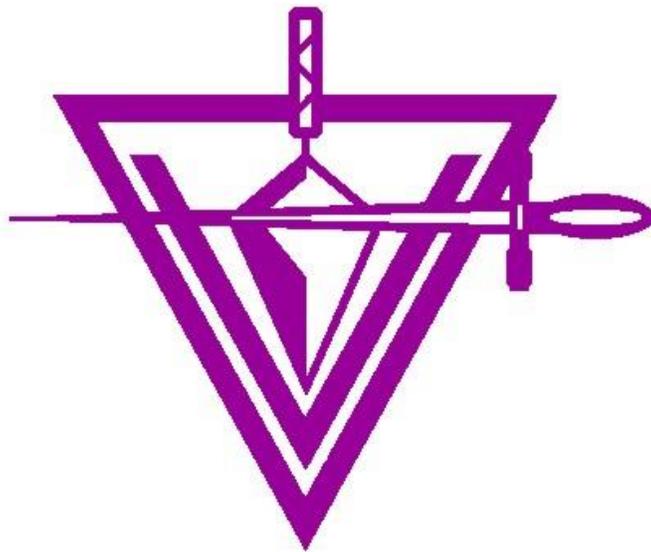


Grand Council of
Royal and Select Masters of Texas

Planning Guide



Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Texas



Most Illustrious Grand Master

Thrice Illustrious Master:

I congratulate you upon your commitment to serve your Council of Royal and Select Masters of Texas as Thrice Illustrious Master. During my year as Most Illustrious Grand Master, I will be ready, along with all of the elected and appointed officers of the Grand Council, to assist you to have a successful year.

This booklet is the **Thrice Illustrious Master's Planning Guide**. By completing it, you will begin the first step in "Planning into the Future" by setting specific goals, activities, and strategies that will take your Council to new heights during your year of service.

Planning is the first step of our future. No successful organization operates without clear goals, established strategies, action plans, and energized members. All of these are important for you to have a successful year in your Council. Think for a moment about what you can achieve if you know what you want to accomplish and how to get there, along with ways to track your progress. The sky is truly the limit to what you can accomplish.

By being aware of your goals, plans, and activities, the Grand Officers can mobilize resources and provide suggestions to ensure your success. If we don't know what your Council is planning to do, we cannot help you succeed. Note that this guide sets you up to succeed by allowing your Council to get the help it needs, before you need it.

Your District Deputy Grand Master is available to assist you in any part of the planning. All you have to do is ask and he will be at your disposal. He will also establish a follow-up date to work with you on any problems that you may have with Planning Guide, and ensure that you proceed smoothly.

You will need to forward a copy of your completed guide to the District Deputy Grand Master no later than **April**. I assure you that I will personally review your Planning Guide and together with your District Deputy Grand Master, we will do everything we can to ensure that you will have a successful year.

I appreciate your time and commitment to making your term in office a great success.

Most Illustrious Grand Master
Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Texas

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boldfaced and asterisks (*) indicate that the page should be **copied** and given to the DDGM by April

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THRICE ILLUSTRIOUS MASTER PLANNING GUIDE*

Why Plan?

In order to meet the standards of successful operations for a Council of Royal and Select Masters, a T.I.M. should engage in planning. Planning for year as T.I.M. is an essential step in order to ensure that: (1) you meet the standards for successful operations, and (2) you will have a successful term in office and that your Council grows and prospers. This workbook should help you plan your year in office effectively. The more input that you receive from the Companions as you complete this form, the more useful this process will be for you. Remember – without involvement, there is no commitment! Involving your Companions to help you plan as a team gives you a much better chance of succeeding. Begin planning the year no later than December of the year prior to installation.

Requirement: Submit a copy of the pages with an asterisk (*) to your DDGM no later than April 1 prior to your installation. Keep the entire workbook for your reference. Your DDGM is happy to help you work on this form and can give you some good ideas in the process. Your DDGM will copy the Most Illustrious Grand Master and Deputy Grand Master.

Officers

Select your Council officers, based upon their availability, their competence, and their commitment to the craft. Assign each Council officer some responsibility - give each officer something to contribute or oversee. Use the table below to draft your list.

Officer /Name	Responsibility
Thrice Illustrious Master/	
Right Illustrious Deputy Master /	
Illustrious Principal Conductor of the Work/	
Treasurer /	
Recorder /	
Chaplain /	
Captain of Guard /	
Conductor of Council /	
Steward /	
Guard /	

Note: This Planning Guide was first developed for M:E: Clarence J. Laney when he was Grand High Priest in 2007-2008, by the then State Coordinator, Dr. Karl J. Krayner, PHP.

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Standards of Successful Operation For Chapters And Councils

By Robert P. Walker
V:E: Past Grand High Priest - 2001
The Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas

The following material has been prepared under the direction of The Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Texas, the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters, and/or the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Texas.

Primary Standards

These standards are determined to be necessary for enhancing the dignity and efficiency of your meetings.

Each Officer should fill his station at all stated meetings, unless excused for reasonable cause.

Each Officer should be proficient in his station in the opening and closing ritual and floor work.

Each Officer should know and understand his duties at a stated meeting. (Example: Duties of an officer during a balloting procedure.)

The Presiding Officer prepares a "Business Agenda" for the meeting in accordance with the general order of business as set forth in Article 207 of the Laws of the R.A.M. of Texas and Article 174 of the Laws of the Grand Council of R.&S.M. of Texas and follows the pre-planned Agenda, thus promoting an orderly and timely meeting.

Examples of items that may be included are:

- Conferrals
- Presentations
- Special Programs
- Report future activities
- Activities and other Bodies
- Reports from the various Committees

Secondary Standards

These standards, if achieved, will not only continue to enhance professionalism in the meetings, but will aid in promoting growth and interest in the activities of the body.

Each Officer should strive to be proficient, in his station, in at least one of the Degrees of the Body.

The Presiding Officer should utilize the officers of the body whenever feasible to chair committees or otherwise provide input for the successful operation of the body.

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The Bodies should strive to promote training in leadership and management for officers and other interested members. Sources include the Masonic Renewal Committee, the Warden's Retreat Program, the Texas Lodge of Research.

The Presiding Officer should plan to include, in each stated meeting, a short presentation (5 minutes or so) to the membership by some knowledgeable person on any topic of interest, not necessarily limited to a Masonic subject.

The Officers should develop and implement various ideas for including family members in at least some of the yearly activities of the Body.

Each Body should develop and implement methods of promoting the idea of York Rite membership in Blue Lodges. Some methods might include promotional programs, volunteer work, presentations, recognition programs, liaison officer, etc.

The Fraternal Bodies should work together to develop and implement ideas for community involvement.

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Committees

Form Council Committees. Involving your Companions in meaningful committee work is an important way that they partner with each other and enjoy fellowship. Committees are also ways that keep the Companions busy doing the work of the Council.

You are required to form some committees according to Grand Council Law. At your option, you may form other committees. Use the table below to draft a list of companions to invite to serve. Use an asterisk (*) to designate the Companion you wish to ask to chair the committee.

Committee Names	Companions
Required Standing Committees	
Finance (including Audit) - see Article C - 100 and Code of By-Laws, Article VI, Section 2(b)	
Charity (including Fraternal Assistance) – see Article C – 100 and Code of By-Laws, Article VI, Section 1(a)	
Sickness – see Code of By-Laws, Article VI, Section 2(a)	
Special Committees Required by Code of By-Laws see Article VI, Section 2(c) Membership (including Recruitment, Retention, and Reinstatement)	
Programs (including being “Ready and Willing to impart instruction, and receive the same”)	
Activities (including “Cultivating the Social Virtues”)	
Ritual Conferral	

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Goals*

Goals give your Council an accomplishment to aim for. They provide a common purpose and heighten enthusiasm toward achieving meaningful outcomes. All successful terms in office in any Masonic organization begin with clear, high performance goals. Your goal could be in membership, finance, social activity, Masonic Education, ritual proficiency, or any other area that you wish. Be creative!

Select one outcome that you would like to achieve by the end of your term, and mobilize activities and resources toward it.

“At the end of my term, I would like to have accomplished _____

 _____.”

Then, complete the following table with your Companions:

What You Have to Do To Accomplish the Goal	By When You Have to Do It	Who is Working on It
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7,		
8.		

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Activity

Select one social activity that you would like your Council to host during your term. Pick an activity that will emphasize unique fellowship and capitalize upon family relationships that would be of interest to members.

This should be fun! The activity could be a dinner, board game night, visitation, sporting event, social night – the sky is the limit to what you could do. The Master of every Symbolic Blue Lodge is charged to cultivate the social virtues. Activities should be social!

The activity is: _____

We will hold this on _____.

In order to be successful, complete the following planning chart with your Companions:

What You Have to Do To Hold the Activity	By When You Have to Do It	Who is Working on It
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		

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Masonic Education Programs

Have one Masonic Educational Program at each stated meeting that focuses upon York Rite Masonry. Use this chart to align your topics for each meeting. Decide who will be responsible for presenting the program, or finding someone to present. NOTE: If your Council does not meet every month, then complete this for the months that you do meet.

Month	Program Topic	Presenter or Responsible Companion
July		
August		
September		
October		
November		
December		
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
June		

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Thrice Ill. Master _____ Phone _____

External Masonic Education For Symbolic Blue Lodges

Sponsor one Masonic Educational Program to present at one of the Constituent Symbolic Blue Lodges within your Council's territory. This could be about York Rite Masonry in general, or specifically on Cryptic Masonry. This program is one way for York Rite Masonry to be visible in our Symbolic Blue Lodges.

The Masonic Lodge or Lodges we will target is/are _____

Their stated meeting night is _____

Their WM in July, will be _____

His phone number is _____

Our preferred dates to present are _____

Topics that we could offer for a program are: _____

Companions who are responsible for coordinating this are:

Other notes about this program:

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Conferring of Degrees

The appropriate statutes regarding the conferral of degrees are as follows:

Art. C-140 (272) Degrees: Conferred Jointly. The degrees of Royal Master and Select Master may be conferred on more than one candidate at the same time, but only in the manner as adopted by the Grand Chapter and as taught and exemplified by the Committee on Work.

Art. C-140 (272) Super Excellent Degree. The Super Excellent Master Degree may be conferred upon any number of Brethren at one and the same time.

According to the Committee on work there are no times in which the Council Lectures are deleted during Degree Work.

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Questions?*

Is your Council interested in hosting a York Rite Festival? ____yes ____ no

What date would your Council be interested in for a York Rite Festival? _____

Have you read the handbook entitled “**How to Have a Successful Festival**”?

____yes ____ no

Note: This is available from your District Deputy Grand Master.

If your Council is unwilling or cannot host a York Rite Festival, would your chapter be willing to take candidates to the nearest York Rite Festival? ____yes ____ no

Have you contacted the Grand Recorder, or the Grand Master, or viewed the York Rite website (www.texasorkrite.org) for Grand Council to see when and where a York Rite Festival would be available to your Council candidates? ____yes ____ no

What is that place and what is that date? _____

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The **New Candidate Orientation** is a meeting tool for retention. The text follows:

Candidates should receive a special invitation to attend the first stated Assembly after their greeting in order to participate in this orientation. This is true whether they are greeted at a festival or at an individual degree night in a Council. The orientation is to be delivered by the Thrice Illustrious Master, or another qualified companion, in open Council with the assistance of available companions, where necessary. The lines in italics are suggested remarks that the Thrice Illustrious Master or other qualified companion may paraphrase.

Congratulations and uniqueness

Explain that only 10% of Texas Masons become Royal and Select Masters

“Welcome! You are now a member of a unique group in Texas. Only one out of ten Master Masons in Texas has made the choice to receive additional light in Masonry by joining the York Rite. Congratulations upon your greeting and welcome to _____ Council No. _____.”

Remind companions what they now know as a result of proceeding through these degrees – that they are better and more knowledgeable Masons:

“I mentioned additional light in Masonry that you received as you took the Chapter degrees in the York Rite. Here are some examples of what you have learned:

- *You now know the True word of a Master Mason, which you learned in the Royal Arch Degree.*
- *You now know how Fellowcraft Masons receive their wages, taught in the Mark Master Degree.*
- *You witnessed the final completion and dedication of the Temple in the Most Excellent Master Degree, which was in an unfinished state when you took your Master Mason’s degree.*
- *You now know how to properly rule and govern a lodge, armed with the lessons you learned in the Past Master Degree.”*

Unique customs

“Let’s talk about some of the traditions and customs that we practice in a Council of Royal and Select Masters, many of which differ radically from what you are used to in your blue lodge:

- *When you are called upon, or wish to speak in the Council, you stand, address and salute the Thrice Illustrious Master, saying “Thrice Illustrious*
- *We use a double gavel in rapid succession (demonstrate) and also talk while gaveling.*
- *We call each other ‘Companions,’ to illustrate that closer connection that we have among us as brother Masons.*

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- *We use purple as the unique color of the Council Degrees. All the aprons and jewels, the logo, and paraphernalia of the Council are purple.*
- *In all cases, ‘three’ has a great significance in Cryptic Masonry. We have three elected officers in the east representing our Ancient Grand Masters*
- *Legally, it takes either nine or five companions to open and close a Council, but nine companions is traditional and preferable. Keep the tradition!*
- *Our ritual is written out in plain English in codebooks. You may study with these, but they are not to be used while the Council is open. We also have a monitor for the Council degrees that specifies movement, floor work, and tactics.”*

Ritual

“I want to spend a few minutes ensuring that you are comfortable with the ritualistic traditions that we use here.

First, let’s review the signs from Royal Master to Select Master, inclusive. I would like for all companions to participate together for our new companion.

Second, we will demonstrate sharing the word in the closing for nine. I would like to call upon the companions to gather around the altar to demonstrate this, and then, I would like for you to participate as we do this again, to ensure you have it.

Are there any of these signs that you would like us to repeat for you?”

Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters

“You are well aware that the blue lodge is overseen by the Grand Lodge of Texas, with the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons in Texas. The Grand Lodge meets in Waco on the first weekend in December. In the Royal and Select Masters, we also have a parent or superordinate body, the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of Texas. It has its own grand officers, with the presiding officer entitled the Most Illustrious Grand Master. Other elected grand officers are the Right Illustrious Deputy Grand Master, Right Illustrious Grand Principal Conductor of the Work, Right Illustrious Grand Treasurer, and Right Illustrious Grand Recorder. There is also a full line of appointed grand officers along with elected and appointed committees. The Grand Council meets each year in Waco at the Grand Lodge building on the third Monday and Tuesday in October. At that meeting, the Grand Council conducts its annual business and elects officers. As a new Royal and select Master you are now entitled to attend this session, and I hope that you will make plans to do so on the next occasion that it meets, which is _____.”

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Texas Masonic Retirement Center

“The Grand Royal Arch Chapter, which I just spoke of, has proudly sponsored the Texas Masonic Retirement Center (TMRC), for 100 years. According to Article 1 Section 2 The Texas Masonic Retirement Center is the primary charity of the Grand Council of Texas. The Center is located in Arlington, and typically houses 70 senior citizens who are either Masons, or relatives of Masons. The Center offers beautiful, relaxing accommodations amid 100 acres of sweeping grassland, wildflowers, and a century-old pecan orchard. The residents enjoy quiet country living and fill their days with countless activities, knowing that their privacy is respected and their independence is honored. The Main Building has a variety of apartments. Also, there are two bedroom duplex units and a luxury apartment building with upscale interiors. Wireless internet is available to all residents. A skilled nursing clinic is on the grounds of the facility. The TMRC offers a fine environment for its residents, with many opportunities for recreation, good food, and rest, along with excellent physical care and hygiene. There are two payment options for eligible Royal Arch Masons and certain family members: payment for services, or total asset turnover which includes lifetime care.”

“I encourage you to visit the Texas Masonic Retirement Center at your earliest convenience.

“I would like to open the floor to you for questions about anything I have mentioned in this orientation.”

“I would now like to give you the opportunity to speak to our Council, and say whatever is on your mind and heart

The following information is a tool for membership recruitment:

YORK RITE LIGHT

Karl J. Kraye, PHP, PTIM

George Washington Chapter No. 422 - John C. Callahan Council No. 408

We often tell prospective candidates that one of the benefits of joining the York Rite is that they will receive additional light, as our degrees complete many of the stories and extend many of the lessons that they received in their blue lodge degrees. What, specifically, can we tell the candidates that they will learn? Here is a quick list of **York Rite Light**, with the corresponding degree, as the candidates will learn:

- how to receive wages as a Fellowcraft Mason (Mark Master⁰)
- how the builder made the principal keystone for the temple and how it was recovered (Mark Master⁰)
- how to govern a Masonic body as a presiding officer (Past Master⁰)
- what happened at the final dedication and completion of the temple (Most Excellent Master⁰)
- recovery of the “lost word or true word” of a Master Mason (Royal Arch⁰)
- the destruction and plans for rebuilding the temple (Royal Arch⁰)
- the builder’s prophecy about the lost word of a Master Mason (Royal Master⁰)
- how the “lost word or true word” of a Master Mason was deposited for the benefit of future generations (Select Master⁰) until it was recovered in the Royal Arch Degree
- how work in the temple was preserved for antiquity and later discovered by future generations (Select Master⁰)
- how the rebuilt temple was destroyed in a siege at Jerusalem (Super Excellent Master⁰)
- how the Jewish Nation was released from their captivity in Babylon and returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple (Order of the Red Cross)
- how the true word of a Master Mason became flesh and walked among us (Order of the Temple)

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This is quite a list! It is clear that any Master Mason who does not take the York Rite degrees is truly missing valuable information about Freemasonry. There is great value for any Master Mason to finish his Masonic experience and education by completing the York Rite Masonic journey begun in the Symbolic Blue Lodge. Remember it is not the destination, but the journey for more and further light that is important

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Elevator Speech

Provide Master Masons who are not York Rite Masons with an “elevator speech” that clearly and concisely describes York Rite Masonry – what it is, what it does, what its benefits are to new members.

Customize this for your chapter and your Companions by holding a discussion at one of your meetings. Take a stab at this yourself before reading the sample on page 19

What is York Rite Masonry?

What do we do in our Chapter that will be attractive to a non-member?

What are the benefits of joining?

Every York Rite Mason should be able to give clear and concise responses to these three questions in the time that it takes an elevator to move 3-5 floors. Your ability to give these responses has direct impact upon whether prospective members decide to petition.

What is York Rite Masonry?

The York Rite of Freemasonry is open to any Master Mason in good standing. The York Rite is comprised of three bodies, each with its own line of officers and ritual, and charitable activity. These are the chapter of Royal Arch Masons, council of Royal and Select Masters, and Commandery of Knights Templar. Unlike the blue lodge, candidates in the York Rite do not need to complete any proficiency examination of memory work. And like in the blue lodge, but unlike in the Scottish Rite, the method of presentation we use in our degrees involves active participation from the candidates, which adds meaning and impact for everyone.

What do we do in our Chapter and Council that will be Attractive to a Non-Member?

First, we have fun. It is great to get together with Masons from different blue lodges to share ideas, hear about activities, and support each other. Second, we are dedicated to sharing more Masonic light with our candidates by participating in our degrees and giving them a quality experience, along with our "short talk" programs and discussions at our meetings. Third, many of our activities involve our families, and the York Rite provides an opportunity for everyone to meet and spend time with good people.

What are the Benefits of Joining the York Rite?

York Rite Masons are better Masons because of the two main benefits of joining. First, you will receive valuable instruction and lessons that complete many of the stories and lessons that you learned in your blue lodge degrees. These include the completion of King Solomon's temple, the recovery of the long lost Master Mason's Word, and many others that you will enjoy learning. Second, you may enjoy fellowship with Masons from several different lodges in your area, thus extending your Masonic connections, and experiencing the meaning of true universal brotherhood.

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Thrice Ill. Master _____ Phone _____

Questions For Grand Council Officers*

What questions could one of the Grand Council officers answer for you?

How could Grand Council officers be of particular assistance to you?

When is the best time to reach you? _____

What number should we use? _____

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