

**PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE BYLAWS GOVERNING
THE GRAND CHAPTER OF NEW MEXICO**

**ARTICLE IV — Duties of Grand Officers
SECTION 10. BOARD OF GRAND TRUSTEES**

The current paragraph (e) reads:

(e) The Board of Grand Trustees shall determine the amount to be given a benevolent request and shall be governed by conditions pertaining to the case after a thorough investigation has been made.

Be deleted and replaced to read:

(e) Upon receiving notice from the Benevolent Assistance Board of the amount of assistance approved by that Board, the Board of Grand Trustees shall determine whether sufficient designated funds are available. The notice shall not disclose the applicant's identity, application, or personal circumstances. The Board of Grand Trustees shall not conduct a separate investigation or reconsider the Benevolent Assistance Board's determination of eligibility or need. If the full amount is not available, the Board of Grand Trustees shall notify the Benevolent Assistance Board of the amount available.

ARTICLE VI — Duties of Standing Boards

SECTION 1. BENEVOLENT ASSISTANCE

Currently reads:

- (a) To receive and review all applications for assistance.
- (b) To recommend to the Board of Grand Trustees to disburse designated funds available to recipients selected by this Board.
- (c) To formulate a policy and develop guidelines for the use of this Board.

Be deleted and replaced to read:

- (a) To receive and confidentially review all applications for benevolent assistance.
- (b) To determine whether an applicant qualifies for assistance and the amount of assistance to be provided. The determination of eligibility and need shall rest solely with the Benevolent Assistance Board, subject to the availability of designated funds.
- (c) To submit only the amount approved to the Board of Grand Trustees for confirmation that sufficient designated funds are available. The applicant's identity, application, and personal circumstances shall not be disclosed to the Board of Grand Trustees.
- (d) Upon confirmation that sufficient designated funds are available, to provide the Grand Secretary and Grand Treasurer with only the information necessary to make the disbursement. The Grand Secretary and Grand Treasurer shall maintain the confidentiality of that information.
- (e) To formulate policies and develop guidelines for the use of this Board consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Grand Chapter of New Mexico.

Rationale:

This amendment places responsibility for reviewing applications, determining eligibility and need, and approving the amount of assistance with the Benevolent Assistance Board. It limits disclosure of the applicant's identity and circumstances to those who must know that information to evaluate the application or complete the disbursement. It preserves the Trustees' responsibility to oversee the availability of Grand Chapter funds while protecting the privacy and dignity of members who seek assistance.

The current bylaws assign responsibilities related to benevolent assistance to both the Benevolent Assistance Board and the Board of Grand Trustees but do not clearly distinguish their respective duties. Article VI charges the Benevolent Assistance Board with receiving and reviewing applications and selecting recipients, while Article IV, Section 10 (e), can be interpreted as authorizing the Board of Grand Trustees to obtain information concerning an applicant, conduct another investigation, and independently determine the assistance to be given.

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