Guidelines for One Chapter Merging with Another Chapter

(Reference: Rules and Regulations for the Government of the Subordinate Chapters Under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Chapter of Virginia, Order of the Eastern Star, Section 40)

> Grand Chapter of Virginia Order of the Eastern Star 2018

This publication is prepared only as a guide to assist the Worthy Grand Matron, her Deputy, and the Officers of Subordinate Chapters involved in the merger process. **It does not, in any way**, replace the content in the Constitution, Rules and Regulations, and Book of Instructions of the Grand Chapter of Virginia, OES. It should be updated, as necessary, by the Chair of Jurisprudence through the Grand Secretary's office.

<u>Note</u>: All forms shown in this booklet are available through the Grand Secretary's office for adaptation by the Chapters involved in a merger.

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RULES AND REGULATIONS

for the
Government of the Subordinate Chapters
Under the Jurisdiction
of the
Grand Chapter of Virginia
Order of the Eastern Star

Section 40. One (1) Chapter merging with another Chapter – If an inactive or small Chapter desires to merge with a more active Chapter, the Worthy Matron must notify the Worthy Grand Matron (by letter, telephone, in person, or e-mail), document the date and means of notification, and proceed as follows: Present a resolution in writing at a stated meeting, naming the active Chapter with which merging is desired. The Secretary shall notify each member of the Chapter, by first class mail, of the proposed action at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of the date when the vote on the merger will take place. If the results of the vote show a majority of the members present and voting are in favor of the merger, the Chapter should submit a written appeal to the active Chapter named in the resolution, accompanied by a financial statement and a list of members in good standing. The Secretary of the active Chapter, after the reading of the appeal at the first stated meeting after receipt, should notify each member of its receipt by first class mail at least twentyone (21) days prior to the date when action will be taken. The active Chapter must advise the inactive Chapter in writing of the results of the vote. Both Chapters must advise the Worthy Grand Matron, her Deputy (if appointed), Associate Grand Matron, and Grand Secretary in writing of the results of the vote. If the vote of the active Chapter was favorable and all papers are in order, the Worthy Matron may approve the merger. The active Chapter will retain its name and Charter; the inactive Chapter will, in turn, submit the Charter, Secret Work, Books of Instructions and all paraphernalia required to the Grand Secretary. The Worthy Grand Matron, if she so desires, may personally pick up these items, or she may appoint a Past Grand Matron or Past Grand Patron as her Deputy to take care of this matter.

NOTE: If a vote on the merger is **not favorable in either the inactive or active Chapter**, suspend the merger process and contact the Worthy Grand Matron or her Deputy (if appointed).

Any member of the inactive Chapter who desires a demit and is clear on the Chapter's records should request the same at the last stated meeting of the inactive Chapter. Members of the inactive Chapter desiring to continue their membership in the active Chapter and who have received a current dues card will not be required to pay any additional fee or dues to the active Chapter at the time of the merger. A new dues card must be issued to those members by the active Chapter. A list of those members of the inactive Chapter owing dues of less than two (2) years should be submitted to the active Chapter. Members owing dues of two (2) years are automatically suspended. A list of these suspended members should be submitted to the active Chapter and to the Grand Secretary.

APPENDIX G

MERGING OF CHAPTERS Procedure

- 1. Worthy Matron notifies the Worthy Grand Matron (WGM) of the intent to pursue a merger and notes date and means of notification (letter, telephone, in person, or e-mail).
- 2. Present a resolution (motion) in writing at a stated meeting of Chapter's desire to merge.
- 3. Name in the resolution the active Chapter with which merging is desired.
- 4. Secretary notifies each member of the Chapter by first class mail of the proposed action at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of the date when the vote on the merger will take place.
- 5. Vote is taken. If the results show a majority of the members present and voting are in favor of the merger,* proceed as follows:
 - a. Submit a written appeal to the active Chapter named in the resolution (motion).
 - b. Include a financial statement and a list of members in good standing.
- 6. Active Chapter reads the appeal at the first stated meeting after receipt.
- 7. Secretary notifies each member of the receipt of the appeal for merger at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the date when action will be taken.
- 8. Vote is taken. The active Chapter advises the inactive Chapter in writing of the results of the vote.* **BOTH** Chapters advise the WGM, WGM's Deputy (if appointed), Associate Grand Matron (AGM), and Grand Secretary in writing, of the results of the vote.
- 9. If the vote of the active Chapter was favorable* and all papers are in order, the WGM may approve the merger.
- 10. The Secretary of the inactive Chapter will notify the members in writing of the following:
 - a. The approval of the merger.
 - b. The date, time, and location of the meetings of their new Chapter.
 - c. Membership issues:
 - i. A member who is clear on the books may request a demit at the last stated meeting of the inactive Chapter.
 - ii. Members of the inactive Chapter who wish to continue their membership in the active Chapter and have received a current dues card will not be required to pay any additional fee or dues to the active Chapter at the time of the merger. New dues cards must be issued by the active Chapter.
 - iii. Members owing dues of two (2) years are automatically dropped.
- 11. The Secretary of the inactive Chapter will submit a list of those members of the Chapter owing dues of less than two (2) years to the active Chapter. A list of members dropped owing two (2) years dues must be submitted to the active Chapter and to the Grand Secretary.

- 12. Inactive Chapter submits Charter, Secret Work, Books of Instructions, and all paraphernalia as required to the Grand Secretary.
- 13. The WGM may personally pick up the items in #12 above, or she may appoint a Past Grand Matron or a Past Grand Patron as her Deputy to take care of this matter.

*If a vote **not** in **favor** of the merger is received, suspend the merger process and contact the Worthy Grand Matron or her Deputy (if appointed).

Reference: Rules and Regulations, Section 40

APPENDIX H

$\begin{array}{c} \textbf{MERGING OF CHAPTERS} \\ \textbf{Checklist} \end{array}$

Date

1.	WGM was notified by (circle one) letter, telephone, in		
	person, e-mail on (date).	Yes	No
2.	Resolution (motion) was presented in writing at a stated		
	meeting.	Yes	No
3.	Active Chapter with which merging is desired was named		
	in the resolution (motion).	Yes	No
4.	Secretary notified each member of the Chapter by first class		
	mail of the proposed action at least twenty-one (21) days in		
	advance of the date vote was to be taken.	Yes	No
5.	Results showed a majority of members present and voting		
	were in favor of the merger.*	Yes	No
6.	Written appeal was submitted to active Chapter.	Yes	No
7.	Financial statement was included in the appeal.	Yes	No
8.	List of members in good standing was included in the	7.7	».T
0	appeal.	Yes	No
9.	Active Chapter read appeal at the first stated meeting after	37	NT
10	receipt.	Yes	No
10.	Secretary notified each member of receipt of appeal by first class mail at least twenty-one (21) days prior to date when		
	action was to be taken.	Yes	No
11.	Vote showed active Chapter was in favor of the merger.*	Yes	No
11. 12.	Active Chapter notified inactive Chapter in writing of the	168	NO
12.	results of the vote.*	Yes	No
13.	Both Chapters advised the WGM, WGM's Deputy (if	105	
	appointed), AGM, and Grand Secretary of results.	Yes	No
14.	WGM approved the merger (if all papers are in order).	Yes	No
15.	Secretary of inactive Chapter advised membership in		
	writing of information in Appendix G #10.	Yes	No
16.	Secretary of the inactive Chapter submitted a list of those		
	members of the Chapter owing dues of less than two (2)		
	years to the active Chapter.	Yes	No
17.	Secretary of inactive Chapter submitted a list of members		
	owing two (2) years dues to the active Chapter and to the		
	Grand Secretary.	Yes	No
18.	Inactive Chapter submitted:	Yes	No
	a. the Charter	Yes	No
	b. Secret Work	Yes	No
	c. Books of Instructions	Yes	
	d. All paraphernalia as required.	Yes	No

19.	WGM personally picked up the items listed in #18 above.	Yes	No
20.	WGM's appointed Deputy picked up the items listed in #18		
	above.	Yes	No

* If a vote **not in favor** of the merger is received, suspend the merger process and contact the Worthy Grand Matron or her Deputy (if appointed).

Reference: Rules and Regulations, Section 40

Sample forms for use in the merger process should be obtained from the Grand Secretary prior to any action by a Chapter.

NOTICE TO WGM - CHAPTER CONSIDERING MERGER*

Chapter No, OES
(Street Address
(City, State, Zip
(Date
-
dress)
e, Zip)
Regulations for the Government of sediction of the Grand Chapter of Virginia, this Chapter No, OES, is abordinate Chapter in Virginia.
n Section 40. Please advise us of the name of will assist in this process.
Fraternally,
Worthy Matron

***NOTE:** Notification of the Worthy Grand Matron of the <u>intent</u> to consider a merger may be made by letter, in person, by telephone, or e-mail from the Worthy Matron of the Chapter.

RESOLUTION (MOTION) TO MERGE

Worthy Matron (or title of presiding officer), I move that this Chapter,
Chapter No, OES, seek to merge with
, OES.
Name of Chapter Member Making the Motion
Name of Chapter Member Seconding the Motion
Date of Stated Meeting When Motion is Presented and Read
Note: If the motion is seconded, the Secretary will notify each member of the
Chapter by first class mail of the proposed action at least twenty-one (21) day
in advance of the date when the vote on the merger will take place. (Reference:
Rules & Regulations, Section 40; Appendix G)

LETTER OF NOTIFICATION TO CHAPTER MEMBERS

Return Address	
	(Date)
To the Officers and Members of	Chapter No, OES
Dear Sisters and Brothers,	
At a stated meeting of (Date: MDY) a motion was made with Chapter No,	and seconded to pursue a merger
The Rules and Regulations for the Gov Under the Jurisdiction of the Grand Chapter of Consolidation or Merging of Chapters, Section each member of the Chapter, by first class twenty-one (21) days in advance of the time very place."	of Virginia, Order of the Eastern Star, 40, states: "The Secretary shall notify mail, of the proposed action at least
This letter constitutes notification to our merger will be taken at our stated meeting or results of the vote show a majority of the mer of the merger, the Chapter will submit a writter No	n (Date: MDY). If the mbers present and voting are in favor
It is with sadness that we undertake this and active participation necessitates this modifficult matter concerning your Chapter. Plea	ve. We urge your assistance in this
	Fraternally,
SEAL OF THE CHAPTER	Worthy Matron
	Secretary
Copy: WGM or Deputy (if appointed)	

LETTER OF APPEAL TO ACTIVE CHAPTER

	Chapter No, OES
	(Street address)
	(City, State, Zip)
	(Date)
To the Officers and Members of (Street address)	, Chapter No, OES
(City, State, Zip)	
Dear Sisters and Brothers,	
Chapter No consideration of a merger with your Cha	, OES, hereby appeals to your members for apter.
Subordinate Chapters Under the Juris Consolidation or Merging of Chapters, members of Chapter N a vote was taken at the	nd Regulations for the Government of the diction of the Grand Chapter of Virginia, Section 40, a resolution was presented, the No were notified by first class mail and (Date: MDY) stated meeting. A majority of the in favor of requesting a merger with S.
members in good standing are enclosed	Chapter and a Membership Roster of our . Following the appropriate action by your om you regarding the results of your vote on
SEAL OF THE CHAPTER	Fraternally,
	Secretary
Conv. WGM or Deputy (if appointed)	
Copy: WGM or Deputy (if appointed)	
Enclosures:	
	Financial Statement
	Membership Roster

Sample Financial Statement

SAMPLE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

	Checking	Savings	CD	Other Account	Other Account
Current Balances as of Date of	Checking	Javings	CD	Account	Account
Letter of Appeal	\$3,148.00	\$2,000.00	\$3,000.00	Show Balance	Show Balance
Anticipated Income (Dues, etc.)					
prior to Merger:	\$ 180.00				
CD Mature Date:,					
Transfer to Checking	\$3,000.00				
Current Balance + Anticipated					
Income	\$6,328.00				
Anticipated Expenses prior to Merger:					
Rent to Lodge (5 months)	\$ 500.00				
Installation (if applicable)	\$ 100.00				
Usual Donations to Lodge and					
Youth Organizations	\$ 500.00				
Insurance Payment	\$ 250.00				
Other Expense (Give details)	\$ 200.00				
Other Expense (Give details)	\$ 200.00				
CD Mature Date:			\$3,000.00		
Total Anticipated Expenses:	\$1,750.00				
Anticipated Approximate				Other Acct.	Other Acct.
Balance at time of Merger	\$4,578.00	\$2,000.00	\$ -	Balance	Balance

NOTE: Financial Statement may be modified to reflect the finances of the individual Chapter. Once the financial statement has been submitted to the active Chapter, no expenses other than those required for the normal operation of the Chapter may be incurred.

Sample Membership Roster (Members in Good Standing)

Name (Alphabetical)	Address	Current Year Dues Paid	Last Year Dues Paid
Last Name, First Name	100 Any Street Anytown, VA 00000	X	
Last Name, First Name	101 Any Street Anytown, VA 00000		X
Last Name, First Name	103 Any Street Anytown, VA 00000	X	



LETTER OF VOTE NOTIFICATION – TO WGM

			Chapter No	_, OES
			(Str	reet address)
			(City	, State, Zip)
				(Date)
	, WGM			
	(City, State, Zip)			
Dear Sister	·			
Our Chapter received w	ritten notification from	1	Chap	ter No.
advising us tha appeal to merge with the	t they have voted to _ eir Chapter.		_ (accept/reje	ct) our
We look forward to rece	eiving notice of your ap	pproval of this	merger. (if acce	epted)
		Fraternally,		
		Secretary		

SEAL OF THE CHAPTER

Copy: Deputy for the WGM (if appointed)
Associate Grand Matron
Grand Secretary

NOTICE OF MERGER TO MEMBERS OF INACTIVE CHAPTER AND NOTIFICATION OF LAST MEETING

	Chapter No, OES
	(Street Address)
	(City, State, Zip)
	(Date)
Dear Sisters and Brothers,	
favorably to accept us in a merger. The	has notified our Chapter that they voted ne Worthy Grand Matron, Associate Grand stified, and the Worthy Grand Matron has
The date of our final meeting as (Date: MDY) at	Chapter No will be
(Day of the month	Chapter No are held on the h) at (Time, a.m./p.m.). The address is: I hope that you will be
able to attend and support our new Chap	
Subordinate Chapters Under the Jurisa for your information: "Any member of the inactive Chapter's records should request the sa Chapter. Members of the inactive Chapter the active Chapter and who have received pay any additional fee or dues to the active Chapter of two (2) years a	
After our meeting on	(Date: MDY) you will introduce yourself as a
member of Chapte	(Date: MDY) you will introduce yourself as a er No
(Any other appropriate words to the	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
	Fraternally,
SEAL OF THE CHAPTER	
	Worthy Matron
	Secretary

GRAND CHAPTER OF VIRGINIA, OES FOR CHAPTERS MERGING ITEMS TO BE RETURNED TO GRAND CHAPTER

Chapter Name and Number:		
Item	Check Received	Date Returned
Charter		
Dispensation for Chapter (if available)		
Secret Work (4 copies issued)		
Black Books (18 issued)		,
Small Bibles (4 issued)		
Ballot Box		
Marbles		
Cubes		
Sword and Veil		
Sheaf of Wheat		
Crown and Scepter		
Broken Column		
Cup		
Badges (18 Officers)		
Chapter Seal		
List of Members current on the books		
List of Members being suspended		
<i>5</i> 1		
Worthy Grand Matron or Deputy		
Worthy Matron		Secretary
Date		

Rules and Regulations, Consolidation or Merging of Chapters, Section 40, Page 32. ${\rm GCF}013.11/09/17$

Sample List of Suspended Members

(Owing two years' dues)

Name (Alphabetical)	Address	Last Year Dues Paid	Date Paid
Last Name, First Name	100 Any Street Anytown, VA 00000	20XX	6-22-XX
Last Name, First Name	101 Any Street Anytown, VA 00000	20XX	3-28-XX
Last Name, First Name	103 Any Street Anytown, VA 00000	20XX	7-13-XX



Transfer of Funds from Inactive Chapter to Active Chapter

- 1. Once the financial statement has been submitted to the active Chapter in the appeal for merger, <u>no expenses</u> other than those required for the normal operation of the inactive Chapter may be incurred. When the merger is approved, ALL accounts of the inactive Chapter must be closed, and the funds forwarded to the active Chapter.
- 2. Be sure to follow your bank's instructions for closing accounts. The instructions that follow should apply in all cases.

3. Checking/Savings Accounts:

- a. Once all outstanding checks have cleared, funds in the inactive Chapter's *checking* account should be withdrawn via a Bank Official Check made payable to the active Chapter. Remember to allow for any fee that may be charged by the bank for this check.
- b. Funds in the inactive Chapter's *savings* account should be withdrawn via a Bank Official Check made payable to the active Chapter. Remember to allow for any fee that may be charged by the bank for this check.
- c. For each account, inform the inactive Chapter's bank that the account is to be closed. Obtain a letter from the bank confirming that the account is closed. This will protect both Chapters from occasions where the bank may reopen the account in the future.

4. Certificate of Deposit

- a. If the CD matures prior to the finalization of the merger, the inactive Chapter will transfer the funds in the CD to their checking account. All these funds will then be transferred to the active Chapter via the Cashier's Check in #3a above.
- b. If the CD has not matured prior to the finalization of the merger, the financial institution holding the CD must immediately be notified of the change of ownership. Proper procedures to transfer ownership to the active Chapter must be followed through the financial institution holding the CD. Depending on the type of CD account, early withdrawal fees may apply. (If the Chapter has a financial advisor, he/she may be of assistance here.)

5. Money Market Account

Money market accounts may be closed at any time without penalty. Use the procedures in the Checking/Savings Accounts section above to properly transfer funds from the inactive Chapter to the active Chapter.

6. Stocks, Bonds, Other Financial Investments

Stocks, bonds, and other financial investments owned by the inactive Chapter at the time the merger is complete must be transferred to the active Chapter. Redemption and transfer rules vary depending on the type of investment. The inactive Chapter should use the procedures in place through the firms holding these investments.

7. Real Property

If the inactive Chapter is in possession of real property (i.e., building, land, etc.) at the time the merger is complete, the active Chapter (which now includes the members from the inactive Chapter) must decide whether to sell the property or transfer ownership. Be advised that sale of real property must be reported on the Chapter's tax returns and the city/county tax offices must be notified. An attorney and possibly a real estate professional should be used in transactions involving real estate.

8. Insurance Policies

Notify insurance company (if applicable) of Chapter closure and cancel the policy. If cancelled mid-term, a pro-rated refund may be appropriate and, if possible, should be made payable to the active Chapter.

NOTICE OF LETTER OF APPEAL FROM INACTIVE CHAPTER

<u>-</u>	Chapter No, OES
	(Street address
	(City, State, Zip
	(Date
To the Officers and Members of	
Dear Sisters and Brothers,	
Our Chapter has received a written request OES, appealing to the members of our Chaptwas read at our (Dat	ter to accept them by merger. The letter
In accordance with the Rules and Reg Subordinate Chapters Under the Jury Virginia, Consolidation or Merging of C is to be notified by first class mail at I the date when action will be taken.	risdiction of the Grand Chapter of Chapters, Section 40, each member
This is notification that we will be Chapter No, OES, a meeting. Please come and vote.	
	Fraternally,
SEAL OF THE CHAPTER	
	Secretary
Copy: WGM or Deputy (if appointed)	

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LETTER OF RESPONSE TO INACTIVE CHAPTER

-	Chapter No, OES
<u>-</u>	(Street address)
	(City, State, Zip)
	(Data)
	(Date)
To the Officers and Members of	Chapter No
(Street address)	
(City, State, Zip)	
Dear Sisters and Brothers,	
This letter is in response to your request to	merge with our Chapter.
In accordance with the Rules and Re Subordinate Chapters Under the Ju Virginia, Consolidation or Merging of was notified by first class mail at leadate when action was taken.	urisdiction of the Grand Chapter of f Chapters, Section 40, each member
At our stated meeting onChapter No.	Date: MDY) the members of voted to
(accept or reject) the merger reque OES.	
(Appropriate welcoming rema accepted.)	irks may be added here, if
	Fraternally,
SEAL OF THE CHAPTER	
	Secretary

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Copy: WGM or Deputy (if appointed)

LETTER OF VOTE RESULTS – TO WGM

			Chapter No	o, OES
				(Street address)
				_ (City, State, Zip)
				(Date)
	, WGM			
	(City, State, Zip)			
Dear Sister	,			
Our Chapter received	a letter from		Chapter N	o,
OES, requesting that w			ger. The letter was	read at our
stated meeting on		. (Date: MDY)		
Virginia, Consolida members was notifi prior to the date wh	ied by first clas	ss mail at le		
At our stated mee	ting on		(Date:MDY) the me	embers of
	hapter No.	, OES,	voted to	
(accept or reject) OES.				
		Frate	rnally,	
SEAL OF THE CHA	PTER			
		Secre	tary	
	NON ACTO	1\		

Copy: Deputy for the WGM (If appointed)
Associate Grand Matron
Grand Secretary



Grand Chapter of Virginia

Ø.C. S.

Grand Chapter of Virginia, OES Office of the Grand Secretary 500 Masonic Lane, Suite B Henrico, VA 23223 Telephone (804) 236-0888

Document Retention and Destruction Policy

The records of this organization should be managed in an effective manner. While not all records must be maintained indefinitely, guidelines must be established to properly manage the records of the organization. Records should only be destroyed when they are no longer required as a matter of law, applicable governmental regulation or as a matter of good management. Officers, members and employees must never destroy records in anticipation of any litigation or regulatory investigation.

The following table provides the minimum requirements for retention of records.

Type of Document	Minimum Requirement
Accounts payable ledgers and schedules	7 years
Audit reports, financial statements	Permanently
Bank reconciliations and bank statements	3 years
Checks (for important payments and purchases)	Permanently
Contracts, mortgages, notes and leases (expired)	7 years
Contracts (still in effect)	Permanently
Correspondence (general)	3 years
Correspondence (legal and important matters)	Permanently
Deeds, mortgages, and bills of sale	Permanently
Employment applications	3 years
Insurance Policies (expired)	3 years
Insurance records, current accident reports, claims, policies, etc.	Permanently
Minute books, bylaws and charter	Permanently
Payroll records and summaries	7 years
Personnel files (terminated employees)	7 years
Retirement and pension records	Permanently
Tax returns and worksheets	Permanently
Timesheets	7 years
Withholding tax statements	7 years

Adopted May 20, 2015 at the Grand Chapter Session

RECORD RETENTION

PERMANENT RECORDS	
Minutes (including Memorials for Chapter Members & VA Past Grands)	Permanent
Roll Book (if used)	Permanent
Officers, Members & Visitors Book (if used)	Permanent
Secretary and Treasurer Cash Books	Permanent
Petitions, Demits and Suspensions	Permanent
Individual Permanent Record Sheets	Permanent
By-Laws (1 copy of each version)	Permanent
FINANCIAL RECORDS	
Check Books	7 Years
Bank Statements	7 Years
Warrants and Receipts	7 Years
DUES CARDS	
Issued and Unissued	2 Years
CORRESPONDENCE	
From Grand Chapter	2 Years
From other than Grand Chapter	1 Year
Newsletters	1 Month
Invitations	After Event Date

(2015)