembly next preceding the 24th day of June of each year, a list of all members whose dues are not paid in full to Date. It shall be the duty of the Illustrious Master to declare such members suspended and they shall stand suspended until such dues are paid in full, and shall close the report of their proceedings on the 1st day of December next preceding the Annual Assembly of this Grand Council, and immediately forward the same to the Grand Recorder.

Section 3. Every Subordinate Council in this jurisdiction shall have its own By-Laws, which shall not be inconsistent with the Constitution, By-Laws, and Edicts of this Grand Council. Each subordinate Council's By-Laws shall be submitted to the Committee on By-Laws which shall review the same, make comments hereon; and submit such By-Laws and comments to the Committee on Jurisprudence; after which they must be presented to and be approved by the Grand Council, after which they shall be deemed in effect.

Section 4. A Subordinate Council shall not confer the Degrees of Royal, Select, and Super Excellent Master for less sum than Twelve Dollars (\$12.00). (Ministers of the Gospel who are regularly engaged in their calling may be exempted and may also be exempted from paying annual dues.)

Section 5. The Council Degrees may be conferred only upon petition by an affiliated Royal Arch Mason. The petition shall be in writing, vouched for by two Royal and Select Masters in good standing in the Subordinate Council, presented at a Stated Assembly, referred to a Committee of three Royal and Select Masters in good standing in the Subordinate Council, and passed by a unanimous ballot at a subsequent Stated Assembly. When the condition warrants and due notice has been given, the Grand Master may grant special dispensation to Subordinate Councils to receive petitions, ballot on them and confer the degrees at the same stated special Assembly.

Section 6. Each Subordinate Council shall hold exclusive jurisdiction over petitioners who reside within the corporate limits of the city, town, or municipality in which said Council is located. Where more than one Subordinate Council is located in a city, town, or municipality, then each Council so located shall hold concurrent jurisdiction with the other. All other territory within the boundaries of the State of Alabama, not covered by the foregoing, shall be known as OPEN TERRITORY, and all Subordinate Councils within said State of Alabama shall have concurrent jurisdiction within such territory.

Section 6a. The State line shall mark the jurisdictional borders and shall be strictly observed. However, territorial jurisdiction may be waived by the Grand Master on a petitioner residing in a state line border area to another state when the Grand Master of such other state duly requests such waiver, but only if the state requesting has a similar existing law.

Section 6b. For the purpose of removal of a Subordinate Council from its regular place of meeting in a city or town to another city or town where there is not presently a Subordinate Council, the Illustrious Master shall cause notice to be given to each member of the Council to appear at a specified assembly of the Council for the purpose of consideration of removal, and should a majority of the members present vote for removal, they may do so upon the consent of the Grand Master.

Section 7. A Subordinate Council shall not be opened unless there are present nine Royal and Select Masters, members of that Council.

Section 8. The Most Illustrious Grand Master or a Most Illustrious Past Grand Master may open or close a Subordinate Council by declaration in "Ample Form".

Section 9. The Illustrious Master has direct supervision over his Subordinate Council and is responsible to the Grand Council for the proper conduct of his Council.

Section 10. In trials for unmasonic conduct, Subordinate Councils shall be governed by the rules set down for trials by the Grand Lodge F. & A. M. of Alabama.

ARTICLE V. GRAND OFFICERS OR THEIR PROXIES TO GENERAL GRAND COUNCIL

Section 1. The presiding Grand Master, Deputy Grand Master, and the Grand Principal Conductor of the Work, shall be the official representatives of the Grand Council to the stated and called Assemblies of the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International, under the rules and regulations prescribed by the General Grand Council. If for any reason any or all of the first three Grand Officers cannot attend such Assemblies, they shall be allowed to appoint as proxy the next elected Grand Officer in the Grand Line, down through the Grand Steward, or a Past Grand Master who has not attended the General Grand Council.

ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. These By-Laws may be altered or amended at any Annual Assembly by proposal in writing; received at the Grand Office not later than December 1st preceding the Annual Assembly; and referred to the Committee on Jurisprudence. When approved as being in proper form, all Subordinate Councils shall be notified in writing not later than January 15th preceding the Annual Assembly. The altered or amended By-Laws can then be adopted by concurrence of two-thirds of the members present.

ARTICLE VII. DUAL MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. A Companion can be a member of two Councils in this Grand Jurisdiction, provided both Councils record him as a dual member, and his membership is reported to the Grand Council. However, a dual member cannot hold elected office in both Councils at the same time. Any matter that affects membership in either Council will likewise affect membership in both Councils. Furthermore, it is permissible for a Companion in this Jurisdiction to hold membership in another Grand Jurisdiction, provided said other Grand Jurisdiction is in fraternal relations with this Grand Jurisdiction, and further provided that said other Grand Jurisdiction legalizes dual membership. Likewise, a Companion of another Grand Jurisdiction that qualifies as above who properly applies and is duly elected can become a dual member of a Subordinate Council in this Grand Jurisdiction with all rights and obligations of regular membership.

Should a Companion holding dual membership within Alabama desire to withdraw his membership from one Council, he shall notify the Council from which he desires to withdraw his membership of his decision in writing, and if he has paid current dues and no charges are pending against him, the Recorder of the Council will carry him as withdrawn and notify the other Council in which dual membership was held of the date that the member is no longer a dual member. A Companion holding membership in Alabama and another Grand Jurisdiction may continue as long as the Companion remains in good standing in his basic (home) Council; however, any matter affecting the basic membership will also affect the dual membership.

ARTICLE VII.

All former By-Laws of this Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Alabama are hereby repealed.