

PENNSYLVANIA DeMOLAY

Streamlined Membership Joining Process (Issued 9-29-05)

While section 315.4 of the Rules and Regulations of DeMolay International, and Masonic tradition, *imply* that a membership application must be received at a stated meeting of the Chapter before a Visitation Committee can be assigned, and therefore is presented twice before balloting, it is not explicit in the language that this sequence *MUST* be followed. Accordingly, Master Councilors of Pennsylvania Chapters are permitted to appoint Visitation Committees as soon as applications have been physically received, rather than waiting for the next Stated Meeting. Upon being assigned, the requirement of section 315.4 is that a Visitation Committee *MUST* report at the next Stated Meeting following its assignment, and thus, the application may be read, and the report presented, at the same meeting. Section 315.5 requires that balloting must take place at a meeting of the Chapter, and after the report of the Visitation Committee. With these requirements being met, it is therefore possible for an application to be presented and approved on the same night.

This may help streamline the process without thwarting its key elements. Action on applications may only be taken at Stated or Special meetings of the Chapter. A Visitation Committee must meet with each applicant *and at least one parent*, and must report prior to balloting. All applications must be read out loud in open Chapter at the time of balloting, which must be a secret ballot as described in Section 315.5 (b)(c) & (d). Chapters that wish to continue following the "traditional" process of reading at one Stated Meeting and balloting at the next Stated Meeting may continue to do so. *However, this is a decision that is to be made by vote of the members, and not the Advisory Council.* Chapters are *STILL* cautioned NOT to plan on initiating or obligating on the same day as the election, just in case the application is rejected.

Section 315.8 of the Rules and Regulations require that no applicant may be initiated until the full fee has been paid. While tradition has *expected* that the full fee be paid at the time when the application is presented, there is no specific requirement that the fees *MUST* be paid in full prior to *election*. Partial fees may be collected over time, but the full fee *must* be paid prior to obligating or inducting new members.