

**The Grand Chapter of Colorado
Order of the Eastern Star
AFFILIATION PROCEDURE**



**Adopted by the
GRAND CHAPTER OF COLORADO
ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR
September 22, 2012**

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AFFILIATION PROCEDURE

First Edition
(Known as Constitution and Bylaws
Including
Trial Code and Affiliation Procedure)

by

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Amended by Grand Chapter
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**PROCEDURE FOR AFFILIATION
FOR
BOTH AFFILIATING AND RECEIVING CHAPTERS
BYLAWS, SUBORDINATE CHAPTERS,
(as referenced in Article XII, Sec. 4)**

In the event that members find it difficult for their Chapter to continue in a meaningful way due to lack of officers, members, or money, and affiliation with another Chapter becomes a considered alternative, then this procedure is to be followed. In conjunction with this procedure, it will be most helpful to also use the accompanying:

.....*AFFILIATION PROCESS CHECKLIST*
.....Sample Forms and Letters

Prior to discussions regarding Affiliation with another Chapter the Central Membership Committee may be able to offer help and suggestions for increasing membership or reactivating old members.

The Jurisprudence Committee has been designated to advise and assist Chapters in the options and procedures when affiliation with another Chapter is being considered.

The Charters Committee has been designated to assist after the Chapter has voted to affiliate. Their duties consist of assuring that the minutes, membership records and financial records are in order. They will also advise and assist in the transfer of funds and property. The committee member assigned by the committee chairman shall be the primary Grand Chapter representative to oversee and advise on the activities of both the affiliating and receiving chapter as related to the entire affiliation process. (2013)

Note: All events requiring voting are underlined in the following paragraphs for ease of identification.

1. After discussion among the members and an expressed desire to consider affiliation, the Secretary will notify, in writing, the Worthy Grand Matron, Grand Secretary, Chairman of Jurisprudence and Chairman of Charters of the Chapter's desire to discuss the procedure for affiliation. This Letter of Invitation should include the date, time and location they wish to have the Committee members attend. Representatives of both committees will attend these meetings. (2013)

2. At the designated meeting, a representative of both committees will attend to offer ideas and suggestions, and to present steps required for affiliation. Should there then be no further action by the Chapter **within 120 days** after this meeting, and no communication with the Chairman of Jurisprudence, the discussion and pursuit of affiliation shall be deemed abandoned.
3. At this or the next stated meeting the Chapter will vote by written ballot whether to proceed with possible affiliation. To proceed requires a majority affirmative vote of members present and voting. A majority negative vote terminates the process. If it is the Chapter's decision to proceed, a letter of notification shall be sent to all Chapter members stating the proposal to affiliate with another Chapter. The letter shall include the reason and date the vote is to be taken.
4. The Secretary shall also notify the Worthy Grand Matron, Grand Secretary, Chairman of Jurisprudence and Chairman of Charters of the date the proposal to affiliate will be balloted on. (2013)
5. As a gesture of goodwill and common courtesy, a Chapter wishing to affiliate shall not purposely spend-down or donate any existing funds prior to beginning, or during, the affiliation process. Members of an Affiliating Chapter have the right to feel they are financially well-represented in their new Chapter. A Receiving Chapter, likewise, has a right to not unnecessarily assume a financial burden as a result of agreeing to accept an Affiliating Chapter.
6. At the stated meeting designated in the Letter of Notification, a written ballot will be taken on whether to affiliate. A majority affirmative vote of members present and voting requires that the procedure for affiliation shall continue to the next step of determining which chapter to affiliate with. A majority negative vote of members present and voting terminates the process. The Chapter Secretary will notify, in writing, the Worthy Grand Matron, Grand Secretary and the Chairman of Jurisprudence and the Chairman of Charters, the result of the vote. All funds and property of the Affiliating Chapter shall become frozen at the time of the affirmative vote to proceed with affiliation, with the exception of payment of normal expenses. (Refer to Chapter 7, Par. 7.01 d. Bylaws Governing the Grand Chapter of Colorado)

7. After receiving notification of an affirmative vote to affiliate, the Chairman of Charters shall select a committee member to facilitate the affiliation process, if not previously selected. The Chairman shall then notify the Worthy Grand Matron, Grand Secretary, Chairman of Jurisprudence and the selected committee member by email or regular mail of the selection.

8. Eligible Chapters to be considered for affiliating with (those having concurrent or adjacent jurisdiction) will be identified by the affiliating Secretary (See Bylaws Subordinate Chapter, Article XII, Concurrent Chapters). The Secretary will then obtain copies of the Bylaws of said Chapters to aid members in their decision with whom they wish to affiliate.

9. At the next stated meeting, the Chapter members will discuss Receiving Chapters' Bylaws and vote by written ballot on the Chapter with which to affiliate. The chapter receiving the most votes shall be selected. Chapter members shall then select and propose a date the affiliation is to be effective. Said date must be later than the date the Receiving Chapter is able to vote for acceptance or rejection.

10. The Secretary of the Affiliating Chapter, in conjunction with the Charters committee representative, completes a **PETITION FOR AFFILIATION**, including the proposed effective date of affiliation. The Petition must be signed by no fewer than five (5) members. It shall be accompanied by the following: A copy of the last financial statement filed with Grand Chapter, a copy of the most recent financial statement, a list of estimated expenses to date of affiliation, dues records and number of Chapter members as well as identifying the Life Members, 50-year members and Past Matrons and Patrons. These documents are mailed to the Secretary of the Receiving Chapter, with copies to the Grand Secretary, and the Charters Committee representative. The Affiliating Chapter agrees to abide by all the Laws, Rules and Regulations of the Receiving Chapter and the Petition may not request or impose any conditions or contingencies upon the Receiving Chapter as a condition of accepting or rejecting the Affiliating Chapter. (2013)

11. The Chapter shall continue to meet at its regular time and place until notified of acceptance or non-acceptance by the Receiving Chapter. If not accepted by the Receiving Chapter, the Affiliating Chapter will continue to meet at its regular time and location. If accepted, they may continue to meet if desired until the date specified in the **Order for Affiliation**.

12. The Secretary of the Chapter receiving the **PETITION FOR AFFILIATION** shall read it at their first stated meeting after receipt and send written notice to its membership that a vote will be taken at their next stated meeting.

13. The Receiving Chapter will vote by written ballot whether to accept or reject the Affiliating Chapter. A majority affirmative vote of members present and voting is required. The Chapter Secretary will notify the Worthy Grand Matron, Grand Secretary, Chairmen of Jurisprudence and Charters, the representative of the Charters committee and the affiliating chapter's Worthy Matron and Secretary, the results of the ballot. If rejected, no such proposition shall be presented to the same Chapter again in the same chapter year. (2013)

14. After the Worthy Grand Matron is notified that the vote of the Receiving Chapter is affirmative, she will direct the Grand Secretary to issue an **ORDER FOR AFFILIATION TO BE SENT TO THE** Secretary of the Receiving Chapter, with copies to the Secretary of the Affiliating Chapter and to the representative of the Charters Committee. This shall be signed by the Worthy Grand Matron and the Grand Secretary, and bear the seal of the Grand Chapter of Colorado, Order of the Eastern Star. A letter from the Worthy Grand Matron per the attached sample shall accompany the **ORDER FOR AFFILIATION**. The effective date of affiliation will be the date specified in the **ORDER FOR AFFILIATION**. (2013)

15. An optional ceremony performed by the Grand Officers is available. The Worthy Matrons of both Chapters will decide if they wish to have this optional ceremony performed. If so, The WGM will be notified and a date acceptable to the chapters and the Grand Officers will be determined.

16. The Affiliating Chapter Secretary shall notify the Chapter members of their new Chapter, location, meeting days, time and details of the Affiliation Ceremony, if one is decided on. The Secretary will also notify the Lodge or Hall where the meetings have been held of the date of the Chapter closing.

17. After receipt of notification of the affirmative ballot from the Receiving Chapter, the Chairman or designee of the Charters Committee will meet with the Worthy Matrons or their designees to accomplish the transfer of all money and property. (2013)

18. The Affiliating Chapter Secretary shall pay all outstanding debts and cause the books to be audited prior to the final transfer of the funds and records. The audit committee shall consist of the Chapter's Finance committee and the Charters committee representative. (2013)

19. All property, funds, Minutes Books, Bylaws Signature Book and other records of the Affiliating Chapter shall become the property of the Receiving Chapter, with the exception of the Charter, Seal and Secret Work, which shall be returned to Grand Chapter by the Charters committee representative **within 60 days after the date of the affiliation**. The Affiliating Chapter members are not required to sign the Bylaws of the Chapter with which they are affiliating. (2013)

20. Final reports must be prepared by the Secretary and Treasurer of the Affiliating Chapter and sent to the Grand Chapter Office and to the Secretary of the Receiving Chapter showing which members demitted or were suspended prior to affiliation, and listing those members affiliating with the Receiving Chapter. Note: Please remember that **ALL FUNDS** are to be transferred to the Receiving Chapter, with the exception of amounts necessary to pay outstanding bills. These funds are needed by the Receiving Chapter to pay per capita, postage, and other expenses. This helps relieve the Receiving Chapter of financial shortfalls when accepting new members. This must be accomplished **within 60 days** after the effective date of affiliation.

21. It is recommended that the Receiving Chapter send letters to affiliating members to welcome them. This letter should include a copy of the Bylaws, if practical, the amount of dues, and a reminder of the location, meeting days and time, and other pertinent information. Affiliating members shall be governed by the Laws, Rules and Regulations of the Receiving Chapter and are entitled to all rights and privileges of said Chapter.

22. A copy of all correspondence relating to the affiliation, including a copy of the **PETITION FOR AFFILIATION**, SHALL BE SENT TO THE Grand Secretary by both the Affiliating Chapter Secretary and the Receiving Chapter Secretary, to be placed in the permanent file of each Chapter.

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**AFFILIATION PROCESS CHECKLIST
(WITH ESTIMATED TIMING)**

This checklist is meant simply as an aid in following the steps to be taken in affiliation and is to be used in conjunction with the formal *Procedure for Affiliation*, which is the definitive document. This checklist neither covers nor includes all of the requirements. Abbreviations are used to make this a more concise and easier tool to use. The “day” numbers are a rough estimate, based on a chapter having two meetings per month, and is designed to give a ‘feel’ for roughly how long each step, and the entire process, might take. For chapters that meet only once per month and/or are dark during a portion of the process, a substantially longer time will be required. The short line (___) preceding each ‘Day’ may be used to check off each item as it is completed.

___ Day 1 (Meeting): Members discuss deteriorating state of the Chapter. Discuss and vote by written ballot on action to be taken as follows:

1. Do nothing and continue on present course.
2. Request member of the Central Membership Committee (CMC) attend next meeting to discuss possible remedies to improve current situation.
3. Request members of Jurisprudence (JP) and Charters (CH) attend next meeting to discuss pros and cons of affiliating with another chapter and to explain the process. (2013)

___ Day 2: If option 2 above receives majority vote, Chapter Secretary will write to the WGM to request that a member of the CMC attend the next meeting to present options and suggestions.

If option 3 above receives majority vote, Chapter Secretary will write to WGM with copies to the Grand Secretary (GS) and Chairmen of JP and CH requesting members of JP and CH attend next meeting to present options and suggestions. (2013)

___ Day 3-10: The letters are received. The Chairman of JP with the Chairman of CH then calls the Chapter Secretary, agreeing on day, time, location and who the two committees’ attendees will be.

___ Day 15 (Meeting): Members of appropriate committees (either CMC or JP and CH) attend to offer ideas and suggestions, or to present steps required for affiliation. (2013)

___ Day 30 (Meeting): Members discuss whether to pursue possible affiliation, followed by a written ballot as to whether a letter will be sent to all members advising of an upcoming vote to affiliate.

___ Day 31 - 36: If the majority vote is to proceed with a letter, the Chapter Secretary advises the WGM, GS and JP and CH Chairmen, in writing, of the date the vote to affiliate will be taken. (2013)

___ Day 31- 36: Chapter Secretary sends letters to all chapter members advising that a ballot will be taken at the next meeting whether to affiliate or not.

___ Day 45 (Meeting): Final discussion and then written ballot is taken.

___ Day 46: If majority vote is against affiliation, the proposal to affiliate is concluded. Chapter Secretary will notify, in writing, the WGM, GS and the Chairmen of JP and CH. (2013)

___ Day 46: If majority vote is for affiliation, the Chapter Secretary will notify, in writing, the WGM, GS, and the Chairmen of JP and CH. (2013)

___ Day 46: Additionally, the Chapter Secretary will write to the prospective Receiving Chapters, requesting a copy of the Bylaws to aid members in their decision regarding with whom they wish to affiliate.

___ Day 60 (Meeting): Chapter members review the prospective Receiving Chapters' Bylaws and discuss the pros and cons of each potential chapter. A written ballot is taken to determine which chapter receives the most votes. Chapter members then select and propose a date the affiliation will be effective.

___ Day 61 – 66: Chapter Secretary advises WGM, GS and Committee Chairmen of the Chapter's choice of Receiving Chapter. Chapter Secretary completes the *Petition for Affiliation* form and mails it to the selected Receiving Chapter, stating the preferred effective date of affiliation.

___ Day 75 (Meeting): The Secretary of the Receiving Chapter reads the *Petition for Affiliation* at their first meeting and sends written notice to its membership that a vote will be taken at their next stated meeting whether to accept or not accept the Affiliating Chapter.

___ Day 90 (Meeting): Receiving Chapter reviews the petition and the financial statements and votes by written ballot on whether to accept the Affiliating Chapter.

___ Day 91: The Receiving Chapter Secretary notifies the WGM, GS, Chairmen of JP and CH, and the Affiliating Chapter WM and Secretary, in writing, the result of the ballot. (2013)

___ Day 91: Upon affirmative ballot, Secretary of Affiliating Chapter will notify the owner of the building where meetings have been held that they will be moving.

___ Day 95: Upon receipt of affirmative ballot notification, the WGM directs the GS to issue an *Order for Affiliation* which will be accompanied by a letter from the Worthy Grand Matron per the attached sample.

___ Day 95 - 100: Upon receipt of affirmative ballot notification, the WM's of both Chapters will decide if they wish to have the optional Affiliation Ceremony performed. If so, the WGM will be notified and a date acceptable to the Chapters and the Grand Officers will be determined.

___ Day 100: After the decision concerning the Affiliation Ceremony, the Affiliating Chapter Secretary notifies all Chapter member in writing of their new chapter, meeting days, time, location and, if applicable, details of the Affiliation Ceremony.

___ Day 100: Secretary of the Affiliating Chapter pays all outstanding debts and causes the books to be audited by the designated audit committee prior to the transfer of the funds and records.

___ Day 100: Upon receipt of affirmative ballot notification, a member of CH meets with both Chapter Worthy Matrons or their designees to accomplish the proper disposition and transfer of all money, paraphernalia and other property, records, the Bylaws Signature Book, and Minutes Books. At this time CH will assume possession of the Charter, Seal and Secret Work to be delivered to Grand Chapter. (2013)

___ Day 105: The Secretary and the Treasurer of the Affiliating Chapter prepare final reports and send them to the Grand Secretary and to the Secretary of the Receiving Chapter **within 60 days after the effective date of affiliation.**

___ Day 110: Copies of all correspondence relating to the affiliation held by each of the Chapter Secretaries and a copy of the *Petition for Affiliation* shall be sent to the Grand Secretary to be placed in each Chapter's permanent file.

___ Day 115: Representative of CH notifies Chairman of CH, the WGM and the Grand Secretary that all affiliation requirements have been completed.

Sample Letter to Affiliating Chapter Members

Dear Sisters and Brothers of _____ Chapter No. _____

As is sometimes the case, a chapter finds itself in the unfortunate position of struggling to stay alive. When the pain of the struggle begins to outweigh the joy and satisfaction of continuing, the members must stop and evaluate the feasibility of affiliation with a neighboring chapter.

I am sorry to say that our chapter now finds itself in such a situation. Therefore, a vote on a proposal to affiliate with another chapter will be taken at the stated meeting to be held on _____ (date) at the _____ (Masonic Center) _____ in (town or city) _____, beginning at _____ (time) __ p.m.

After an open discussion among the members, a written ballot will be taken. A majority of those present and voting is necessary to proceed with the affiliation process.

If the vote is affirmative to affiliate, then at a later meeting the members present will collectively decide which chapter to petition for affiliation. Individual members are always free to petition a different chapter if they so choose. In any event, no member will lose her or his membership in Eastern Star as a result of chapter affiliation

Sincerely and fraternally,

Secretary

Cc: Worthy Grand Matron
Grand Secretary
Chairman – JP
Chairman – CH

*Affix
Chapter Seal
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ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR

PETITION FOR AFFIATION

To the Members of _____ Chapter No. _____,
Order of the Eastern Star:

The members of _____ Chapter No. _____ located at _____, Colorado, respectfully petition the members of _____ Chapter No. _____, located at _____, Colorado, to affiliate with said Chapter as of _____, 20__.

This petition is submitted by the members of _____ Chapter No. _____ in accordance with the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting at a regular meeting held on the _____ day of _____, 20____, and is signed by at least five members.

If this petition is accepted, the members of _____ Chapter No. _____ agree to abide by the Laws, Rules, and Regulations of _____ Chapter No. _____.

Dated at _____, Colorado this _____ day of _____, 20____.

SIGNATURES OF MEMBERS PRESENT AT THE REGULAR STATED MEETING OF _____ CHAPTER NO. _____ HELD ON _____, 20____.

*Affix
Chapter Seal
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**Sample Letter to accompany the Order for Affiliation
from WGM to Receiving Chapter Secretary.**

Dear Sister _____ and members of
_____ Chapter No. _____.

Enclosed you will find the **Order for Affiliation**.

Per our Rules and Regulations, all funds and properties of the Affiliating Chapter shall become the property of the Chapter with which they are affiliating, with the exception of the Charter, Seal and Secret Work which will become the property of the Grand Chapter of Colorado; and such affiliation shall in no way affect the name, number, charter, officers, or members of the Chapter with which another Chapter has affiliated. All members of the Affiliating Chapter shall become affiliated members of the Chapter with which they have affiliated and shall be governed by the Laws, Rules and Regulations of said Chapter.

The Bylaws Book of the Affiliating Chapter becomes the property of the Receiving Chapter and a part of that Chapter's records. Therefore, the Affiliating Chapter members are not required to sign the Bylaws of the Chapter with which they are affiliating.

Eleanor Eastern Star, Worthy Grand Matron

Affix
Grand Chapter Seal
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ATTEST:

Mrs. Eve Efficiency, Grand Secretary

cc: Secretary of Affiliating Chapter

Order for Affiliation

To: _____, _____ Chapter No. ____
 (Secretary of Affiliating Chapter) (Chapter Name)

To: _____, _____ Chapter No. ____
 (Secretary of Receiving Chapter) (Chapter Name)

Greetings:

Whereas _____ Chapter No. _____, located at _____, Colorado has petitioned to affiliate with _____ Chapter No. _____ located at _____, Colorado, and said petition has been duly voted on by the members of _____ No. _____ in favor of said affiliation, it is hereby ordered that _____ Chapter No. _____ is hereby dissolved as of _____, 20____ and all members in good standing shall henceforth be affiliated with _____ No. _____, with all the rights and privileges thereof, by virtue of this Order for Affiliation.

Executed this _____ day of _____, 20____.

By _____, Worthy Grand Matron

And _____, Grand Secretary

Affix

Grand Chapter Seal

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