

DIRECTIONS FOR PETITIONING THE LODGE OF BENEVOLENCE FOR RELIEF.

See also Book of Constitutions, Edition 1873, pages 96 to 106.

No Mason registered under the constitution of the Grand Lodge of England shall receive the benefit of this fund unless he have paid the full consideration fee, have been registered in the books of the Grand Lodge, have continued a subscribing member to a contributing Lodge for at least two years, and during that period paid his quarterly dues to the Fund of Benevolence. The limitation of two years, however, does not apply to the cases of shipwreck, capture at sea, loss by fire, or breaking or dislocating a limb, fully attested and proved.

Secretaries, who are by their Lodges exempted from the payment of subscription, shall not thereby be disqualified from obtaining assistance from the Fund of Benevolence, but shall be considered as subscribing members of their Lodges, their services being equivalent to subscription; provided their dues to the Grand Lodge have been duly paid.

A serving Brother, who has paid, through the Lodge in which he was initiated, the quarterly dues to the Fund of Benevolence for four years at least, may be considered eligible to be relieved in case of distress, in the same manner as if he had been a regular subscribing member.

X The Lodge of Benevolence may also grant relief to the indigent widow, or child, of a deceased Mason who would himself have been qualified to receive assistance; or of a Brother who shall have died within two years from the period of his initiation, or of his having joined an English Lodge from a Foreign Lodge, and who shall have continued a subscribing member to the time of his decease; provided the marriage certificate and other proper certificates and testimonials be produced.

When application for relief is made on behalf of children only, such application must be made within two years of the death of the father.

Brethren under the constitution of the Grand Lodges of Scotland and Ireland, as well as of Foreign Grand Lodges, and members of Colonial Lodges, may be relieved on the production of certificates from their respective Grand Lodges, or other sufficient certificates and testimonials to the satisfaction of the Lodge of Benevolence, and proof of identity and distress, and of having paid at least two years' subscription to a regular Lodge, it being understood that in the case of Foreign Brethren such relief, if exceeding Three Pounds, except in case of sickness, is intended to assist them to return to their native land.

Applications for relief must be by petition, stating the name, occupation, place of abode, and present circumstances of the petitioner; the name and number of the Lodge in which, and the time when he (or the husband or father, in the case of the petition of a widow, child, or children) was initiated, and the other Lodges, if any, which he afterwards joined. The applicant, unless disabled by disease or accident, must sign the petition.

To every petition must be added a recommendation, signed in open Lodge, by the master, wardens, and a majority of the members then present, to which the petitioner (or the husband or father, in the case of the petition of a widow, child, or children,) does or did belong, or from some other contributing Lodge, certifying that they have known him to have been in reputable, or at least tolerable, circumstances, and that he has been not less than two years an actual contributing member, paying the stipulated subscription to the funds of a regular Lodge, as well as quarterly to the Fund of Benevolence, with such other observations as they may think proper: or in the case of Brethren under the constitution of the Grand Lodges of Scotland or Ireland, or of Foreign Lodges, and the members of Colonial Lodges, a recommendation signed by a Brother registered under the constitution of the Grand Lodge of England.

A visit shall be paid to every applicant by the Master or some member of the Lodge, or some other Brother, who shall certify in writing the result of his enquiries; and in addition, in all town cases, the Brother giving the certificate, or some other Brother who has visited the case, shall attend the Lodge of Benevolence on the consideration of the petition.

Before the petition of the widow or children shall be taken into consideration, the Grand Lodge or other Masonic certificate of the deceased Brother shall be deposited with the Grand Secretary, unless it shall be satisfactorily proved that it has been lost.

No petition for relief shall be presented to the Lodge of Benevolence unless it has been left with the Grand Secretary three days at least previously to their meeting.

No petition shall be read unless the petitioner attend the Lodge of Benevolence in person; except in the case of widows and children, and of sickness, lameness, imprisonment, or residence in the country beyond the London district.

A Brother, who has been relieved, cannot petition a second time within one year. A widow, who has been relieved, cannot petition again.

N.B.—The Master or Visiting Brother of any Lodge recommending a case for relief at the Lodge of Benevolence shall to the best of his information and belief, certify in writing, under his signature, to the actual condition of the applicant, his age, profession or calling, means of subsistence, what aid he receives from his family, his future prospects, the position he has held in the Craft, and any matter that may guide the Lodge of Benevolence in adjusting the distribution of relief from its funds. The application of widows or children to be accompanied with a like certificate so far as practicable, with the probable disposal of the funds if relieved.

Masters of Lodges or Visiting Brethren are earnestly requested to forward the fullest particulars of each case, so enable the Lodge of Benevolence to relieve the applicants to the utmost extent of its means.

The Meetings of the Lodge of Benevolence are held on the last Wednesday but one of every Month, at Six o'Clock p.m., precisely, and Petitions must be sent in to the Grand Secretary, Freemasons' Hall, London, W.C., three days at least previous to the Meeting.

To prevent mistakes in the recommendation of petitions,
the following form is proposed; which may be altered as
circumstances require. (See Constitutions, page 105.)

We, the undersigned, being the master, wardens, and majority of the
members present, in open Lodge assembled, of Lodge No.

called

and held at

this

last week of the

day of

18

do hereby

certify, that the within-named petitioner hath been a regular contributing
member, paying the stipulated subscription to this Lodge, for the space
of years, and that we have known him in reputable circumstances,
and do therefore recommend ^{her} ~~him~~ to the Lodge of Penevolence for relief,
having satisfactory grounds for believing the ^{pet.} allegations set forth in his
petition to be true.