

*The Craft Order  
of Masons and  
Stonemasons*

*Given at Ebersdorf Castle on  
October 6, 1676*

With this letter we inform and announce to everyone that the masters and assistants of the craft of masons and stonemasons in our capital city of Ljubljana and throughout Carniola have humbly informed us that, because they have come before us, in order to prevent any unrest and disobedience and to maintain good order and unity among them, they have united on certain articles, as they are written below and are read in entrusting the honor of God and for the rooting of good upbringing and honesty, as well as in order to eliminate disorder and injustice, the following craft order and freedom article of the brotherhood of masters and assistants of masons and stonemasons, useful for the community, has been compiled and made here in Ljubljana and throughout free Carniola

*in the name of the watchful Holy Trinity,  
God the Father, the Son and the Holy  
Spirit, God the Son who saved us, and God  
the Holy We, the masters and assistants of the  
masonry and stonemasonry brotherhood of  
this capital city of Ljubljana, ask the Spirit  
who consecrated us, and also us and in the  
place and name of all other masters and  
assistants of the masonry and stonemasonry  
trade, as well as those who live in the Duchy  
of Carniola and have learned the said trade  
through regular, honest instruction and have  
been included in this brotherhood and will  
also agree to be included, so that those who  
have not learned honorably and honestly, and  
not even from honest masters, and who have  
flaunted that they know how to build and  
manage construction, and therefore ordered*

with their ignorance, inexperience, because they have only been with some master for a quarter of a year, and yet dared to carry out the mastery and construction, with this disorder, destroy the damage and those honorable and experienced masters and assistants who have fulfilled their apprenticeship with confirmation and are fulfilling it and who have with loyalty, movement and stonemasonry product, eliminate those who and after the work was spoiled, they fled and did not advertise themselves there either. In order to eradicate the infidelities and irregularities, irregularities: we pray God, prevents and scandals, which have greatly angered God, and to spread appropriate order and discipline, Christian behavior and service to God among

the masters and assistants of this brotherhood, from which blessings and happiness come, we have decided in the capital city of Ljubljana and in this Duchy of Carniola, as well as in other provincial lands, to make the order and articles according to the example of the Graz and other brotherhoods and to adhere to them honorably and firmly, as follows:

**Rules and duties for the masters and brothers of the stonemason's guild in Ljubljana**

1. In the capital city of Ljubljana and in the capital city of Graz, a true and lawful, honorable and experienced masonry and stonemason's brotherhood or guild shall be organized, with a common main chest and

book, which shall be regularly kept by the elected guild master. This one should make a yearly account of receipts and expenditures, and all regular masters should also be included in it. The most experienced member, who is obliged to be honorable and above suspicion, is always elected as the guild master, who is strictly obliged to be honorable and above suspicion.

2. The guild master shall register those who are proposed for inclusion in this brotherhood and who are suitably honest and experienced in the craft, and for their behavior he shall give them a reading at least every year, or have them read it.

3. It is understood that the masters have their own country in their cities or in each quarter of the country, but they must depend on the main guild and the main guild treasury, give correct accounts and be included here. The main guild also asks the apprentices here in front of the guild treasury after the award of the apprentice's whistle, but in order to make it difficult for a master from distant cities to come here to Ljubljana to exempt an apprentice from bad times, such a master should give the task to the brotherhood. This letter must be awarded and issued always here in Ljubljana, so that it reaches everyone in charge.

4. A stonemason or bricklayer's assistant who wants to become a master and get master

rights must submit to at least three works and must work for two years at each work. A master and or one who will marry a master's daughter or a master's daughter must work for one master for one year. He must also make a master's work, which is assessed as suitable or unsuitable by the commission on the day of the test and after approval by the guild masters. Then the assistant is obliged to make such a master's work, for which he wants to receive the title of stonemason or bricklayer master. He must make the master's product to the best of his ability and prove that he has learned them. After examining the work, the candidate must also answer a question. Before entering the guild, in addition to the official letter, the candidate must submit another certificate, e.g. as proof

of a legal birth certificate, confirmed that there must be a master in the house and that he must also submit to the duties of a citizen. The bricklayer who has already practiced the craft before, when there was no order, should continue to be questioned, but he must be patient in waiting to join the brotherhood. Upon entering, he should also donate an appropriate amount of money to the guild chest (pušica) according to his wealth. Whoever will become a true master bricklayer and stonemason in the future should act according to these 26 points. On the horse, they should ask themselves again about the trade, the peasant trade On horseback, let the peasants and countrymen who have only learned, usually, masonry work and who have done masonry work all their lives under

*a master mason and according to his orders and instructions, ask themselves again about the responsibilities.*

*5. Those craftsmen who work in smaller towns must also join the brotherhood, even if only in the most basic house repairs. Whoever is a real city master mason and builds or repairs churches, chapels, castle towers, important houses and similar buildings must comply with the regulations and other articles. However, if a master mason comes from German or Latsch lands and is accepted by the land or superior because of his art, the brotherhood should recognize him as a master, and he is obliged to respect the brotherhood, negotiate with it for a suitable price and agree that he will also perform civic duties.*

6. Whoever wants to join the brotherhood and be accepted as a master must first come to an agreement with the brotherhood and give a certain sum of money to the chest at the verdict for certain four commissioners, give his master's lunch and then contribute 15 kreuzers to the chest every quarter, and this within the ridiculous 9th point.

7. A stonemason's or bricklayer's assistant should allocate one groschen to the brotherhood every quarter, and should also behave in accordance with the order, otherwise he will be punished.

8. All masters and apprentices who live outside Ljubljana within a radius of three to

four miles should gather at the main guild four times a year. At these they must gather around the brotherhood chest, go to the imara and follow the established procession. A master who is not absent due to illness or illness with permission and cannot stop on the way will pay 10 kreuzers to the brotherhood treasury, and an assistant 15 kreuzers. The brotherhood is resolved to give the masters a pound of yellow wax, and the assistant half a pound. Only those who are exempt from this can be exempted from the base of the cheer, great poverty or other serious impediment. The gift will be given at a distance from the brotherhood treasury to poor people, especially those who were great in the stonemasonry and masonry brotherhood.

9. Masters and assistants who live in distant cities and towns and are members of the brotherhood are obliged to come to Ljubljana for the body at the main brotherhood. For those for whom the journey is in their power and would require expenses, the brotherhood will examine this. They must perform their duty at home, and they must pay into the main treasury of the brotherhood in Ljubljana 30 kreuzers for the master, 15 kreuzers for the assistant, and a little less for the masters mentioned in Article 5. Once every three years, all the masters and assistants must gather on the day mentioned here, or at least one master and two assistants from every fourth. If any master or assistant cannot give the money mentioned in this order, they should do so in excess of that

amount. Also, the natural cases mentioned in Article 5 and who are 4 to 5 miles away from Ljubljana are exempted from appearing here, but they must pay their fee into the treasury.

10. Masters may keep with them their apprentice who is to become an assistant for five years, and those who are to become a mason for three years. Before the beginning of the apprenticeship, the master may not keep an apprentice with him for more than fourteen days. When an apprentice is trained by a guild master, he must grant him his apprenticeship certificate, and this at the open main chest in Ljubljana. During the apprenticeship, the apprentice must behave very respectfully and obediently towards his

master and assistants, and must not say a bad word against them. His task is to follow the master in all masonry, behave respectfully, loyally and patiently, and do his work without any objections. The apprentice must avoid drinking, gambling, and similar games. In this way, he will develop into a better person and be worthy of the masters. If he behaves very badly, the law imposes a harsh and severe punishment on him. Even if he were to end his apprenticeship, the guild chief can expel him from the brotherhood. During the apprenticeship, the apprentice must not leave the master, but if he does so, that is, runs away, no one else may accept him.

11. Every master stonemason may have three assistants, and a mason or master mason as

many as he needs and can afford. A master mason may have as many students as he needs, but a master stonemason can only have one apprentice at a time. Only when the first apprentice has been with him for three years can he take on another.

12. An apprentice who was honest, exemplary and well-behaved, but out of ignorance studied with a master who was not included in the guild, cannot be in the brotherhood or guild, until he has learned the opinion of the guild master and the masters for a while with the regular master and has agreed on this with the brotherhood.

13. Masters should not complain about public slander among themselves. Anyone who would do this anyway should be punished by the guild chief and the guild. The guild does not give leave to these assistants, but should do so on St. Gregory's or St. Michael's Day. During the leave he may not be employed or employed by another master, he may only travel. If he should travel here and be unable to find work, he shall be given food assistance from the treasury.

14. The masters shall not take over work from one another. If a master still has claims against the client, no other master shall work for him until he has settled the debts owed to the masters, until he has paid them or secured their payment. In the case of persons of high

rank, the class must be changed. A master who acts against this point must compensate the injured master, and will also be punished according to the state of affairs.

15. In this land of Carniola, no master may practice the craft who has not been regularly with the treasury here in Ljubljana or has not been accepted as a master with its permission. Whoever acts against this shall be excluded from the brotherhood and shall be blind and invalid. And no honest assistant shall be employed. If, however, an assistant who is with such a master refuses to leave him at the request of the brotherhood, he shall be excluded from the brotherhood and shall not be recognized as a regular. In the event that the assistant did not know that he worked for

*a false master, this shall not be considered a bad thing for him.*

*16. A master who behaves indecently, dishonorably, renovates, harms his wife and children, does not make the usual Christian confession and communion for a year and a day, and abandons sermons and listening to the word of God, the guild master shall first warn him to improve, but if he does not improve, he shall punish him. of the brotherhood and thirdly, if there is no improvement, he shall be recognized as dishonorable and shall be excluded from the brotherhood and no assistant may help him.*

17. If a master who is invited to the brotherhood and is honorable, respected and of good conduct and is truly honest, falls into poverty through a long illness or other misfortune, which may happen by God's decision, and no wealth can help him, he should be given help from the brotherhood for his hardship, and when he recovers by the goodness of God, he will honestly repay it. But if he dies in poverty, nothing will be left to him, he will even be overlooked.

18. About the request to perform any work, as it is usually called, they must inform each other publicly before the master of the guild and nowhere else, if this craft is approved and permitted.

19. It is agreed that each master must give his assistant a salary according to the work done, diligence and considerate experience. As well according to the time with the handling of better and worse years, so that the group can stay. The assistants must not waste their wages on pie with claims and things, wages to be annoying to the master, to outsource work and thereby harm the master. The assistants who do so should be punished according to the decision of the brotherhood.

20. When a master or assistant who was included in the brotherhood dies and left nothing, such a deceased comrade is buried Christianly from the treasury and in such a way the masters and assistants present accompany him on his last journey.

21. When the master polishes a confidential work, he must do this work faithfully and diligently. He must take care that his subordinates work diligently, so that there is no cursing of God and impurity. All assistants must be faithfully devoted and obedient to their master. In the absence of the master, they must be honest polishers. They should live in reverence for God, and should attend mass every Sunday and on holy holidays.

22. No under-master or assistant should despise the work or product of the master, especially not in front of the client. He should show attention and love to the master, just as the master does to his under-master or assistant. Whoever violates this is excluded

from the brotherhood or punished, and the injured master is given satisfaction.

23. No assistant can have demands, he must adhere to this order in all points and fulfill it, otherwise he is removed. An assistant who has demands for dishonest masters and was previously honest, but has already worked, is not tolerated in the brotherhood.

24. An assistant must ask for the work of the master, and he must polish his absences. He must not interfere with the recovery of the workday with the leader, especially not on Mondays, he must not waste money uselessly and waste work in this trust and faith in the master, so that the client would get angry

and take action because of this, such an assistant must be warned fatherly for the first offense, he must be sharply reprimanded for his behavior the second time, and the guild master must punish him. Assistants who are not talked down and reprimanded for the work of the master are severely punished.

25. If an assistant knows something unworthy of his master, he must immediately report it to the guild chief, or then to the master, as appropriate. The same applies to assistants. If an assistant wants to say something to another or hurt him in any way, he must report it to his next or next master. The master can resolve the dispute himself, or he can contact the guild chief to impose an appropriate punishment. The

assistant should only be punished, not expelled from the workshop, since the client needs him for his work.

26. The assistant can leave the master or the mistress or take a vacation, if no one sues him, but first he must settle all debts.

27. If an assistant who is included in the brotherhood falls ill, not because of bad living or waste, but because of an accident, or if he falls ill because of a test from God, he is given the interstate and brotherhood arrows, but how does he maintain this brotherhood. But if he does not do this, he must be recovered and constantly demanded and he must be punished considerably.

28. If a helper from this brotherhood dies, if what remains from the payment of the funeral, masses and debts is handed over to his relatives against a certificate, but if there are no relatives and they do not come within a year or do not want to dispose of the legacy, then the guild master shall sell this legacy to the brotherhood, the movables, and put the money into the brotherhood's treasury and give an account of it.

29. All shusmans, troublemakers and other inexperienced people, even those not included in our brotherhood, often build new buildings or repair old ones in cities, monasteries, castles, squares and parishes and thereby take over the work of more experienced ones. Due to their inexperience and

ignorance, they often make gross and great mistakes, so that such a distorted and unsuitable building has to be demolished at great expense and to the great detriment of the client. Even the bound stones must be installed incompletely or not aligned, or people are hammering and losing their work, not only the client, but also the monasteries, castles, parish and vassal churches. When the clients settle down, but the slushies sometimes even do a lot of work, they are stealing the bread of honest and experienced masters. If such a slushie and troublemaker appears in cities, suburbs, squares, monasteries, castles, counties or anywhere, the brotherhood must be informed about it, and the lord must remove him and prohibit him from working. The work must be stopped under penalty of

punishment. If the procedure is repeated, his tools are taken away and he is severely punished. Half of this goes to the lord, and the brotherhood to the other half.

If the order is suitable for the time and other craft orders, the provincial governor and provincial vice-deputy in Carniola gave their respects. The Inner Austrian Privy Councillors deliberated on this on 8 July 1616 and confirmed it by their plenipotentiary, the universal and provincial prince. The stonemasons and masons shall adhere to this order and shall respect it. They shall show to all the people that they protect the stonemasons and masons in Carniola, as if the province were against them. And he shall fall into disgrace and be punished. In

*confirmation of this document, the order is  
sealed with the imperial hanging seal.*

*Given at Ebersdorf Castle on October 6, 1676.*

*Christoph von Abele*

SOURCE:

1) The Order of Craftsmen of Free Masons and Masons from 1676, Archives of the Republic of Slovenia, Vicestolniki Archive, fasc. 1/110, front p. 286, The transcription of the document is the work of Irene Later - Benedicic and is published in full in N. POLAJNAR FRELIH 1999 (9-30), the text published here is a free translation. Instead of the text, there is a translation in Slovenian. Note and is En. Unack.

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*In Ljubljana on 06.08.2025*