



# Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons

## OF THE STATE OF OHIO

DANIEL S. SMITH  
GRAND HIGH PRIEST  
1026 ZODIAC AVENUE  
GAHANNA, OHIO 43230

November 6, 2020

### Edict 2020-6 Virtual Meeting Option for Royal Arch Chapters and Lodges of Mark Masters

**WHEREAS**, the state of Ohio, has a uniform rating system introduced through the Ohio Public Health Advisory System. By which this system utilizes seven indicators to identify the risk level for each county regarding the COVID-19 virus. Consequently, the State of Ohio created four color coded levels to gauge the risk level which are purple, red, orange and yellow to gauge the current pandemic exposure and spread rate as measured in each county. The Red category is defined by the State of Ohio Department of Health as:

*“Public Emergency, Very High exposure and spread. Limit activities as much as possible. Follow all current health orders.”*

**AND WHEREAS**, As of Thursday November 5, 2020, 56 of 88 Ohio counties have transitioned into the Red category. Consequently, in compliance with Edict 2020-4 there are currently only 26 Royal Arch Chapters in the state of Ohio that can safely confer the capitular degrees.

**NOW THEREFORE I Daniel S. Smith** Grand High Priest of Royal Arch Masons of Ohio by virtue of the powers in me vested by the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of the State of Ohio, hereby decree that:

Resulting from the expanding Covid-19 virus infection rate, and in an effort to keep our members safe and free from the virus, effective Friday, November 6, 2020, I will allow, at the discretion of the Excellent High Priest, the option of holding their Chapters Stated Meeting virtually when the county in which they meet, transition to the Orange or Red categories. This edict will apply to all Ohio Royal Arch Chapters and Lodges of Mark Masters under the jurisdiction of the Grand Chapter of Ohio. Royal Arch Chapters and Mark Lodges will be allowed to meet using alternative virtual methods of meeting available through the internet. Conducting stated meetings via a telephonic conference calling option is also acceptable. Utilizing the alternate methods of meeting will be the choice of the Excellent High Priest and is not intended to be a Grand Chapter requirement. Virtual stated meetings of Royal Arch Chapters or Mark Lodges are to comply with the following requirements:

- A password protected secure application should be utilized when creating a virtual Royal Arch Chapter Stated meeting or Lodge of Mark Masters for the members to access. (e.g. Zoom, GoToMeeting, WebEx, etc).

- An email meeting notice should be sent to the members of their Royal Arch Chapter or Mark Lodge from the High Priest, Secretary or designated officer. In addition, a meeting notice should be posted on the Chapter web page or social media account if available.
- The High Priest in charge will proclaim the meeting open: “This Stated Meeting is symbolically opened in extraordinary session in the Royal Arch Degree.” In order to:
  - Conduct necessary business of the Chapter / Mark Lodge.
  - Enjoy Fellowship with our Companions.
  - Presentation of Education programs. (topics on ritual are not permitted)
- The High Priest will proclaim the meeting closed: “This Stated Meeting is symbolically closed in the Royal Arch Degree.

Note: Ritual work of any type or nature will not be permitted in virtual meetings.

One recommended tool available for Chapters to use is the Zoom Video Conferencing application. There are several other tools available for use that meet the required security features. The only requirement for a Chapter to use a conferencing tool of this type is that it must have the ability to input a password for invited members to access the meeting.

Note: This Edict is applicable to all Ohio Royal Arch Chapters and Lodges of Mark Masters.

This Edict is intended to provide a temporary alternate method for Royal Arch Chapters and Lodges of Mark Masters to safely hold Stated meetings. It is not intended to limit any other individually organized virtual fellowship activities we may all enjoy. This Edict will remain in effect throughout the 2020-2021 capitular year when counties are classified in Orange or Red according to the Ohio Public Health Advisory System.

**I FURTHER DIRECT** this Edict is to be in effect until midnight on October 7, 2021 or until a future Edict shall supersede. Given under my hand and Seal of the Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Ohio in the City of Columbus, Ohio this Sixth day of November, A.D. 2020.

Fraternally,

Daniel S. Smith  
Grand High Priest  
Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Ohio