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**General Grand Chapter**  
Order of the Eastern Star™  
Established November 1876

August 26, 2020

Dear Worthy Grand Matrons (currently serving),

It is my hope this finds you and your loved ones doing well—safe and healthy. The ongoing coronavirus pandemic has created some challenging circumstances when it comes to conducting the business of Grand Chapters, Subordinate Chapters and Subordinate Chapter directly under the General Grand Chapter. I am proud of you, the leadership, for your commitment to serve your Sisters and Brothers in the best way possible under these circumstances.

Due to the continuing pandemic and the difficulties this presents to Chapters for conducting their business, I have attached my guidelines allowing holding a simple business meeting using Zoom or other video conferencing method. These instructions are to be used responsibly to address essential Chapter business, particularly financial responsibilities. This authorization does not allow for the reading of petitions, reports of investigating committees, balloting or initiations using Zoom or other video conferencing methods. It remains illegal to use video conferencing for these portions of Eastern Star business. These guidelines are not permanent and they are to be used only during these Covid restricted times.

Please share these guidelines as you deem necessary in an effort to assist your Chapters. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please continue to follow all government and local authority health and safety guidelines in your area regarding Covid in order to protect yourself and the well-being of our beautiful members. Please wear a face mask!

In friendship,  
*Marianne Shenefelt*  
Marianne R. Shenefelt  
Most Worthy Grand Matron

copy: Henry S. Martin, MWGP  
Alma Bane, RWGS  
GGC Jurisprudence Committee

attachment: Video Conferencing Guidelines



## Guidelines – Video Conferencing to Conduct Essential Chapter Business

The guidelines below are for the purpose of conducting a simple business meeting in order to complete Chapter business that must be addressed for the good of the Chapter, in particular to meet financial obligations, using Zoom or other video conferencing methods. These instructions do not apply to and are not to be used for in-person Chapter meetings.

### **Using Zoom or other video conferencing to conduct essential Chapter business:**

- Establish that a quorum is present on the call for the transaction of business. Seven members of the Chapter, including one of the first four Officers, constitutes a quorum, unless the Bylaws of the Chapter states a larger number.
- Record the names of the members present on the call that constitute the quorum, as well as other members in attendance on the call.
- Confirm minutes of the meeting are being taken.
- Do not open the meeting ritualistically. The Officer in charge (WM or pro tem) will call the meeting to order, i.e., "I hereby call this virtual meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter to order."
- Request the reading of the minutes of the last stated and special meeting, if any.
- Ask for corrections, if any.
- Ask for approval of the minutes.
- Request the reading of communications.
- Ask for Unfinished Business (see paragraph below).
- Ask for New Business (see paragraph below).
- Request Treasurer's report.
- Request reading of the bills.
- Conduct discussion, as necessary, and ask for verbal approval to pay the bills.
- Record the verbal "yes" or "no" by the individual's name when asking for approval to pay bills and/or spend the Chapter's money.
- Ask for any sickness and distress.
- Close the meeting. Do not close the meeting ritualistically. The Officer in charge will say, "There being no further business to be conducted virtually, I hereby declare this virtual meeting of \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter closed."

There will be no petitions read, no reports of investigating committees, no balloting and no initiations taking place during virtual business meetings of a Chapter. These portions of our closed meetings are not authorized to be conducted using Zoom or other video conferencing methods because to do so is illegal.

If your Unfinished Business and/or New Business involves petitions, investigating committee reports, balloting or initiation, it will be necessary to postpone this business until it is safe for your Chapter to meet in person.

Please adhere to all government and local authority health and safety guidelines specific to your area regarding Covid for your protection and the well-being of your members.

Marianne R. Shenefelt  
Most Worthy Grand Matron  
August 2020