



PROVINCE OF EAST LANCASHIRE



Circular No 197

To: Lodge Secretaries & Chapter Scribes E
cc: Cabinet (RA & Craft)
Grand and District Officers

10 March 2020

Dear Lodge Secretary / Companion Scribe E,

Provincial Circular No.197 – Abandoning a Lodge or Chapter Meeting

United Grand Lodge / Supreme Grand Chapter has issued further guidance, via social media, following queries by members, relating to the effects of the Coronavirus on Lodge and Chapter Meetings. We have included, below, the key points of the statements, should a Lodge or Chapter Meeting need to be abandoned.

- Rule 137 of the Book of Constitutions provides that there is no power to cancel a Regular Meeting of a Lodge. The Rule is made for normal conditions and, at some future date which has not yet been reached, necessity may dictate that external events override it.
- Lodges should, therefore, for the time being, be summoned in the normal way. The quorum for a valid meeting of a Lodge is five (excluding the Tyler and any Candidate), of whom one must be an Installed Master and two must be members of the Lodge concerned; it is not a requirement that the Installed Master be a member of the Lodge. If, on the day of the meeting, a quorum cannot be achieved, the meeting must be abandoned, and a note entered in the Minute Book for which the following is the suggested wording;

“The Regular Meeting of the Lodge on ... day ... March 2020 was duly called in accordance with the attached summons. Owing to the incidence of the coronavirus the required number of Brethren to open the Lodge could not be assembled and the meeting was abandoned.”

Provincial Secretariat, Rossendale Masonic Hall, Ashday Lea, Haslingden Road,
Rawtenstall, Rossendale BB4 6QX

Telephone: 01706 833170 **Email:** secretariat@eastlancsmasons.org.uk

Visit: www.pglel.co.uk **Twitter:** @pglel **Facebook:** pglel



- Lodges should not be concerned, if a Meeting has to be abandoned in these circumstances, that it may affect entitlement to a Centenary or Bi-Centenary Warrant in the future; there are many precedents for an enforced break in continuity of working being disregarded by the Grand Master when deciding whether to grant such a Warrant.
- Similar considerations will apply in relation to Chapters.
- If the abandoned Meeting is that for the election of the Master, the final paragraph of Rule 106 will govern the situation.
- If the meeting is that for the Installation, Rule 108 will apply.
- Consideration should also be given to moving the date of a meeting by not more than 28 days, by dispensation, under Rule 139(c). Care should, however, be exercised in such a situation that Rule 172 (which requires a minimum of 28 days between Initiation and Passing, and between Passing and Raising) is not inadvertently infringed.

As has been stated, previously, please use common sense and remember the following guidance that was issued, last week:

"If you're feeling unwell, please stay away from Lodge and Chapter meetings until you feel better This is for the benefit of all our members as well as the individual concerned."

Yours fraternally,

Martin P Roche

Provincial Grand Secretary

Andrew Holland

Provincial Grand Scribe E