

Fulfilling your Obligation as a Lodge Officer

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Editor's Note: This information is from the booklet "A Primer for Masonic Lodge Wardens".

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. 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.

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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 "Grand View". After you have registered as a member, go to "Resources". You will find the District Educational Officer's Manual under the Master Mason list.

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.