

# The Grand Lodge of Texas

G. Clay Smith  
GRAND MASTER



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ANCIENT FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

## GRAND MASTER'S DECISION NUMBER 1

QUESTION: Do the Constitution and Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas allow biological women whose gender identity or gender expression are now male to become Masons? Conversely, may biological men whose gender identity or gender expression are now female become Masons? May a Mason who is a biological male and whose gender identity or gender expression was male when he was made a Mason but is now female, remain a Mason?

ANSWER: The answer in each case is no. While the Constitution and the Laws of the Grand Lodge of Texas are silent with regard to the question posed, Anderson's "Old Charges of a Freemason" (1722), the binding authority in such cases under Article III, Section 3 of the Constitution, requires such a result.

Article III of the Old Charges states that "The persons admitted members of a Lodge must be good and true men, freeborn, and of a mature and discreet age; no bondmen, no woman, no immoral or scandalous men, but of good report." The Old Charges form an integral part of our more than one hundred-year-old Constitution. The "system of ancient laws and customs of the Craft" which they contain are timeless and universally adhered to in all Grand Lodges throughout the world with which this Grand Lodge is in fraternal relations. As such, The Old Charges must be understood in the context of the time in which they were written and at the time they were incorporated into our Constitution of 1920, not given new meaning based on current attitudes and practices among some concerning gender or other matters. Anyone who desires to become a Mason, and any Mason who wishes to remain in our fraternity, must be a man, as Dr. Anderson understood men to be in 1722 and as our Texas forebearers understood them to be at the time of the adoption of our current Constitution.

With regard to the question posed, I therefore decide that:

1. A biological woman (meaning an individual who was assigned female at birth) cannot be a Mason.
2. A transgender man (meaning an individual who was assigned female at birth whose gender identity or gender expression is now male) cannot be a Mason.
3. A transgender woman (meaning an individual who was assigned male at birth whose gender identity or gender expression is now female) cannot be made a Mason nor remain a Mason.

It is important to understand that this decision does not constitute a judgment of this Grand Lodge, moral or otherwise, on the issues of gender identity, gender expression or transgender issues. As in the case of spiritual and political matters, every Mason is free to form a private opinion on the subject. The Grand Lodge of Texas is forever committed to individual freedom of conscience and personal liberty in every lawful pursuit. However, not every such pursuit qualifies an individual to become or remain a Mason.

G. Clay Smith,  
Grand Master 2023-2024

