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Date: October 8, 2020

To: All Members of the Prince Hall Family of the Jurisdiction of Alabama

From: Corey D. Hawkins, Sr., Esq., Most Worshipful Grand Master

Re: Community Service Projects and “Soft” Re-opening of the Jurisdiction of Alabama

Greetings:

On March 17, 2020, I issued a directive cancelling all masonic functions (meetings of any kind, fundraisers, community service, banquets, etc.) of all masonic bodies, within the Jurisdiction of Alabama due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The directive was necessary due to the declaration of a National State of Emergency by the President of the United States and the recommendations issued by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Alabama Department of Health (ADH).

After a lot of prayer and consultation with many of the Grand Lodge Officers I have decided to issue the following:

Effective immediately, all masonic bodies within the Jurisdiction of Alabama, are hereby allowed to participate in community service projects. We have a very important election fast approaching and as a Prince Hall Family we cannot sit on the sidelines and watch it go by. We must get involved. While it is not our position to endorse any candidates, it is our obligation as Prince Hall Masons, to help ensure that citizens of this country, exercise their rights and participate in the electoral process. We must help assist those within our communities to get to the polls. The reinstatement of community service will allow us the opportunity to plan voter's transportation projects and to assist in other ways, as well as, will allow us to reapply our efforts to serve those in need within our communities. **CDC guidelines are to be followed while**

participating in community service projects. Participants must wear masks and practice social distancing.

Also, as of January 1, 2021, the Jurisdiction of Alabama will engage in a “soft” re-opening of masonic functions. During this “soft” re-opening, lodges will have the option of meeting in person or may opt not to meet. **REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE LODGES OPT TO MEET IN PERSON OR NOT, ALL LODGES ARE STILL RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OBLIGATIONS TO THE GRAND LODGE.** If lodges do opt to meet in person, they must conform to the following **mandatory** stipulations:

- ❖ Can only meet once a month
- ❖ The meeting can only last a maximum of one hour
- ❖ Must wear masks and gloves at all times
- ❖ Must have temperature checked, using a non-contact, digital thermometer, and not have a fever to enter the lodge hall
- ❖ Must meet in a hall or facility that will accommodate social distancing
- ❖ Air filters in the hvac units where lodges meet must be replaced.
- ❖ Hand sanitizer must be readily available
- ❖ Antibacterial soap must be placed in all lodge restrooms
- ❖ Meeting places must be sanitized prior to each meeting
- ❖ If the facility where meetings are held reaches social distancing capacity, then no others are to be admitted
- ❖ No one with COVID-19 or any of the symptoms are allowed to attend
- ❖ Anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 must receive two negative tests prior to attending a meeting
- ❖ Degree work can only be performed in special circumstances and by dispensation from the Grand Master
- ❖ A member who has had contact with someone who has been recently diagnosed with COVID-19 cannot attend a meeting for fourteen (14) days from the date of contact
- ❖ There will be no large gatherings (banquets, statewide meetings, etc.)
- ❖ Worshipful Masters are responsible for their lodges’ conformance to these **mandatory** stipulations

THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THE MANDATORY STIPULATIONS. NONCONFORMANCE TO THE MANDATORY STIPULATIONS WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

According to the CDC, people of any age with the following conditions are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19:

- ❖ Cancer
- ❖ Chronic kidney disease
- ❖ COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- ❖ Immunocompromised state (weakened Immune system) from solid organ transplant
- ❖ Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
- ❖ Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- ❖ Sickle cell disease
- ❖ Type 2 diabetes mellitus

According to the CDC, people with the following conditions might be at an increased risk of severe illness from Covid-19:

- ❖ Asthma (moderate to severe)
- ❖ Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
- ❖ Cystic fibrosis
- ❖ Hypertension or high blood pressure
- ❖ Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines
- ❖ Neurologic conditions, such as dementia
- ❖ Liver disease
- ❖ Pregnancy
- ❖ Pulmonary fibrosis (having damaged or scarred lung tissues)
- ❖ Smoking

- ❖ Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder)
- ❖ Type 1 diabetes mellitus

ANY MEMBERS WHO SUFFER FROM ANY OF THE ABOVE-MENTIONED CONDITIONS ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED NOT TO ATTEND MEETINGS.

In a continued attempt to eliminate external risk of exposure to our employees, the Office of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge F. and A. M. of Alabama remains closed to appointments and walk-ins. The business of the Grand Lodge will continue to be transacted via U. S. Mail, email, telephone, and/or facsimile, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

The immediate reinstatement of participation in community service projects and the “soft” re-opening of the jurisdiction as of January 1, 2021, remain in effect until upgraded to a “full” re-opening, unless otherwise rescinded in part or in its entirety. Take notice and govern yourselves accordingly!

Fraternally,



Corey D. Hawkins, Sr., Esq.
Most Worshipful Grand Master

