

Grand Lodge of Rhode Island Social Media Code of Conduct Policy, October 2016

In the virtual digital environment in which society now finds itself existing, it is easy to lose track of who we are as Freemasons and the ideals that define us.

We must remember that it is the responsibility of each of us to act and stand as upright Masons, and to take ownership of our actions in the non-tangible, virtual world, just as we should in the physical world.

How we are perceived by both the fraternity and the world is now, more than ever, defined by the actions we take and the words we choose on sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumbler, Web forums, and any other place where we are digitally represented.

Therefore, we should practice outside of the lodge what we practice within while we are communicating with each other, and with non-Masons. We should be ever mindful of our obligations, to which we are still bound.

It is imperative that in the impersonal world of digital media we remember to treat everyone with the same personal manners of dignity, tolerance, courtesy and respect. We should be ready to whisper good council to each other, and be willing to listen to such council when we err.

The character of the Craft is now judged by another, modern facet of our technological society. We must maintain our awareness of the effect that our on-line presence has on our fraternity, and take appropriate steps to manage ourselves and our actions within the digital realm.

However we represent ourselves in the digital world will be there forever, for any and all to see.

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1. Freemasons must conduct Social Media activities in a way that reflects membership in the Craft, acting in a way that presents a positive image of the fraternity; avoiding private piques and quarrels; being cautious in behavior; courteous to our brethren and to promote the general good and to preserve the reputation of the fraternity.
2. Postings should not bring discredit to Freemasonry nor should they fit within the definition of Un-Masonic Conduct as defined by our Masonic fraternity. Conduct contrary to the accepted and customary rule of right and duty between Freemasons or to society in general, is improper.
3. Freemasons must be aware that postings are a permanent record; and therefore an individual's conduct may influence the world with a positive or negative image about the individual and also about Freemasonry. Postings and actions on the various Social Media outlets should reflect the highest standards of morality and integrity.
4. There should never be discussion related to the business of a Lodge and what is discussed within our tyled doors There should never be discussion related to petitions, applications, background checks, investigation of an applicant, or regarding balloting on an applicant. Posts must comply with Grand Lodge rules, regulations, and edicts. Individual Freemasons should not be identified without their consent nor should there be any discussion or allusion to any of the Masonic Signs, Tokens or Words.
5. The Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in Rhode Island is the absolute Masonic authority in Rhode Island. Only the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in Rhode Island can make authoritative statements on behalf of Rhode Island Masons.
6. No official communication with other Grand Lodges or their subordinate or concordant Lodges may take place online. Contact must be conducted through the Office of the Grand Secretary.
7. Participation in discussions with those who most often are looking for discussions outside of what is Masonically acceptable should be avoided.
8. To ensure our fraternity represents itself to the high standards we must regulate our actions by individual restraint and through Brother-to-Brother intervention. As a Freemason, quietly advise a Brother if you feel that what he has posted is improper within the framework of our Grand Constitutions, laws, rules, regulations, edicts and the general regulations of Freemasonry.