



*American Values.  
Hometown Roots.*

# **Master/President Handbook**

## **Subordinate/Community Granges**

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National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry

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Worthy Master/President,

Congratulations on your election as Master/President of your Grange and may your term of service be successful.

This handbook is designed to help you perform your duties to the highest levels and to inform you about the tools and resources available to you.

While this handbook is designed to provide you with much of the information you will need, please remember that there are many individuals within our organization who are also there to assist you, to answer questions and to act as a sounding board. The National Grange website also offers information and help to you. While you have help available, this will only make your job easier if you choose to take advantage of it. Familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook and certainly spend some time familiarizing yourself with your State Grange By-Laws and the National Grange Digest of Laws, remembering that these documents may change on an annual basis. The By-Laws of our organization will help to guide you in many decisions.

According to the traditional Installation of Officers, the Master should “be foremost in advocating the principles and carrying out the objects of our Order”; this is restated in the Alternative Installation Ceremony as “You should also find new ways to serve your community, promote agriculture and attract new members.” So no matter which installation you use, it is up to you as the Master to lead your Grange and to provide assistance to your members.

Remember your Grange has also elected a talented group of officers and that they assume some of the burden of the leadership, yourself setting the example in all things. Each office comes with specific duties outlined in our By-Laws. Make sure your new officers are thoroughly acquainted with their job duties. Of course, part of your own job description includes appointing members to the various standing and special committees in your Grange. When making appointments take into consideration the special knowledge and talents of all your members and place them in positions where they can be of the most benefit to the Grange and to the community. Having an officer and committee meeting at the beginning of each year is imperative so that all involved understand their duties and the expectations of the Grange.

Finally, do not forget that one of your duties is to make sure that you are passing along the leadership skills you are learning. Our organization has been perpetual for over 150 years by making sure that someone is always ready to step up to leadership.

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## Grange Meetings

### Floor Work and Ritual

One of the reasons your Grange qualifies for tax exempt status is as a fraternal organization that has “a ritualistic form of work.” The Subordinate Grange Manual specifies how to setup the hall for a meeting. You may use the Subordinate Grange Manual (2013 version has both traditional and alternative language) for the language for opening and closing a meeting. Requirements for any Grange include the Bible on the altar and the American Flag displayed in the meeting room.

It is important that all of your members have the ability to look at a Manual, and the officers with speaking parts certainly need to have one. Considering that our first four degrees are included in the Subordinate Manual, it would also be an excellent idea to make them available for new members so that they may experience the beautiful lessons found in the degree work.

The latest version of the Subordinate/Community Grange Manual is a good source for answers regarding any of the ceremonies, including the opening and closing, presenting guests, draping the Charter, presentation of the flag and balloting for candidates.

There are three ways to initiate new members: exemplify the first four Degrees, the Obligation Ceremony or the Welcoming Ceremony. All three of these methods are found in the 2013 version of the Manual.

### Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance may be used in place of singing “The Star Spangled Banner.” When it is used, the Master will not announce the pledge; he/she will just place their hand over their heart and begin in a loud voice with the pledge.

### Balloting

Candidates for Grange membership are voted upon:

- A. New candidates wishing to become members must be balloted on by either paper ballots (“Yes” for acceptance – “No” for rejection) or the conventional ballot box using balls and cubes. (See Subordinate Manual for instructions.)
- B. Current Grange members or former Grange members wishing to be reinstated may be balloted on by use of a paper ballot. This balloting is done during Balloting for Candidates.

### Demits

Granting a demit:

- A. Granting a demit to a member of your Grange, who is in good standing (their dues are current), is done by motion under new business. No member may object without preferring charges against the applicant.

Accepting a demit:

- A. A member holding a demit may apply for membership in any Subordinate/Community Grange.
- B. A demit is in force for six months from the date of issue.
- C. The vote to accept a demit is done by paper ballot under New Business.

## Contacts

When you have a question or need to order supplies, contact your State Grange leadership first. You may also order supplies from the National Grange, 1616 H Street NW, Washington DC 20006-4999. The phone number is 202-628-3507 ext. 109. The email address is [sales@nationalgrange.org](mailto:sales@nationalgrange.org) or you may order brochures and other books directly off the Grange Store website, [www.grangestore.org](http://www.grangestore.org). Promotional items, Grange apparel and Grange regalia can be ordered from <https://www.promoplace.com/grange>. You may find additional information on the National Grange website [www.nationalgrange.org](http://www.nationalgrange.org).



# Master's/President's Tools and Tasks

## Tools

### Rules and Laws of the Order

- A. Subordinate/Community Grange Manual
- B. National Grange Digest of Laws
- C. State Grange By-laws
- D. Roster of your State Grange (Directory of officers and committee chairs of State, Pomona and Subordinate Granges)
- E. State Grange Journal of Proceedings
- F. National Grange Journal of Proceedings

### Publications

- A. State Grange newsletter/paper etc.
- B. State Grange Contests, Awards and Scholarships information
- C. State Grange Legislative Policies
- D. National Legislative Policies
- E. National Grange "Action Alerts"
- F. National Grange Patrons Chain emails
- G. National Grange *Good Day!* Magazine
- H. Other communications from the State and National Grange

## Tasks

### Public Relations

#### *Selling the Grange to the Membership*

- A. Every member should know what your Grange program and activities are.
- B. Every member (household) should receive State and National publications.
- C. Every member should have confidence that they are an important part of your Grange.

#### *Selling the Grange to the Community*

- A. Each Grange needs at least one member to establish a relationship with the local media (print, radio, television, etc.).
- B. Each member needs to have a positive attitude and always keep the Grange in a positive light. Their opinions will have influence on their friends and families.
- C. The Grange needs to publicize all community involvement activities and all members who receive awards and recognition. Also publicize awards provided by the Grange to non-members.
- D. Participate in the activities of other community organizations as representatives of the Grange.
- E. Attend and participate in all "county planning" or other government activities and have members serve on boards whenever possible.
- F. Participate in county fairs, local festivals, parades and community events.
- G. Take a stand on community issues and publicize your stand.
- H. Have an Open House or open meeting to invite the community to a Grange style meeting.
- I. Make sure your hall and grounds are well maintained. Encourage Scouts, 4-H and other groups to meet in your hall so that it appears to be "lived in."

*Promoting a Growing Membership*

- A. Have a personal contact with each member. Attempt to involve each one in some manner.
- B. Encourage your members to share opportunities for community involvement with your Grange.
- C. Encourage your members to develop a vision statement if you do not have one and set goals to carry it out.
- D. Check out the National Grange Website [www.nationalgrange.org](http://www.nationalgrange.org) for ongoing membership resources and ideas.
- E. Membership brochures are available for a minimal charge from the National Grange.

## Legal Matters

This section is designed to be a guide for Subordinate/Community and Pomona Granges and to help Grange leaders protect their Grange and themselves. It does not replace legal advice or checking on current laws. If you have any questions, contact your State Grange.

### Defining the Grange

#### Who We Are

The National Grange developed the following statement to define our organization in 2019. While no one short statement can capture the entire range of Grange involvement, this sentence gives an excellent beginning.

“The Grange strengthens individuals, families and communities through grassroots action, service, education, advocacy and agriculture awareness.”

#### IRS Tax Status

The IRS issued to the National Grange a blanket exemption as a 501(c)(5) organization.

#### Tax ID Number

Each Pomona, Subordinate, and Junior Grange is issued a Federal Tax ID number. It is obtained with the Internal Revenue Service by filing a Form SS-4.

#### Articles of Incorporation

Your Grange should check with the State Grange to see if your Grange needs to be incorporated through the Secretary of State in your state.

Incorporation protects all your members from personal liability on behalf of the actions of the Grange. It does not prevent someone from suing the Grange itself. Incorporation is strongly recommended.

#### Authority of Each Level and the Master

The sponsoring Grange is responsible for a Junior Grange. The Pomona has responsibility for the health and growth of the Subordinate Granges within its jurisdiction but has no authority over them. The State Grange has responsibility and authority over the Subordinate and Pomona Granges. The National Grange has responsibility and authority over the State Grange.

The Master is required to enforce the laws of the Order for the Grange they serve. The Subordinate and Pomona Master are answerable to the State Master for their actions. The State Master is answerable to the National Master for his/her actions.

#### Digest, State Grange By-Laws, Subordinate/Community Grange By-Laws and Rulings

The rules of the order are located in the National Grange Digest of Laws, the State Grange By-Laws and the Pomona or Subordinate Grange By-Laws. The By-Laws of each level must conform to the laws of the higher level. If they do not conform, they are not applicable and must be removed from the rules.

The only member who can make rulings on the By-Laws is the Master of that Grange or the Master of the next level (State Master, National Master). The Pomona Master does not have authority to rule on Subordinate By-Laws.

Each member and officer is required to obey the Constitution and By-Laws of the Grange. No officer may condone the breaking of the rules of the Order, and it is the responsibility of the Master to prohibit any violations of the rules of the order. A Grange may not suspend any By-Law for any reason, but the By-Laws may be amended as per the procedure provided in the By-Laws. Amending your By-Laws takes place over at least two meetings, notifying your members of the proposed change and upcoming vote, and requires a 2/3 majority of those present for adoption.

Each Grange needs to have a current copy of the National Grange Digest and a copy of the State Grange By-Laws. The Master should, as a part of his/her responsibilities, become familiar with the Digest and By-Laws.

Any member may purchase a copy of the National Grange Digest of Laws or your State Grange By-Laws for their own use. Annual updates are available to these documents will be made available to you by request from the National Grange office.

Each Subordinate and Pomona Grange should have a current copy of its own By-Laws. The Master and Secretary should each have a copy and any member may request a copy for their own reference.

#### Master, Overseer, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Committee Responsibilities

As the Master, Overseer, Secretary, Treasurer, and Executive Committee are the officers responsible for the finances of the Grange, they have a fiduciary responsibility to the Grange.

## Hall and Property

Many Granges are fortunate to have their own Grange Hall. Grange Halls are one of the most visible identifications of the organizations to the public and are one of our greatest assets. The following information is for those Granges that have their own Grange Hall.

### Use of Hall

If the Grange hall is owned by the Grange, then the membership sets its own rental policy and rates for allowing use of the building and grounds.

The members of each Grange determine which organizations may use their hall. However, each Grange must remain aware of other basic rules which may have impact on their renting of the hall or property. The Grange should determine the purpose for which the hall or property is being used to assure that no activity will reflect on the integrity of the Grange within the local community.

Political parties or candidates for office should rent only if and when there is no appearance of Grange support. We are non-partisan and must retain the image of fairness. Granges are encouraged to have candidate forums but must invite all candidates. If all candidates are invited, the Grange has fulfilled their responsibility.

Similarly, organizations that oppose Grange legislative policy must not give the impression of Grange support if allowed to use the Grange property.

### Hall Use Policy

Each Grange should have in its records a written policy of who may use the hall and what charges are made. This will protect the Grange, the members, and those using the Grange property. Some Granges allow members one free use of the hall each year and some allow community groups to use the hall for free, but these policies should be written and adopted by the Grange to protect whoever schedules the use of the hall.

### Rental Income

If a Grange receives a pre-arranged amount of money for use of the hall or property, it is considered rent by the IRS. Calling it a donation or gift, does not change its definition.

### Hall Use Agreement

A sample “Grange Hall Rental Agreement” is in appendix 1 (a digital copy is available on the National Grange website. The agreement should be used for everyone who uses the hall. Having a signed contract shifts the liability for the rental to the renter even if the Grange donates the use of the hall. The agreement will also help avoid many legal problems for the Grange if the renter fails to abide by the terms of the agreement. The agreement must be accompanied with a “certificate of liability insurance” to be provided by the renter’s insurance agent. The Grange must be shown as the “additional insured” on this certificate.

### Insurance and Value

Every Grange must carry property and liability insurance on its property. In the interest of protecting the officers and members and the Grange at all levels. Periodically the members should review the coverage to make sure it is adequate.

### Acquiring or Upgrading Property

Granges may acquire property by donation, purchase, or other means. There are no restrictions on how or when a Grange may acquire property or upgrade its current property. However, if a Grange must borrow money **and uses the Grange property for collateral**, the

Grange must secure the approval of the State Grange Executive Committee prior to finalizing the purchase or mortgage.

#### Selling, Encumbering (Mortgaging, Leasing), or Disposing of Grange Property

No Grange may sell, mortgage, lease or dispose of Grange property without first securing the approval of the State Grange Executive Committee. Grange law prohibits the Grange to use its property in ways that do not benefit Grange purposes.

Selling or leasing for long terms (such as cell phone towers, power transfer stations, etc.) or mortgaging Grange property should be presented in resolution form to the members and, if adopted, sent to the State Grange Executive Committee. If the committee approves the proposal, it may proceed.

In the case of a sale of property of a functioning Grange, following the approved sale, all but \$1,000 is turned over to the State Grange and placed in a trust fund for that Grange. The money remains property of that Grange but is managed and invested by the State Grange until that Grange needs it for a hall or hall improvements, or for use in accordance with the general purposes of the order. Use of the funds held in trust must be approved by the Executive Committee of the State Grange.

#### Reversion Clauses

Before any Grange can transfer property due to a reversion clause in a deed or contract, the State Grange Executive Committee must be notified and approve the reversion. Many reversion clauses in deeds are not valid due to changes in state law. The By-Laws require the Master of the State Grange to make every effort to reorganize any Grange that has become inactive for a period of seven (7) years, which prohibits any reversion of property.

## Finances

### Reporting

A report should be given at each meeting that states the current funds the Grange has, how any funds are invested, the source of any income and any accounts payable. The minutes should have the same information. When the Grange has a fund-raiser, a report on income and expenses should be completed for that event.

Any member may request to examine the records, but the Treasurer and/or Secretary should be present during such an examination.

Bills must be approved by the Grange before they are paid. Granges may preapprove specific expenses, but should set limits to protect the liability of the Treasurer.

### Cash, Checking and Savings Accounts

Granges should provide a checking and/or savings account. Most banks will require the Grange's tax ID number and a copy of the minutes showing election of officers or authorization of signers.

### Investments

Granges may make investments of all types. Savings accounts, money market accounts, CDs, stocks and bonds, or other types of investments are allowed under our rules. All investments must be made prudently and conservatively. The Executive Committee is responsible for the invested funds. A Grange may choose to only invest in certain types of investments, but members should remember that they are investing the money of the organization.

### Income Taxability

Grange income is not subject to taxation within limits set by the IRS. Check with your State Grange about state tax liability. Related income including dues, most fund-raising and reasonable rental income is usually not taxable.

### Tax Filing

Granges with an annual gross income of less than \$50,000 are required by the IRS to file a 990-N (e-Postcard) between May 1st and Sept 15th. Granges with an annual gross income greater than \$50,000 must file a 990 or 990-EZ tax form.

### Budgeting

Each Grange should develop an annual budget. A budget is a tool that estimates the income the Grange expects to receive and the expected expenses. A budget is never set in stone, and can be revised as necessary. The required annual financial report (sometimes referred to as the audit) provides valuable information for preparing the budget. It is the responsibility of the Master to assure that the financial report is prepared and presented to the Grange. Many grant applications will require budgets for the current year and, sometimes, for previous years.

An Annual Budget Template is located in appendix 2.

## Protection

### Incorporation

Incorporation protects all your members from personal liability on behalf of the actions of the Grange. It does not prevent someone from suing the Grange itself. Incorporation is strongly recommended.

### Insurance - Liability

Liability insurance protects the Grange when someone is bodily injured or their property is damaged on Grange property, due to the Grange's negligence. Liability coverage also protects the Grange if a member who is working on the hall is hurt. Having a liability policy may prevent legal problems when someone is hurt on Grange property.

### Insurance - Property

Property of the Grange should be insured against loss as it is normally the single greatest asset of a Grange. Depending upon the age and condition of your hall, it will be insured for replacement cost or actual cash value (ACV). Fire, wind and other losses are covered by the general policy, but things such as earthquakes and floods must be insured specifically or through other sources.

### Insurance - Fidelity Bonding

Each Grange is required by the National Grange Digest to bond the Secretary and Treasurer. Any officer or member who handles money for the Grange should also be bonded. Bonding insurance covers the loss of Grange funds. A bonding policy is available from the National Grange that covers all officer and members. A Grange should also check with its insurance agent to compare the National Grange premium costs with what the agent can provide. Specific information about bonding offered through the National Grange is in appendix 3.



# **Appendix 1**

## **Sample Grange Hall Rental Agreement**

**Contact the California State Grange for a California specific rental agreement.**

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# **Appendix 2**

## **Sample Subordinate Grange Budget Template**

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# ANNUAL SUBORDINATE GRANGE BUDGET TEMPLATE

Grange # \_\_\_\_\_

## Revenue:

Dues & Applicaton Fees	\$ _____
Events	\$ _____
Grants	\$ _____
Donations	\$ _____
Other Revenue	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	\$ _____

## Expenses:

Per capita due to State Grange	\$ _____
Rent	\$ _____
Insurance	\$ _____
Utilities	\$ _____
Taxes	\$ _____
Events	\$ _____
Other Expenses	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$ _____

**SURPLUS/DEFICIT** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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# **Appendix 3**

## **National Grange Bonding Insurance Information**

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## Bonding

Each Grange is required by the National Grange Digest of Laws to bond the Secretary and Treasurer. Any officer or member who handles money for the Grange should also be bonded. Bonding insurance covers the loss of Grange funds. A bonding policy is available from the National Grange that covers all officer and members. A Grange should also check with its insurance agent to compare the National premium costs with what the agent can provide.

The table below details the amount of coverage and the annual premium for bonding offered through the National Grange.

### NATIONAL GRANGE BOND PROGRAM 2019 COVERAGE RATES

For bond coverage effective January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019

Community Grange Coverage Level Basic \$5,000 coverage = \$50 premium	Total Premium
\$5,000	\$50
\$7,500	\$59
\$10,000	\$67
\$12,500	\$72
\$15,000	\$77
\$25,000	\$99
\$30,000	\$106
\$40,000	\$121
\$50,000	\$136
\$75,000	\$168
\$100,000	\$189

\* For Granges requesting coverage of \$200,000 or greater, additional information will be needed to complete your enrollment. Please contact your State Grange for details.