

## Procedures and Guidelines for Digital Meetings During the current Coronavirus Pandemic

*Brethren*

*You will be well aware that over the past few weeks there has been a massive upsurge in the use of products such as Zoom to hold virtual meetings at all levels. That surge has brought with it genuine concerns about security and about the content of some meetings.*

*In order to try and ensure that we do all we can to make systems as secure as possible and to regulate the content of meetings, the Grand Lodge of Scotland issue the attached Interim Guidelines. I would stress that the guidelines must be viewed as **Interim Guidelines**. I have asked the Information and Communications Committee to produce a definitive set of guidelines for the longer term. I fully expect that when we are once again able to meet in our Lodges, Provinces and Districts we will be able to dispense with virtual meetings but do acknowledge that there will be a place to use such technology such as training workshops, international meetings and also for future sub-committees to enable membership from literally across the globe.*

*Please use the technology sensibly and adhere to the guidelines.*

*W Ramsay McGhee  
Grand Master Mason*

Procedures for Digital Lodge Business Meetings: -

1. When Lodges are unable to meet in person, they may choose to hold Digital Lodge Business meetings to maintain fellowship and strengthen the bonds of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.
2. Lodges should choose a platform to conduct digital lodge business meetings that gives them confidence. Most Lodges use Zoom, however there are several alternatives available.
3. Lodges can hold their digital lodge business meetings as often as members require and at a frequency that allows everyone to remain connected to each other.
4. Lodges should, where reasonably possible, ensure all members of the Lodge are able to access the digital lodge business meetings.
5. The decision for Lodges to admit members of the craft from other lodges to their digital meetings – such as a general lecture - is at the discretion of the lodge. However, in general terms, for security purposes especially, it is recommended that if the Lodge is participating in a digitised meeting it should be restricted to members of the Lodge
6. All Mason's attending must be identifiable by face, on live video. Zoom have recently made improvements to the security and each Lodge should take advantage of their

Password and Waiting Room facilities – those will enhance security. See [“Latest information from Zoom”](#)

7. The recording of digital lodge business meetings is strictly prohibited. However, the content of a lecture may be recorded for future use. This is not only to uphold the privacy of each member but again to aid good security in general. However, it is recommended that a written account be made of any business discussed for inclusion in the Minute of the next normal meeting of the Lodge.
8. Masons attending digital lodge business meetings should adhere to the same decorum and standards of any meeting containing Just, Upright and Free Men who have sound judgement and strict morals.
9. Under no circumstances should Signs, Secrets, Rites or Ceremonies be performed at any time during a digital lodge business meeting. The Lodge is not Tyled and decisions are not binding as if they were conducted at a Regular Meeting. Digital Lodge Business Meetings do not replace a Lodges Regular meeting, they are in lieu of their ability to meet. Digital Lodge Business meetings do not in any way, no matter how they may seem or appear to, meet the requirements of the Ancient Landmarks, Ancient Charges and Regulations, and Constitution to be considered Tyled in any or remote form. Further, Digital Lodge Business meetings must not appear or seem to be Tyled.
10. Digital Meetings should have an agenda, be timely and run to a format in order to ensure the smooth running of the meeting. All attendees should be on mute unless they are speaking. The Master should chair the meeting, in his absence the Immediate Past Master or any other Past Master
11. Key Items to Note:
  - All microphones should be on mute unless you are being spoken to
  - To speak, unmute and address the Master
  - Please remember that decorum and respect should always prevail with only one member speaking at a time.
  - If you need to leave the meeting, just as you would in a lodge meeting, excuse yourself to the Master.
  - Meetings should have an agreed time limit, and should more time be needed, agree to meet again to continue the discussion.
  - Digital Business Meetings can be as a Lodge or as a Sub-Committee of the Lodge,
  - Reports to the digital meeting should be short but are needed to keep the members up to date with the business of the lodge, try to move onto the work for the meeting as quickly as possible.
12. Procedures for Commencing an online meeting:

The Master will first ensure that only Masons are present and do a quick rollcall of those present.  
He should, when satisfied, declare the meeting open.

When all matters have been satisfactorily dealt with, he should formally declare the meeting to be closed.

### **Latest information from Zoom:**

We're always striving to deliver you a secure virtual meeting environment. **Starting April 5th**, we've chosen to enable passwords on your meetings and turn on Waiting Rooms by default as additional security enhancements to protect your privacy.

#### **Meeting Passwords Enabled "On"**

Going forward, your previously scheduled meetings (including those scheduled via your Personal Meeting ID) will have passwords enabled. If your attendees are **joining via a meeting link, there will be no change to their joining experience**. For attendees who join meetings by manually entering a Meeting ID, they will need to enter a password to access the meeting.

For attendees joining manually, **we highly recommend re-sharing the updated meeting invitation before your workweek begins**. Here's how you can do that:

Log in to your account, visit your **Meetings** tab, select your upcoming meeting by name, and copy the new meeting invitation to share with your attendees.

For meetings scheduled moving forward, the meeting password can be found in the invitation. For instant meetings, the password will be displayed in the Zoom client. The password can also be found in the meeting join URL.

#### **Virtual Waiting Room Turned on by Default**

Going forward, the **virtual waiting room feature** will be automatically turned on by default. The **Waiting Room** is just like it sounds: It's a virtual staging area that prevents people from joining a meeting until the host is ready

For more information on how to leverage passwords and Waiting Rooms to secure your meetings, please visit our **Knowledge Centre**, attend a **daily live demo**, or visit our **Blog**.

Please reach out to our Support Team if you have any questions at [support@zoom.us](mailto:support@zoom.us).

**GMM**

**13 April 2020**