



number of degrees you participate in at one time. If you are participating in a degree rally, they generally start at 9:00 am, break for lunch and finish around 3:00 pm. If you are participating in the initiatory degree at a lodge business meeting it will take about an hour for the degree work and 30 minutes for the business meeting.

3. What are the annual dues for membership?

**Answer:** Each lodge sets their own dues. Discuss with your sponsor how much dues should be paid at your initiatory. Please bring (to be filled in by sponsoring lodge) \$\_\_\_\_\_.

4. Why is there a cost for degree work?

**Answer:** There are administrative fees paid to the grand body on each new member. As with most organizations, it has been found that when an investment is required, individuals are more committed to their cause. These are one time fees. The cost for degree work is the same in every lodge.

Initiatory \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 1<sup>st</sup> Degree \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total dues & degrees \$ \_\_\_\_\_

5. What happens in a lodge meeting?

**Answer:** Lodge meetings are different than degree work as these are the business meetings of the lodge. It is during these regularly scheduled meetings where members make reports on those who are sick or in distress, reports of committees, and plan for community events, social events and service projects.

6. What are the privileges of membership?

**Answer:** Members of the initiatory degree have full fellowship in a lodge and the privilege to make motions and vote on activities and expenditures within the lodge. Once a member has received all of the degrees they are considered a 3<sup>rd</sup> degree member and can be appointed or elected to hold an office or position within the lodge.



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### *The Odd Fellow Valediction*

At the close of every Odd Fellow meeting the members join together in repeating the Valediction. We would like to challenge you to memorize the Valediction in preparation for your degree work.

#### **Valediction**

I am an Odd Fellow!

I believe in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man:  
 I believe in Friendship, Love and Truth as basic guides to the ultimate destiny of all mankind:

I believe my home, my church or temple, my lodge, and my community deserve my best work, my modest pride, my earnest faith, and my deepest loyalty, as I perform my duty "to visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead, and educate the orphan" and as I work with others to build a better world because, in spirit and in truth, I am, and must always be, grateful to my Creator, faithful to my Country and fraternal to my fellow man:

I am an Odd Fellow!

## *Welcome Aboard!*



Sponsor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Noble Grand: \_\_\_\_\_

NG Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Lodge: \_\_\_\_\_

Date for Initiation: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Independent Order of Odd Fellows

*Your Application has been approved.  
 What's next?*

#### *Our Goal*

Good will among people, states, and nations under the guide of a Supreme Being as the catalyst for friendship, love, truth, faith, hope, charity and universal justice for all. These are the basic guides, which will create peace and harmony among all peoples, kindred and tongues. It is only through serving others that we truly embrace and understand the principles of Odd Fellowship.



## Grand Lodge of Texas

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### Why are there degrees?

It is through the ritual of degree work that all of the principles of Odd Fellowship are conveyed to new members. Odd Fellows, like other fraternal orders, have century old rituals. During these rituals you will be instructed in the ideologies of an Odd Fellow and will take on important responsibilities, none of which will conflict with your obligations to your God, family, or country.



As an Odd Fellow you are making a life time commitment to elevate the character of humanity through service and example. In order to fully understand how we may accomplish these obligations, instruction in ritual form is divided into Degrees; which represent practical lessons in Friendship, Love and Truth.

### The Initiatory

The initiatory degree is required in order to attend an Odd Fellows meeting. With the initiatory degree you are a full fledged voting member of the lodge and able to participate in business meetings. Before entering into the Initiatory degree you will give a signed statement, provided at the initiatory, affirming your belief in a Supreme Being, that you are morally responsible and of good character, and capable of providing for those who depend upon you. After attesting to these things you will be brought into the lodge to begin your instruction in the principles of Odd Fellowship.

In the initiatory degree you will witness a representation of our mortal existence, which begs the question; "How will I spend my life?" In our modern fast paced society there are many things that compete for our attention. As Odd Fellows we are bound by sacred obligations to extend the hand of fellowship as we are commanded to: visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead and educate the orphan. In short you will commit, as an enlightened member of our order, to do your part to build a better world.



### 1st Degree or degree of friendship

The first degree is a representation of friendship. The story of David and Jonathan is reenacted as a representation of true Friendship. Jonathan is the son of King Saul and heir to the throne. When King Saul finds out that David has been selected to be the next King, he desires to kill David. Jonathan demonstrates true friendship by protecting David from the King; with his own life if necessary. True friends will help, protect, and rejoice in each other's accomplishments; they will not be divided by jealous competitions.

### 2nd Degree or the degree of love

The second degree is a representation of Love. The age old story of the Good Samaritan is recounted. This simple story depicts a man that has been beaten, robbed, and left for dead. His own people and a priest pass him by without offering help. The man who stops to offer aid is a hated group by his people. This story teaches us that true love transcends race, religion, or national origin. As an Odd Fellow you are expected to make the same commitment.

### 3rd Degree or the degree of truth

In the third degree you will be instructed in the Universal truths of Odd Fellowship. For thousands of years humanity has relied on symbols to represent ideologies and principles. In this degree you will be introduced to the symbols of Odd Fellowship and instructed in their representations. They are used to remind us that the Creator and Preserver of the universe

sees all that we do and expects us to live by certain universal truths. In summary; we should treat others the way we want to be treated.

As an Odd Fellow you will be committed to truth, by this we mean; you should always speak the truth and be honest in all of your dealings with your God, family, work, community and our world. You must also practice truth in your actions. This means you are dependable, when you commit to a task or leadership within your lodge or community, you will endeavor to meet those obligations to the best of your ability.



### Frequently asked Questions

- How should I dress for my degree work and lodge meetings?  
**Answer:** Discuss this with your sponsoring lodge. A generally neat, well kept, clean appearance is expected. You should wear business casual dress and comfortable shoes as you will be standing to receive instruction during your degree work.
- How long are the degrees?  
**Answer:** Discuss this with your sponsoring lodge. This depends on the

