



The Grand Commandery of the State of Ohio

Office of the Right Eminent Grand Commander

To the Sir Knights, Officers and Members of all Constituent Commanderies and to all present Grand Commandery Officers and past Grand Commanders of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of the State of Ohio:

Greetings:

It is my order that **General Order No. 16** be read in its entirety and be made a part of the minutes of each Constituent Commandery at the first stated conclave following its receipt.

General Order No. 16

Effective March 1, 2021, Grand and Constituent Commanderies in this jurisdiction may open in **Phase One***, as defined by the Grand Encampment of **Knights Templar Reopening Templary 2021 Phased Opening Criteria**. This document was provided to Eminent Commanders and Recorders of Constituent Commanderies on November 6, 2020, via electronic mail.

***Note: Phase One with these applications for Ohio Commanderies:**

- In-person conclaves may resume, provided they are permitted by state and local authority and conducted utilizing strict, social-distancing and Personal Protective Equipment protocols. (*i.e.*, six-foot physical separation, face coverings worn by every Sir Knight in the building and hand sanitizer or washing of hands with soap and water utilized by every Sir Knight in the building.
- Virtual conclaves by means of conference call and/or video conferencing (Zoom, etc.) may continue at the discretion of the Eminent Commander.
- Hybrid conclaves, with audio and video emanating from a tiled Asylum while others view virtually, are also permitted. All virtual conclave policies apply. **No ritual may be displayed during a Hybrid conclave. The Eminent Commander may elect to declare the Commandery open and closed during a Hybrid conclave at his discretion.**

If a Commandery chooses to resume in-person stated or special conclaves, the following additional protocols must also be observed:

- No meals or snacks may be served before or after the conclave;
- The health assessment form (sent as an attachment with this Order) or a similar record for contact tracing purposes shall be completed for all in attendance;
- **Only voting members of the Commandery may attend in person (no visitors), with the exception of Grand Commandery officers (including Past Grand Commanders) who may attend with the consent of the Eminent Commander;**
- All Sir Knights, with the exception of any who may be needed to assist with “set up” for the stated conclave (set up should be minimal) should arrive no earlier than ten (10) minutes prior to the meeting start time and depart no later than ten (10) minutes after its conclusion.

(continued)

General Order No. 16, continued

- **Ritual Work:** Due to the inability to maintain proper social distancing associated with the conferral of any of the Commandery orders on candidates, **only the temporary Short Form of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross and temporary Short Form Order of Malta may be conferred. The Order of the Temple SHALL NOT be conferred in Phase One.** The scripts for the temporary Short Form Orders are included with this General Order as an attachment. *We are fully aware that the candidate does not receive the full initiatory experience by use of this temporary, revised ritual, but it does give Commanderies an opportunity to impart the essential lessons these two Orders convey. Thus, we strongly urge Commanderies to make arrangements with the candidates to return and experience the traditional Orders when they become available.*

- **Annual Inspections:** The supplemental instructions accompanying General Order No. 2 are hereby amended to limit Annual Inspections to a **Review of the Commandery's Administrative, Financial, and Membership records ONLY.** The 2021 Annual Inspection Form is available on the Grand Commandery of Ohio website. Attendance is limited to voting members of the Commandery, along with the Inspecting Officer and Grand Commandery officers essential to the Review. The Commandery's inspection certificate will be presented upon a successful Administrative Review.

Eminent Commanders desirous of earning their Certificate of Proficiency may recite the 5 L's and the Knighting Ceremony (Ritual, starting on p. 126, "*We will now participate in the First.....*", through p. 127, continuing at the bottom of p. 132 to the top of p. 133, continuing at the top of p. 141 through the 5th L, continuing at the bottom of p. 144 to the middle of p. 145) in the presence of the Inspecting Officer or may elect to do so in the presence of a Grand Commandery officer or a PGC no later than May 31, 2021.

- **Division (CTA) Meetings** may be held under the Phase One guidelines prescribed in this Order with the following modifications:

Hybrid meetings: The video should be focused on the primary speaker (CTA president, DDC, etc.) using a podium or lectern when possible;

In-person attendance shall be limited to CTA officers, Grand Commandery officers from the Division, and the Eminent Commander (or his representative) from each Commandery within the Division.

- **Drill Team Meetings** for planning and organizational purposes may be held under the Phase One guidelines, however, **Drill Team Practices** remain PROHIBITED since proper physical distancing while marching and executing other Drill movements cannot be safely maintained.

- **Posting of Colors, Casket Honor Guards, and Templar Funeral Services** may resume.

This Order remains in effect until further notice. Ohio General Orders 14 and 15 are superseded by this Order.

Given under my hand and seal of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of the State of Ohio, on the 10th day of February 2021, Anno Ordinis 903.



R. Thomas Starr, KCT
Right Eminent Grand Commander

Attest: Alfred T. Johnson, KCT, HPGC
Eminent Grand Recorder

