



Professional Standards and Ethics Concerns

The National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) Code of Ethics, adopted in 1913, is a set of mandatory professional standards for REALTORS® to ensure honesty, integrity, and client protection. It requires members to put clients' interests first, treat all parties honestly, and adhere to 17 articles covering duties to clients, the public, and other REALTORS®. Non-member licensees are not bound by the Code of Ethics and should be reported directly to the state licensing authority (the websites can be found toward the end of this document) or pursued via civil court if relevant.

[Click here to access the Code of Ethics.](#)

If you feel you may have an ethics complaint, first, consider speaking to the agent or their principal broker about your concerns. Many issues stem from miscommunication and can be resolved informally. If unsatisfactory, proceed with the following steps.

If you believe an agent's conduct may rise to the level of an ethics concern, there is a formal process in place.

Pen-Mar REALTORS® is a member of the Pennsylvania Association of REALTORS® Professional Standards Coalition. The Coalition covers all inquiries and cases coming from and related to Pen-Mar Realtors® members, regardless of primary state membership.

To learn more about the process, please visit:
Pennsylvania Association of Realtors Professional Standards:
<https://www.parealtors.org/ethics-and-professional-standards/>

To submit a concern or ask questions about the process, please contact Lisa Aaron at 800-555-3390. There is also an online contact form at <https://www.parealtors.org/ethics-and-professional-standards/>.

While there may be circumstances in which it is appropriate for your broker to contact the broker of the individual whose conduct is in question, you should avoid discussing that individual's behavior with others in an effort to solicit opinions or responses.

A Note on Antitrust - It is also important to remember that discussing the activities of other agents—especially in group settings—can raise antitrust concerns.

Key reminders:

- Do not coordinate actions against another agent (e.g., boycotts, refusals to work with someone, or encouraging others to do the same).
- Avoid discussions that could limit competition or impact another agent's ability to conduct business.
- Do not share or speculate about disciplinary matters outside of formal processes.

- Keep conversations focused on professionalism—not individuals.

Antitrust laws are designed to protect a fair and competitive marketplace, and even casual conversations can unintentionally cross the line.

Pen-Mar REALTORS® is committed to supporting a professional, inclusive, and ethical real estate community. If you ever have questions about best practices, ethics, or professional standards, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Resources:

- A brief overview of the process can be found [here](#).
- [Before You File an Ethics Complaint](#)
- All Realtors® are required to complete Code of Ethics training. Pen-Mar provides training from time to time. [NAR has an online option for all members](#).

When should matters be referred to the state real estate commission?

If the individual has not violated the Code of Ethics or is not a member of a local association, you may report to the State Licensing Board

Pennsylvania

<https://www.pa.gov/services/dos/file-a-complaint-against-a-pa-licensed-professional>

Maryland

<https://www.dllr.state.md.us/license/mrec/mreccomp.shtml>

West Virginia

<https://rec.wv.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

Matters appropriate for a state real estate commission are typically those involving license law violations or misconduct tied to a person's authority to practice real estate. This includes issues such as practicing without an active license, misrepresentation or fraud in a transaction, failure to disclose required information, mishandling or commingling of client funds (e.g., escrow violations), breach of fiduciary duties, or engaging in conduct that rises to a regulatory concern.

In general, if the behavior calls into question whether an individual should hold or maintain a real estate license—or whether disciplinary action (such as fines, suspension, or revocation) may be warranted—it is appropriate to bring the matter to the real estate commission.

Resources:

[Maryland Real Estate Commission](#)

[Pennsylvania State Real Estate Commission](#)

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