

June 16, 2020

Companions,

On June 1st, Edict #2 – “Coronavirus (COVID-19) Recovery Provisions” was issued, and contained the following (with emphasis added):

- *Governor Hogan has implemented Phase 2 of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Recovery Plan for Maryland; however, formal Council Assemblies and other in-person gatherings of Companions are still prohibited. **As restrictions are lessened, Councils are authorized to implement all guidelines for in-person meetings/gatherings that the Grand Lodge issues for Lodges, in accordance with State and local restrictions. All guidelines/restrictions should be followed, including use of masks, social distancing, and limitations on number of attendees. Shaking hands is discouraged.***

Yesterday, MWGM Richard Naegele issued a memo with Lodge Reopening Guidelines. As stated in Edict #2, Councils are permitted to implement the reopening guidelines that have been issued for Lodges. Remember that all other specific provisions for Councils contained in Edict #2 remain in effect until the Annual Grand Assembly in October.

Even though the formal Grand York Rite Sessions have been cancelled, I still hope to have an in-person meeting for the Grand Assembly. Specifics will be announced by early September.

Because of the shutdown of activity, sales of the CMMRF raffle tickets have been stunted. The drawings initially planned to be held at the May 2020 Semi-Annual Grand Assembly were previously rescheduled to be held at the Grand Sessions. At the request of CMMRF Chairman Louis Romeo, and to promote the full sale of tickets, the drawing has been rescheduled to be held during the May 2021 Semi-Annual.

These past few months have been very trying times. Now that the situation is allowing some return to “normal” operations, I wish you all the very best as we navigate through the troubles and hopefully pass this hurdle. Above all, keep safe and share the Brotherhood and Companionship of our great fraternity.

Randall L. Watson
Most Illustrious Grand Master
Grand Council of Royal & Select Masters of Maryland