

NATIONAL MASTER'S RULING – FAMILY MEMBERSHIP  
JUNE 19, 2018

*Q - I have a question about the definition of family membership. Section 4.6.6 (B) of the By-Laws states that a “family shall consist of a couple and their dependents, or a single person and their dependents.” However, what happens if one spouse isn’t a Grange member, has passed away or is a single parent raising a family. Is the remaining spouse and dependents not eligible for family membership?*

**RULING**

Under the 2018 Digest of Laws, the eligibility for "family membership" clearly includes unmarried single parents or guardians with eligible dependents; a divorced parent/guardian with dependents who previously qualified for family membership as married spouse; a widowed parent/guardian with dependents who previously qualified for family membership as a married spouse; or a currently married parent/guardian with dependents whose spouse chooses not to be a Grange member.

When the family membership category was added to the Digest, it was meant to be inclusive of all types of families to encourage them to join the Grange as a family unit. This has been proven by the amendments that have been approved in this section since its original adoption, to include unmarried couples and legal dependents of any age.

“Single person” in Section 4.6.6 (B) includes an unmarried parent, a single parent due to divorce or death of spouse, or a person wishing to join the Grange with his/her dependents whose spouse does not wish to join the Grange. The other qualifications pertaining to the dependents remain in effect, as does Section 4.6.6 (C), when the members no longer qualify for family membership they become individual members with no interruption of membership.