

Obligations of a Lodge or Branch

1. First and foremost, a Lodge represents The Theosophical Society. As such, a Lodge is expected to endeavour at all times to present an image consistent with the Objects and values for which the TS stands, e.g. brotherly and harmonious relationships between Lodge members, within a Lodge Committee, and with members of the public with whom members come into contact.
2. Secondly, and following on from the first point, a Lodge is expected to uphold the General Council resolutions on 'Freedom of Thought' and 'Freedom of the Society', copies which are printed in the leaflet 'The Spirit of The Theosophical Society'.
3. Thirdly, and also following on from the first point, programmes are expected to consist of theosophical subjects so as to encourage a study of the Ancient Wisdom teachings. For example, The TS is not a yoga society, a society to promote psychism or a society representing a particular religion. Therefore, if any programmes are presented on such subjects it is most important that they be linked in somehow with the Wisdom tradition, or considered in the light of some aspect of that tradition. A Lodge may wish to invite an outside speaker from time to time but is not expected to act as a regular open forum for outside speakers or Groups. Also, as you would be aware, it is not the function of the TS to be an umbrella group for other 'likeminded' organisations as the Society itself is neutral. (You may wish to refer to my column on page 35 of the June 2002 issue of *T in A* for more on this subject). The TS has its own specific work to do, as mentioned in the 'Freedom of the Society' statement.
4. According to the Section Rules, the Committee of a Lodge should consist of TS members who have been in Good Standing for the previous two years.
5. A Lodge is required to have a set of Rules approved by the national Executive Committee. A Pattern set of Lodge/Branch Rules exists which may be used or else modified as required with the approval of the national Executive Committee
6. A Lodge is required to update its Rules from time to time in line with any changes to the National and/or International Rules (copy of current National Rules enclosed). Changes need to be approved at a General Meeting of the Lodge.
7. A Lodge is required to submit any proposed changes to its Rules to the Chair of the National Rules Committee for checking and referral to the national Executive Committee for approval.
8. Lodges are eligible to vote on certain items which come up at the Convention Business Meeting of the Section, held in January each year. In order to vote, a Lodge needs to hold an annual Lodge Convention Meeting to vote on these items in advance of the January Convention Business meeting, and submit the results of the votes to the National Secretary by an appointed date.
9. A Lodge is required under the Section Rules to hold an Annual General Meeting.
10. A Lodge is required to provide an Annual Report to the National President.

11. A Lodge is required to collect Membership fees and remit quarterly that portion of the fees payable to the Section.

12. A membership register must be maintained and a membership report needs to be submitted to the national Membership Secretary each month.