



INFORMATION ON MASONIC TRIALS

Prepared by:

*Law & Jurisprudence Committee
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INDEX

PREFACE.....	3
APPEAL.....	16
ACTION TAKEN UPON ADOPTION OF CHARGES.....	11
CIVIL RIGHTS TO THE ACCUSED.....	5
DAY OF TRIAL.....	12
EVIDENCE.....	13
EVIDENCE OF THOSE WHO CANNOT BE ADMITTED INTO THE LODGE.....	12
FILING OF CHARGES.....	11
FORM OF THE CHARGE: FILING BY AN INDIVIDUAL BROTHER.....	10
FORM OF THE CHARGE: FILING BY THE COMPLAINTS AND OFFENSES COMMITTEE.....	10
MASONIC RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED.....	6
NEW TRIAL.....	16
OUTLINE & CHECKLIST.....	19
PENAL JURISDICTION OF THE LODGE.....	4
PROSECUTION AND DEFENSE.....	12
RECORD.....	16
THE PENALTY.....	15
TRIAL PROCEDURE.....	14
UNMASONIC CONDUCT.....	7 & 8
WHEN FORMAL TRIAL MAY BE DISPENSED WITH.....	17 & 18
THOSE WHO MAY PREFER CHARGES.....	9
WHO PRESIDES.....	13

PREFACE

This manual has been prepared with the hope that it may be of the aid and assistance to the Craft in the discharge of one of the most onerous, but nevertheless, one of the most important duties of Masons – the administration of Masonic Justice. As Masons we are taught that truth is the foundation of every virtue and that justice is the standard by which every man is rendered his just due without distinction.

The purpose and goal of Masonic Jurisprudence, as it relates to the penal jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge and the subordinate Lodges, are to find and establish the truth in every particular and to render justice in accordance with the truth as it shall be found.

It is hoped that this manual will bring to the Craft a better understanding of the basic principles of Masonic Law and will serve as an aid and guide in the administration of Masonic Justice under the Law.

PENAL JURISDICTION OF THE LODGE

Jurisdiction means the power to act, the power to make and enforce decisions and judgments. Penal jurisdiction is the power to bring charges, to conduct a trial, to render judgment, to impose penalty and to enforce the same.

Penal jurisdiction is of two kinds; (a) geographical, or territorial jurisdiction, which means the power of the Lodge over all Masons, affiliated and unaffiliated, that live and reside within the territory from which the Lodge may receive petitions for the Degrees; and, (b) personal jurisdiction, which means the power of the Lodge over its own members wherever they may reside and ceases only when the Brother ceases to be a member of the Lodge.

Under our law, jurisdiction means not only the power of a Lodge to prefer charges, render judgment and impose sentence but includes the duty to do so in proper cases.

A Lodge has jurisdiction of affiliated Masons in its territory wherever their membership may be. If he is a member of the Lodge within whose jurisdiction the act complained of is done to prefer charges against him and to send them to his Lodge, and if the Lodge of which he is a member shall not within four (4) months proceed and try him for such offense, the Lodge where the act is done shall have jurisdiction and proceed and try him as if he were a member of that Lodge, and its judgment shall have the same effect as if it were rendered by the Lodge of which he is a member. (1902-138). If a member of a Lodge in another jurisdiction shall, while sojourning or residing in this State, commit an act which would subject a member of a Lodge in this jurisdiction to trial and discipline, charges shall be made against him by the Lodge where he may be at the time the act was done and sent to the Lodge of his membership through the Grand Secretary; but he shall nevertheless be tried by the Lodge, and its judgment shall by respect have the same effect. A certified copy of the judgment shall be sent under the seal of the Lodge trying him, through the Grand Secretary, to the Lodge of his membership.

A Lodge likewise has the jurisdiction over unaffiliated Masons residing in its territory and may prefer charges, conduct the trial and render Masonic justice, and the action of the Mississippi Lodge is binding upon the Lodges of the Masonic world.

These provisions of law are recognized by all Masons for the good of the fraternity. A Mason who is unworthy of membership should be subject to discipline no matter where he resides because his unworthiness is a reflection on all Masons, and more particularly on those Masons who are members of the Lodge in whose territory he resides. Masonic Law confers jurisdiction over him to the Lodge in whose jurisdiction he resides.

A Lodge has jurisdiction over its own members no matter where they reside and upon proper notice to a member may render Masonic judgment against him.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED

We tend to think of Masonic justice as conclusive of all the rights of a Masons, but this is not completely true because civil law also governs the rights of Masons as well as the rights of members of all other voluntary organizations, and a Mason deprived of his Masonic rights by Lodge action may have recourse in proper cases to the civil courts for protection.

A Mason has paid a specific sum of money as fees for the Degrees, and paid sums of money as due and in return therefore has acquired valuable rights including the rights to Masonic charity. These rights are considered property rights by the civil courts and every Mason is protected against arbitrary denial and deprivation of these rights.

Every Mason, however, by voluntarily becoming a member of the fraternity agrees to and becomes bound by our laws, including those which provide that he may be expelled from Masonry by certain procedures provided for in our laws, and the courts will not interfere in administration of Masonic justice nor enforcement of its judgment if our law relating to suspensions or expulsions from Masonry make adequate provisions for notice to the accused of charges against him and for a fair hearing thereon. If in our procedures we comply with those laws, the courts will have no cause to interfere.

A Mason in voluntarily joining the fraternity agrees to and is bound by our laws, but he does not agree to be bound by disregard of or non-compliance therewith.

It is the responsibility of every Lodge not only to conduct its penal proceedings in absolute fairness to the accused, but to so conduct them that they will be sustained under rigid examination in a court of law.

Nothing could be more embarrassing to Masonry than for the judgment of a Lodge to be set aside because of failure to give the accused a fair trial or because it did not comply with Masonic Law.

THE MASONIC RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED

The basic rights of the accused are first, a charge or charges plainly stated; second, reasonable notice; and third, a speedy trial.

A Mason accused of unmasonic conduct and brought to trial is on trial for his Masonic life. By the trial and judgment of this Brothers he may be denied that which he sought of his own free will that which he paid of his earnings to have, that which he worked to achieve and that which brought him membership in the greatest fraternal order the world has ever known.

To be denied or deprived of these rights, to be expelled from membership in Masonry, is a serious matter that will have its effects throughout the life of him who suffers such judgment. It is the duty of the Lodge and the Masons responsible for conduct of such a Masonic trial to be constantly aware of the seriousness of their responsibilities and the grave nature of their duties and to the faithfully fulfill those responsibilities and discharge those duties.

The accused is presumed to be innocent of the charges and should be treated with every consideration reasonably necessary for him to present his defense of those charges.

The bare legal necessities of clear and plainly stated charges, or reasonable notice and speedy trial are not all the requirements to be complied with when a Brother is under charges.

The accused has a right to be fully informed of his rights, of the requirements of our laws as to the clear charges, adequate notice of proceedings, of his right to answer the charges, to have witnesses appear in his behalf, to be confronted with the witnesses against him and to examine them on their testimony, of his right to counsel, and to present at all proceedings except when the Lodge is considering the matter of judgment and penalty at the close of the trial. It is the undoubted duty of the Master of the Lodge to inform the accused of these rights or be assured that the Brother is informed in regard thereto by a Brother competent to advise him.

Brethren of the Lodge are the jury and it behooves each of them to keep an open mind as to the guilt or innocence of the accused, to refrain from listening to rumor or gossip, to discourage discussion that tends to influence the mind before the evidence is considered and each members should in every way demean himself as he would wish others to do if he himself were on trial. This is the supreme right of the accused and all the more vital because the power to grant or deny that right lies in the heart, mind and conscience of each and every member of the Lodge.

UNMASONIC CONDUCT

Our laws do not contain an extensive listing of specific offenses that constitute unmasonic conduct, but sets forth the general principles, tenets and obligations that should be the guide of every Mason in his conduct and declares any violation thereof to be unmasonic conduct.

The Holy Bible, the obligations of a Mason solemnly assumed at the Altar, the principles and tenets exemplified in our Ritual, the Constitution, Statutes, Rules and Regulations of the Grand Lodge and the By-Laws of Subordinate Lodges constitute the guidelines for proper Masonic conduct and any violation thereof subjects a Mason to discipline. Over the years our Grand Lodge has deemed the following to be Masonic Offenses –

Any transgression of, or want of conformity unto, the law of God or the law of the land.

A violation of fidelity to solemn engagements, a neglect of prescribed duties, or a transgression of the cardinal principles of friendship, morality or brotherly love.

Violation of the Landmarks and Regulations of the Institution.

The institution (fraternity) takes no cognizance of ecclesiastical or political offenses.

The whole moral Code is the law of Masonry, and special legislation must not be construed to mean that vices not mentioned are not the subject of Masonic discipline (1855-66; 1897-26).

The following are some of the acts that constitute Masonic offenses:

Abandoning when charged with a violation of the law of the land (1898-60);

Failure of Secretary or Treasurer to give accounting (1886-13);

Becoming an atheist (1882-49);

Attacking the motives of Committee of Complaints and Offenses (1886-35);

Refusing to stand to and abide by the awards of the Lodge (1889-14);

Disclosing ballot (1887-76; 1902-86);

Any offense committed before initiation not known to the Lodge at the time of initiation (1897-27);

Threatening to use a black ball, or informing the candidate who cast a black ball (1898-12);

Conducting himself in his business so as to bring censure or reproach to himself of the Fraternity (1870-55);

Disclosing Lodge business (1853-56);

Drunkenness, regardless of whether or not he is wearing a Fez (1877-64; 1889-92; 1898-64);

Electioneering for office in Subordinate Lodge or Grand Lodge (1857-69);

Ceasing to believe in the existence of God (1882-49; 1900-43);

UNMASONIC CONDUCT, cont.

Ceasing to believe in the immortality of the soul; ceasing to believe in a resurrection to a future life, commonly called "Resurrection of the Body";

Improper conduct with that of a woman regardless of her Masonic relation (1866-44; 1872-36);

All forms of lottery, raffle and games of chance in connection with Masonic Enterprises or entertainments, either direct or indirect, are unmasonic and not permissible. (1952-142);

It is unmasonic for a Mason to send out a political letter or circular to a Mason addressing him as "Fellow Mason," or "Brother Mason," or to send one out signed as an officer, or past officer, or a Lodge, or to solicit votes in the name of Masonry, or because of Masonic affiliation, or in any form or manner to bring Masonry into the political arena. Any Mason so offending should be put on trial by his Lodge and properly punished. Any Lodge that refuses or knowingly fails to put the offender on trial should have its charter arrested (Digest 1958-70);

All the words used in Opening, Closing and Initiation, except the Monitorial, are secret.

Everything that transpires in a tiled Lodge room should be kept secret and not to be discussed with one who is not a Mason;

Visiting a clandestine lodge or conversing with a clandestine mason on a Masonic subject (1853-65; 1854-167; 1870-58; 1899-43)

THOSE WHO MAY PREFER CHARGES

Any Master Mason who is a member in good standing in any regular Lodge may prefer charges in his Lodge against any Mason that resides in that Jurisdiction, or any member thereof (Rule 11).

Our Rules Relating to Masonic Discipline provides for a Complaints and Offenses Committee composed of three discreet members, whose duty it is to take notice of all offenses by Masons, whether members or sojourners, including the suspended (Rule 9). The committee shall take notice of all offenses against Masonry, good morals and society, which may either come under their (the committee's) own observation or of which they may be informed by any person or through any source, and without delay to fairly and impartially investigate the same, and if they deem that the welfare of Masonry or the protection of the weak and defenseless demands such action, to report any misconduct to the Lodge. Their report may or may not be accompanied by charges and specifications as they think best.

If the Committee of Complaints and Offenses prefers charges and the Lodge adopts the report it is an arraignment of the accused and a motion to put him on trial is unnecessary.

It is not the duty of this committee to try cases or to pronounce sentence, but simply to investigate the nature of the offense, and if probable cause is found to exist, to report. The committee neither prosecutes nor defends, but investigates with strict impartiality. It is quite as much their duty to establish the innocence as it is to show guilt. Their sole function is to get at the truth and report it to the Lodge.

When charges are filed and accepted by the Lodge, they are the responsibility of the Lodge, even though they were filed by an individual.

THE FORM OF THE CHARGE

The following is a suggested form to be used to file charges. It is ample and sufficient to meet all requirements of our laws.

FILING BY AN INDIVIDUAL BROTHER

TO: Worshipful Master, Wardens and Members of _____ Lodge No. _____, Mississippi. I, _____, a member of this Lodge charge Brother _____, a member of this Lodge (or a member of _____ Lodge No. _____, F. & A.M., residing in the jurisdiction of this Lodge) with the following act(s) of unmasonic conduct.

(Specify the act(s) of unmasonic conduct – list clearly and concisely the act(s), words, or conduct constituting the offense(s) complained of, giving dates and, if witnessed by others, their names and addresses.)

NAME

FILING BY THE COMPLAINTS AND OFFENSES COMMITTEE

We the undersigned, constituting the Complaints and Offenses Committee of this Lodge charge Brother _____, a member of this Lodge (or a member of _____ Lodge, No. _____, F. & A.M., of _____, with the following act(s) of unmasonic conduct.

- 1. On or about the _____ day of _____, A.D. _____, at or near _____ did (state clearly the acts, words or conduct complained of.)
- 2. (If more than one offense is complained of, use language in Paragraph 1 above and state clearly the acts, words or conduct constituting the offense complained of.

Complaints and Offense Committee

Chairman

Member

Member

THE FORM OF THE CHARGE, cont.

The charges should state as definitely as possible the date of the alleged offense, the place where it was committed, and if the act, words of conduct, was directed towards any person or persons, the name or names of such person or persons should be included in the charge. It would also be entirely proper, although not necessary, that the names of the persons who saw, heard or observed the act, words or conduct be set forth in the charges.

The essential element of the charge is that the accused be fully informed so that he may make a full, direct and complete answer thereto.

FILING OF CHARGES

Charges must be filed in open Lodge. If filed by an individual he must be present the charges and specifications to the Lodge. If the Lodge so desires, it may adopt the charges as presented; refer them to Complaints and Offenses Committee for investigation and report to the Lodge; or, if the Lodge feels that the charges are frivolous, refuse to consider them.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN UPON ADOPTION OF CHARGES

Upon presentation of charges to the Lodge and motion made to adopt the same, the ballot is taken (either by show of hands or with white balls and black balls or cubes). A majority vote is required for adoption. Every member present should vote.

Immediately upon adoption of the charges, the Secretary is to prepare notice to the accused using the form prescribed in Rule 12, "Notice to the Accused", and forward this notice, along with a true copy of the charges and specifications to the accused. The notice shall be sent to the accused to his usual place of residence, or if his place of residence is unknown or cannot be ascertained after delinquent inquiry, he shall so report to the Lodge, and if it shall so order, the Committee on Complaints and Offenses shall proceed as if he were served, to take evidence as in other cases, and the Lodge may, when the evidence is complete, set a day for trial, not to be less than two (2) months thereafter.

EVIDENCE OF THOSE WHO CANNOT BE ADMITTED INTO LODGE

Only Master Masons can be admitted into the Lodge. (This includes legal counsel for the accused if he is not a Mason.) Those who cannot be admitted shall be examined and evidence taken by the Complaints and Offenses Committee, (this hearing shall not be less than two (2) weeks from the service of the notice to accused) at which examination the accused may attend, either in person or by counsel, and cross-examine such witnesses, and also to present any persons, who cannot be admitted into the Lodge, whose testimony the accused may desire to have read into the trial by the Lodge. This hearing shall be continued from day to day until all such testimony shall have been taken, but an adjournment may be taken by agreement with the accused to any other time or place, and by like agreement in writing, an earlier day than that named in the notice may be agreed upon.

DAY OF THE TRIAL

On the day named in the notice, which shall not be less than two months after the charges are adopted by the Lodge, the trial shall proceed, unless for good cause shown, the Lodge may continue the same until another day.

The Lodge fixes the day of the trial after the report of the committee is in.

PROSECUTION AND DEFENSE

The Committee on Complaints and Offenses shall act as the accusers, and if they desire it may be assisted by counsel, provide that the person who brings the charges, or any one employed by him, shall not act in that capacity. The accused may appear in person or by counsel, and in his absence and that of any person selected by him to conduct his defense, it shall be the duty of the Master to appoint some competent Mason to defend him, and such appointment shall be made before any evidence is taken by the committee.

EVIDENCE

The evidence of Masons shall be taken upon the honor of a Mason and that of all others upon honor.

If evidence of a profane, who is beyond the reach of the committee, is desired, either in proving or disproving the charges, or if a Mason who by reason of distance, sickness or other infirmity, cannot attend at the trial, it may be taken by a Commission, to be composed of three (3) Master Masons to be appointed by the Master, on written interrogatories to be propounded by either the Committee on Complaints and Offenses or the accused. The party desiring such evidence shall give to the other in writing such interrogatories as they desire answered, and cross interrogatories may be asked if desired, but such cross interrogatories must be prepared and given to the Master within one week, or he may disregard them and forward the Commission to the Commissioners. When the witness has testified the Commissioners shall certify and send the deposition to the Master who shall file it with the Secretary, but either party may inspect it before the trial.

The evidence of all witnesses shall be reduced to writing and signed by the witness; then by the committee, and by that taken at the trial by the Secretary or some proper person to be designated by the Master.

Hearsay evidence is not permissible and cannot be used in a Lodge trial.

Evidence must satisfy the Lodge of the guilt of the accused.

Technicalities and quibbles should not be resort to so as to defeat justice, but the spirit of the Law should be observed as to secure a fair trial.

WHO PRESIDES

Ordinarily the Master should preside at every trial, but may call upon a Past Master, not objected to by the committee or the accused, to preside for him, if he thinks that it is expedient to do so, but he shall in every case be responsible for the conduct of the trial and the ruling thereat are his.

The Master of a Lodge is the agent of the Grand Lodge in his Masonic jurisdiction; his decisions upon matters of Masonic law and usages are, with respect to his own Lodge, absolute. There is no appeal from them to the Lodge, but there is to the Grand Master and to the Grand Lodge. He cannot take the law into his own hands, nor set aside the manifest intent of his Lodge.

TRIAL PROCEDURE

Trial procedure shall be as follows:

1. Reading the charges and specifications.
2. Plea, if any, to charge and specifications.
3. Examination of witnesses in support of charges and specifications.
4. Reading of depositions in support of charges and specifications.
5. Examination of witness for the accused.
6. Reading the depositions for the accused.
7. Rebutting any evidence on either side, if any.
8. Argument in support of the charges on behalf of the committee and accuser, if any.
9. Argument for the accused.
10. Withdrawal of the accused and the accuser, if any, and all but members of the Lodge, for the Lodge room.
11. Comments upon the evidence by any member, who has not previously spoken, and who is not engaged as counsel for either party.
12. The Master shall then put the question:
 - a. Is the accused guilty of the first speculation?
 - b. All who believe that he is, will cast a black ball (or cube) and all who think he is not will cast a white ball.

And in like manner the Lodge shall vote upon each specification and charge, the ballot box being first presented to the Master and Wardens in succession, and afterwards placed on the altar for the members to vote.

After each ballot, the Master and each Warden will announce the number of white and the number of black balls (or cubes).

If two-thirds of the balls (or cubes) are black the specification or charge voted upon shall be considered proved; otherwise, the accused shall be acquitted.

THE PENALTY

If any one of the charges are sustained by the requisite vote, the Lodge shall proceed to vote upon the penalty as follows:

1. Shall the brother be expelled? All who think he should be will cast a black ball or cube, and those who think that he ought not be, a white ball. It requires a two-thirds vote to expel.
2. Shall the brother be indefinitely suspended? All who think he should be will cast a black ball or cube, and those who think he ought not be, a white ball. It requires a two-thirds vote to indefinitely suspend.
3. Shall the brother be suspended for a definite time? All who think he should be will cast a black ball or cube, and those who think he ought not be, a white ball. It requires a majority vote to definitely suspend.
4. Shall the brother be reprimanded? All who think he should be will cast a black ball or cube, and those who think he ought not be, a white ball. It requires a majority vote to reprimand.

If the conclusion of the Lodge is to suspend, a vote will be taken, on motion, to fix the period of suspension.

The Lodge having decided upon what the sentence it will inflict, the accused will be admitted, and the results announced to him by the Master.

A mandatory sentence of expulsion is required in the following cases:

1. Conversing on a Masonic subject with a clandestine mason or visiting a clandestine lodge.
2. Being incarcerated in the penitentiary. (The law offers no extenuating circumstances that might justify the infliction of a lesser penalty. If the member is in the penitentiary he **must** be expelled.)

NEW TRIAL

Any Mason convicted of unmasonic conduct may be granted one new trial, either by the Master who presided at the trial, or by the Lodge, if good cause exist therefor.

APPEAL

The accused, or the Mason who preferred the charges, **or any member of the Lodge**, who may deem himself or the cause of Masonry injured by the decision of the Lodge at any trial may, within three (3) months after such decision, take an appeal to the Grand Lodge by giving notice in writing the Master of his desire to appeal to the Grand Lodge, in which notice he shall set forth his objections to the action of the Lodge.

RECORD

When the Master of a Lodge shall receive notice of an appeal being taken from its decision at a trial, he shall instruct the Secretary to forthwith make a full and perfect record of all the proceedings, and he shall sign the same and have it forwarded, without delay, to the Grand Secretary. And it shall be the duty of such Master to inspect such record and to see that nothing is omitted therefrom which was before the Lodge at the trial, including the notice of appeal, and that the Secretary duly certifies to the same under the seal of the Lodge. (*Use Form 26 – Form of Record for Appeal to Grand Lodge from the action of a Lodge upon the Trial of a Brother.*)

WHEN FORMAL TRIAL MAY BE DISPENSED WITH

- (a) Plea of guilty: If any Mason against whom charges are made shall appear either in person or by counsel, or in lieu thereof by written sworn affidavit, and plead guilty, such pleas shall have the effect to dispense with the necessity of taking any evidence against him; but if he introduces any evidence in mitigation of the offense it may be rebutted, if the committee so elects; after which the Lodge shall proceed, as in other cases, to fix the penalty.

- (b) Guilty of Felony: Charges shall be preferred against any Mason who has been found guilty of a felony in either the State or Federal Courts, regardless of the plea entered therein, but upon presentation to the Lodge at a stated communication thereof of certified copies of court documents relevant thereto, such documentary evidence shall be held to be prima facie evidence of guilt, and the necessity of presenting other evidence, or of holding formal Lodge trial, shall be dispensed with.

The accused is guilty and the Master shall so announce:

1. If the accused is in the penitentiary or under sentence thereto, he is expelled, and such expulsion is forthwith announced by the Master.

2. If the accused be not in the penitentiary or under sentence thereto, but is in jail or other detention sentence thereto, he is suspended for a period of at least as long as the jail or detention center sentence, but in no case to be less than one year, and such suspension and the length thereof if forthwith announced by the Master.

3. If the accused be not in the penitentiary , jail or other detention center or under the sentence thereto, a lesser sentence having been imposed by the court, he is suspended for a period of not less than six months from the date of suspension, and such suspension and the length thereof is forthwith announced by the Master.

The term "penitentiary" as used herein is construed as being either the penitentiary itself or a county or city jail being used in lieu thereof because of a lack of space in the penitentiary.

The Secretary notifies the expelled or suspended member in writing and also the Grand Secretary as required by Section 31 of the Rules and Regulations.

WHEN FORMAL TRIAL MAY BE DISPENSED WITH, cont.

The documentary evidence provided herein should be procured and/or presented by the Complaints and Offenses Committee, on whose primary duty it is, or by the Master, either of the Wardens, the Secretary or any three members of the Lodge.

If the accused is found guilty in the courts but is free on appeal, such action as is set forth herein should not be delayed. If, on appeal, the original court finding should be reserved and the accused set free, the Lodge may, or may not, as it wishes, restore him, in accordance with the provisions of Rule 29 of Discipline. If the accused by found guilty but is placed on probation by the courts, the length of any suspension imposed by the Lodge hereunder may not be less than the term of such probation.

If the offender be not disciplined as provided herein, such failure may result in the suspension of the Master and/or the arrest of his jewel by the Grand Master, or the Lodge may have its labors suspended; or if the Lodge is recalcitrant or rebellious it may have its charter arrested. In extreme cases, also, the Grand Lodge may assume jurisdiction of as case and on recommendation of the Committee of Complaints and Appeals, expel the offending brother and order his name to be removed from the Lodge roll of membership.

OUTLINE AND CHECKLIST (Master – Secretary – Complaints and Offenses Committee)

1. Charges and Specifications
 - a. Must be in writing stating general charge and specifying clearly the nature of the offense.
 - b. Must be signed by the Brother preferring the charge or by the Complaints and Offenses Committee.
2. Notice to the accused of charges. Furnish accused with copy of charges and specifications, date for taking testimony from those who cannot be admitted into the Lodge, and date of trial.
 - a. If the accused cannot be found, the Secretary shall mail copy of charges and notice to the accused Brother at his last known address.
 - b. Service may be made upon the accused by leaving notice and copy of charges at his usual place of residence.
 - c. Secretary shall enter in the Minutes of the Lodge the manner of delivery of the charges and notice.
 - d. If accused is present at the time of adoption of charges he shall be served only with notice of time and place for taking testimony and date of trial.
3. At the time and place set forth in the notice to accused the Complaints and Offenses Committee shall proceed to take testimony pro and con on the charges.
4. Witnesses before the Committee shall not be sworn. Masons promise on the honor of a Mason and that of all other upon honor.
5. The testimony shall be reduced to writing, the testimony of each witness carrying a separate introduction to identify it and stating whether the witness was for the prosecution or the accused and signed by the witness.
6. Only facts, not rumor or hearsay evidence.
7. No appeal, no record. Whenever a Mason shall be expelled and no appeal is taken to the Grand Lodge, the Master shall cause the Secretary to certify to the Grand Secretary the sentence, under seal of the Lodge, but no other portion of the record shall be sent up to the Grand Lodge, which shall confirm such expulsion on such certificate, if the time for appeal has expired. Expulsion must be confirmed by the Grand Lodge before it is effective, but before the Grand Lodge has confirmed the sentence of expulsion, the Mason is regarded as suspended. (Rule 28).

