

# Lodge Officer Duties and Responsibilities

Masonic Lodge Officer Duties are solely dependent upon leadership.

Masonic Lodge Officers, as they move through the Masonic Officer Chairs, as in any organization, could not properly function without a leadership team which provides Masonic Officer Training.

A successful organization's future depends upon how well this team of lodge officers work together to provide Masonic Officer training. In the business world, an organization is built around Presidents, Vice Presidents, General Managers, Regional Managers, Supervisors and Workers.

Each position plays an important part in order for the organization to be profitable and successful.

In essence, the Masonic Lodge Officer duties and Masonic Officer Training structure, much like their counterparts in the business world, shoulder the Lodge Officer Responsibilities which makes a lodge successful.

Masonic Lodge Progressive Line: Lodge Officers are part of a "progressive line", which is also known as "going through the chairs" ...or as the Masonic Officer Chairs. This line of succession moves up one position at a time from one year to the next.

If no one asks to "step out of line" for any reason, 7 years from the time of becoming Junior Steward, the Master Mason will arrive at the chair of the Worshipful Master.

The progression is as follows: Junior Steward, Senior Steward, Junior Deacon, Senior Deacon, Junior Warden, Senior Warden...and then Worshipful Master. The progressive line is used in the United States and in many other jurisdictions, as well.

Lodge Elections: In the Masonic Lodge, the top five Lodge Officers are (in this order) the Worshipful Master, the Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Treasurer and Secretary are elected by the Lodge members at their annual elections.

Normally each position is filled for one year, however they may be re-elected to the same position depending on the circumstance. Lodge elections are performed via a Masonic Ballot Box.

Masonic Lodge Officer Duties For Their Term in Office: 1 Year  
Appointed Lodge Officer Positions: The other officers, which include the Senior Deacon, Junior Deacon, Senior Steward, Junior Steward, Marshal, Tiler and Chaplain are appointed positions by the Worshipful Master. Other members of the Masonic Lodge may be called on to serve on any of the numerous committees by the Worshipful Master. Lodge Officer Duties and Names: The duties and names of the officers are taken from very old customs dating back to the medieval stonemasons' guilds.

Masonic Lodge Jewels:

In England in the 1400s, under the reign of King Edward III, local (city) governments grew out of the merchant and craft industries in each city or town. After an operative Master stonemason created his "Master's Piece" to the satisfaction of the Master of his craft, or guild, he was considered a "Master Mason".

Heads of the guilds became heads of their town councils, mayors, sheriffs, etc. During this time, one of the ways which a local official proclaimed his rank was by wearing a badge of office, or jewel, on a chain around his neck. The practice is still in use today in England.

If you have ever watched a ceremony wherein a Lord Mayor (regular mayor in the United States) attends a formal ribbon cutting event, you would see an ornate necklace which is the medallion, signature of his office, around his neck. Masonic Lodge Officers carry over this ancient guild tradition, today, in the form of the symbolic "jewels" of their offices.

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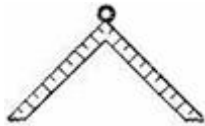
## **Masonic Officer Chairs, Duties and Jewels of Office**

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# Masonic Lodge Officer Jewels

## Medallion Signature of Office

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### Worshipful Master - Lodge Officer Duties:

His Jewel is the **Square**, which is a stonemason's tool to ascertain true and correct angles of the cut and smoothed stone...thus his Jewel symbolizes **virtue**. The Worshipful Master of a Masonic Lodge is the highest ranking of all Lodge Officers which a Lodge may elect.

The Worshipful Master sits in the East of the Lodge room (symbolic of the Rising Sun in the East) and directs all of the business of the Lodge. Note: Even if the building faces a different direction, the Master is said to be "in the East". He also presides over ritual and ceremonies.

His position is similar to a President of any other organization. As Master, his word is final over any and all actions pertaining to his Lodge.

It is his duty to:

**"Set the Craft to work and give them wholesome instruction for their labor".**

While the Worshipful Master's rank is highest of all members, his Lodge Officer Duties are the easiest to remember.

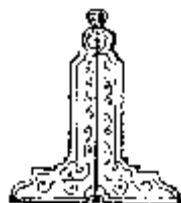
The Worshipful Master is responsible for every single thing within his lodge during his year as Master.

He is ultimately responsible for every other lodge officer and their duties, every lodge committee, ritual and degree work, Masonic education, social functions, fundraisers, District and Grand Lodge liaison, Trestle Board communication, etc.

All eyes are upon the Master. If lodge functions go smoothly, it is the Master who takes the credit. If lodge functions go awry, it is the Master who bears the blame. Therefore, the Master wears many hats.

It is his duty to preside over business meetings, the conferral of degrees, and delegation of duties to all other Lodge Officers. While Freemasons call the Master, "Worshipful Master", they do not, as some people may erroneously believe, actually worship him. "Worshipful" is an honorary title which shows respect for his position. In France, the word "Worshipful" is replaced with the word "Venerable".

It is no different than respecting the office of our President of the United States. He would be addressed, formally, as "Mr. President" rather than by his first name. Likewise, if you go before a judge, you would address him as "Your Honor", rather than by his first name, as a measure of respect that you hold for his office.



## Senior Warden - Lodge Officer Duties:

His Jewel is the **Level**...symbolizing that all Masons **meet on the level**, without regard to social, political or religious beliefs or status.

The Senior Warden of a Masonic Lodge is the second in command within the Lodge Officers.

In the absence of the Worshipful Master, the Senior Warden assumes the Worshipful Master's duties. The Senior Warden of a Masonic Lodge sits in the West (symbolic of the setting sun) and assists the Worshipful Master in opening and closing the Lodge.

The Senior Warden is in charge of the Lodge when it is at labor. His position is similar to a Vice-President of any organization.

His ancient duties were to pay the Craft (the members of the guild) their wages and to handle disputes among the workers. It is his duty to support the Master and to prepare himself for that office during the following year.



## Junior Warden - Lodge Officer Duties:

His Jewel of Office is the **Plumb**,... which is a stonemason's instrument used for ascertaining the alignment of a vertical surface.

It symbolizes **upright behavior** among Masons.

The Junior Warden of a Masonic Lodge is the third in command of the Lodge. The Junior Warden sits in the South (symbolic of the position of the sun at midday) and is responsible for the Brethren while the Lodge is at ease or refreshment.

His position is similar to a Second Vice-President. The Junior Warden, too, may open the lodge if the Master is unable to attend the meeting.

It is the Junior Warden's duty to arrange meals for the lodge, and, typically, the 2 Stewards act as his assistants in this responsibility.

Symbolically, it is also his duty to make certain that the members do not convert their refreshment into intemperance or excess. This is a holdover from earlier days, which still remains as part of the Junior Warden's job description, even though in most U.S. jurisdictions, alcohol is barred from the lodge.

**Which Officers Can Open the Lodge?** The Master, the Senior Warden, the Junior Warden or a Past Master.

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## **Senior Deacon - Lodge Officer Duties:**

His Jewel is the **Square and Compass with the Sun in the middle**. The sun signifies that his position is on the lower level, to the right of the Worshipful Master in the east.

His duty is as **messenger of the Worshipful Master**, hence he does a lot of walking.

The Senior Deacon of a Masonic Lodge is an assistant officer of the Lodge. The Senior Deacon's principle roles are to welcome and escort both visitors and candidates into the lodge and introduce distinguished visitors.

It is his duty to assist the Worshipful Master and carry orders between the Worshipful Master and the Senior Warden. During degree rituals, he guides the new candidate and conducts him around the lodge room.

During the opening and closing ceremonies, the Senior Deacon opens the Holy Scriptures to the correct passage of the degree being worked and closes it after the lodge is adjourned. He also lights and extinguishes the candles at the altar.

In some lodges, he carries the ballot box around the lodge when new members are being voted upon.



The Senior Deacon's position is similar to a Manager. The Senior Deacon (and the Junior Deacon) both carry long staffs (or rods), because as messengers of the Worshipful Master, the staffs are symbolic of the caduceus (or wand) that the Roman winged god and messenger Mercury carried during their duties. Atop the rods are the jewels of their offices.



## **Junior Deacon - Lodge Officer Duties:**

Like his senior counterpart, the Senior Deacon, the Jewel of his office is the Square and Compass, however the Junior Deacon's **Square and Compass has a moon in the center** (rather than a sun), which signifies that he is **in the West**.

The Junior Deacon of a Masonic Lodge is an assistant officer of the Lodge. He sits to the lower right of the Senior Warden.

The Junior Deacon's principle roles are to assist the Senior Warden by carrying messages from the Senior Warden in the West to the Junior Warden in the South and to guard the inner door of the Lodge.

It is his duty to ascertain at all times whether the Tiler is guarding the door and only allowing visitors to enter after they have been properly vouched for. The Junior

Deacon and the Tiler communicate with each other by knocking on the door (the Tiler from the outside...and the Junior Deacon from the inside).

Some jurisdictions split this position into 2 positions...that of the Junior Deacon and the Inner Guard.

The Junior Warden's position is similar to a **Manager**.



### **Senior Steward - Lodge Officer Duties:**

His Jewel is the Cornucopia, which is an exact duplicate of the Junior Steward's Cornucopia.

The **Cornucopia** signifies the "**Horn of Plenty**". It is a goat horn filled with the fresh fruits and vegetables to denote the "**fruits of your labors**" and represents a **job well done**.

The Senior Steward of a Masonic Lodge is an appointed officer of the Lodge.

The Senior Steward is tasked to understudy the Junior Deacon's position and fill in for the Junior Deacon when absent.

The Junior Deacon's principle role is to prepare the candidates during ritual and escort them to the lodge room and assist the Senior Deacon. In their entry Officer positions, both the Senior and Junior Stewards typically handle kitchen duties and wait staff for the members.

The Senior Steward's position is similar to that of a **Supervisor**.

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The Junior Steward is tasked to understudy the Senior Steward position and fill in for the Senior Steward in his absence. The Junior Steward's principle role is to assist the Senior Steward and the Senior Deacon in the preparation of the Candidates.

Both the Senior and Junior Stewards carry rods, atop which are the jewels of their offices. The rods represent England's Lord High Steward's rod in the House of Lords.

The Junior Steward position is similar to that of a **Supervisor**.

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## **LODGE OFFICER DUTIES FOR THOSE NOT IN THE PROGRESSIVE LINE:**

The following officers do not usually move in the progressive line.

Many times they have already progressed through all the chairs and choose to serve their lodge in different positions. Treasurers and Secretaries often serve their lodge in their respective positions for many years.

Continuity in these positions is vital to a well-run and efficient lodge. Training takes time and if these officer positions changed each year, financial and accounting chaos would occur.

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### **Treasurer - Lodge Officer Duties:**

His Jewel is a **Pair of Crossed Keys**, signifying he is the **Collector and Distributor of all Lodge Monies** as he holds the keys to the cashbox.

The Treasurer of a Masonic Lodge is the Chief Financial Officer of the Lodge. He sits to the right of the Master and behind the Senior Deacon.

The Treasurer is responsible for all financial transactions. He receives all money, pays all debts by order of the Worshipful Master with the consent of the lodge and renders a report when requested.

The treasurer does not need to be in possession of an accounting degree, however experience with bookkeeping and accounting is an asset. Financial bookkeeping transactions may be performed either by hand or by the use of accounting software.

The Treasurer's duties can be likened to a corporate C.F.O. (Chief Financial Officer).

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## **Secretary - Lodge Officer Duties:**

His Jewel is the **Crossed Quill Pens**. The Secretary is the Lodge's **Recorder**.

The Secretary's Lodge Officer Duties require a high degree of lodge experience, Masonic knowledge, diplomacy and, above all, detailed paperwork skills. The Lodge Secretary is the backbone of any Masonic Lodge and he holds a position of great responsibility. He sits to the left of the Master.

His duties require him to handle all correspondence to the members, minutes of Lodge meetings, petitions of new candidates, continuous lodge member count, and many other administrative duties. He compiles an ongoing list of each new candidate and which degrees that candidate has undertaken. From his member list, he sends out the annual dues notices and receives dues payments.

He communicates with other Lodges and the Grand Lodge, types letters, retrieves the mail as well as handles many other details.

The Secretary's Lodge Officer duties are many, not the least of which is that he must be well versed in Grand Lodge By-Laws for his jurisdiction and his Lodge By-Laws. He keeps the list of Lodge members and helps the Master organize his meetings.

A very experienced member usually resides in this chair...many times he is a Past Master of the Lodge. While it is not a prerequisite, due to the number of hours that this position requires, most (not all) Lodge Secretaries are retired and therefore able to devote the many hours required which are necessary to this position.

The Secretary's position is similar to a corporate C.O.O., (Chief Operation Officer).



## **Marshal - Lodge Officer Duties:**

His Jewel is the Crossed Batons. The Marshal is the Lodge's Conductor or Master of Ceremonies.

The Marshal of a Masonic Lodge is an appointed officer of the Lodge. The Marshal is in some jurisdictions the "Director of Ceremonies".

The Marshal's duties and principle role is the organization of processions and ensuring the correct precedence and etiquette in formal proceedings. It is his duty to formally conduct visitors into the lodge and introduce them to the members when the lodge is in session.

The Marshal's position is similar to that of a **Supervisor**.



## **Tiler - Lodge Officer Duties:**

His Jewel is the **Sword**, by which he symbolically **refuses entrance to anyone who is uninitiated in the Craft**. The sword has no scabbard, as it is his symbolic duty to always have his sword drawn, ready for the defense of his post.

The Tiler (or Tyler) of a Masonic Lodge is an appointed officer of the Lodge and is sometimes known as the "Outer Guard". He sits outside the closed door of the lodge room, armed with a sword.

The Tiler's duties and principle role is to ensure that only those who are duly qualified are allowed to enter the Lodge Room. He guards against cowans and eavesdroppers. During the Middle Ages, a cowan was a man who built stone walls of poor quality. He was an uninitiated or non-apprenticed stonemason...a "jackleg", if you will.

While the Tiler is sometimes called upon to assist in the preparation of candidates, his chief duty is to (symbolically) keep unskilled workmen from overhearing the conversation within the Lodge Room.

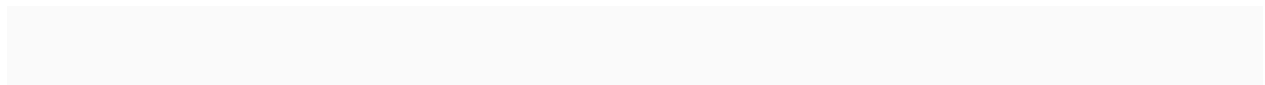
After the lodge members are inside the Lodge Room, the door closes and it is the Tiler's duty to decide whether late arrivals may enter. It is also his duty to make sure that each visitor is "properly clothed", which means they must be wearing their Masonic apron.

To be fully and properly dressed before entrance into the Lodge Room, the visitor must be wearing their apron over the top (or on the outside) of their suit coat (never under their coat) and the apron strings must be fully tied before the Tiler will allow the visitor entrance. Some jurisdictions call this position the Outer Guard.

The Tiler's position is similar to that of a **Supervisor**.



## **Chaplain - Lodge Officer Duties:**





His Jewel of office is an **opened book, symbolizing the Volume of Sacred Law** (the Christian Bible, Hebrew Torah or Tanach, the Muslim Qur'an, the Hindu Vedas or other Holy Books).

The Chaplain of a Masonic Lodge is an appointed officer of the Lodge. He sits to the left of the Master.

The Chaplain is the spiritual leader of the Lodge. While he may or may not be a real-world Minister, Priest, Rabbi or Imam,... in the lodge, the Chaplain is responsible for non-denominational prayers at both the opening and closing of meetings, during degree ritual ceremonies and before meals. Most Chaplains have no religious training and prayers are non-denominational.

The Chaplain's position is similar to that of a **Supervisor**.