



GRAND LODGE OF THE ROYAL ORDER OF SCOTLAND

THE KING OF SCOTS HEREDITARY GRAND MASTER

Deputy Grand Master and Governor
Sir Archibald Donald Orr Ewing, Bart, MA
Grand Secretary
Alan Dickson, MBA, MAPM,

To: All Members of Grand Lodge of the Royal Order of Scotland for information and action
To: All Provincial Grand Masters and Provincial Grand Secretaries for action as appropriate and onward distribution to their membership

12 March 2020

Dear Sir and Brother,

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

There is, very understandably, significant concern about the worsening situation of the spread of the Coronavirus – COVID19. The situation is fast moving, and it seems that it is going to get worse over the coming weeks and months.

The Executive Committee of the Grand Lodge of the Royal Order of Scotland is responsible for an international organisation and is not able to give a “one size fits all” piece of advice as some regions and countries have been affected badly, whilst others have had few cases.

We all have a responsibility to ensure we keep aware of the advice being given at local and national government levels, and strictly follow the advice given. If the advice is that meetings need to be cancelled, then it is expected that the province within that jurisdiction will implement that advice. If you have fallen into a category which means you should self-isolate, then you should do exactly that, you certainly should not be attending a meeting.

The Executive Committee is aware that grand lodges are also issuing advice for its members and we strongly encourage you to support this, so if your grand lodge is cancelling masonic activity in your area it is expected that our members reflect this policy. We rely on grand lodge support for our activities within each country and it is only right that we fully support them in the approach they are taking to protect their members.

At the time of writing, it is expected that most meetings will take place so please do consider the environment you are in for yourself and others:

- Basic hand washing highlighted as the most effective way of preventing the spread of infection. Hand hygiene promoted by ensuring staff, contractors, service users and visitors have access to hand washing facilities and alcohol-based hand rub, where available.
- Crockery and cutlery in shared kitchen areas should be cleaned with warm water and detergent and dried thoroughly.
- Ensuring food such as crisps and sandwiches should not be left open for communal sharing unless individually wrapped.
- Routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched objects and surfaces such as telephones, keyboards, door handles, desks and tables.
- Re-assess your behaviour and consider changing how things have been done (e.g. sing “Auld Lang Sine” but don’t grab each other’s hands, don’t shake hands).
- Respect other people’s decisions and space; smile and show understanding and consideration if a brother does not wish to shake your hand or asks you to step away.



- Have you recently travelled from somewhere with, or live in, an area of higher risk of coronavirus? If so, consider not attending any meeting. An up to date list of high risk countries are located here www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/advice-for-travellers/

The one thing that seems certain is that the overall situation is going to be difficult to contain over the coming months, but timing and impact will be different for each region or country. Considering this the Executive Committee are very keen to encourage a common-sense approach for each Province and for all its members:

- Ultimately it is up to every member to be responsible with a sensible approach to attending a meeting and to think of others. Do not attend a meeting because you are performing an important role, attend because you believe you are healthy and well and do not pose a risk to anybody.
- The province's senior team should positively confirm that all is well to proceed with a meeting. Follow your Government's advice at national and local level, listen to your members and hear what their concerns are. Ensure that you are using premises providing the equipment for people to keep themselves clean at a meeting and for any dining; show consideration and kindness if someone is not keen to do something that has always been done!

Keep safe and look after yourself

Sincerely and fraternally

Alan Dickson
Grand Secretary
Grand Lodge of the Royal Order of Scotland