

More Questions and Answers...

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131. A Mason in good standing in his Lodge *unless he has paid his dues* in accordance with its By-Laws (Uniform Code of By-Laws, Article IX, Section 1) is excluded from the enjoyment of certain privileges, such as: demitting from the Lodge (Par. 271); affiliating with another Lodge (Par. 273); from voting in an election (Par. 215). Is there a similar disqualification in the case of a Lodge which is in arrears in the payment of its dues to the Grand Lodge?

Yes, there is. Par. 191 of the Constitution (rev. 1962) says: "No Lodge, which shall have failed to make its annual returns, *with the payment of its dues*, as provided for in Par. 143, and in Par. 247, shall be entitled to representation at the next Annual Communication."

132. Is the granting of life membership to a Brother who has paid his dues for thirty (30) years, automatic or obligatory to the Lodge?

No, it is entirely at the discretion of the Lodge. Pars 195 and 196 use the verb MAY instead of SHALL; that is, it is *permissive*. The philosophy behind this provision of the law is the *recognition of merit*, for work done for the benefit of Masonry in-general and the Lodge in particular. What would happen to an old Lodge, particularly a small one, if the majority of its members *should automatically become life members exempt from the payment of dues*?

133. When does the liability to suspension for non-payment of dues commence?

At the stated meeting immediately following the period of twelve (12) months during which the member has not paid his dues, as provided for in Par. 179 of the Constitution (rev. 1962). The Lodge may, if it so wishes, grant an extension.

134. Does liability to suspension for non-payment of dues impair the *good standing* of a brother?

It does not, unless there is a charge of un-Masonic conduct pending against him. But suspension for nonpayment of dues excludes him from the enjoyment of the rights granted by Paragraphs 215, 271, 273, etc.

135. Can the proficiency required previous to *passing and raising* be dispensed with, and can an officer, or a member, of the Lodge conduct a private examination and certify as to the proficiency of the candidate?

To both questions the answer is no. Par. 175 of the Constitution (rev. 1962) says: "No Lodge shall advance an Entered Apprentice or a Fellow Craft to a higher degree until, *after a strict examination in open Lodge*, he shall have given satisfactory evidence that he is entirely proficient and well qualified in the degree or degrees which he has already taken." The Master of a Lodge who permits a deviation from this provision of the Constitution renders himself liable for disciplinary action by the Grand Master under Par. 228 of the Constitution.