



Grand Secretary's Office
Mark Masons' Hall
86 St James's Street, London, SW1A 1PL

15 April 2021

To: Members of all Orders administered from Mark Masons' Hall

Dear Sir and Brother

RESUMPTION STRATEGY

Following the UK Prime Minister's recent progress update on the roadmap to exit lockdown in England, we have been considering our strategy for a resumption of meetings, while maintaining our commitment to create options which reflect local conditions and accommodate the different needs of our members.

It is important to emphasise that you should only return to meetings when government guidance permits and when you feel it is right for you. No Brother should feel coerced into resuming their masonic activities prematurely.

With a membership spread across so many different countries, it has not been possible to devise a 'one size fits all' strategy for the resumption of meetings. The guidance contained in this note is most relevant to members in England whilst those in Scotland, Wales and Overseas, should follow the guidance issued by government and public health authorities in those areas.

TIMELINE

From 17 May 2021

Units in all Orders will be permitted to hold meetings of up to **SIX** people subject to government restrictions that may be in force and if the local Head of Order is content to lift the local suspension. This may be agreed on a Centre by Centre basis to reflect the fact that some venues will remain closed for the time being. Separate guidance on ceremonies permitted to be conducted in such meetings will follow shortly.

Larger gatherings of up to **THIRTY** people may be permitted at venues that have carried out a risk assessment, considered all relevant government guidance and taken all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of transmission. In such cases, the maximum permitted attendance may be restricted to less than thirty if the risk assessment identifies a lower maximum capacity to be appropriate.

In all cases, dining may resume but will be restricted to groups of up to **SIX** people.

From 21 June 2021

All Units shall be permitted to return to meeting as normal.

Units that cannot resume meeting because the members have indicated they do not wish to do so at this time or are prevented from doing so because their meeting place is not open, may continue to make use of the Virtual Business Meeting scheme until it is possible to recommence physical meetings.

It is not yet clear what restrictions or government guidance will replace existing measures but as soon as these are known, we will issue an update.

PERMITTED ATTENDANCE

Some Brethren have asked whether individuals who have not been vaccinated will be allowed to attend physical meetings when they resume. Introducing any form of restriction based on vaccination status would place an undue burden on Units and may prove difficult to police.

It is the responsibility of every Brother to ensure that he only attends meetings if he is free of Covid-19 symptoms and, having regard to his general health, deems it appropriate and safe to do so.

FURTHER GUIDANCE

We recognise that the planned resumption of meetings will raise questions which are not covered here so I will shortly be issuing a separate note containing updated guidance and answers to the most frequently asked questions.

We believe that this strategy represents a sensible approach to resuming masonic meetings within the framework set out by the UK government. Any change in circumstances affecting this roadmap will be notified to you as soon as possible.

With fraternal regards and best wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan A. Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial 'R'.

R.W.Bro. Ryan A Williams, P.G.J.W.
Grand Secretary