

Introducing Freemasonry Cares: Financial, Healthcare and Family Help

What is *Freemasonry Cares*?

We are delighted to announce that at July's Annual Provincial Grand Lodge Meeting, the Provincial Grand Master formally announced the intention to launch *Freemasonry Cares* in Hampshire and Isle of Wight, so you and those closest to you know where to turn in times of need.

Freemasonry Cares is an initiative of the central Masonic Charities (The Freemasons' Grand Charity, Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys, The Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution and Masonic Samaritan Fund), delivered in partnership with Metropolitan and Provincial Grand Lodges.

Freemasonry Cares makes it easy to remember that in times of need support is available to Freemasons like you and your dependants. If you have a Masonic connection and a financial, healthcare or family need then contact your Lodge Almoner or *Freemasonry Cares* on 0800 035 60 90 to see if help is available from the Masonic Charities.

Since *Freemasonry Cares* launched, there have been thousands of confidential enquiries into the support available and the outcome has been to make a huge difference to people's lives.

***Freemasonry Cares* in Hampshire and Isle of Wight**

During the coming months, you will be hearing and seeing more about *Freemasonry Cares*. Presentations are being planned for various events and lots of different promotional materials will be appearing around the Province. Our aim is to make sure as many Masons and their dependants as possible know not just that financial, healthcare or family assistance might be available, but also that they can turn to their Lodge Almoner or *Freemasonry Cares* to find out more.

Please remember that *Freemasonry Cares* complements rather than replaces the care arrangements of the Province; we remain fully committed to the welfare of you and your family. Your Lodge Almoner continues to offer the same support and guidance and you can always turn to him should you find yourself in need.

Freemasonry Cares offers an alternative route if, for whatever reason, you feel unable to talk to your own Lodge Almoner. Many have chosen this option because of a reluctance to discuss problems with the Lodge Almoner when he is a personal friend, or as the widow of a Freemason being unsure exactly who to speak to in the Lodge.

It doesn't matter how you choose to make contact. If you have a Masonic connection and a financial, healthcare or family need then you should see if help is available for you. Speak to your Lodge Almoner today or contact *Freemasonry Cares* in confidence on 0800 035 60 90 or help@freemasonrycares.org

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FREEMASONRY CARES

What is Freemasonry Cares?

Freemasonry Cares offers confidential guidance on the financial, healthcare and family help available to Freemasons and their dependants. We provide information on the range of support provided by the central Masonic Charities and their eligibility rules. We can also put you in contact with the central Masonic Charity most appropriate to your need.

Who can Freemasonry Cares help?

Anyone can contact Freemasonry Cares for free and confidential guidance on the support available to individuals, who qualifies for assistance and guidance on how to apply.

When can I contact Freemasonry Cares?

Our team are available 9 to 5, Monday to Thursday and 9 to 4 on a Friday. We are closed at weekends and on public holidays. Outside of these times you can leave a message on our answerphone, [email us](mailto:freemasonrycares.org) or visit our website for more information.

Will I be charged if I call from a mobile?

Some mobile phone operators will charge for calls made to an 0800 number. If you are concerned about this and prefer to contact Freemasonry Cares using a standard phone number you can call using 020 7395 9294.

Where can I get more information on Freemasonry Cares?

For more information about Freemasonry Cares you can visit the website freemasonrycares.org or call 0800 035 60 90 (freephone).

How do you use my personal information?

Freemasonry Cares is committed to ensuring that your privacy is protected. You can be assured that the information you provide will only be used in accordance with our privacy policy, which is available to read on our website.

ELIGIBILITY

What does 'a Masonic connection' mean?

People with a Masonic connection include:

- Freemasons under the United Grand Lodge of England (UGLE)
- Dependants of a Freemason under UGLE - usually a wife, partner, widow or child
- A limited range of assistance is also available to grandchildren and other relatives of a Freemason under UGLE

What do you mean by the dependant of a Freemason?

A dependant is someone who is physically or financially reliant on the Freemason or his estate.

Why are only people with a Masonic connection eligible?

Freemasonry Cares offers guidance on the help available from the central Masonic Charities to individuals. These Charities were established to support Freemasons, their families and other dependants and are primarily funded by donations from Freemasons. Under the guidelines set down by the Charities, to qualify for support an individual will usually require a Masonic connection. In choosing to support a specific group of individuals the Charities are similar to the many occupational and organisational benevolent funds, which provide services based on a common interest. For example, the Soldiers, Sailors, Airforce and Families Association is dedicated to supporting those with a connection to the military. In the case of Freemasonry Cares, the common interest is Freemasonry.

How many times can I contact you?

There is no limit on the number of times you can contact Freemasonry Cares. Even if you are already receiving support, if a new need arises we are happy to provide information on the support which might be available to you.

MAKING AN APPLICATION

Where can I get an application form?

We will direct you to the Masonic Charity best able to assist with your particular need. They will then advise you on the application process.

How do I submit an application?

The process for submitting an application will depend on which Charity you are applying to. You will be advised by the relevant Charity of its process for applying for the help you require.

How quickly will I get a reply from Freemasonry Cares?

Freemasonry Cares aims to respond to all queries within five working days, but you will usually hear sooner than this. If we have not contacted you to discuss your query within five working days then please contact us again.

How will my application be assessed?

Any application will be assessed by the Charity to which the application is to be made. Eligibility for assistance usually depends on the income and savings of the individual concerned and other criteria relevant to the need. As the criteria and application processes vary from Charity to Charity, we recommend you contact Freemasonry Cares for detailed and up to date information.

I've made an application to one of the Masonic Charities - can you advise me on its progress?

Freemasonry Cares is not involved in the review of applications for support. If you have a question about an application we suggest you contact the Charity to which you have applied.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Is Freemasonry Cares part of United Grand Lodge of England?

Not directly. Freemasonry Cares is a service provided by the central Masonic Charities which have a close relationship with United Grand Lodge of England but from which they remain independent.

Is Freemasonry Cares a charity?

No Freemasonry Cares is not a charity. It is a service provided by the central Masonic Charities to help people access and understand the range of support they offer. It does not itself provide the assistance and it is not involved in any of the Masonic charities' decision-making.

Is Freemasonry Cares replacing the central Masonic Charities?

No. Freemasonry Cares is a service jointly provided by the central Masonic Charities, but it is not intended to replace them. The Charities will continue as independent organisations identifying opportunities for co-operation where it is to the benefit of their beneficiaries.

I'm an Almoner - how does Freemasonry Cares affect my work?

Freemasonry Cares is intended to support the work of the Almoner in identifying people who require the support of the Masonic Charities. When appropriate, enquiries continue to be directed to the Provincial Grand Almoner or Lodge Almoner for assistance. The Charities will continue to ensure the involvement of Almoners in their work.