



# THE GRAND LODGE, ANCIENT, FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS, OF VIRGINIA



CONSTITUTED  
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## Social Media, Public Relations and Information Technology Policy (2018)

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# Social Media, Public Relations and Information Technology Policy

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## Article I. Introduction

Section 1.01 The Grand Lodge of Virginia recognizes the prevalence of the Internet, its value and importance to the Craft. It also recognizes the usefulness of Lodge websites and social media platforms to support various aspects of their operations both internally and externally. To support Lodges in proper and reasonable use of the Internet, [social media](#) and websites, the Grand Lodge of Virginia establishes the following Policy to guide subordinate Lodges (“Lodges”) in the development of websites, use of social media, devices, Masonic logos, storage of and transmission of electronic data and all forms of communications via electronic media. It also provides guidance for individual and Lodge engagement with the media (both traditional and “new”) and provides guidance for the individual Brother’s actions with electronic communication and social media. In all cases, this Policy affixes accountability and responsibility for the Lodge and the individual Mason not only regarding policy and procedure but Masonic conduct as well, and must therefore, not be taken lightly or in any manner be disregarded. (2016)

Section 1.02 The Grand Lodge Committee on Public Relations (GLCPR) and Information Technology (GLCIT) jointly administer this Policy, under the direction and guidelines of the Grand Secretary’s Office (GSO), the Grand Master (GM), and the Grand Lodge of Virginia Methodical Digest. (2016)

Section 1.03 Additionally, the Grand Lodge of Virginia may, at its discretion, seek legal remedies for damages incurred as a result of any violation. The Grand Lodge of Virginia may be required by law to report any illegal activities to the proper enforcement agencies. (2015)

Section 1.04 The GLCPR and GLCIT shall conduct an annual review of the Grand Lodge internet presences and the Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia Social Media, Public Relations, and Internet Policy, not later than the month of September. Lodges are encouraged to adopt a similar policy, to ensure they are not in conflict with Grand Lodge Policy. (2016)

Section 1.05 Any proprietary mention of products or services within this Policy is strictly for illustrative purposes. The Grand Lodge of Virginia does not endorse any commercial service or product. (2015)

Section 1.06 The following policies regarding various forms of communication, electronic and otherwise are established in the Grand Jurisdiction of Virginia: (2015)

(a) Electronic communication maintained by the Grand Lodge of Virginia will be administered by the GLCIT. (2018)

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(b) The Grand Lodge of Virginia has no responsibility for electronic communications established or maintained by an individual Lodge or member. (2015)

(c) Electronic communication must not be contrary to the obligations, tenets of Freemasonry or the Grand Lodge of Virginia Methodical Digest. This includes, but is not limited to, the prohibition on certain discussions about balloting, sensitive personal or financial details, or other Lodge matters that one would expect to be kept confidential (Ref: Methodical Digest Sec. 2.95 Decision 1990 D-29). (2016)

## Article II. Security and Privacy

Section 2.01 No one shall permit [personally identifiable information](#) (PII) such as Social Security Number and or birth date, (e.g., the information contained on a petition) to be published, transmitted or shared inappropriately. All confidential information shall be securely stored by means of password protection or data [encryption](#). All confidential information transmitted via email or by other electronic means shall only be done with encryption, as follows: (2015)

(a) The password for such encryption shall not be included with or communicated in the same manner as the password protected encrypted document. Example, if emailing an encrypted document, the password shall be communicated by other means, such as an SMS/text message, or by phone call to the other person(s) needing the encryption key or password. (2015)

(b) All passwords shall be strong passwords as defined at: How to Create [a strong password](#). They shall not be common words, phrases, including those common to Freemasons. (2016)

(c) Email encrypted using third party services may be used to meets the requirements for encryption. (2016)

Section 2.02 Passwords used for encryption and account access shall be unique per site. Most unapproved account access ("[hacking](#)") is through either [software vulnerabilities](#) or poor passwords. Brethren are encouraged to use [password managers](#) to make good practice easy. (2016)

Section 2.03 No Mason shall publish both the names and faces of Brethren, their wives or family members without obtaining consent for any individual or group photographed. If a brother wishes to remain anonymous, he should contact the photographer and state his terms. Meaning the photograph shall not identify the person(s) by name. Pictures of the Lodge officers and

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members at Masonic events shall be deemed to have their consent as a function of their attendance, unless specifically retracted. (2016)

Section 2.04 Absolutely no photographs of minors under the age of 13 shall be published that would positively identify the child without the written permission of their parents or guardians. In all cases, the Lodge and or Mason will comply with [Title 15, Chapter 91 of the US Code](#), which regulates unfair and deceptive acts and practices in connection with collection and use of personal information from and about children on the Internet. (2018)

Section 2.05 Email addresses and phone numbers shall not be published if requested by the individual(s) involved. Email addresses and phone numbers for the Worshipful Master and Secretary, as published by the Grand Lodge, are deemed to have consented as a requirement of their office. (2018)

Section 2.06 Most social networking sites and even camera applications provide the ability to share the location of the captured event. A member's physical location shall not be published at a particular Lodge or participation in Lodge activities (e.g., events or trips) without his explicit or implied consent. The member may, of course, publish his location, however, using site tools/functionality. (2016)

Section 2.07 Any computing devices containing Lodge sensitive or PII should meet the following minimal standards and set-up: (2018)

(a) Use data at rest encryption, either through the operating system or as a third-party software, if available. (2018)

(b) Use of wifi should be encrypted with a strong password. Unencrypted public or open wifi usage is discouraged, and should be used with a VPN ([Virtual Private Network](#)). (2018)

(c) Discourage the use of USB drives, as they may harbor malware in the device firmware. At no time should general member or public USB drives be inserted into a sensitive computer. (2018)

(d) The device may not be used for other purposes or by other individuals other than for the intended, limited purpose (such as Secretary, etc.). (2018)

(e) Strongly recommend two user accounts be setup on the computer for any device containing sensitive or PII: (2018)

(f) A standard "user" account that can do nothing but run installed software (other devices). (2017)

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(g) An “administrator” account that only authorized administrators perform repairs, maintenance, software updates, etc. (2017)

(h) Remote access software (such as [TeamViewer](#), [LogMeIn](#), [VNC](#)) should not be installed on these devices without access controls such as strong passwords, two factor authentication, or one time generated keys. (2018)

(i) Sensitive information or PII must not be transmitted to unofficial third party applications or services. Excluding officially owned online backups (2018)

Section 2.08 Sharing of family situations (e.g., illness, hospitalization, deaths) must have explicit permission to share from the Mason or from the family before electronically sharing with the broader Masonic Community. Permission may be granted for a period of time rather than each occurrence. (2018)

## Article III. Use of Symbols, Names and Trademarks

Section 3.01 Use of general Masonic symbols, such as the square and compasses, working tools, apron may be used in a manner respectful to the Craft. (2015)

Section 3.02 Use of specifically attributable Masonic trademarks, such as the Seal of the Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia, any Grand Master’s logo, or other such specific symbols or identifying markings that can be attributed to the Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia must not be incorporated without prior written consent of the rights holder. (2015)

Section 3.03 All Internet presences and publications utilizing any form of a square and compasses, the term “Lodge” or other identifying marks indicating linkage between the website and the Fraternity of Freemasonry must subscribe to traditional Masonic principles, including, but not limited to, the following: non-commercial; non-political; not advocating a specific religion; respectful of human dignity; and devoid of foul language, nudity, or pornography. (Ref: Methodical Digest Sec. 3.05) (2015)

Section 3.04 The use of any generic (commonly accessible, public domain, creative commons) square and compasses images or other Masonic imagery is allowable on approved Lodge websites within the parameters established customs and standards. Such usage must be respectful of any applicable copyright or trademark laws, and usage must be responsible,

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tasteful and in keeping with Masonic sensibilities. The GLCIT and GLCPR will periodically review such usage and report their findings to the GSO on a regular basis. (2016)

Section 3.05 The publication of the Grand Lodge of Virginia name and Seal is strictly regulated in order to maintain our valuable trademark. Manner of usage, correct proportions, fonts and colors are all considered with each approved use. Upon approval, the guidelines and templates for these items will be made available to any Lodge wishing to use them by communicating with the Grand Secretary, who will convey the request for such use to the GLCIT. The GLCIT will submit recommendations to the GSO for review and to the GM for approval. (2015)

Section 3.06 No Mason shall represent that published content is approved by the Grand Lodge of Virginia, except where such language is incorporated within clearly defined content copied from or directly linked back to the Grand Lodge of Virginia's own website(s), or where a document self-identifies as being a publication of the Grand Lodge of Virginia. (2015)

Section 3.07 Any Lodge may design and use its own logo. The Lodge is responsible to ensure they have properly licensed any copyright, trademark, or other intellectual property used. (2016)

Section 3.08 The [Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia](#) is [copyrighted](#) and shall not be published or incorporated into Lodge logos, published on Lodges websites, or printed material (2015)

## Article IV. E-commerce and Advertising

Section 4.01 For our purposes, any sale of items or monetary transaction via the Internet is considered e-commerce. Because the Methodical Digest and indeed, the core tenets of Masonry, prohibit the use of Masonic imagery for any commercial purpose, the following guidelines have been established: (2018)

(a) It is allowable for a Lodge to accept payment for dues, donations and other member fees via electronic processing, as long as (1) the manner of accepting payment is secure. (2) any fees added are exactly what the Lodge is charged and (3) any such fees are clearly explained before payment is made. Lodges may pass on any reasonable transaction fees to the member for this convenience. (2016)

(b) The Grand Lodge interprets the Methodical Digest as prohibiting Lodges from generally entering into "For-Profit" businesses, with some exceptions as determined by the GM. Historical exceptions include rental of facilities, minor fundraising activities, event food sales or sale of Masonic-themed merchandise. Extending the sale of similar merchandise over the Internet is

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allowable, if Lodges comply with all applicable laws, including sales tax and use regulations. (2015)

(c) The use of the Internet for purposes of promoting e-commerce other than purposes stated in the Policy Statement is prohibited. (2015)

Section 4.02 In general, Lodges are permitted to place notices in Masonic and non-Masonic publications. They are not to advertise services or products for sale, or solicit funds for their Lodges, other than as permitted by the Methodical Digest. Lodges are permitted to display notices for local community events for free in their buildings and trestleboards, and to display and accept payment for advertising for commercial products and services in their trestleboards. The wording and overall content of proposed notices and advertising must align with the values and tenets of Freemasonry, and if found to be in conflict, must be rejected (See Article VIII) (2018)

## **Article V. Domain Registration, Access, and Intellectual Property Ownership and Control**

Section 5.01 Ownership/registration of domains, websites, hosting, and other accounts and services representing any subordinate Lodge shall be in the name and address of the Lodge or its Trustees (regardless of whether the Lodge or a member pays the fees) using the Lodge's mailing address. (2015)

Section 5.02 All account access Uniform Resource Locators (URLs), user IDs, passwords, and any identity verification (e.g., secret questions) shall be held by at least two members to guard against unforeseen happenstance. The GLCIT suggests a written copy be sealed and entrusted to the Lodge Secretary. (2016)

Section 5.03 The GLCIT recommends domain registration include the Lodge name and number in a manner easy for their members to remember (e.g., Indian River Lodge No. 252 as IRLodge252.org). (2015)

Section 5.04 Any intellectual property registration generated for the Lodge (e.g., trademark, copyright) shall be in the name of the Lodge or its Trustees. Should the Lodge contract for such services, the intellectual property rights as belonging to the Lodge shall be a part of the contract (regardless of pay or donation of such service). (2016)

Section 5.05 Incoming Worshipful Masters shall review their electronic and social media footprint, policies, and redundancy prior to (or immediately upon) installation of office--asking the

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question, “What would happen if Brother Webmaster died/demitted/moved/was too ill to perform his duties?” Further, this review should include planning shall the site(s) be compromised or “[hacked](#).” (2016)

Section 5.06 The Worshipful Master shall clearly appoint webmasters, account managers and administrators, either individually or as a Committee, to reinforce that their actions are on behalf and direction of the Lodge. Such appointment shall be part of the Lodge permanent records (i.e., the Minutes) (2016)

Section 5.07 Unless the intellectual property has been formally transferred to the care of the Trustees (Ref: Methodical Digest Sec. 2.69 Decision 1925 D-4), the use, licensing, and direction for the Lodge’s accounts, services, and intellectual property shall fall under vote of the Lodge or by order of the Worshipful Master. It is un-Masonic for any Brother to maintain an electronic Service implying to be that of any Lodge, official or unofficial, in defiance of the Worshipful Master (who is in compliance with this Policy), to include access, permissions, and administrators. Appeals may be submitted per Methodical Digest Sections 2.49 and 1.96. (2015)

## Article VI. Lodge Computer Use Policy

Section 6.01 The Lodge is responsible for securing the Lodge’s network and computing systems against unauthorized access and/or abuse, while making them accessible for authorized and legitimate users. This responsibility includes the use of a firewall, antivirus, and informing users of expected standards of conduct. (2016)

Section 6.02 The users of the network are responsible for respecting and adhering to local, state, federal and international laws. Users who violate any such laws will be subject to prosecution and/or litigation. If such an event should occur, the Lodge will fully comply with any complainants to provide any information necessary for prosecution and/or litigation. (2015)

Section 6.03 General Computing Policy (2015)

(a) All computer systems that are the property of the Lodge shall only be used for Lodge-related purposes. Within the Fraternity, use of Lodge computers by members for personal checking of email, web browsing, and fraternal/social use and printing is a valid Masonic purpose. (2016)

(b) Any unauthorized, deliberate action which violates posted Policy, damages or disrupts a computing system, alters its normal performance, or causes it to malfunction is prohibited regardless of system location or time duration. (2015)

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(c) Only software relevant to the users' Masonic duties should be installed on a computer system. (2015)

(d) The copying or sharing of copyrighted materials, without the express written permission of the owner or the proper licensing authority is prohibited. (2015)

(e) Due to the risk of electronically transmitted [viruses and malware](#), files shall not be downloaded or installed, this includes files attached to email messages, unless such files are from a trusted source, and have been properly scanned for viruses and malware. Individual users who do not conform with this Policy will be held responsible for problems and issues that may subsequently arise. (2016)

(f) Use of computer systems, facilities and/or services for commercial purposes, outside the scope of Lodge activities, is prohibited. (2015)

(g) Deletion, examination, copying, or modification of files and/or data belonging to other users without their prior consent is prohibited. (2015)

(h) The introduction of computer viruses, [malware](#), key-logging, spying or other disruptive/destructive/tracking programs is prohibited. (2015)

(i) All data shall be [regularly backed up](#), these backups shall be securely stored off-site, either by means of online [cloud](#) backups, and/or on portable external devices. Site administrators will regularly test their backup to ensure viable restoration of the site. All stored data with PII shall be protected with a password or encrypted. (2015)

Section 6.04 Wireless Technology. The Lodge is responsible for managing the infrastructure of the Lodge's data network, including a secure wireless network access. Wireless Access Points (WAP) must be approved by the Worshipful Master prior to installation. Wifi connections shall use a secure password and encryption, if users have access to internal computers or network. Wireless guest access will also require a password for access. (2016)

Section 6.05 The Lodge is responsible for Lodge electronic activity and communications, including that performed by its members on personal accounts or devices in the name of the Lodge. (2015)

Section 6.06 Lodges shall ensure the software and security of any site is kept current, to limit the risk of known threats. (2015)

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## Article VII. Electronic Communication in Tiled Lodges and Ritual Practice

Section 7.01 Subordinate Lodges shall use the following guidance for use of electronic devices in tiled communications: (2015)

(a) In general, the presence of electronic devices in a tiled communication is discouraged as being disrespectful. This includes, but is not limited to, computers, cell phones, tablets, pagers, recorders, personal digital assistants (PDA) and other communication or storage devices. (2016)

(b) A computing device may be used in a Tiled Lodge for the following purposes, with the permission of the Worshipful Master: (2018)

(1) By the Master (e.g., agenda and meeting coordination and preparation) (2016)

(2) By the Secretary, Assistant Secretary, or designee for taking minutes or researching an issue (e.g., records, previous minutes, rolls, or Methodical Digest)

(3) By the Treasurer for researching or presenting a financial matter (2016)

(4) Any Brother to research a calendar, note, or reference such as the Methodical Digest or Lodge By-Laws (2016)

(5) By or for a presenter to present a slideshow, demonstration or video (2016)

(6) Cameras (stand-alone or integrated into a multipurpose device) to capture award or presentation photos (2016)

(7) Other not-otherwise-prohibited specific uses as permitted by the Master (e.g., music) (2018)

(c) The non-disruptive use of smartphone, or similar electronic based calendars and note/reminder applications is permitted (with the permission of the Worshipful Master). (2016)

(d) With regards to members who must be immediately available (e.g., fire or medical professionals, law enforcement, those with a babysitter, caregiver or severely ill family member) cell phones or other types of communication instruments will be allowed, but must be muted or in silent mode during a tiled Lodge meeting. If a call comes in for the member, he shall excuse himself from the meeting in the same manner as asking to retire for any other reason and take the call outside the Lodge room, so as not to disturb the meeting. (2015)

(e) The recording of or streaming or any form of external communication of the actions or proceedings of a tiled meeting, during that meeting, is improper and prohibited without explicit

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permission of the Grand Lodge of Virginia. This explicitly prohibits “virtual” or “cyber” Lodge meetings or off-site attendance. (2015)

(f) Texting, emailing, or use of social media, the use of a smartphone, or similar electronic devices during tiled meetings is discourteous and improper. The use of phones or communication devices during such a meeting, except as may be directed by the Worshipful Master, is improper--specifically no communicating pictures, text, video or sound. (2018)

(g) Posting the rejection of a Petitioner to receive the degrees in Freemasonry is improper and prohibited. Posting for positive election results shall be delayed until the petitioner is notified by the voucher, Lodge Officer, or designee. It is disrespectful for any individual to start his Masonic career notified by a public post. (Ref: Methodical Digest 1933 D-17, §-2.107, §-2.108) (2016)

(h) Members shall not attend a tiled communication wearing a wireless earpiece, except for amplification assistive devices. The Worshipful Master may permit the use of wired or wireless earpieces for law enforcement, fire, or emergency services or similar personnel to monitor radio traffic. (2015)

Section 7.02 Digital communications platforms such as Skype<sup>®</sup>, FaceTime<sup>®</sup>, Google Hangouts<sup>®</sup>, and Go-To-Meeting<sup>®</sup> (not inclusive) may possess means to allow third parties to monitor or record the conversation. Hence catechism, lecture, degree practice and all other Virginia ritual only permitted to be learned orally may not be communicated over these services. (2015)

Section 7.03 For word-of-mouth ritual (e.g., catechism, lecture, degree) wired and cellular telephones may only be used to provide a needed or clarified word or phrase. They may not be used for distance education, examination or practice. (2015)

## Article VIII. Specific Electronic, Public Relations, and Communication Services

Section 8.01 News Media Interviews, Publications, and Press Releases (2016)

(a) The GLCPR maintains a website which explains how to create a press release, links to news media contacts and other information at: <http://pr.vamasons.org>. Except as otherwise provided herein, press releases and other public communications which conform to this Policy are not required to be reviewed or approved by the GSO. Notwithstanding, no press release or other communications is permitted concerning or in support of activities that are commercial,

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political or religious in nature other than as permitted by the Digest, and all press releases shall be respectful of human dignity and devoid of foul language, nudity and pornography. (2016)

(b) No Masons or Lodges shall participate in a news media interview either by newspaper, radio, television, internet post or blog, or publish by other means any information that purports to represent the views or opinions of the Grand Lodge of Virginia or Freemasonry (in general) without first having the script reviewed and approved for accuracy and policy compliance by the GLCPR and the GSO, including but not limited to Section 9.12 of this policy. Masons publishing on matters of appendant bodies are subject to their requirements. (Ref: Methodical Digest Standing Resolution February 9, 1966) (2018)

(c) Masons and Lodges shall consult the GLCPR before scheduling or providing any interview for formal publication (e.g., newspaper, magazine). Masons publishing on matters of appendant bodies are subject to their requirements. (Ref: Methodical Digest Sec. Standing Resolution February 9, 1966) (2016)

(d) Members shall refrain from publicly siding in controversial Masonic issues and using their individual Lodge or Grand Lodge affiliation as bona fides to attempt to give credibility to their position. Members are encouraged to engage the GLCPR for assistance or clarification. (2016)

## Section 8.02 Electronic Mail (2015)

(a) There are no privacy rights in the creation, sending, or receipt of email. Unencrypted email is considered insecure and publicly accessible. (2015)

(b) Whenever you send electronic mail, your name and contact information shall be included in each mail message. The Lodge is responsible for all electronic mail originating from Lodge computers. (2015)

(c) Forgery (or attempted forgery) of electronic mail messages is prohibited. (2015)

(d) Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other users is prohibited. (2016)

(e) Sending harassing, obscene or threatening email to another user is prohibited. (2015)

Section 8.03 The rapid change in information technology devices and services prohibits a comprehensive, specific policy. Masonic leaders and Brethren are responsible for consulting with the GLCIT or GSO for any specific question or concern. (2016)

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Section 8.04 Lodges are encouraged to promote their Lodge activities (e.g. blood drive, community builder awards, fundraisers, etc.) via the GL social media accounts, and can submit their event for publication to the GLCIT or GLCPR chairman, which will be reviewed for compliance first, and then published at the chairman's discretion. (2016)

Section 8.05 Lodges and Members may not place any pictures, representations or text that represent ritual, due guard, grips, signs, tokens or other information not permitted to be written by the Grand Lodge of Virginia on their website or other electronic system. Should such a violation occur, the GLCIT or GLCPR chairman should immediately be notified. (2018)

Section 8.06 The Lodge shall ensure any ads on the site have a disclaimer noting that the ad does not represent sponsorship or endorsement. Lodges may not have ads on topics that are un-Masonic (e.g., politics, religion, degrading or hate related, controversial social issues). (2016)

Section 8.07. Grand Lodge publications, to include but not limited to, the Methodical Digest, shall not be made available for non-Masonic purposes, to include public access. (2018)

## Article IX. Social Media Code of Conduct for Virginia Freemasons

Section 9.01 A Mason must conduct his social media activities in a way that reflects favorably upon his membership in the Craft. He must act in a way that presents a positive image of his membership in Freemasonry and realize that rash, imprudent or ill-advised postings cannot really be "taken back." (2016)

Section 9.02 The Grand Lodge of Virginia Districts and Lodges shall notify the GLCIT at [it@glova.org](mailto:it@glova.org) or the GLCPR at [pr@glova.org](mailto:pr@glova.org) when a new District or Lodge website and/or social media account is created, to ensure that Internet presences are maintained in accordance with policies, contain relevant information, and updated regularly. (2018)

Section 9.03 His actions, postings, videos and pictures, including those of Lodge or other Masonic events, on Social Media outlets must reflect the highest standards of morality and integrity he would practice within the Lodge. Such postings must not depict the Lodge, the Fraternity or any member thereof in an unfavorable light. (2015)

Section 9.04 To ensure our Fraternity represents itself to the high standards we believe in, we must regulate our actions through Brother-to-Brother intervention. As a Mason, you have the responsibility to advise a Brother if you feel that what he has posted is improper within the

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framework of our constitution, laws, rules, regulations, edicts or social media policy as reflected herein. (2016)

Section 9.05 It is improper to identify any Freemason as a member of the Craft unless he has given his consent, or has already identified himself as such. (2015)

Section 9.06 Lodge notices, and information contained within Lodge notices beyond the time and place of meeting and the general purpose or nature thereof, must not be discussed in any forum accessible by non-Masons. (2015)

Section 9.07 The publishing in any public forum discussion related to the submission of a petition, application, background check or investigation of an applicant, fact of a ballot, discussion thereon or results thereof is improper. (2015)

Section 9.08 The publishing in a public forum discussion related to the business of a Lodge and what is discussed within its tiled doors, including any posting of minutes or any portion thereof, is improper. This prohibition does not include awards or public recognition which may be published with consent of the awardee. (Ref: Methodical Digest Sec. 2.95 Decision 1990 D-29) (2015)

Section 9.09 Information about Lodge or district social activities must comply with the provisions of this Code of Conduct. (2015)

Section 9.10 Masons and Lodges shall not officially communicate with other Grand Lodges or their subordinate Lodges on matters such as, for example, membership standing. Contact must be conducted through the GSO. Lodges may have unofficial contact, such as social media membership/publication, email notifications, and event sharing, with other Grand Lodges or their subordinate Lodges. (2016)

Section 9.11 The Hallmarks of Masonic Communication, oral, written or electronic are: dignity, courtesy, fraternal respect, consideration for the privacy rights of Brethren, tolerance and respect for the religious, political and other personal views of Masons. Admonishment of error, when needed is done privately. Discussion and reasoned debate between Brethren is healthy; personal attacks and incivility are not permitted and may be considered un-Masonic. Masons are expected to extend these generous principles to all. (Ref: Methodical Digest Sec. 3.06 and 4.01). (2016)

Section 9.12 Any blog, website or social media site created by any member of Freemasonry under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Virginia that will discuss any Masonic topic of any kind must include the following disclaimer: (2015)

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“Any views, opinions, or thoughts articulated in postings and/or comments from any contributors do not in any way represent the views of the Grand Lodge of Virginia, its officers, employees, or its subordinate Lodges.”

Section 9.13 Notifications of Degrees may include the candidate’s name once he has been elected to receive the Degrees in Freemasonry. (MD 2.108) (2018)

## **Article X. Events Involving the Public**

Section 10.01 Lodges are encouraged to invite local nonprofits, community associations and governmental bodies to use their buildings, which activity helps educate the public about Masonry and its presence and importance in their communities. Lodges also are encouraged to give tours of their Lodge buildings and participate in local public events, such as parades, Fourth of July and other holiday celebrations, or community fairs, in order to create a positive image of Masonry and demonstrate the positive contributions that Masons make to their communities. When opening their buildings to the public, Lodges must ensure that Masonic paraphernalia or regalia—those items that have meaning and purpose when presented within the context of our ritual but may not be easily understood by one who is not a Mason—are properly secured. At all times, Lodge buildings must not permit any item or display that would conflict with the values of Freemasonry. (2016)

Section 10.02 Lodges may participate in fundraising and other activities by themselves or with unrelated nonprofits and governmental bodies as long as such activities are not commercial, political, or religious in nature other than as permitted by the Digest, are respectful of human dignity and devoid of foul language, nudity, or pornography. Use of Lodge buildings for such purposes by unrelated nonprofits, community associations and governmental bodies shall be consistent with the Digest. (2016)

## **Article XI. Policy Violations**

Section 11.01 Violations of this policy shall be referred to the GLCIT or the GLCPR who will communicate such violation to the GSO for the determination of appropriate action. (2016)

## **Article XII. Questions and Comments**

Section 12.01 Questions to the GLCIT and GLCPR: (2015)

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(a) The Chairman, GLCIT, and by extension the GLCIT and GLCPR when performing in their official role, may respond directly to Masonic questions over supported GL platforms only on topics covered explicitly within this Policy or the Methodical Digest, Proclamations, Edicts, Resolutions or other published materials. The reference shall be cited (and ideally linked) in the response. (2016)

(b) Questions to the GLCIT and GLCPR not explicitly contained in GL published material shall be referred to the GSO, via the Chairman with as much information on the requestor as possible. (2016)

Section 12.02 Comments to the GLCIT and GLCPR: (2015)

(a) Relevant comments and suggestions to the GLCIT and GLCPR shall be referred to the appropriate Committee Chairman with as much information on the submitter as possible. (2016)

Submitted: October 26, 2018

Submitted: October 26, 2018

William J. Baumbach II, PM

Wade Evans III, PM

Chairman, Committee on Information  
Technology

Chairman, Committee on Public  
Relations

Reviewed: November 19, 2018

Approved: November 19, 2018

Alan W. Adkins, PGM

William E. Hershey, Jr.

Grand Secretary

Grand Master of Masons in Virginia

# Social Media, Public Relations and Information Technology Policy

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## Appendix A: Acronyms and Definitions

A.F. & A.M = Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons.

GL = Grand Lodge.

GLCIT = Grand Lodge Committee on Information Technology.

GLCPR = Grand Lodge Committee on Public Relations.

GM = Grand Master.

GSO = Grand Secretary's Office.

IT = Information Technology.

PGM = Past Grand Master.

PII = Personally Identifiable Information.

PM = Past Master.

S&C = Square and Compasses.

SMS = Short Message Service (text message).

USB = Universal Serial Bus.

[Social Media](#), includes but is not limited to, information sharing services/platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, Blogs, YouTube, Forums, Podcasts. (2016)

# Social Media, Public Relations and Information Technology Policy

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## Appendix B: Hyperlink References

Since this IT Policy may be printed, the following represents all hyperlinks used in the document

Article	Section	Link	URL
I	1.01	Social Media	<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_media">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_media</a>
II	2.01	Personally Identifiable Information. (PII)	<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personally_identifiable_information">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personally_identifiable_information</a>
II	2.01	Encryption	<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Encryption">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Encryption</a>
II	2.01(b)	Tips for creating a strong password	<a href="http://www.howtogeek.com/195430/how-to-create-a-strong-password-and-remember-it/">http://www.howtogeek.com/195430/how-to-create-a-strong-password-and-remember-it/</a>
II	2.02	Hacking	<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hijacking">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hijacking</a>
II	2.02	Software Vulnerabilities	<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vulnerability_(computing)">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vulnerability_(computing)</a>
II	2.02	Password Managers	<a href="http://lifel hacker.com/5529133/five-best-password-managers">http://lifel hacker.com/5529133/five-best-password-managers</a>
II	2.04	Title 15, Chapter 91 of the US Code	<a href="https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/15/chapter-91">https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/15/chapter-91</a>
II	2.07(b)	Virtual Private Network	<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virtual_private_network">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virtual_private_network</a>
II	2.07(h)	Team Viewer	<a href="https://www.teamviewer.com">https://www.teamviewer.com</a>
II	2.07(h)	LogMeIn	<a href="http://logmein.com">http://logmein.com</a>
II	2.07(h)	VNC	<a href="http://ultravnc.com">http://ultravnc.com</a>
III	3.08	Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia	<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_and_seal_of_Virginia">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_and_seal_of_Virginia</a>
III	3.08	Copyrighted	<a href="https://commonwealth.virginia.gov/official-documents/seals-of-the-commonwealth/">https://commonwealth.virginia.gov/official-documents/seals-of-the-commonwealth/</a>
V	5.05	“Hacked”	<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hacker_%28computer_security%29">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hacker_%28computer_security%29</a>

# Social Media, Public Relations and Information Technology Policy

VI	6.03(e)	Viruses	<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_virus">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_virus</a>
VI	6.03(h)	Malware	<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malware">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malware</a>
VI	6.03(i)	Regularly backed up	<a href="http://www.dpbestflow.org/backup/backup-overview">http://www.dpbestflow.org/backup/backup-overview</a>
VI	6.03(i)	Cloud	<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cloud_computing">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cloud_computing</a>
	Acronyms and Definitions	Social Media	<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_media">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_media</a>
		Handbook for Safeguarding Sensitive Personally Identifiable Information DHS	<a href="http://bit.ly/2SolmYv">http://bit.ly/2SolmYv</a>

# Social Media, Public Relations and Information Technology Policy

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## Appendix C: Disclaimer

The Grand Lodge of A.F & A.M. of Virginia is not responsible for the externally linked content. Any conflict or discrepancies in this Policy with the Methodical Digest, Edicts, or other, the same shall prevail, or shall be referred to the Grand Master through proper protocol and procedure for decision. **Due to the nature of Information Technology and communications services, this Policy is subject to change at any time without notice, it will be your responsibility to obtain the current version at: [www.policy.grandlodgeofvirginia.org](http://www.policy.grandlodgeofvirginia.org) (2016)**

## Appendix D: Revisions

Initially approval by the Grand Master: July 31, 2015.

Editions: 2015 1st 2016 2nd, 2017 n/a, 2018 3rd.

Last reviewed by the Committee on IT Chairman: November 02, 2018.

Last reviewed by the Committee on PR Chairman: October 26, 2018.

Last reviewed by the Grand Secretary: November 2018.

Most recent approval by the Grand Master: November 2018.

# Social Media, Public Relations and Information Technology Policy

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## Appendix E: Annual Lodge Verification

### Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of Virginia Review and Intent To Comply with Social Media, Public Relations, and Information Technology Policy

Lodge Name	No.	City	Masonic Year

We, the Worshipful Master and Secretary, certify that we:

- Have read and understand the Grand Lodge of Virginia Social Media, Public Relations, and Information Technology Policy.
- Understand the need to properly safeguard personally identifiable information of our members, both in paper and electronically, in storage and transmission.
- Understand the need to preserve the traditions and public image of Virginia Freemasonry.
- Have reviewed the policies and practices of our Lodge; initiating actions, if needed, to come into compliance.
- Have or will disseminate the Policy, as needed, to the Lodge officers, committeemen and Brothers for their knowledge and implementation.
- Have had an opportunity to address any questions or need of assistance to the Grand Lodge of Virginia Committee on Information Technology at [IT@GrandLodgeofVirginia.org](mailto:IT@GrandLodgeofVirginia.org) or Grand Lodge Committee on Public Relations at [PR@GrandLodgeofVirginia.org](mailto:PR@GrandLodgeofVirginia.org) and further understand such assistance is available in the future, if needed.

Worshipful Master Signature		
Worshipful Master Printed Name		(date)
Secretary Signature		
Secretary Printed Name		(date)

Upon completion please email, mail or fax to the Grand Lodge Office.