



Pathways to Professionalism

While the REALTOR® Code of Ethics establishes objective, enforceable ethical standards governing the professional conduct of REALTORS®, it does not address issues of courtesy or etiquette. The following are suggested by the Memphis Area Association of REALTORS® as Best Practices for the Memphis area.

I. Respect for the Public

- Follow the “Golden Rule” – Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
- Respond promptly to inquiries and requests for information.
- Present a professional appearance at all times; dress appropriately and drive a clean car.
- Communicate clearly; don’t use jargon or slang that may not be readily understood.
- Be aware of and respect cultural differences.
- Show courtesy and respect to everyone.
- Spend sufficient time with the client on the front end explaining the buying and selling process.
- Promise only what you can deliver – and keep your promises.
- Identify your REALTOR® and your professional status in contacts with the public.
- Do not tell people what you think – tell them what you know.

II. Respect for Peers For Selling Brokers...

- Identify yourself on the front end by name and firm name.
- Schedule appointments and showings as far in advance as possible.
- Call if you are delayed or must cancel an appointment or showing.
- Read the MLS Remarks for special instructions prior to showing the property.
- If a prospective buyer decides not to view an occupied home, promptly explain the situation to the listing broker or the occupant.
- When showing an occupied home, always ring the doorbell or knock - and announce yourself loudly - before entering. Knock and announce yourself loudly before entering any closed room.
- When entering a property, ensure that unexpected situations, such as pets, are handled appropriately.
- If occupants are home during showings, ask for permission before using the telephone or bathroom.
- Be responsible for everyone you allow to enter listed property.

- Never allow buyers to enter property unaccompanied.
- When showing property, keep all members of the group together.
- Never allow unaccompanied access to property without permission.
- Enter property only with permission even if you have a lockbox key or combination.
- Be considerate of the seller’s property. Do not allow anyone to eat, drink, smoke, dispose of trash, use bathing or sleeping facilities, or bring pets.
- Use sidewalks; if weather is bad, take off shoes and boots inside property.
- Obtain permission of seller before video recording property.
- Never criticize property in the presence of the occupant.
- Inform occupants that you are leaving after showings.
- When the occupant is absent, leave the property as you found it (lights, heating, cooling, drapes, etc.) If you think something is amiss (e.g. vandalism) contact the listing broker immediately.
- Carefully replace keys in the lockbox after showings.
- Notify the listing broker if there appears to be inaccurate information on the listing.
- At the time of writing the offer advise the buyer to write the earnest money check to the listing broker.
- Give a courtesy call to the listing broker before delivering an offer.
- Promptly deliver the earnest money check to the listing broker, unless otherwise specified in the contract.
- Stay in touch with the lender and follow up on loan processing.
- Coordinate inspections and repairs.

For Listing Brokers...

- Utilize the MLS REALTOR® Remarks to share important information about a property, including the presence of pets and security systems.
- Utilize the Media function of Tempo to make available to cooperating brokers required documents.
- Be sure your assistant has viewed the property before calling cooperating brokers for feedback.

- Subject to seller’s consent, keep all parties informed about multiple offers.

In General...

- Communicate with all parties in a timely fashion.
- Respond to other agents’ calls, faxes, and e-mails promptly and courteously.
- Encourage the clients of other brokers to direct questions to their agent or representative.
- Do not prospect at other REALTORS® open houses or similar events.
- Avoid placing calls after hours that are not time sensitive.
- Leave detailed messages, i.e. time and date of appointment desired, feedback request, etc.
- On outgoing voicemail messages, alert the caller of your work schedule (i.e., “If this call is after 6:00 p.m. I will return the call the next business day”).
- Be aware of – and meet – all deadlines.
- Be aware that large electronic files with attachments or lengthy faxes may be a burden on recipients.
- If you are new in the business, let the other agent know that.
- If you are experienced, be willing to guide the new agent as appropriate in the transaction.
- Don’t be condescending to the other agent and make demands; avoid placing blame.
- Avoid the inappropriate use of endearments or other denigrating language.
- Show courtesy, trust and respect to other real estate professionals.
- To be successful in the business, mutual respect is essential.
- Real estate is a reputation business. What you do today may affect your reputation and business – for years to come.
- Use NAR’s Grievance and Professional Standards process: Changing the mindset from “tattle telling” to “maintaining and improving professionalism.”