



NATIONAL GRANGE

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American Values. Hometown Roots.

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Question: Can Associate members hold office in a Community Grange? Can they be counted for the minimum 13-member requirement for a charter of a Community Grange?

The National Grange Digest of Laws, Chapter 4 Section 4.6.13 defines Associate Members and sets limits on their participation in Grange activities.

4.6.13 Associate Members - A person or business with an interest in the advancement of agriculture and improvement of rural life may become an Associate Member. The qualifications and procedures for attaining Associate Membership shall be provided for in the By-Laws of the State Granges having jurisdiction. Such Associate Members shall pay dues as prescribed in 4.8.2 (E) and be entitled to receive State Grange information publications and participate in State Grange services as provided for by the State Grange having jurisdiction; provided, however, that Associate Members shall not be entitled to vote on matters of Grange policy or participate in National Grange sponsored contests that are designed for Grange Members only.

(E) Associate members – The State Grange having jurisdiction may establish the amount of Associate Member annual dues and the allocation of such dues to the affected Subordinate, Pomona, or State Grange; provided, however, that such annual dues shall be no less than the minimum dues for a regular member, of which the amount of dues paid to the National Grange shall be the same as for a regular member. The State Grange having jurisdiction over Associate Members shall report the number of such members and forward their annual dues to the Secretary of the National Grange. A dues notice shall be forwarded to all Associate Members each year by the Secretary of the Grange (Subordinate, Pomona, or State,) as provided for in the By-Laws of the State Grange having jurisdiction.

The Digest does not clearly state that Associate members can or cannot hold office. They are not required to pledge the obligation in order to join Grange as an Associate member. They cannot vote because they have not pledged to abide by the Constitution, rules and regulations of the Grange from National to Community level. Since they are not allowed to vote in a meeting and have not taken the obligation, it would not make sense that they could have the responsibility of holding office. It also would not make sense, if they cannot vote, that they would be counted for a meeting quorum or as one of the required number of members to hold a charter.

RULING: Therefore I am ruling that an associate member cannot hold office in the Grange at any level. An Associate member cannot be counted in the number of members (7) required for a quorum. An Associate member cannot be counted in the number of members (13) required to hold a Community Grange charter. The Grange appreciates their financial support but if they desire to have a vote in a meeting or hold an office, they must be obligated and join as a regular member.

Betsy E. Huber

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