

Lapsation Committee QUICK START GUIDE

If you are the Exalted Ruler of your Lodge you need to appoint a Lapsation Committee Chairman; if you are the Lodge Secretary you need to ask the Exalted Ruler to appoint a Lapsation Committee Chairman to assist you; if you are the Lapsation Chairman of your Lodge you came to the right place to start.

You may be looking for a “Silver Bullet” to solve this problem in your Lodge but unfortunately there are no more silver bullets. The good news is that there is a great Membership Management Program manual available from Grand Lodge. This “Silver Bullet” can be downloaded from “www.elks.org” or ordered by the Exalted Ruler or Lodge Secretary from Grand Lodge. The Lapsation Manual section can be downloaded from www.chea-elks.org.

Membership Program and Planning (Code 510400 Revised 08/2001)

It is a common conception that Lapsation is about reporting on delinquent and dropped members. While this is an important measurement of how well our Lodges are doing it is not the solution to retaining members and keeping your Lodge healthy.

The Lapsation Manual section of the Membership Program and Planning manual has a great outline of how to avoid dropping delinquent members and making them active again in “their” Lodge. It includes suggested letters and ways to contact members and get their dues and per capita fees paid. Remember that per capita fees have already been advanced to Grand Lodge and CHEA for delinquent members. You should regard this as an investment in your Lodge’s future and just as important to that future as your Lodge’s other invested funds.

Here is a quick start suggestion:

- 1. Sort your Lapsation list into three groups.**
 - a. New members (1 – 5 Years).**
 - b. Habitual late payers. (Consult with the Lodge Secretary).**
 - c. Long-term members (over 5 years).**
- 2. If the numbers are large get more help to make contact with listed members.**
- 3. Make the first contact more social than business.**
- 4. Make all of your contacts personal. Avoid “Dear Member” or other impersonal greeting in your letters or other contacts.**
- 5. Consider inviting delinquent members to a special social event.**
- 6. Contact any newer members that are showing up on the list before they are lost. The first five to seven years of membership are critical to developing long-term memberships.**

Final thought / suggestion: If this works for your Lodge, consider expanding it to include members dropped in the last one to three years.