Guide

The Associate Matron, Worthy Matron and  
Immediate Past Worthy Matron

# Overview

## Purpose

The tasks, responsibilities and duties of the Worthy Matron stretch three terms - The preparation for her Installation (as Associate Matron); the fulfillment of her role as Chief Office-bearer (Worthy Matron) and as an advisor to the next installed Worthy Matron (as Immediate Past Worthy Matron). This guide brings the requirements of all three roles together in the one document so that an holistic picture of what these roles involve can be seen.

The administration of the Chapter is generally left to the Secretary and Treasurer. The Worthy Matron (and the Worthy Patron to some extent) provide a role of overseer to the Chapter’s operations and will be called on to finalise decisions as they need to be. For this reason, the Worthy Matron should review the Guides appropriate to those office’s and should read them in conjunction with this document.

Taking on the role of Chief Office-bearer in a Chapter is one of the most challenging but rewarding roles you will ever experience in the Order. It is not for **everyone**, but it is a role that **anyone** should be able to aspire to. It is hoped that this guide will also help those who have aspirations to become Worthy Matron and they should remember that there are many Past Worthy Matrons in the Chapter that will be willing to be their mentor as they take that journey.

## References

The following documents, laws or regulations should be read in conjunction with this guide:

| Document |
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| Constitution and Laws of The United Grand Chapter of Australia. |
| Procedure Book and Guide for Election’s and Installations (Yellow Book). |
| Guide and Information for Secretary, Treasurer, Auditors and Books Inspection Committee (Green Book). |
| CC-PRO-001 Petty Cash Management |
| CC-PRO-002 Dues & Membership Management |
| CC-GDE-003 Election Preparation and Recording |
| CC-GDE-004 The Secretary |
| CC-GDE-005 The Treasurer |

# Preparation for YOUR election & installation

* At approximately 5 months prior to your Installation (eg. July if the installation is November):
  + Investigate the catering arrangements for the Installation meeting. This should be put to a committee meeting for discussion and agreement. The charge to members and visitors needs to be decided and should include an offset for the Chapter’s payment of banquet tickets for the installed Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron and both the Worthy Grand Matron/Patron (and other dignitaries) if in attendance.
  + Once the cost of the banquet and RSVP date is determined, the Secretary can send out the invitations. It is at this time you should advise the Secretary of the Chapters you wish to invite to your Installation.
  + If you wish an Open Installation, you should advise the Chapter (at a committee). There is no requirement for ‘approval’ as such. Closer to the time, you will need to advise the Secretary of the names and contact details of those non-members you wish to invite to the Open Installation.
* At approximately 2 months prior to your Installation (eg. September if the installation is November):
  + The Associate Matron (if the incoming WM) and the Star Points will start thinking about (and collecting contributions) to present to the outgoing Worthy Matron/Patron at the Installation meeting. The Associate Matron should approach all members except the Star Points who present their own gift.
  + You will need to have decided the members who will be your Chapter Star Points in your year. You can start asking members at any time, but you need to announce them at the Election meeting.
  + It is not really appropriate for the incoming Worthy Matron to ‘appoint’ her Marshal, but if you have someone in mind and they agree, you should let it be known before the Election Meeting.
  + You should appoint a Social Secretary. They start their role on Installation Day and should be in charge of the Installation Banquet. Their team of helpers for the year will be determined after the Installation and at the first General & Social Committee meeting.
  + Your Installing Board should be arranged by now. It is appropriate to ask the key members (ie. Installing Officer, Installing Marshal and Installing Chaplain) early in the year so they have time to learn their work. Your Installing Board will include:

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| Installing Officer | Needs to be a Past Worthy Matron.  Your choice doesn’t have to be someone in your Chapter, but it is not appropriate for you to fill all of your Installing Board with members from outside the Chapter you are being Installed in as Worthy Matron.  If they hold a rank of PWDGM, PWGM or PMWGM, then their Installing role prefix, and those of the Installing Marshal and Chaplain change to District Grand/Grand or Worthy Grand. |
| Installing Marshal | Needs to be a Past Worthy Matron. |
| Installing Chaplain | Can be either a Past Worthy Matron or Past Worthy Patron. |
| Assistant to the Installing Marshal | Must be a Sister.  There is no requirement to learn ritual for this position (except see below), but the member needs to understand the ceremony and the correct way to present regalia to the Marshal. It may be appropriate to ask your Installing Marshal for her recommendation as to who would be experienced in this role.  If the Installing Marshal is also being installed on the day, it is this Assistant that needs to stand in and take over the Installing Marshal’s role at the appropriate time. |
| Assistant to the Assistant Installing Marshal | Must be a Sister.  This member helps the Assistant in preparing the regalia and flower arrangements for presentation. |
| Installing Organist | Can be a Sister or Brother.  You should liaise with the Organist early as to the music to be played at your Installation especially if you have a particular tune you wish to have played. |
| Installing Warder/ Installing Sentinel | Can be a Sister or Brother.  If you are having an Open Installation, you should remind these members of the changes to the Closing Ritual.  If appropriate, these members can be chosen on the day of Installation. |
| Installing Points | Must be Sisters.  If appropriate, these members can be chosen on the day of Installation. |

* + You should have a good idea of what you require for your Installation Folders, and you should let the Secretary know what your intention is in relation to their development and printing. If you are doing them yourself, or have someone else doing them, the Secretary is required to approve the Installation Card before it is printed and that cannot be started until after the Election Meeting.
  + You should have decided what bouquet (or other item) you will be presented with on Installation Day. The choice needs to include some flowers and will be used each time you enter the Chapter Room (at the Opening), and if you go to the Grand Chapter Ball.
  + You should have decided what bouquet (or other item) will be presented to your Star Points on Installation Day. The choice needs to include some flowers and it is considered a keepsake by those that are chosen as a Star Point.
  + It is common for a Worthy Matron to choose a colour or colours to use throughout the year. Some choose to have a theme also (Bear, Butterfly, Bluebird etc.). The colour or theme chosen can be first seen by all on the Installation Folders, and it can be carried through to gift cards, birthday cards, wrapping paper, serviettes etc. Although you would like the choice of colour or theme to be kept confidential until Installation Day, you should at least let the Social Secretary and the Secretary know of your plans.
  + You should have decided what Charity you wish to support in your year. The choice should be a local charity or community project that all members can relate to and be proud to support. It may be appropriate to contact someone from that organization prior to you announcing it, to discuss how the Chapter can best support them. This contact should also provide you with some indication as to whether the organization appears ‘safe’ to support and that by doing so, the good name of our Chapter or the Order in general will not, in any way be negatively impacted. It is customary for you to announce your chosen Charity during your acceptance speech on Installation Day.
  + You should investigate the availability in storage of the ‘backs’ for the Installation Chairs and see if they need refurbishment. Alternatively, you can arrange to have your own for the day.
* At the Election meeting:
  + You should be prepared to announce your Star Points; the key Installing Board Members (ie. Installing Officer, Installing Marshal and Installing Chaplain); and, your Social Secretary.
  + It is not mandatory, but if you wish to have a service to the Outgoing Worthy Matron/Patron, then the Election Meeting is appropriate rather than the busy Installation Day.
  + If you wish to have any Congratulatory Cards from yourself to other Chapter Installations sent, they you should advise the Secretary.
  + If the Installation Meeting is the month before the Christmas Meeting, and you wish to have Christmas Cards sent to particular Chapters, you should advise the Secretary.
  + You should discuss the need for Installation Rehearsals with the Installing Officer and Installing Marshal and announce such date(s) at the meeting.
  + Once you know the office-bearers for your year, you will be able to see if this will require members of your Installing Team to be installed as well. Discuss this with the Installing Officer so that those parts of the ceremony can be planned for.
* On Installation Day:
  + If you are the Associate Matron, you should be prepared to present the Chapter’s gift(s) to the outgoing Worthy Matron/Patron in the first half of the meeting (generally after they have completed their farewell speeches);
  + You will also need to write your own an acceptance speech. It is helpful if a copy is given to the Secretary (preferable soft copy) for when the minutes are being prepared.
  + **At Recess:** Your Installation Folders should be available (in baskets) at the Associate Conductress & Conductress stations;
  + **At Recess:** Your bouquet and Star Point bouquets should be available at the Conductress Station. You should discuss any ‘handling’ requirements with both the Installing Marshal and Assistant to the Installing Marshal before the commencement of the Installation Ceremony;
  + **At Recess:** If you have your own Gavel, it should be placed on the WM/WPs desk. If you don’t have your own, ensure one is available;
  + **At Recess:** If you have special attire for the purpose of your Installation, you should change at this time. It’s not appropriate to do so from the beginning of the meeting, as it is still the current Worthy Matron’s Chapter until you are installed.
  + **At Recess:** Ensure any gifts you wish to hand out are available behind the WM/WPs desk and in easy reach for when you need them.

# gifts & COMPetition prizes

* The giving of gifts at your Installation and during your year is totally your decision. It is easy to fall into a need to do ‘what others have done’ and feel that you must do the same. Being Worthy Matron is all about YOU, so you do what you know is right, what you can afford and what you are comfortable with. Remember, the GIVING of the gift is the important thing, not the quality or quantity.

Having said that, the following are the options open to you in the giving of gifts

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| Installing Board | Gifts for the Installing Officer, Installing Marshal, and the Installing Chaplain are common practice. The rest is your choice.  These can be given out during the Installation meeting only if time allows and then, only have the IO, IM and IC escorted to the East for presentation. |
| Visiting Worthy Grand Matron/Patron  Visiting Most Worthy Grand Matron/Patron | Gifts presented to the WGM/WGP are common practice.  When being welcomed at the beginning of the meeting, it is appropriate to give them their gift then, along with their agenda.  Presenting gifts to the WGM and WGP on your Installation Day, is your choice. 1) you could have the outgoing WM present them with a gift from you when she welcomes them at the beginning of the meeting; or 2) you can present them a gift when you ask them to respond at the end of the meeting. |
| Visiting Worthy Matrons/Patrons | Between Worthy Matrons and Patrons it is ‘ understood’ how the giving of gifts can get out of hand, not only in quantity, but value. So it is appropriate if your choice is not to do so for visiting WMs/WPs during your year, and maybe you wish to do so only on special occasions (Birthday, Installation etc). |
| Office-bearers | The giving of gifts or a memento to your office-bearers is your choice. This can be done either on Installation Day (after the meeting), or at the end of your year (at the Election meeting). |
| Birthdays or other special occasions | It is customary to provide all members and visitors with some sort of memento at the Birthday meeting. The cost of this should be borne by the Chapter. |
| Favours | It has become common practice to have some sort of memento to hand out to everyone at each meeting and after your Service. It is not really necessary for EVERY meeting and totally your choice if you wish to leave it to special meetings or every second meeting etc. |
| Social Events | It is your choice if you wish to present a gift to any member that arranges/hosts a fund raising social event. |
| Birthday Basket | It is customary for this to be arranged and provided by the Worthy Matron.  Your Birthday Basket is in use at your Installation Meeting onwards. |

* The number of raffle/competition prizes you need to have ready for each meeting is subject to the number of visitors you will have. As a general rule, the Worthy Matron usually brings along at least 3 for each meeting, and, if you are confident that other members will bring contributions as well. A total of 6 prizes for a ‘non-special’ meeting is adequate. You should discuss this with your Social Secretary when planning your year and if you wish, it is in order to make a general request to all members to assist you.
* Raffles for socials and fund raising events should be discussed with the event Host/Hostess to decide on how many prizes are required.

# preparing for committee meetings

The General & Social Committee is the opportunity to speak informally, openly and to discuss in detail, any Chapter issues. The Worthy Matron should manage these meetings with a fair hand ie. Allow everyone to say what they want to say, but remain conscious of the time allocated to do so.

Not every Worthy Matron will have experience in running and chairing meetings. Your Secretary and Treasurer are there to ensure you cover the necessary business but in order to Chair a meeting and to control the discussions that occur, you should remind yourself of the following qualities that are considered to be a good measure of a Chairperson:

Speak clearly and succinctly. Use short and clear sentences when explaining things and do not rush;

Be sensitive to the feelings and opinions of the members by listening and making eye contact with the person speaking. Let those that wish to speak have equal time doing so;

Be impartial and tactful. If you have an idea or view on a subject let others talk first and indicate your opinion only at the end of the discussion or if no resolution has been achieved;

Don’t be the person that does all the talking or be the only one making decisions. Involve members as much as possible, asking for their opinions or views; and

Ensure the meeting starts on time and finishes as quickly as it can.

There is no constituted Order of Business for Committee Meetings. As a general rule however, the following is considered appropriate:

* General & Social Committee
  + Call to Order (by the Worthy Matron)
  + Opening with Prayer or Verse – Provided by the Worthy Matron and it can be read by either the Chaplain or the Worthy Patron. If the Committee is held on the same day as the Regular meeting, it is not necessary to have Silent Prayer at the Committee as it will be repeated during the Regular Meeting. The Worthy Matron can however, ask any members if they are aware of any Sisters or Brothers that need prayers and make a note for attention at the Regular Meeting.
  + Apologies (Secretary)
  + Correspondence (Secretary)
  + General Business (All)
  + Social Business (Social Secretary)
* Other Committees
  + Call to Order (by the Worthy Matron)
  + Apologies (Secretary)
  + Business/Purpose of the meeting (Secretary)

# preparing for regular meetings

**Prior to your installation** you should prepare a rough plan for each meeting throughout the year. The Theme for that meeting can dictate what Services or Verses you plan for, but as a general rule, the Worthy Matron should consider what is required for the following:

* The Service – the length of the service and how many to have will depend on the type of meeting and how many visitors are in attendance. Provide each speaker with a card containing the piece you wish them to read. Ensure the writing is large enough to be read without too much effort (or glasses) and if you include any instructions, ensure they are easily identified from the speaking part of the service. Structure and develop your service with consideration of those that will deliver it ie. remember that you will have members in the Chapter room that may not be able to (or not like to), speak loud or clearly, or be able to move around the Chapter room easily if required. For the best effect, the service must ‘ flow ‘ with little effort, and with the appropriate emphasis on the message being delivered. If a special meeting or service it is good to provide copies, the month before, to the members taking part, so they can read it prior to the meeting. This helps in the delivery of the service as the member is more comfortable as they know what to expect and they also feel more involved.
* Music – It is good to provide a copy of your plan for the year to the Organist. They appreciate being able to provide appropriate music to the theme of the meeting regardless of whether you have some special tunes in mind. Always remember to give them plenty of time to rehearse any special music you wish to have.
* Handouts or mementos – as indicated earlier, the giving of a handout to the members at every meeting is not necessary, but you may have something special in mind and appropriate to the theme of the day.
* Verses – The Worthy Matron can have as many additional verses to deliver during the meeting as she wishes as long as they do not interrupt or detract from Ritual or other constitutional ceremonies. Generally, there is one at the ‘ Welcome’ part of the meeting, and you may choose to close the meeting with a Verse also. If you have visiting dignitaries, you may wish to have a verse for each one as they are presented in the West and introduced to the Chapter, or wait until they are all seated and do a general Welcome verse. It is also nice to have a ‘Grace’ for the Chaplain to say at Afternoon tea.
* Agenda – The Agenda for the next meeting is prepared by the Secretary soon after each meeting and the Worthy Matron needs to approve it before printing. You may wish to have a verse on the Agenda to carry on your theme for the meeting or you can write a short paragraph for members to read. Keep in mind that many members cannot attend meetings regularly and the Agenda is the only communication they have so ‘ speak ‘ to them and keep them involved in what is happening in and around the Chapter.
* Gift Cards – You may choose to carry your theme through into Gift Cards and Birthday Cards (on the gifts in your Birthday Basket). For these you will also require verses to be included.
* Hall Bookings - The Secretary will provide details of the bookings for the hall at the beginning of your term. You should review these early and advise the Secretary if any changes are required for particular meetings so she can make the necessary arrangements.

**It is wise to have a ‘book’** that you can use while standing in the East and facilitating the meeting. A template is available from the Secretary if you require one. This template has the Order of Business for any type of meeting. A few days prior to the meeting, the Worthy Matron can go through it, taking out the items not required and adding the verses, services etc. to be used. Space is available in the template for you to list 1) those filling in positions on the day 2) members needing silent prayer 3) items you may wish to bring up during general business and 4) any thank you or reminders you wish to make at the end of the meeting. The Ritual Book and this book should be all that is required for a meeting and having everything in one place, helps you keep the meeting moving and in control.

Regardless of the planning done before hand, the Worthy Matron must always be prepared for things that don’t go to script, but making a lot of effort in such a plan reduces the risk of everything going too bad if it does. When this happens, remember to KEEP CALM, STOP, THINK and always ASK for advice if you do not know the immediate answer.

# invitations & visiting other chapters

* As early in your year as possible, provide the Secretary with a list of the Chapters you wish to invite to visit. Those invitations should only be appropriate through the year and up to the meeting prior to the Installation meeting as those invitations are sent out in the middle of the year.
* It is not appropriate to visit another Chapter without receiving a formal written invitation and/or, you have formally accepted to attend.
* It is not appropriate to accept invitations to visit other Chapters if you really don’t think you can go. If in doubt, and if other members indicate they would like to go, you can accept the invitation for the Chapter members so they can attend in your absence. The Secretary can advise the requesting Chapter accordingly. If circumstances change and you can then visit the Chapter, it is appropriate for you to ring the Chapter’s Secretary or Worthy Matron and advise them accordingly.
* You should always wear your Regalia when visiting other Chapters. If you can’t for some reason, you should advise the Worthy Matron being visited and apologise accordingly.
  + If you have accepted an invitation to visit for your members, they are able to wear their Regalia. If they visit a Chapter that you have not accepted to attend, they do not wear their regalia.
  + When visiting a Chapter, it is appropriate for you to put on your Regalia until the Worthy Matron being visited, has put on her Regalia.
  + You should remember to see the Secretary to sign the Inventory Book to indicate you have custody of your Regalia.
* When visiting a Chapter, you sign as a Visitor writing your FULL name (first, then last) and indicating you are the Worthy Matron and what your Chapter Number is eg. “Angela Sweeney W.M. No 52”;
* If you are also a member of the Chapter you are visiting, you should still sign your name in the Visitors column. You are there as an invited representative of the Chapter you are Worthy Matron for, and you should show respect to that Chapter and its members. As a member of the Chapter you are visiting, you are at liberty to be involved in Chapter discussions and are entitled to vote if required. You should be cautious in being involved in a lot of discussion in respect again, to the Chapter you are Worthy Matron for, and to its members that may be in attendance.
* As a visiting Worthy Matron, you should be seated in the extended East with other visiting Worthy Matrons. (Depending on other dignitaries that are also visiting the Chapter). While sitting there, the visiting Worthy Matron’s will work out between themselves who will respond at the end of the meeting. If you are chosen/asked to speak, remember that you are speaking for those Worthy Matrons as well as adding your own congratulations or speaking about other items as you see fit.
  + If there are dignitaries also in attendance, and there are a lot of responses from visitors, it is likely that you will be left with little else to discuss. Try to speak about things that have not been mentioned by the others. A tip – you are a Worthy Matron, speaking to a Worthy Matron, so you are well aware of the effort of putting together a meeting and will see things that others may not notice.
  + The correct protocol to address the Chapter Room when asked to speak is 1) the first speaker addresses everyone ie. The Worthy Grand Matron being first to speak will say: “Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron, Worthy Grand Patron, Past Worthy Grand Matrons, Past Worthy Grand Patrons, Grand Office-bearers, visiting Worthy Matrons, visiting Worthy Patrons and members all” 2) speakers after that only need to start with “Worthy Matron, Worthy Patron and members”.
* When you attend a Grand Chapter or United Grand Chapter Meeting, you do not wear your Regalia and you do not sit in the Extended East.
* Celebratory Cards – it is customary for the Worthy Matron to provide and deliver celebratory cards in person when visiting that Chapter. You can request the Secretary to send cards when she declines your invitations if you wish.

# social events

* The first General and Social Committee for your term should be the time to discuss the years fund raising activities and prepare a calendar, but you should have already discussed some ideas with your Social Secretary before that.
* It is appropriate for you to indicate what proportion of monies is to go to Charity or the Chapter when an event is held. Usually it is 50%-50%, but for events that are likely to involve non-member contributions (eg. Market Stall, selling of tickets for a special raffle), all monies should go to the Charity. This is a requirement of the regulatory environment we operate in and part of the legislation appropriate for the operation of not-for-profit organisations. If you have any ideas for fund raising and are not sure whether it is within our legal ability to do so, you can discuss this more with the Secretary or Treasurer.

# the ‘feather duster’ principle

* Your responsibilities as Immediate Past Worthy Matron are clearly defined in the Constitution and Ritual. You should be prepared to support the Worthy Matron at any time including filling any last minute office-bearer roles as required.

If your successor is a ‘first time’ Worthy Matron, the role of IP Worthy Matron changes to be one of a ‘mentor’. At the beginning of her year, discuss her plan with her and provide any advice if necessary. During a meeting, you will be sitting at her right, and should be watchful of how the meeting is progressing. If you need to correct her at any time, do so inconspicuously and without judgement or criticism.

* In some cases, you may not be able to fill your role as Immediate Past because you need to take on another office in the Chapter. You do not need to gain approval to do so from the Chapter. When installed into that new position, you are no longer considered the Immediate Past Worthy Matron, and cannot where that regalia or take on any responsibilities deemed for that office.
* Coming out of the Chair and becoming a Past Worthy Matron is by no means the end of a ‘Star Career’. Always be prepared to step into office when required and to mentor others in the Chapter as they travel on their Star journey.

# other responsibilities

* The meeting chosen for the Annual Official Visit will be advised by the Worthy Grand Matron. You should consider whether rehearsals need to be planned for and discuss this with the Secretary.
  + The Secretary will receive advice as to what is required to be reviewed by Grand Chapter on the Official Visit. You should ensure all required items are available at the meeting and notify the Secretary as soon as possible if you cannot supply any of the items required.
* As Worthy Matron, you are given custody of a case for your use during your term. This case contains the essential constitutional items that a Worthy Matron needs to do her job in addition to those added by the Secretary on behalf of the Chapter. During the year, you will be given copies of Grand Reports etc to file in the appropriate folders in your case, or updates to documents as they become available. At the end of your year, it is appropriate to remove any personal items, check that all contents are in good order, and prepare to hand the case to the Secretary.

What should be contained in your case is detailed in the inventory form within one of the folders in the case.