

# Grand Chapter of Nebraska



# Order of the Eastern Star

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July 12, 2020

Dear Worthy Matrons of Nebraska Eastern Star,

We are privileged to share this Order with you, have taken the same Obligation and serve beside you. We respect you and take very seriously our relationship with you. We value your needs, concerns, and current situations, as widely varied as they are. We pray daily for each Chapter and each member. We pray for your health, wellness and ability to live with joy and hope in the presence of this pandemic.

As we prepare to enter a new month, permission is granted for Nebraska subordinate Chapters to enter Phase 1 of opening in August. Permission is not a requirement or an expectation for your Chapter to enter Phase 1 and meet for your stated meeting in August. Permission allows your Chapter to individually determine what is best at this time for your Chapter. Conditions and risks are not the same in all communities. Focus on the unique conditions and risks of your Chapter and members. We advise caution.

You have received the guidelines for what Phase 1 must look like. If you choose to enter Phase 1 and meet in August, you must abide by the Phase 1 Guidelines. If you have questions about applying these guidelines in your Chapter, please communicate directly with the Worthy Grand Matron. We advise caution as you consider the timing of opening your Chapter to begin Phase 1 meetings. Opening too soon can cause higher risks for attenders. The welfare and safety of our members must continue to be our highest priority. Please continue to listen to your officers and members. Hear their needs and concerns before making your determination for how your Chapter will proceed during the month of August. Please carefully consider the safety and preparation of your Chapter room. Please carefully consider the implementation of the Phase 1 Guidelines and how they impact your meeting. Consider the needs of members to use masks and sanitizers. The contact list must be maintained.

If a Chapter chooses not to open or meet in August, no dispensation is needed. Please communicate with me your Chapter's choice and share how your members are feeling and doing. You may communicate simply by USPS mail, email, private Facebook message, or text. No Chapter seal is required.

We acknowledge that while we are a unified Grand Chapter, the needs and conditions of all Chapters are not alike. The guidelines are designed to protect our Chapters and each of our members. Your Chapter may have unique needs, concerns, and questions that are not addressed to your satisfaction in our information and the guidelines, please communicate directly with the Worthy Grand Matron.

Thank you for your faithfulness to the Grand Chapter requests, guidelines and to this public health process. While we make our decisions for a date that lies in the future, conditions and risks will continue to evolve and attention must be paid to the realities as the date draws near. A plan may need to be altered as the date draws near as conditions evolve and warrant. A cancellation may become necessary.

May we each listen to our members and accept with grace our differences, individual circumstances, concerns, and needs. We are guided by charity, truth and loving kindness and I anticipate we will each demonstrate our loving compassion in each encounter and communication.

It is our ongoing honor and privilege to serve you. We pray for the wisdom and courage to find the paths through this crisis that God is blessing and on which He is calling us to serve.



Star love and enduring hope,

Karan Birdsall  
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Dear Sisters and Brothers of Nebraska Eastern Star,

Patience is the ability to hold fast to the calm acceptance that things can happen in a different order than you might have originally had in mind. All areas of our daily living in 2020 continue to challenge our patience. What we thought we knew, what we thought we would experience, what we planned for have all been rearranged by the challenges and inherent dangers presented by Covid-19 and the developed global pandemic.

As we prepare to enter a new month, permission is granted for Nebraska subordinate Chapters to enter Phase 1 of opening in August. Permission is not a requirement or an expectation for your Chapter to enter Phase 1 and meet for your stated meeting in August. Permission allows your Chapter to individually determine what is best at this time for your Chapter. We advise caution as you consider the timing of opening your Chapter to begin Phase 1 meetings. Opening too soon can cause higher risks for attenders. The welfare and safety of our members must continue to be our highest priority. Conditions and risks are not the same in all communities. Focus on the unique conditions and risks of your Chapter and members. While we make our decisions for a date that lies in the future, conditions and risks will continue to evolve and attention must be paid to the realities as the date draws near. A plan may need to be altered as the date draws near as conditions evolve and warrant. A cancellation may become necessary.

Over the past five months we have waited and hoped for science and research to lead us to slowing the progression of this virus by defining processes and behaviors that are safe, and helping us understand best practices for our own safety and for our promotion of the safety and health of those around us. We find ourselves in the midst of this journey and these processes. There is still much to learn and understand; however, there is a great deal of information and experience available to each of us as we chart our courses. Personal interpretation and implementation are the rights and responsibilities for each of us. No two of our situations, needs or concerns are alike. Our choices for our daily living are individual and we show our love and compassion by responding respectfully to those whose opinions differ from our own.

At this time, we do not have fewer cases of Covid-19 in our state nor a vaccine for biological protection but we do have five months of statistics, trends, observations, evaluations and are developing an understanding of what we can do to live as safely as possible with the presence of Covid-19. The conditions in our communities will evolve and require our attention to changes when addressing what is timely and appropriate in our own Chapter. As we move forward together as members of Nebraska Eastern Star, may we listen to each other and accept with grace our differences, individual circumstances, concerns, and needs. We are guided by charity, truth and loving kindness and I anticipate we will each demonstrate our loving compassion in each encounter and communication.

It is our ongoing honor and privilege to serve you. We pray for the wisdom and courage to find the paths through this crisis that God is blessing and on which He is calling us to serve.

Star love and enduring hope,

Karan Birdsall  
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## Evaluating Your Chapter's Timeline for Entering Phase 1

Thank you for your consideration and placing the welfare and safety of your Chapter's members first and foremost. Please use this tool each month as you consider and determine the timing appropriate for your opening and entering Phase 1.

- Consult with local authorities to maintain your awareness of current mitigation levels in your area.
- Evaluate if your area's current level of risk makes opening your Chapter feasible with regard to the welfare of your members.
- Consult with officers and hear their perspectives regarding risk versus benefit to moving forward into Phase 1.
- Consider opening date and its impact on your members. Listen to your members' needs and concerns.
- Evaluate preparation needed for your building. Is it ready for your use?
- Are masks and sanitizers available for attenders when entering?
- Have plans been developed to establish social distancing when arriving and departing?
- Have plans been developed for establishing social distancing within your Chapter room?
- Are you prepared for maintaining the contact list of those attending your meetings?
- Are plans in place to sanitize the Chapter room, paraphernalia, and portions of building used following the meeting?
- Meeting dates are scheduled in the future, as the date approaches if risks and conditions evolve to be less safe a cancellation may become necessary. Continue to consider if opening is appropriate on your stated meeting date. Communication to all members is essential.
- Members whose health concerns make them uncomfortable or anxious about returning to meet and who choose not to attend must be assured, supported and treated with respect. Communications to inform and include them in Chapter information and business is essential.

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## Directive for Sharing of Communications in Stated Chapter Meeting

Since our Chapters last met and Chapter Secretaries shared verbally the written communications from the Worthy Grand Matron and the Most Worthy Grand Matron a great deal of time and information have past. Each communication from the Worthy Grand Matron and Most Worthy Grand Matron are important and were essential when created and distributed; however they are not to be read word for word by the Chapter Secretary at your return to stated meeting.

As we return to meeting, you may make available for distribution as needed the communications from these previous months. You may distribute these communications in printed copies or emails. Please have available at each meeting a copy of each communication, the guidelines for Phase 1 and Phase 2. Please utilize at each meeting and have available for sharing the "Guidelines for Phase 1 Checklist".

It has been our expectation that you have shared the communications when they were timely, allowing your members to be aware of these important details and actions even though we were not together meeting.

It is also our recommendation that these communications, guidelines and any supporting materials regarding actions relating to the Covid-19 pandemic are printed and assembled into a separate file for retention and availability at each stated meeting.

Thank you for your dedication and desire to serve the best interests of our Order, your Chapter and your members.

This directive is temporary. This directive only applies to your first return stated meeting. Regular reading of correspondence will resume following the first return meeting.

Respectfully,



Karan Birdsall  
Worthy Grand Matron