



## HOUSE COMMITTEE BASICS

1. An incident occurs in your social quarters or at an event sponsored by the lodge. The offending member can be asked to leave either the social quarters or the event due to the breach of decorum. However, to keep that member out of the lodge, the House Committee must discuss the incident and agree (by a majority vote) that action must be taken.
2. If the majority of the House Committee agrees on action, the accused member must be sent a notice to appear before the House Committee. The notice must be in writing, never verbally.
3. A hearing date must be scheduled. The notice must contain the date and time of the hearing **AND THE NOTICE MUST CONTAIN AN EXPLANATION OF THE CONDUCT FOR WHICH HE/SHE IS ACCUSED OF ENGAGING IN.** Details must include the date, time, location and all information so that the member knows why he/she is being brought before the House Committee, even if he/she knows why. Failure to provide an adequate explanation can result in our office overturning the House Committee decision. Pay close attention to numbers 1 – 6 on page 93 of the General Laws.
4. The notice must be mailed seven (7) days before the hearing. If the accused member is suspended pending the hearing, we suggest that the House Committee put a copy of the notice in a sealed envelope and leave it behind the bar in case the member attempts to enter before he/she receives the notice in the mail. The bartender can then hand the notice to the member and ask him/her to leave. Also, keep in mind that we recommend sending the notice by first class mail only. It does not need to be certified or registered mail. Doing so requires the accused to pick up the letter and many times they intentionally ignore it. If you are unsure how to prepare the notice, before you mail it, please call our office at 630-966-2207 and ask for Lori and you may read it to her over the phone so that it goes out correctly the first time.
5. If the accused shows up for the hearing, proper minutes should be taken regarding discussion and any vote taken on disciplinary action. The accused does not need to be given your decision that evening. Simply hear what he/she has to say and send a letter containing your decision immediately following the hearing (recommended next day).
6. If the accused member does not show up for the hearing, he/she is suspended until they request another hearing date to resolve the matter.
7. Do not confuse Section 55.3 with House Committee matters. It does not apply. The only section the House Committee has jurisdiction is Section 48.8. It covers all breaches of decorum in the lodge or at a lodge sponsored event.

**NOTE:** This process must be followed in the case of an appeal. If it is not followed as stated above, there is a good chance that you will either have to repeat the process, **OR** the offending member will be reinstated. If throughout this process, you have any questions, please call Lori at 630-966-2207.