Guide

The Secretary

# Overview

## Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to document the Administration activities that need to be completed for the Chapter in the planning of a typical ‘Chapter’ year.

As well as the activities associated with the Office, the Secretary is the Office-bearer in the Chapter that has an overall understanding of what needs to be done in the Chapter. The Secretary should therefore have knowledge of all Chapter activities in order to guide others.

Therefore, some of the tasks listed in this guide are not necessarily the responsibility of the Secretary to complete, but it is the Secretary’s responsibility to ensure that they have been done where appropriate.

## 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-005 The Treasurer |
| CC-GDE-006 The AM WM IPWM |

# Preparation for election & installation

The months leading to the annual Installation Meeting are the busiest for the Secretary and it is appropriate to start this guide at that period of time.

It is strongly advised to review the Grand Chapter’s Procedure Book (see References) as well as Capital Chapter’s guide ***Election Preparation and Recording***.

Each activity described below should be reviewed in the month prior to the meeting itself as some items may need to be tabled at General Business in the previous month, included on the agenda for that month’s meeting, or the Secretary may need to start arranging for the activity to be done prior to the meeting.

## 5 months out from the Installation (eg. June)

* The catering arrangements for the Installation meeting should be discussed and the cost to be charged to members and visitors should be agreed;
* Invitations to Chapters to attend the Installation Meeting should be sent, including the cost of the Banquet and the RSVP date.

## 3 months out from the Installation (eg. August)

* The amount payable for annual Dues for the next term should start to be placed on the agendas along with any cost for the Installation Banquet;
* This is also the time of the year that hall bookings for the following term are sent to the Northside Community Centre. Bookings are made from one December through to the following December.

## 2 months out from the Installation (eg. September)

* Following the completion of this meeting, the Past Worthy Matron/Patron jewels need to either be sent to the Jewelers for refurbishment, or, new ones ordered;
* Envelopes should be sent out with this meeting’s agenda requesting members to use it when paying Dues or for the installation Banquet. Space should also be made available on the envelope to accept payment for other Chapter’s Installation Banquets. The use of envelopes helps the Treasurer to manage the high number of payments that are made at this time of year. From this point on, the Secretary and Treasurer should be keeping a record of Dues and Banquet monies paid.
  + It is wise for the Secretary to note in the diary what RSVP dates are required for other Chapter installations as they come in and ensure those payments are sent by the Due date.
* The amount members can pay for Grand Chapter document fees and reports can also be added to the agenda at this time. These payments however, are not required until March the following year, but it is helpful to remind members now especially given the busy time of year followed by Christmas and our recess in January.
* Remind the Associate Matron and the Star Points that they need to start thinking about (and collecting contributions) to present to the outgoing WM/WP at the Installation meeting. The Associate Matron should approach all members except the Star Points who present their own gift.
* The WM will need to arrange the members who will represent the Chapter on the 5 star points. She will also need to arrange her installing board and possibly her Social Secretary.

## Election Meeting (eg. October)

* All members should have paid their Dues for the next term by this meeting;
* The Treasurer should be asked to prepare a list of those that have NOT paid Dues. This list should be monitored by the Treasurer during the Election meeting as nominations for office or committees are made. Only members who are financial for the next term can nominate, vote, and/or be elected to office or a committee;
* Any member not able to attend the Election meeting, but prepared to be nominated for an office or committee, should provide their intention to do so (via letter or email). NOTE: these letters or emails are not dealt with as general correspondence. They are read prior to the commencement of the election.
* The Treasurer should calculate the amount to be donated to the WM’s Charity for the outgoing year, and raise the amount to the members at the Election meeting for ratification;
* The Treasurer should be arranging for the Auditors for the next term and provide you with letters/emails confirming their acceptance of that role;
* If it is not likely that the Chapter will have anyone to fill the roles of Grand Representative or those for the Home Fund/Home Management Committees, the Secretary should ask the existing representatives to provide a letter/email if they intend to continue in those roles, or source new representatives;
* The outgoing and incoming WMs should advise if they require any Installation (Congratulation) Cards to be sent to other Chapters;
* The outgoing WM, WP, Secretary and Treasurer should do a stock take of the items in each of their cases and advise of anything that needs to be replaced or prepared for handover in November;
* The Secretary should draft the UGC Chapter Returns (sent through by the WG Registrar) and determine the cost of diplomas and statutory fees. These need to be tabled as Monthly Expenses and notified to the Treasurer at the meeting so that a cheque can be drawn and sent after the meeting. This is to ensure that the Diplomas are ready for presentation at the November meeting.
* The Secretary should have balloting material, papers, pencils/pens and paper bags in readiness for the Election meeting if required;
* The WM will arrange for at least 2 tellers for the Election meeting.
* For the meeting, the Secretary should print an Election Template to be completed by the Secretary, Tellers and for reference for the Presiding WM. As a reference, record the current amounts agreed last Election meeting for Administration Expenses and Petty Cash as these may be revised.
* Following the Election meeting, the Secretary should develop a schedule for those who were nominated for the Visitors panel. A small slip of paper with this schedule can be sent to these members in the Installation agenda;
* Following the Election meeting, the Secretary should prepare correspondence to anyone outside of the Chapter who has been nominated as an Auditor or a Chapter representatives. Letters of thanks should also be sent to those who are no longer taking on those roles for the Chapter.

## November (Installation)

* The Secretary should oversee the preparation of the Installation Cards with the incoming WM and approve them before any printing is done;
* Past WM/WP jewels for the outgoing WM/WP (ordered previously) should have been received from the jewelers and ready to be presented at the meeting. Ensure these are placed on the WM/WP desk during recess at the November meeting;
* Past WM/WP diplomas for the outgoing WM/WP should have been received. Ensure they are signed before they are presented at the meeting and that they are placed on the WM/WP desk during recess at the November meeting;
* Administration Cheques should be prepared, signed and ready for presentation to the Secretary, Treasurer and Social Secretary (as agreed at the Election meeting). Place these cheques in envelopes and ensure they are on the WM/WP desk for first half of November meeting;
* Petty Cash Cheques should be prepared, signed and ready to be given out (as agreed at the Election meeting). The Treasurer or Secretary can hand these to the members filling the role that requires it;
  + For a member who has had petty cash for that role in the previous term, ensure they also request re-imbursement to bring their petty cash balance up to the required amount. (record as a monthly account).
  + If a member is also handing over petty cash to another, ensure they hand in the Petty Cash book & receipts to the Treasurer.
  + If a member is taking on Petty Cash and hasn’t previously, ensure they receive a copy of the Petty Cash procedure and understand their responsibility;
* A Cheque should be prepared, signed and ready for presentation to the recipient of the Chapter’s fund raising for the last Chapter year (if the recipient is able to attend on the day, else this can be posted in the mail);
* The Secretary’s Annual Report should be completed and ready for reading at the meeting. This is copied in full and written into the minutes of the November meeting;
* It is helpful if the outgoing WM/WP, and incoming WM/WP provides a soft copy of their speeches to the Secretary. These do not need to be placed in the minute in full and can be summarized if necessary.
* Any names received for the Installation Banquet/High Tea should have been given to Social Secretary;
* The incoming WM should advise which Chapters she would like to send Christmas Cards to. These may need to be mailed prior to the November meeting given that the Chapter meets late November;

## 1st Meeting after Installation (eg. December)

The activities required at the 1st meeting will be dependent on whether a recess occur after it (if a December meeting). The following can be done at December or the first meeting back after recess.

* Prepare and send Chapter invitations for the year, up until October. Invitations for the Installation meeting are done mid-year when the cost of the banquet etc. is known;
* The Chapter should construct a social calendar for the new year. This calendar can be printed and provided to members early in the new year;
* It is appropriate to review the Address Book and decide whether changes only, can be issued to members or a new book printed. The Secretary should maintain the Address Book during the year as changes occur;
* The Chapter should discuss the additional roles required by members such as Kitchen Rosters, Storage/Furniture, Trading table. Rosters can be made available to all early in the new year. A small slip of paper with these Rosters can be sent to these members in their next agenda;
* Ensure the new WM/WP and any other Office-bearers sign the Inventory book for their regalia if they choose to carry it with them at all times.

# AGENDAS

* After each Regular meeting, the Secretary should draft the Agenda for the next meeting and provide it to the WM for her approval. On approval The WM should provide details of her services, any verses to go on the Agenda or other notices as required. Discuss with the WM the timing of the hall booking for the next meeting and arrange any adjustments necessary;
* Agendas should go out to members no later than 2 weeks prior to the Regular meeting;
* Make additional copies of the monthly agenda for the WM to present to visiting dignitaries at the meeting. (6 copies is usually enough, but it will be dependent on the WMs, WPs or Dignitaries visiting);
* Ensure an Agenda is sent every month to the WGM, WGP, the Grand Secretary and the Chapter’s Grand Representative. If the UGCA is visiting at any meeting, an Agenda should also be sent to the MWGM/MWGP and the WG Secretary for that meeting.
* On each agenda, the member’s financial status should be included. 3 months out from the Installation meeting, the next year’s amount payable for Dues should start to appear, and if they haven’t paid this year’s dues at that time, then it is shown as ‘arrears’. Refer also to the procedure ***Dues & Membership Management***.

# Correspondence

* As correspondence is received, note the date received on a corner of the document. Any correspondence that is urgent or is an invitation, can be emailed to the WM for her consideration prior to it being discussed in Chapter.
* Only hard copy correspondence from Grand Chapter and the United Grand Chapter is filed. The Secretary has folders for this purpose. All other hard copy correspondence is destroyed once it has been dealt with. Scanning correspondence is acceptable and can be held on file for longer. When filing scanned correspondence, use the date received in the front of the file name.
* In relation to what types of correspondence is tabled and dealt with a regular or committee meetings;
  + Correspondence from the UGC or Grand Chapter is only tabled/read at a Regular meeting;
  + Correspondence appropriate for ALL members to hear should be read at a Regular Meeting.
  + Invitations from other Chapters, or matters impacting Chapter Administration can be read and discussed at the Committee meeting. They are not re-read at the Regular Meeting. The Committee records minor action or discussion as ‘Business Arising’. The Committee can make ‘Recommendations’ if appropriate, for ratification at the Regular Meeting.
  + Correspondence relating to the Annual Election of Office-bearers and committee members are read immediately prior to the commencement of the Annual Election part of the meeting. These are recorded in the minute of that meeting and as such, do not need to be retained and filed.
* Correspondence is dealt with in the order of who has sent it eg. UGC first, then Grand Chapter, then other Chapters.
* When drafting minutes for either the Regular or Committee meeting, the Secretary can list the correspondence to be tabled in preparation. An example of the format for recording correspondence in the minute is:

*From; Who - Subject eg.*

*Grand Secretary; Grand Chapter of NSW & ACT – Advising changes to procedure for xxxxxx.*

# REGULAR & COMMITTEE MEETING PREPARATION

* Prepare and print Sign in Sheets (including Apologies) ready for the Visitors Panel to use on entry door. These are to be filed after the meeting, in the appropriate folder held by the Secretary;
* Update and balance Petty Cash records and prepare Chapter expenses to be ratified at the meeting;
* Draft the minute for the Regular Meeting in accordance with the order of business stated in the Agenda and other items known to be addressed at the meeting. Leave enough room in the draft to make notes or fill in details;
* Draft the minute for the General & Social Committee with the items known to be addressed at the meeting. As this committee meeting is held on the same day and prior to the Regular Meeting, the Secretary will not have enough time to complete these minutes prior to them being read at the Regular Meeting. Ensure the Draft is ‘readable’. The WM cannot sign these minutes until the final copy has been completed. The WM can sign them when she signs the Regular Meeting minute next month;
* Prior to the start of the meeting, ensure the Associate Conductress has received the Prompt Ritual and has signed the Inventory Book.

# annual visitation by grand chapter

The timing of the Annual Visit by Grand Chapter will be advised by the incoming WGM. When this date is advised, the following needs to be done/prepared:

* Advise the WM of the date of the Annual Visit and ask if any rehearsals will be necessary. These will need to be advised to the members and placed on the agenda;
* There is a ‘template’ available which lists the items that the Grand Chapter will inspect prior to the commencement of the meeting. Review this list and prepare your own items for inspection. Advise the WM, WP or Treasurer of the requirements and request they bring the necessary items to the meeting.
* The WGM & WGP will perform the inspection usually within 30-45 minutes of the start of the Regular Meeting. Keep this in mind when holding the General & Social Committee to ensure you have enough time in between.
* **A donation to the WGM’s/WGP’s charity** is in order at this meeting. Ensure this is tabled for discussion at a Chapter meeting before the Annual Visit, and prepare a cheque for presentation at that meeting. The WM may present this in a card at the time she offers the WGM the gavel for the meeting.

# other activities to plan on

* **A good diary** is essential for use by the Secretary eg. 1 month to an opening.
  + When the WM accepts invitations, add these to the diary including the address, times etc. (unless a scanned copy of the invitation is held);
  + When a Chapter accepts an invitation to visit, note this in the diary against the meeting at which they are visiting. This helps the WM to plan for gifts etc, as well as assisting the Chapter with catering;
  + The date on which agendas should be sent can be calculated and noted in the diary. Public Holidays can therefore be considered and mailings adjusted accordingly;
* **Annual Books Inspections** are required by the Grand Chapter of NSW & ACT. The date of inspection and the items to be inspected are advised by the Grand Secretary. The Secretary should work in conjunction with the Treasurer to obtain the required items and ensure they are provided in the appropriate timeframe.