

# Code of Ethics



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

## REALTORS'® Pledge of Performance and Service

*The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® adopted the Code of Ethics in 1913, following the professions of medicine, law, and engineering.*

*REALTORS® are real estate professionals who have chosen to join the National Association and abide by its strict Code of Ethics.*

*What does this mean to you? It means that any REALTOR® with whom you work has voluntarily agreed to abide by a Code of Ethics, based on professionalism and protection of the public.*

*REALTORS® are subject to disciplinary action and sanctions if they violate the duties imposed by the Code of Ethics.*

*The Code of Ethics is a detailed document that spells out the professional responsibilities of every REALTOR®.*

*Do not hesitate to ask a REALTOR® for a copy of the Code, including the Standards of Practice. The Code is your assurance of dealing with a professional who has your best interests in mind.*

*The Code of Ethics consists of seventeen Articles and related Standards of Practice.*

*The basic principles of the Code are summarized below.*

*Please note that the following is not a substitute for the Code, but simply a general overview of the Code's key principles. For additional information about the Code of Ethics and its enforcement, speak with a REALTOR® or contact the local association of REALTORS® nearest you.*

### Duties to Clients and Customers

#### Article 1

REALTORS® protect and promote their clients' interests while treating all parties honestly.

#### Article 2

REALTORS® refrain from exaggeration, misrepresentation, or concealment of pertinent facts related to property or transactions.

#### Article 3

REALTORS® cooperate with other real estate professionals to advance their clients' best interests.

#### Article 4

When buying or selling on their own account or for their families or firms, REALTORS® make their true position or interest known.

#### Article 5

REALTORS® do not provide professional services where they have any present or contemplated interest in property without disclosing that interest to all affected parties.

#### Article 6

REALTORS® disclose any fee or financial benefit they may receive from recommending related real estate products or services.

#### Article 7

REALTORS® receive compensation from only one party except where they make full disclosure and receive informed consent from their client.

#### Article 8

REALTORS® keep entrusted funds of clients and customers in a separate escrow account.

#### Article 9

REALTORS® make sure that contract details are spelled out in writing and that parties receive copies.

### Duties to the Public

#### Article 10

REALTORS® give equal professional service to all clients and customers irrespective of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin.

#### Article 11

REALTORS® are knowledgeable and competent in the fields of practice in which they engage or they get assistance from a knowledgeable professional, or disclose any lack of expertise to their client.

#### Article 12

REALTORS® paint a true picture in their advertising and in other public representations.

#### Article 13

REALTORS® do not engage in the unauthorized practice of law.

#### Article 14

REALTORS® willingly participate in ethics investigations and enforcement actions.

### Duties to REALTORS®

#### Article 15

REALTORS® make only truthful, objective comments about other real estate professionals.

#### Article 16

Respect the exclusive representation or exclusive brokerage relationship agreements that other REALTORS® have with their clients.

#### Article 17

REALTORS® arbitrate financial disagreements with other REALTORS® and with their clients.

**The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® Code of Ethics:  
What Does it Mean for Consumers?**

How does the Code of Ethics affect every day real estate practices?

If a REALTOR® represents you, whether you are buying or selling a home, you can count on that REALTOR® to:

**1. Be honest with all parties in the transaction – not just with you, as his or her client, but also with the other real estate practitioner and his or her clients.**

For example, if REALTORS® represent a buyer with a spotty credit history, they can't be dishonest with sellers about this fact. At the same time, REALTORS® can help their buyer clients collect and assemble information, such as credit reports and audited tax returns, to demonstrate that the buyer has addressed the problem and improved their situation.

**2. Put your interests ahead of his or her own, at all times.**

A REALTOR® makes every effort to understand the housing needs of his or her client, thoroughly researches available inventory, and shares all relevant information with the buyer so that he or she can make an informed decision. This service is provided regardless of the compensation available.

**3. Disclose all pertinent facts regarding the property and the transaction to both buyer and seller.**

If a REALTOR® believes information provided by a seller is questionable, the REALTOR® is obligated to investigate. REALTORS® should recommend that buyers consult their own experts, such as home inspectors, to address concerns. For example, if a home seller asks his or her REALTOR® to conceal the fact that the roof leaks, the REALTOR® cannot comply; if the seller insists, the REALTOR® should end the business relationship with that seller.

**4. Be truthful in all communications with the public.**

When REALTORS® distribute newsletters, create Web sites, or place advertisements, they must be careful not to represent other real estate professionals' work product as their own. If recently sold or listed properties in the community are publicized, it must be clear whether the REALTOR® was actually involved in the transaction, or whether that data came from the local multiple listing service or other source. This ensures that the public understands the REALTOR®'s experience and can make an informed decision when choosing real estate representation.