

Greater Alabama Multiple Listing Service, Inc.

Policy Handbook – January 2023

Section 1 Multiple Listing Service (MLS) Defined

A multiple listing service is:

- a facility for the orderly correlation and dissemination of listing information so Participants may better serve their clients and customers and the public
- a means of enhancing cooperation among Participants
- a means by which information is accumulated and disseminated to enable authorized Participants to prepare appraisals, analyses, and other valuations of real property for bona fide clients and customers
- a means by which participants engaging in real estate appraisal contribute to common databases (*Revised*)

Section 2 Definition of MLS Participant (Policy Statement 7.9)

Where the term REALTOR® is used in this explanation of policy in connection with the word member or the word Participant, it shall be construed to mean the REALTOR® principal or principals, of this or any other association, or a firm comprised of REALTOR® principals participating in a multiple listing service owned and operated by the board. Participatory rights shall be held by an individual principal broker unless determined by the association or MLS to be held by a firm. It shall not be construed to include individuals other than a principal or principals who are REALTOR® members of this or any other association, or who are legally entitled to participate without association membership. However, under no circumstances is any individual or firm, regardless of membership status, entitled to MLS membership or participation unless they hold a current, valid real estate broker's license and cooperate, or are licensed or certified by an appropriate state regulatory agency to engage in the appraisal of real property.

Cooperation is the obligation to share information on listed property and to make property available to other brokers for showing to prospective purchasers and tenants when it is in the best interests of their clients. Use of information developed by or published by an association multiple listing service is strictly limited to the activities authorized under a Participant's licensure(s) or certification and unauthorized uses are prohibited.

Mere possession of a broker's license is not sufficient to qualify for MLS participation. Rather, the requirement that an individual or firm cooperates means that the Participant actively endeavors during the operation of its real estate business to list real property of the type listed on the MLS, shares information on listed property, and makes property available to other brokers for showing to prospective purchasers and tenants when it is in the best interests of their clients, and to cooperate. "Actively" means on a continual and ongoing basis during the operation of the Participant's real estate business. The "actively" requirement is not intended to preclude MLS participation by a Participant or potential Participant that operates a real estate business on a part-time, seasonal, or similarly time limited basis or that has its business interrupted by periods of relative inactivity occasioned by market conditions. Similarly, the requirement is not intended to deny MLS participation to a Participant or potential Participant who has not achieved a minimum number of transactions despite good faith efforts. Nor is it intended to permit an MLS to deny participation based on the level of service provided by the Participant or potential Participant as long as the level of service satisfies state law.

The key is that the Participant or potential Participant cooperates with respect to properties of the type that are listed on the MLS in which participation is sought. Cooperation is the obligation to share information on listed property and to make property available to other brokers for showing to prospective purchasers and tenants when it is in the best interests of their client(s). This requirement does not permit an MLS to deny participation to a Participant or potential Participant that operates a "Virtual Office Website" (VOW) (including a VOW that the Participant uses to refer customers to other Participants) if the Participant or potential Participant actively endeavors to cooperate. An MLS may evaluate whether a Participant or potential Participant actively endeavors during the operation of its real estate business to cooperate only if the MLS has a reasonable basis to believe that the Participant or potential Participant is in fact not doing so. The membership requirement shall be applied in a nondiscriminatory manner to all Participants and potential Participants.

Further, none of the foregoing is intended to convey participation or membership or any right of access to information developed by or published by an association multiple listing service where access to such information is prohibited by law. Additionally, the foregoing does not prohibit association multiple listing services, at their discretion, from categorizing non-principal brokers, sales licensees, licensed and certified appraisers and others affiliated with the MLS members or participants as users or subscribers and, holding such individuals personally subject to the rules and regulations and any other governing provisions of the MLS and to discipline for violations thereof. MLSs may, as a matter of local determination, limit participatory rights to individual principal brokers, or to their firms, and to licensed or certified appraisers, who maintain an office or Internet presence from which they are available to represent real estate sellers, buyers, lessors or lessees or from which they provide appraisal services. (*Amended 5/02*)

Where the terms subscriber or user are used in connection with a multiple listing service owned or operated by an association of REALTORS®, they refer to non-principal brokers, sales licensees, and licensed and certified real estate appraisers affiliated with an MLS participant and may, as a matter of local option, also include a participant's affiliated unlicensed administrative and clerical staff, personal assistants, and individuals seeking licensure or certification as real estate appraisers provided that any such individual is under the direct supervision of an MLS participant or the participant's licensed designee. If such access is available to unlicensed or uncertified individuals, their access is subject to the rules and regulations, the payment of applicable fees and charges (if any), and the limitations and restrictions of state law. None of the foregoing shall diminish the participant's ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance with the rules and regulations of the MLS by all individuals affiliated with the participant. *(Adopted 4/92)*

Under the Board of Choice policy, MLS participatory rights shall be available to any REALTOR® (principal) or any firm comprised of REALTORS® (principals) irrespective of where they hold primary membership subject only to their agreement to abide by any MLS rules or regulations; agreement to arbitrate disputes with other participants; and payment of any MLS dues, fees, and charges. Participatory rights granted under Board of Choice do not confer voting privileges or eligibility for office as an MLS committee member, officer, or director, except as granted at the discretion of the local board and/or MLS. *(Amended 5/97)*

The universal access to services component of Board of Choice is to be interpreted as requiring that MLS participatory rights be available to REALTOR® principals, or to firms comprised of REALTOR® principals, irrespective of where primary or secondary membership is held.

The MLS may charge participants and subscribers not holding primary or secondary membership in a REALTOR® association that owns the MLS a different amount than charged to members of the association, provided that such charge is reasonably related to the actual costs of serving those members. *(Amended 5/19)*

None of the foregoing shall be construed as requiring an association to grant MLS participatory rights, under Board of Choice, where such rights have been previously terminated by action of that association's board of directors. *(Adopted 11/95)* **M**

Section 3 Definitions of Various Types of Listing Agreements (Policy Statement 7.50)

Except where state law provides otherwise, the following terms shall be defined as follows when used in rules and regulations of any multiple listing service owned or operated by one or more associations of REALTORS®. *(Amended 5/06)*

Exclusive Right-to-Sell Listing: A contractual agreement under which the listing broker acts as the agent or as the legally recognized non-agency representative of the seller(s), and the seller(s) agrees to pay a commission to the listing broker, regardless of whether the property is sold through the efforts of the listing broker, the seller(s), or anyone else; and a contractual agreement under which the listing broker acts as the agent or as the legally recognized non-agency representative of the seller(s), and the seller(s) agrees to pay a commission to the listing broker regardless of whether the property is sold through the efforts of the listing broker, the seller(s), or anyone else, except that the seller(s) may name one or more individuals or entities as exemptions in the listing agreement and if the property is sold to any exempted individual or entity, the seller(s) is not obligated to pay a commission to the listing broker. *(Amended 5/06)*

Exclusive Agency Listing: A contractual agreement under which the listing broker acts as the agent or as the legally recognized non-agency representative of the seller(s), and the seller(s) agrees to pay a commission to the listing broker if the property is sold through the efforts of any real estate broker. If the property is sold solely through the efforts of the seller(s), the seller(s) is not obligated to pay a commission to the listing broker. *(Amended 5/06)*

Open Listing: A contractual agreement under which the listing broker acts as the agent or as the legally recognized non-agency representative of the seller(s), and the seller(s) agrees to pay a commission to the listing broker only if the property is sold through the efforts of the listing broker. *(Amended 5/06)*

Note: These definitions are provided to facilitate categorization of listings in MLS compilations. In any area of conflict or inconsistency, state law or regulation takes precedence. If state law permits brokers to list property, on either an exclusive or open basis, without establishing an agency relationship, listings may not be excluded from MLS compilations on the basis that the listing broker is not the seller's agent. *(Adopted 11/93, Amended 5/06)*

Section 4 Listing Content Defined (Policy Statement 7.86)

"Listing content" as used in the National Association's multiple listing policies, including the model MLS rules and regulations, includes, but is not limited to, photographs, images, graphics, audio and video recordings, virtual tours, drawings, descriptions, remarks, narratives, pricing information, and other details or information related to listed property. *(Adopted 5/06)* **M**

Part Two: Policies

A. MLS Antitrust Compliance Policy

The purpose of multiple listing is the orderly correlation and dissemination of listing information to participants so they may better serve the buying and selling public. Boards and associations of REALTORS® and their multiple listing services shall not enact or enforce any rule which restricts, limits, or interferes with participants in their relations with each other, in their broker/client relationships, or in the conduct of their business in the following areas.

Boards and associations of REALTORS® and their MLSs shall not:

1. Fix, control, recommend, or suggest the commissions or fees charged for real estate brokerage services (Interpretation 14).
2. Fix, control, recommend, or suggest the cooperative compensation offered by listing brokers to potential cooperating brokers.
3. Base dues, fees, or charges on commissions, listed prices, or sales prices. Initial participation fees and charges should directly relate to the costs incurred in bringing services to new participants.
4. Modify, or attempt to modify, the terms of any listing agreement; this does not prohibit administrative corrections of property information necessary to ensure accuracy or consistency in MLS compilations.
5. Refuse to include any listing in an MLS compilation solely on the basis of the listed price.
6. Prohibit or discourage participants from taking exclusive agency listings or refusing to include any listing in an MLS compilation solely on the basis that the property is listed on an exclusive agency basis.
7. Prohibit or discourage participants from taking “office exclusive” listings; certification may be required from the seller or listing broker that the listing is being withheld from the MLS at the direction of the seller.
8. Give participants or subscribers blanket authority to deal with or negotiate with buyers or sellers exclusively represented by other participants (Interpretation 10).
9. Establish, or permit establishment of, any representational or contractual relationship between an MLS and sellers, buyers, landlords, or tenants.
10. Prohibit or discourage cooperation between participants and brokers that do not participate in the MLS.
11. Prohibit or discourage participants or subscribers from participating in political activities (Interpretation 15).
12. Interfere in or restrict participants in their relationships with their affiliated licensees (Interpretations 16 and 17).

As used in this policy, “rule” includes all rules, regulations, bylaws, policies, procedures, practices, guidelines, or other governance provisions, whether mandatory or not. “Multiple listing service” and “MLS” means multiple listing service committees of boards and associations of REALTORS® and separately-incorporated multiple listing services owned by one or more boards or associations of REALTORS®.

These policy prohibitions are subject to and limited by applicable statutes, ordinances, and governmental regulations, to agreements entered into by an MLS or board or association of REALTORS® and an agency of government, and to final decrees of courts or administrative agencies.

This policy does not prohibit boards or associations of REALTORS® or their MLSs from adopting rules or policies establishing the legitimate uses of MLS information, from prohibiting unauthorized uses of MLS information, or from establishing rules or policies necessary to prevent illegal collective action, including price-fixing and boycotts.

It is the duty and responsibility of all boards and associations of REALTORS® and MLSs owned by or controlled by boards or associations of REALTORS® to ensure that all bylaws, rules, regulations, and other governance provisions comply with all mandatory multiple listing policies of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. Boards and associations of REALTORS® failing to conform with these policies will be required to show cause why their charters should not be revoked.

The numbered references refer to the official interpretations of Article I, Section 2 of the bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. *(Amended 11/04)* **M**

B. Structure

Section 1 Types of Multiple Listing Services

Basically, there are two types of multiple listing activities used by associations of REALTORS®. The essential characteristics of each may be summarized as follows:

1. A multiple listing activity available for voluntary participation, but requiring members (principals) who participate to submit all listings of designated types of property, is termed “a mandatory listing service.”

The mandatory service permits each REALTOR® to decide whether or not multiple listing is consistent with the REALTOR®’s method of doing business. If a decision is made to participate in the activity, however, then all listings covered by the rules are required to be submitted.

2. A multiple listing activity available to all members (principals), but the submission of any listing is an option of the member; this is termed “a voluntary listing service.”

Note: Any multiple listing activity in which it is compulsory that all members of an association of REALTORS® participate and submit information on all designated types of listings would be in direct conflict with the National Association's bylaws, Article I, Section 2, which bans the adoption by associations of REALTORS® of inequitable limitations on membership. On November 15, 1960, the Board of Directors of the National Association officially adopted the following interpretation: "A requirement to participate in a multiple listing service in order to gain or maintain REALTOR® membership is an inequitable limitation on membership." I

Section 2 Association and MLS Compliance with National Association Policy (Policy Statement 7.17)

Those associations or multiple listing services found by the National Association to be operating under bylaws or rules and regulations not consistent with mandatory policies of the National Association are not entitled to errors and omissions insurance coverage and their charters are subject to review and revocation. I

Section 3 Multiple Listing Service Reciprocal Agreements Between Associations, Contract Service for Multiple Listing Service, or Other Association Agreements Concerning the Association Multiple Listing Service (Policy Statement 7.19)

If an agreement is in effect or being considered between associations of REALTORS® or between MLSs for establishment of an MLS cooperative venture of any type, the agreement should be in writing including, but not limited to, the following items:

1. purpose of the agreement
2. geographic territory to be served
3. rights and responsibilities of each association and its members
4. form of governing body
5. method of appointment or election of such governing body
6. responsibilities and accountability of the governing body to the respective associations party to the agreement
7. roles and responsibilities of each association for enforcement of the Code of Ethics and for dispute resolution between MLS participants
8. intent of the multiple listing service(s) to operate in compliance with the multiple listing policies of the National Association
9. terms and procedures for resolving controversies between associations or between the association and the MLS. The agreement should also specify the terms under which the agreement may be terminated
10. rights and responsibilities of recipients of data related to relicensing of data (*Amended 11/04*) M

Section 4 Relationship of Association with Independent Multiple Listing Service in Association Area (Policy Statement 7.20)

No association may make or maintain any rule prohibiting a REALTOR® from participating in an independent multiple listing service. Associations shall take every action necessary to avoid responsibility and liability for the policies, practices, conduct and activities of any unaffiliated multiple listing service not owned and operated by it. In this connection the association shall document by letter to such independent multiple listing service that the association has no relationship or agreement with the service, no jurisdiction over the service, and no responsibility for it. *(Amended 2/94)*

This policy statement is not intended to prohibit associations from entering into cooperative relationships with independent multiple listing services (that limit participation to appropriately licensed or certified individuals or firms), including reciprocity agreements, regionalization agreements, and other forms of cooperative venture. *(Adopted 2/94)*

Such agreements may limit coverage under the National Association's blanket errors and omissions insurance policy and associations will want to ascertain the extent of insurance coverage, and the availability of coverage from other sources, prior to entering into such agreements. *(Adopted 2/94)*

Explanation: A primary responsibility of an association of REALTORS® is to protect the interests of the association and its members. With respect to an unaffiliated independent multiple listing service not owned or controlled by the association, or that is not party to an agreement with the association, the association has no jurisdiction over such multiple listing service and can, therefore, assume no responsibility for it or its actions. Positive effort should, therefore, be made to establish clearly that there is no relationship between the association of REALTORS® and the independent multiple listing service even though some or all of the multiple listing service participants may also be members of the association, and that no direct or indirect control is exercised by the association in connection with said independent multiple listing service. Such effort by the association should be documented to provide a basis for extricating the association from any litigation which may be brought against the independent multiple listing service and which may also name the association as a party to such litigation. *(Amended 2/94)* **M**

Section 5 Information Related to Listings of Commercial and Industrial Property (Policy Statement 7.33)

An association or association MLS may also publish a compilation of commercial and industrial properties listed with association or MLS members so that prospective cooperating brokers will have the opportunity to contact the listing broker to learn the terms of any cooperative relationship the listing broker wishes to establish. Such a mechanism is not a multiple listing service. If an association or association MLS provides this type of informational function (commonly referred to as a commercial information exchange or CIE) to its members, it shall not publish either the total commission negotiated between the listing broker and the seller or any offers of compensation to cooperating brokers. If a relationship is established between the listing broker and a prospective cooperating broker, it is strongly recommended that the terms and conditions be established in writing prior to the time the cooperating broker commences any efforts to produce a prospective purchaser or lessee. None of the foregoing is intended to preclude a CIE from providing, as a matter of local determination, access to information from CIE compilations to affiliate members of associations or to others engaged in recognized fields of real estate practice or in related fields. *(Revised 11/04)* **M**

CIE fees, dues and charges: CIE participants must be given the option of a no-cost waiver for any licensee or licensed or certified appraiser who does not use the service and who can demonstrate subscription to a different CIE or MLS where their principal is a participant. CIEs may, at local discretion, require that broker participants sign a certification for nonuse of the CIE's services by their licensees, which can include penalties and termination of the waiver if violated. *(Adopted 05/18 and Amended 08/18 [Leadership Team])* **M**

Section 6 Service Area of Association Multiple Listing Services (Policy Statement 7.42)

The service area of multiple listing services owned and operated by associations of REALTORS® is not limited to the jurisdiction of the parent association(s) of REALTORS®. Rather, associations are encouraged to establish multiple listing services that encompass natural market areas and to periodically reexamine such boundaries to ensure that they encompass the relevant market area. While associations are encouraged to work cooperatively to establish market area multiple listing services, the absence of such an agreement shall not preclude any association from establishing and maintaining a multiple listing service whose service area exceeds that of the parent association(s) jurisdiction. MLSs may not require other offices of a firm to participate in the MLS if any office of that firm participates in that MLS. *(Revised 11/17)* **M**

C. Administration

Operational Issues

Section 1 Procedures to Be Followed by an Association of REALTORS® Upon Demand for Access to the Association's Multiple Listing Service without Association Membership (Policy Statement 7.25)

In states other than California, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida, whenever an association is confronted with a request or demand by an individual for access to the association's multiple listing service without membership in the association, member associations are advised that the association should immediately advise both the state association and the Member Policy Department of the National Association, and the recommended procedures will be provided to the member association with any other pertinent information or assistance. It is important that the state association and National Association be advised immediately if such request or demand for access to the association MLS as described is received. **M**

Section 2 Prerequisites for Participation in or Access to a Commercial/ Industrial Multiple Listing Service of an Association of REALTORS® (Policy Statement 7.26)

An association may require any applicant for commercial information exchange participation or commercial/industrial MLS participation and any licensee affiliated with the CIE or C/I MLS participant who has access to and use of CIE or C/I MLS-generated information to complete an orientation program of no more than twelve (12) classroom hours devoted to the CIE or C/I MLS rules and regulations and computer training related to the CIE or C/I MLS information entry and retrieval. *(Amended 11/96)*

Note: Associations are not required to establish prerequisites for CIE or C/I MLS participation beyond holding REALTOR® (principal) membership in an association. However, if an association wishes to establish prerequisites for CIE or C/I MLS participation or access to CIE or C/I MLS-generated information, the requirement of attendance at an orientation program is the most rigorous prerequisite that may be required. *(Amended 11/96)* **M**

Section 3 MLS Indoctrination Requirements Relating to Individuals Entitled to Participation without Association Membership (Policy Statement 7.38)

In processing the application of an individual entitled by law to MLS participation without REALTOR® membership, the listing information and services shall be promptly provided upon completion of the following:

1. confirmation applicant has a valid, current, real estate license or certificate
2. applicant's written application and agreement to abide by the MLS rules and regulations
3. applicant's completion of any required MLS orientation on MLS bylaws, MLS rules and regulations, other MLS related policies or procedures, and computer training related to MLS information entry and retrieval within a reasonable time not to exceed thirty (30) days, and
4. payment of all required initial MLS fees or charges

If any examination on the MLS orientation is given, it shall be an open-book, no-pass, no-fail examination for programmed learning purposes only. *(Amended 11/04)* **M**

Section 4 Inclusion of Exclusive Agency Listings in MLS Compilations and Databases (Policy Statement 7.41)

Multiple listing services shall not establish or maintain any rule or policy prohibiting inclusion of exclusive agency listings that would be otherwise acceptable for inclusion in the compilation of current listing information.

Explanation: This policy shall not be construed as requiring Participants to accept exclusive agency listings if they determine acceptance is not in their best interest or the best interest of clients or customers. However, this policy does preclude collective agreements between Participants affiliated with different firms or others to refuse to accept exclusive agency listings. This policy contemplates multiple listing services will clearly distinguish between exclusive right-to-sell and exclusive agency listings in multiple listing compilations and databases to prevent confusion about the rights and obligations of brokers who cooperate in the sale of such listings. *(Amended)* **M**

Section 5 Effective Date of Changes in Multiple Listing Policy (Policy Statement 7.51)

To ensure consistent, uniform understanding of and compliance with the multiple listing policies of the National Association, all changes incorporated into the National Association's Handbook on Multiple Listing Policy become effective January 1 of the year following their approval by the Board of Directors of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. Unless specifically provided otherwise by the National Association's Board of Directors, associations and multiple listing services shall have sixty (60) days from the effective date of new or amended policies to adopt them locally. *(Amended 05/15)* **M**

Section 6 Factual Data Submitted by Appraisers (Policy Statement 7.52)

Association multiple listing services should encourage appraiser-participants to contribute factual data related to properties sold and closed which are not otherwise reported through MLS when the submission of such data is not in violation of the appraiser/client relationship. *(Adopted 2/91)* **M**

Section 7 Names of Multiple Listing Services (Policy Statement 7.54)

The names of association owned or operated multiple listing services (including multi-association and regional multiples) should rationally relate to the area served. Challenges by other associations to the appropriateness of any name utilized shall be considered and determined by the board of directors of the state association if attempts to resolve the conflict locally fail. Documentation of the attempt to resolve the conflict shall be forwarded to the state association. Challenges to the names of multiple listing services with multi-state jurisdictions shall be resolved by the National Association. The chairperson of the multiple listing policy committee shall appoint a panel of committee members to hear the challenge, and forward its recommendations to the National Association's Board of Directors for final disposition. Challenges to pre-existing names must be filed within one (1) year following the January 1, 1993 effective date. Existing in-state multiple listing services shall be grandfathered as to their names. Each state association shall have the right to override the grandfather provision by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of its board of directors. *(Amended 4/92)* **M**

Section 8 Categorization of MLS Services, Information, and Products (Policy Statement 7.57)

The services, information, and products that multiple listing services provide to participants and to subscribers affiliated with participants may be categorized as core, as ancillary to the core but included in a basic package of MLS services as determined locally and provided to all MLS participants and subscribers automatically or on a discretionary basis, or as optional and available to participants and subscribers at their discretion. The following will guide MLSs in categorizing their services, information, and products.

Core: Core MLS information, services, and products are essential to the effective functioning of MLS, as defined, and include:

- active listing information

Core services include the mechanisms (print or electronic or both) by which this information is communicated between participants and the MLS.

Where MLS participation is available to non-member brokers or their firms, either by law or by local decision, the information, services, and products available to such participants may be limited to those categorized as core.

Basic: In addition to core services, an MLS may automatically or on a discretionary basis provide additional information, services, and products substantially related to the purpose and function of MLS such as, but not limited to:

- sold and comparable information
- pending sales information
- expired listings and “off market” information
- tax records
- zoning records/information
- title/abstract information
- mortgage information
- amortization schedules
- mapping capabilities
- statistical information
- public accommodation information (e.g., schools, shopping, churches, transportation, entertainment, recreational facilities, etc.)
- MLS computer training/orientation
- access to affinity programs
- establishment, maintenance, and promotion of public-facing websites

Optional: An MLS may not require a participant to use, participate in, or pay for the following optional information, services, or products:

- lock box equipment including lock boxes (manual or electronic), combination lock boxes, mechanical keys, and electronic programmers or keycards
- advertising or access to advertising (whether print or electronic), including classified advertising, homes-type publications, and electronic compilations, including participant, subscriber, or firm homepages or websites

Notwithstanding the foregoing, where permitted by law*, an MLS may treat Optional information, services, or products as Basic provided that the MLS does not receive an economic benefit from the arrangement as demonstrated by satisfying both of the following conditions:

1. The MLS or its shareholder(s) is not the seller, lessor, or licensor of the information, service, or product (i.e., the information, service, or product is sourced from an independent third party); and
2. The MLS does not make a profit or receive a commission or rebate based on the sale, lease, or license that exceeds the operational costs of providing the information, service, or product.

*MLSs in the following states/territories may not treat Optional information, services, or products as Basic: States within the First, Second, and Eighth United States Circuits that include Arkansas, Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Dakota, and Vermont. *(Adopted 05/13)*

While no participant can be required to use, participate in, or pay for information, services, or products defined in this policy statement as optional, an MLS may, as a matter of local determination, bill all participants (or, where appropriate, subscribers) for optional information, services, or products provided that participants (or, where appropriate, subscribers) may decline such information, services, or products and not be charged for them. In such cases, the MLS must make all participants and subscribers aware, in advance, of their right to decline any such service, product, or information.

None of the foregoing precludes an association or MLS from utilizing association or MLS reserves, dues, or fees or special assessments (as otherwise provided for in the association or MLS governing documents) to acquire assets (including hardware and software) necessary to make optional information, services, or products available to participants and subscribers, provided any funds used to acquire assets or initiate services will be reimbursed out of the proceeds realized from the sale or lease of such information, services, or products. Associations of REALTORS® and MLSs may make nominal administrative expenditures out of reserves, dues, or fees to initiate or maintain optional services and products. *(Amended 05/13)* **M**

Section 9 Changes in MLS Rules and Regulations (Policy Statement 7.81)

Amendments to MLS rules and regulations are subject to approval by the board of directors of the parent association(s) of REALTORS®. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 10 MLSs may, as a matter of local discretion, make limited participation in MLS available to all brokers (principals) and firms comprised of brokers (principals) and to licensed or certified real estate appraisers (principals) and firms comprised of licensed or certified real estate appraisers. Limitations on participatory rights, if any, shall be determined locally. *(Amended 11/04)* **O**

Section 11 Removal of Listings When Participant Refuses/Fails to Timely Report Status Changes (Policy Statement 7.88)

Notwithstanding the limitations established in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual or in other National Association policy, multiple listing services operated as committees of associations of REALTORS® or as separate, wholly-owned subsidiaries of one or more associations of REALTORS® are authorized to remove any listing from the MLS compilation of current listings where the participant has refused or failed to timely report status changes. Prior to the removal of any listing from the MLS, the participant shall be advised of the intended removal so the participant can advise his or her client(s). *(Adopted 11/07)* **I**

Section 12 Real Estate Transaction Standards (RETS) and RESO Standards (Policy Statement 7.90)

The integrity of data is a foundation to the orderly real estate market. The Real Estate Transaction Standards (RETS) provide a vendor neutral, secure approach to exchanging listing information between the broker and the MLS. In order to ensure that the goal of maintaining an orderly marketplace is maintained, and to further establish REALTOR® information as the trusted data source, MLS organizations owned and operated by associations of REALTORS® will implement the RESO Standards including: the RESO Data Dictionary by January 1, 2016; the RESO Web API by June 30, 2016 and will keep current by implementing new releases of RESO Standards within one (1) year from ratification. Compliance with this requirement can be demonstrated using the Real Estate Standards Organization (RESO) compliance Certification Process. Web API data access provided to participants and subscribers must have no less than the same data available via data access methods such as RETS or FTP systems, and MLS fields that exist in the RESO Data Dictionary must be delivered in conformance with the standard. *(Amended 11/20)* **M**

Section 13 Orientation and Other Training (Policy Statement 7.92)

Multiple listing services may, as a matter of local discretion, require applicants for MLS participation and licensees (including licensed or certified appraisers) affiliated with an MLS participant who have access to and use of MLS-generated information to complete an orientation program of no more than eight (8) classroom hours devoted to the MLS rules and regulations, computer training related to MLS information entry and retrieval, and the operation of the MLS within thirty (30) days after access has been provided. Participants and subscribers may also be required, at the discretion of the MLS, to complete additional training of not more than four (4) classroom hours in any (12) twelve month period when deemed necessary by the MLS to familiarize participants and subscribers with system changes or enhancements and/or changes to MLS rules or policies. Participants and subscribers must be given the opportunity to complete any mandated orientation and additional training remotely. *(Amended 11/17)* **M**

Section 14 Submission of Photographs or Other Graphic Representations (Policy Statement 7.93)

Multiple Listing Services may, as a matter of local discretion, require submission of a reasonable number of photographs or other graphic representations that accurately depict listed property except where sellers expressly direct that photographs of their property not appear in MLS compilations. *(Adopted 5/10)* **M**

Section 15 Submission of Legally-required Seller Disclosure Information (Policy Statement 7.94)

Multiple Listing Services may, as a matter of local discretion, require submission of all legally-required seller disclosure information except where sellers expressly direct that such disclosure documents not be disseminated through MLS. *(Adopted 5/10)* **M**

Section 16 Price Change Information (Policy Statement 7.95)

MLSs are not required to track or report price change information other than the most recent increase or decrease in the price of current listings. If such information (either with respect to a current listing or to prior listings of that property) is tracked by an MLS and made available to participants and subscribers, neither it nor any information from which it may be determined shall be classified as confidential nor may participants be prohibited from making such information available to clients and customers pursuant to the same rules governing dissemination of other non-confidential data fields. Classification as non-confidential permits inclusion of such information in advertisements, including IDX display, of other participants' listings as a matter of local option. *(Adopted 5/10, Amended 5/11)* **M**

Section 17 Days/Time on Market Information (Policy Statement 7.96)

MLSs are not required to track or report days/time on market information (i.e., the length of time a property has been listed for sale pursuant to a current listing agreement or prior listing agreements, whether with the same or different listing brokers or firms). If such information is tracked by an MLS and made available to participants and subscribers, neither it nor any information from which it may be determined (such as the current list date, or prior list and expiration dates) shall be classified as confidential, nor may participants be prohibited from making such information available to clients or customers pursuant to the same rules governing dissemination of other non-confidential data fields. Classification as non-confidential permits inclusion of such information in advertisements, including IDX display, of other participants' listings as a matter of local option. *(Adopted 5/10, Amended 5/11)* **M**

Section 18 Need to Disclose if Property is a Foreclosure, Bank-owned, or Real Estate Owned ("REO") (Policy Statement 7.97)

As a matter of local discretion, Multiple Listing Services may require participants to disclose if a listed property is a foreclosure, bank-owned, or real estate owned ("REO"). *(Adopted 11/11)* **O**

Section 19 Customer Service and Tech Support (Policy Statement 8.2)

The MLS must display customer service and technical support contact information on the MLS website. *(Adopted 11/20)* **M**

Section 20 Fair Housing Policy (Policy Statement 8.1)

Multiple Listing Services are important tools for furthering fair housing because they facilitate the widespread distribution of accurate property information to all consumers. To that end, MLSs must implement a process for identifying potential violations of fair housing laws, advising participants and subscribers to remove or correct potential violations. *(Adopted 11/20)* **M**

Finance

Section 1 Waivers of MLS Fees, Dues, and Charges (Policy Statement 7.43)

Recurring MLS fees, dues, and charges may be based upon the total number of real estate brokers, sales licensees, and licensed or certified real estate appraisers affiliated with or employed by an MLS participant. *(Amended 11/17)*

However, MLSs must provide participants the option of a no-cost waiver of MLS fees, dues and charges for any licensee or licensed or certified appraiser who can demonstrate subscription to a different MLS or CIE where the principal broker participates. MLSs may, at their discretion, require that broker participants sign a certification for nonuse of its MLS services by their licensees, which can include penalties and termination of the waiver if violated. *(Amended 5/18 and 8/18)* **M**

Section 2 Assessment of MLS Fees, Dues, and Charges (Policy Statement 7.45)

All MLS fees, dues, and charges, including, but not limited to, initial participation fees, recurring participation fees, listing origination fees, subscription fees, etc., may be assessed to MLS participants or to individual users or subscribers. This does not preclude an MLS participant from being reimbursed by affiliated licensees for fees or charges incurred on their behalf pursuant to any in-house agreement that may exist. If direct billing of subscribers is utilized, the ultimate responsibility for delinquent dues, fees, and charges is that of the participant, unless an MLS, by adoption of appropriate rules or bylaws, makes subscribers exclusively responsible for such financial obligations. *(Amended 2/95)* **M**

Section 3 Merger or Dissolution of Association or MLS

In cases of merger or dissolution of an association of REALTORS® or an MLS, the advice of the organization(s) accountant or tax advisor should be sought. *(Adopted 11/04)* **R**

Law

Postal Regulations

Section 1 Compliance with United States Postal Codes (Policy Statement 7.15)

Associations of REALTORS® and their multiple listing services should comply with the requirements of the United States postal statutes as they relate to delivery of multiple listing service information, and in particular Volume 39, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 320, Suspension of the Private Express Statutes; Extremely Urgent Letters, found in the Federal Register, Volume 44, Number 207, Wednesday, October 24, 1979, page 61178. **I**

Tax Exempt Status of an Association of REALTORS®

Section 2 Limitation on Content of Association Advertising

The tax exempt status of an association of REALTORS® can be jeopardized if it includes the names of REALTORS® in advertisements it places.

Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code provides for the exemption of a real estate association which is not organized for profit provided no part of the net earnings of the association inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.

Revenue Ruling 65-14, C.B. 1965-1, 236 holds that the publication of advertisements containing listings of the names of individual members constitutes advertising for the individuals so advertised and is thus considered the performance of particular services for such individuals rather than an activity aimed at improvement of general business conditions. Section 1.501(c)(6)-I of the Income Tax Regulations confines the activities of a real estate association exempt under Section 501(c)(6) to those directed to the improvement of business conditions of one or more lines of business rather than the performance of particular services for individual persons. *(Amended 11/04)* **I**

Standard Multiple Listing Service Logo of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Section 3 Nature of the Standard Multiple Listing Service Mark

The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® has approved a standard multiple listing service logo (the “Logo”) for use by authorized chartered associations of REALTORS®, members of such associations, and multiple listing services solely owned by such association(s) pursuant to the terms set forth herein, and as further described in the Membership Marks Manual.

Downloadable files and additional information about the Logo may be found on nar.realtor.
(Amended 11/20) **M**

Section 4 Authorization to Use the Standard Multiple Listing Service Logo

Authorization to use the Logo is limited to the following authorized licensees (“Authorized Licensees”):

- a. Associations of REALTORS® that own or control a multiple listing service, wholly owned by REALTOR® associations, and that have certified that their governing documents comply with multiple listing policy of the National Association.
- b. Multiple listing services owned and/or controlled solely by an association(s) of REALTORS®, and when the governing documents of the owning or controlling association(s) of REALTORS® and/or the MLS, if a separate legal entity with separate governing documents, have certified that their governing documents comply with multiple listing policy of the National Association.
- c. Members of an association of REALTORS® that owns and/or controls a multiple listing service and that has certified that their governing documents comply with multiple listing policy of the National Association.

Authorized Licensees use of the Logo is subject to the following limitations:

- The Logo may not be modified.
- The Logo may not be used as a lapel pin or jewelry.
- The Logo may be used only on stationery, printed forms, websites and within promotional materials regarding multiple listing services.
- Authorized Licensees acknowledge that the National Association is the exclusive owner of the Logo.
- The multiple listing service must cease all use of the Logo in the event it is no longer solely owned and/or controlled by an association(s) of REALTORS®.

- The association(s) of REALTORS® and multiple listing service must cease all use of the Logo in the event any governing documents of the association(s) of REALTORS® or the multiple listing service, if applicable, do not comply with multiple listing policy of the National Association.
- The National Association reserves the right to require Authorized Licensees to adhere to additional limitations on use of the Logo and to cease use of the Logo for any reason within its sole discretion. *(Amended 11/20)* **I**

Section 5 Special Notes Concerning the Standard Multiple Listing Service Logo and the National Association's REALTOR® Trademarks

The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® does not permit any variation of the Logo design. Further, the National Association will not review and does not authorize any multiple listing service insignia to be used with the Logo other than the multiple listing service's own logo. Further, the National Association's REALTOR® trademarks may not, in any instance, be used in connection with any multiple listing service not owned and/or controlled solely by an association(s) of REALTORS®. *(Amended 11/20)* **M**

Section 6 Use of the Standard Multiple Listing Service Logo by Nonmember Participants (Policy Statement 7.13)

The Logo may not be used by non-association members of an MLS, including in any state where law requires that brokers (principals) who are not REALTORS® be admitted to the multiple listing service of an association of REALTORS® or in any association which has voluntarily opened its MLS to nonmember brokers and/or appraisers. Such use would be a misrepresentation and would violate the registration rights in the REALTOR® trademarks of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, the lawful owner of said collective marks. Where such non-association member advertises that they are a member of the multiple listing service of an association of REALTORS®, the multiple listing service may properly require that such participant of the service include in such advertisement that they are not a member of the association of REALTORS®. *(Amended 11/20)* **M**

Other Legal Issues

Section 7 Compliance with Law by Association and MLS (Policy Statement 7.10)

The multiple listing policy of the National Association shall in no instance be interpreted as requiring any constituent member association or association member to adopt or follow any policy which would contravene law applicable to such member association or association member. **I**

D. Data

Current Listings

Section 1 Standard Forms (Policy Statement 7.60)

Maintaining accurate listing data is a critical necessity for achieving the defined purpose of the MLS. Participants and subscribers are required to submit accurate listing data and required to correct any known errors.

Multiple listing services shall not require participants to enter into listing agreements using a form other than the form a participant individually chooses to use. Multiple listing services may refuse to accept any listing which fails to adequately protect the interests of the public and other participants, and shall not accept any listing which establishes a contractual relationship between the MLS and a participant's client. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 2 Termination Dates (Policy Statement 7.66)

All listings filed with the multiple listing service shall include the definite and final termination date as negotiated between the participant and the seller. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 3 Net Listings (Policy Statement 7.61)

Multiple listing services shall not include net listings in compilations of current listing information. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 4 Open Listings (Policy Statement 7.62)

Except where required by law, multiple listing services shall not include open listings in MLS compilations since open listings generally do not include authority to cooperate with and compensate other brokers. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 5 Office Exclusive Listings (Policy Statement 7.63)

If a seller withholds consent for a listing to be published in an MLS compilation of current listings, such listings shall be filed with the MLS but not disseminated to other participants. As a matter of local discretion, certification may be required from the seller or from the listing broker that the listing is being withheld from the MLS at the direction of the seller. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 6 Listing Prices Specified (Policy Statement 7.65)

The full gross listing price stated in each listing agreement will be published in MLS compilations of current listings except where a property is subject to auction and no listed price is specified in the agreement. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 7 Auction Listings (Policy Statement 7.82)

Multiple listing services may, as a matter of local discretion, accept exclusively-listed property subject to auction. Where listings subject to auction do not include a listed price, they may be published in a separate section of the MLS compilation of current listings. *(Adopted 11/04)* **O**

Section 8 Limited Service Listings (Policy Statement 7.83)

MLSs may, as a matter of local discretion, categorize listings as limited service in instances where listing brokers, pursuant to their listing agreements, will not provide one or more of the following services:

- a. arrange appointments for cooperating brokers to show listed properties to potential purchaser(s) but instead give cooperating brokers authority to make such appointments directly with seller(s)
- b. accept and present to seller(s) offers to purchase procured by cooperating brokers but instead give cooperating brokers authority to present offers directly to seller(s)
- c. advise seller(s) as to the merits of offers to purchase d. assist seller(s) in developing, communicating, or presenting counter-offers e. participate on seller's(s') behalf in negotiations leading to the sale of the listed property *(Adopted 11/04)* **O**

Section 9 MLS Entry-only Listings (Policy Statement 7.84)

Multiple listing services may, as a matter of local discretion, categorize listings as MLS entry-only in instances where listing brokers, pursuant to their listing agreements, will not provide any of the following services:

- a. arrange appointments for cooperating brokers to show a listed property to potential purchaser(s) but instead give cooperating brokers authority to make such appointments directly with seller(s)
- b. accept and present to seller(s) offers to purchase procured by cooperating brokers but instead give cooperating brokers authority to present offers directly to seller(s)
- c. advise seller(s) as to the merits of offers to purchase
- d. assist seller(s) in developing, communicating, or presenting counter-offers
- e. participate on seller's(s') behalf in negotiations leading to the sale of the listed property
(Adopted 11/04) O

Section 10 Listings of Suspended Participants (Policy Statement 7.67)

When an MLS participant is suspended from the MLS for failing to abide by a membership duty (i.e., violation of the Code of Ethics, association bylaws, MLS bylaws, MLS rules and regulations, or other membership duties except for failure to pay appropriate dues, fees, or charges), all listings currently filed with the MLS by the suspended participant shall, at the participant's option, be retained in the MLS until sold, withdrawn, or expired. Such listings shall not be renewed or extended by the MLS beyond the termination date of the listing agreement in effect when the suspension became effective. If a participant is suspended from an association of REALTORS® (except where MLS participation without association membership is permitted by law) or MLS (or both) for failure to pay appropriate dues, fees, or charges, the MLS is not obligated to provide MLS services, including continued inclusion of a suspended participant's listings in the MLS compilation of current listing information. Prior to removal of a suspended participant's listings from MLS, the suspended participant shall be advised in writing of the intended removal so that the suspended participant's clients can be advised. (Adopted 11/04) M

Section 11 Listings of Expelled Participants (Policy Statement 7.68)

When an MLS participant is expelled from the MLS for failing to abide by a membership duty (i.e., violation of the Code of Ethics, association bylaws, MLS bylaws, MLS rules and regulations, or other membership duties except for failure to pay appropriate dues, fees, or charges), all listings currently filed with the MLS by the expelled participant shall, at the participant's option, be retained in the MLS until sold, withdrawn, or expired. Such listings shall not be renewed or extended by the MLS beyond the termination date of the listing agreement in effect when the expulsion became effective. If a participant is expelled from an association of REALTORS® (except where MLS participation without association membership is permitted by law) or MLS (or both) for failure to pay appropriate dues, fees, or charges, the MLS is not obligated to provide MLS services, including continued inclusion of an expelled participant's listings in the MLS compilation of current listing information. Prior to removal of an expelled participant's listings from the MLS, the expelled participant shall be advised in writing of the intended removal so that the expelled participant's clients can be advised. (Adopted 11/04) M

Section 12 Listings of Resigned Participants (Policy Statement 7.69)

When a participant resigns from the MLS, the MLS is not obligated to provide MLS services, including continued inclusion of a resigned participant's listings in the MLS compilation of current listing information. Prior to removal of a resigned participant's listings from the MLS, the resigned participant shall be advised in writing of the intended removal so that the resigned participant's clients can be advised. *(Adopted 11/04)* **O**

Section 13 Submission of Offers (Policy Statement 7.72)

As required by Standard of Practice 1-7, listing brokers will continue to submit written offers to their seller-clients until closing unless precluded by law, government rule or regulation, or unless agreed otherwise in writing between the seller and the listing broker. Except where a subsequent offer is contingent upon termination of an existing contract, listing brokers shall recommend that sellers obtain the advice of legal counsel prior to accepting any subsequent offer. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 14 Reporting Resolutions of Contingencies (Policy Statement 7.76)

MLS participants shall report that any contingency on file with the MLS has been fulfilled or renewed, or the agreement cancelled within twenty-four (24) hours. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 15 Reporting Cancellation of Pending Sales (Policy Statement 7.77)

MLS participants shall promptly report to MLS that a pending sale has been cancelled and the listing, if still in effect, will be reinstated in the MLS compilation. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 16 Information Included in Any Association MLS Compilation (Policy Statement 7.35)

The National Association recommends to its associations and their multiple listing services that the information included in any MLS compilation should be limited to information related to the sale of listed property which is objective and capable of being verified by any interested party. The MLS information should not include any subjective impressions or opinions that could be misunderstood or misconstrued. **R**

Section 17 Protection Clauses in Association MLS Standard Listing Contracts (Policy Statement 7.37)

Any broker protection clause which is contained in a standard listing form established and recommended by a multiple listing service for the use of MLS participants shall not contain any specific time period therein, but shall contain a blank space to indicate that the time period of such protection period is negotiable between the property owner and the listing broker. **M**

Section 18 Compensation Notice (Policy Statement 7.39)

It is recommended that MLSs publish the following notice to their general membership at least annually.

Notice to Association Members

Compensation Notice

1. A broker's compensation and fees for services are not set by law and are fully negotiable.

2. A broker's compensation for services rendered to a seller or for services rendered to a buyer is solely a matter of negotiation between the broker and their client, and is not fixed, controlled, recommended, or maintained by any persons not a party to the brokerage service agreement.
 3. The compensation paid by a listing broker to a cooperating broker in respect to any listing is established by the listing broker and is not fixed, controlled, recommended, or maintained by any persons other than the listing broker. (Amended) **M**
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Section 19 Reproduction of MLS Information (Policy Statement 7.79)

Option #1: Participants or their affiliated licensees shall not reproduce any MLS compilation or any portion thereof, except in the following limited circumstances:

Participants or their affiliated licensees may reproduce from the MLS compilation and distribute to prospective purchasers a reasonable number of single copies of property listing data contained in the MLS compilation which relate to any properties in which the prospective purchasers are or may, in the judgment of the participant or their affiliated licensees, be interested.

Reproductions made in accordance with this rule shall be prepared in such a fashion that the property listing data of properties other than that in which the prospective purchaser has expressed interest, or in which the participant or the affiliated licensees are seeking to promote interest, does not appear on such reproduction.

Nothing contained herein shall be construed to preclude any participant from utilizing, displaying, distributing, or reproducing property listing sheets or other compilations of data pertaining exclusively to properties currently listed for sale with the participant.

Any MLS information, whether provided in written or printed form, provided electronically, or provided in any other form or format, is provided for the exclusive use of the participant and those licensees affiliated with the participant who are authorized to have access to such information. Such information may not be transmitted, retransmitted, or provided in any manner to any unauthorized individual, office, or firm.

None of the foregoing shall be construed to prevent any individual legitimately in possession of current listing information, sold information, comparables, or statistical information from utilizing such information to support valuations on particular properties for clients and customers. Any MLS content in data feeds available to participants for real estate brokerage purposes must also be available to participants for valuation purposes, including automated valuations. MLSs must either permit use of existing data feeds, or create a separate data feed, to satisfy this requirement. MLSs may require execution of a third-party license agreement where deemed appropriate by the MLS. MLSs may require participants who will use such data feeds to pay the reasonably estimated costs incurred by the MLS in adding or enhancing its downloading capacity for this purpose. Information deemed confidential may not be used as supporting documentation. Any other use of such information is unauthorized and prohibited by these rules and regulations. (Amended 05/14)

Option #2: Participants or their affiliated licensees shall not reproduce any MLS compilation or any portion thereof, except in the following limited circumstances:

Participants or their affiliated licensees may reproduce from the MLS compilation and distribute to prospective purchasers a reasonable number of single copies of property listing data contained in the MLS compilation which relate to any properties in which the prospective purchasers are or may, in the judgment of the participants or their affiliated licensees, be interested.

Nothing contained herein shall be construed to preclude any participant from utilizing, displaying, distributing, or reproducing property listing sheets or other compilations of data pertaining exclusively to properties currently listed for sale with the participant.

Any MLS information, whether provided in written or printed form, provided electronically, or provided in any other form or format, is provided for the exclusive use of the participant and those licensees affiliated with the participant who are authorized to have access to such information. Such information may not be transmitted, retransmitted, or provided in any manner to any unauthorized individual, office, or firm.

None of the foregoing shall be construed to prevent any individual legitimately in possession of current listing information, sold information, comparables, or statistical information from utilizing such information to support valuations on particular properties for clients and customers. Any MLS content in data feeds available to participants for real estate brokerage purposes must also be available to participants for valuation purposes, including automated valuations. MLSs must either permit use of existing data feeds, or create a separate data feed, to satisfy this requirement. MLSs may require execution of a third-party license agreement where deemed appropriate by the MLS. MLSs may require participants who will use such data feeds to pay the reasonably estimated costs incurred by the MLS in adding or enhancing its downloading capacity for this purpose. Information deemed confidential may not be used as supporting documentation. Any other use of such information is unauthorized and prohibited by these rules and regulations. *(Amended 05/14)* **M**

Section 20 Property Addresses (Policy Statement 8.9)

Residential listings filed with the MLS must include a property address where one exists at the time the listing is filed. If a property address is unavailable, then the parcel identification number must be submitted at the time the listing is filed. If no address or parcel identification number is available at the time the listing is filed, the listing must, at a minimum, contain a legal description of the property sufficient to describe the location of the property. This information shall be available to participants and subscribers at the time of filing. *(Adopted 5/21)* **M**

Section 21 Non-filtering of Listings (Policy Statement 8.5)

MLS Participants and Subscribers must not, and MLSs must not enable the ability to, filter out or restrict MLS listings that are communicated to consumers or clients based on the existence or level of compensation offered to the cooperating broker or the name of a brokerage or agent. *(Amended)* **M**

Sold/Comparable/Off-market Information

Section 1 Reporting Sales to the MLS (Policy Statement 7.75)

Sales of listed property, including sales prices, shall be reported promptly to the MLS by listing brokers. If negotiations were carried on directly between a cooperating participant and the seller, the cooperating broker shall report the accepted offer and price to the listing broker, and the listing broker shall report that information to the MLS. Listing agreements should also include provisions expressly granting the listing broker the right to authorize dissemination of sales price information by the MLS to its participants.

Note applicable in “disclosure” states: In disclosure states, if the sale price of a listed property is recorded, then reporting of the sale price may be required by the MLS.

Note applicable in “nondisclosure” states: In states where the actual sale prices of completed transactions are not publicly accessible, failure to report sale prices can result in disciplinary action only if the MLS:

1. categorizes sale price information as confidential and
2. limits use of sale price information to participants and subscribers in providing real estate services, including appraisals and other valuations, to customers and clients; and to governmental bodies and third-party entities only as provided below.

The MLS may provide sale price information to governmental bodies only to be used for statistical purposes (including use of aggregated data for purposes of valuing property) and to confirm the accuracy of information submitted by property owners or their representatives in connection with property valuation challenges; and to third-party entities only to be used for academic research, statistical analysis, or for providing services to participants and subscribers. In any instance where a governmental body or third-party entity makes sale price information provided by the MLS available other than as provided for in this provision, a listing participant may request the sale price information for a specific property be withheld from dissemination for these purposes with written authorization from the seller, and withholding of sale price information from those entities shall not be construed as a violation of the requirement to report sale prices.

Note regarding confidentiality: As established in the Virtual Office Website (“VOW”) policy, sale prices can only be categorized as confidential in states where the actual sale prices of completed transactions are not accessible from public records. *(Amended 11/11)* **M**

Section 2 Withdrawn Listings (Policy Statement 7.64)

Listings may be withdrawn from a multiple listing service by participants prior to the listing’s expiration date. As a matter of local discretion, MLSs may require that a copy of the agreement authorizing withdrawal be submitted. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 3 Inclusion of Expired or Withdrawn Listings in an Association’s Comparable Report or Other Report of Statistical Information (Policy Statement 7.36)

Any information concerning expired or withdrawn listings included in an association’s comparable report or other report of statistical information shall be clearly indicated as expired or withdrawn so that the users of such information will be aware of the actual status of such listings. **M**

Statistical Reports

Section 1 Statistical Reports (Policy Statement 7.3)

MLSs may, as a matter of local determination, make statistical reports, sold information, and other informational reports derived from the MLS available to REALTORS® who do not participate in the MLS but who are engaged in real estate brokerage, management, appraising, land development, or building. Additional expenses incurred in providing such information to REALTORS® who do not participate in the MLS may be included in the price charged for such information. Any information provided may not be transmitted, retransmitted, or provided in any manner to any individual, office, or firm, except as otherwise authorized in the MLS rules and regulations.

MLSs may, as a matter of local determination, provide statistical reports, sold information, and other informational reports derived from the MLS to government agencies. MLSs may, as a matter of local discretion, require that such agencies (or representatives of such agencies) hold an appropriate form of membership in the MLS or in the association of REALTORS® as a condition of such access. *(Amended 11/21)* **M**

Section 2 Statistical Reports Should Be Kept

The information submitted on listing and sales contracts makes it possible for an association to compile valuable market data. Therefore, an association of REALTORS® should develop and preserve its multiple listing records for that purpose. The resulting information should be available to members and, under some conditions, to interested governmental agencies. The National Association's Department of Real Estate Research can be helpful with advice and suggestions. **R**

Advertising

Print and Electronic

Section 1 Internet Data Exchange (IDX) Policy (Policy Statement 7.58)

The IDX policy gives MLS participants the ability to authorize limited electronic display and delivery of their listings by other participants via the following authorized mediums under the participant's control: websites, mobile apps, and audio devices. As used throughout this policy, "display" includes "delivery" of such listings. Associations of REALTORS® and their multiple listing services must enable MLS participants to display aggregated MLS listing information by specified electronic means in accordance with this policy. Requests for IDX feeds/downloads must be acted on by the MLS within five (5) business days from receipt, barring extenuating circumstances related to an individual's qualification for MLS Participation, and review of the participant's and vendor's use of the IDX information consistent with the MLS rules, in which case an estimated time of approval or denial must be issued. *(Amended 05/17)*

For purposes of this policy “control” means participants must have the ability to add, delete, modify and update information as required by this policy. All displays of IDX listings must also be under the actual and apparent control of the participant, and must be presented to the public as being the participant’s display. Actual control requires that the participant has developed the display, or caused the display to be developed for the participant pursuant to an agreement giving the participant authority to determine what listings will be displayed, and how those listings will be displayed. Apparent control requires that a reasonable consumer receiving the participant’s display will understand the display is the participant’s, and that the display is controlled by the participant. Factors evidencing control include, but are not limited to, clear, conspicuous, written or verbal identification of the name of the brokerage firm under which the participant operates, except as otherwise provided for in this policy (e.g., displays of minimal information). All electronic display of IDX information conducted pursuant to this policy must comply with state law and regulations, and MLS rules. Any display of IDX information must be controlled by the participant, including the ability to comply with this policy and applicable MLS rules. *(Amended 05/17)*

To comply with this requirement MLSs must, if requested by a participant, promptly provide basic downloading of all active listings, sold* listing data starting from January 1, 2012, non-confidential pending sale listing data, and other listings authorized under applicable MLS rules. MLSs may not exclude any listings from the information which can be downloaded or displayed under IDX except those listings for which a seller has affirmatively directed that their listing or their property address not appear on the Internet or other electronic forms of display or distribution. Associations and MLSs can also offer alternative display options including framing of board, MLS, or other publicly-accessible sites displaying participants’ listings (with permission of the framed site). For purposes of this policy, “downloading” means electronic transmission of data from MLS servers to participants’ servers on a persistent or transient basis, at the discretion of the MLS. The MLS’s IDX download must be refreshed to accurately reflect all updates and status changes no less frequently than every twelve (12) hours. *(Amended 5/17)*

***Note:** If “sold” information is not publicly accessible, display of sales price may be prohibited. “Publicly accessible” as used in IDX policy and rules, means data that is available electronically or in hard copy to the public from city, county, state and other government records. MLSs must provide for its Participants’ IDX displays publicly accessible sold information maintained by the MLS starting January 1, 2012. *(Amended 05/21)*

MLSs that allow persistent downloading of the MLS database by participants for display or distribution on the Internet or by other electronic means may require that participants’ websites (1) utilize appropriate security protection, such as firewalls, provided that any security obligations imposed on participants may not be greater than those employed concurrently by the MLS, and/or (2) maintain an audit trail of consumer activity on participants’ websites and make that information available to the MLS if the MLS has reason to believe that a participant’s IDX website has caused or permitted a breach in the security of the data or a violation of MLS rules related to use by consumers. This policy does not require associations or MLSs to establish publicly accessible sites displaying participants’ listings. *(Amended 05/12)*

Unless state law requires prior written consent from listing brokers, listing brokers’ consent for IDX display may be presumed unless a listing broker affirmatively notifies the MLS that the listing broker refuses to permit display (either on a blanket or on a listing-by-listing basis). If a participant refuses on a blanket basis to permit IDX display of that participant’s listings, then that participant may not display the aggregated MLS data of other participants on an IDX site.

Alternatively, MLSs may require that participants' consent for IDX display of their listings by other participants be affirmatively established in writing. Even where participants have given blanket authority for other participants' IDX display of their listings, such consent may be withdrawn on a listing-by-listing basis as instructed by the seller. *(Amended 05/12)*

Access to MLS databases, or any part of such databases, may not be provided to any person or entity not expressly authorized such access under the MLS rules. *(Amended 11/09)*

Participants' Internet websites and other authorized display mechanisms may also provide other features, information, or services in addition to IDX information (including Virtual Office Website ["VOW"] functions) which are not subject to this policy. *(Amended 05/12)*

Policies Applicable to Participants' IDX Websites and Displays

1. Participants must notify the MLS of their intention to display IDX information and give the MLS direct access for purposes of monitoring/ensuring compliance with applicable rules and policies. *(Amended 05/12)*
2. MLS participants may not use IDX-provided listings for any purpose other than IDX display. This does not require participants to prevent indexing of IDX listings by recognized search engines. *(Amended 05/12)*
3. Listings or property addresses of sellers who have directed their listing brokers to withhold their listing or property address from display on the Internet (including, but not limited to, publicly accessible websites or VOWs) shall not be accessible via IDX display. *(Amended 05/12)*
4. Participants may select the IDX listings they choose to display based only on objective criteria including, but not limited to, factors such as geography or location ("uptown", "downtown", etc.), list price, type of property (e.g., condominiums, cooperatives, single family detached, multi-family), or type of listing (e.g., exclusive right-to-sell or exclusive agency). Selection of IDX listings to be displayed must be independently made by each participant. *(Amended 11/21)*
5. Participants must refresh all MLS downloads and displays automatically fed by those downloads not less frequently than every twelve (12) hours. *(Amended 11/14)*
6. Except as provided elsewhere in this policy or elsewhere in an MLS's rules and regulations, an IDX display or participant engaging in IDX display may not distribute, provide, or make any portion of the MLS database available to any person or entity. *(Amended 05/12)*
7. When displaying listing content, a participant's or user's IDX display must clearly identify the name of the brokerage firm under which they operate in a readily visible color and typeface. This policy acknowledges that certain required disclosures may not be possible in displays of minimal information (e.g., "thumbnails", text messages, "tweets", etc., of 200 characters or less) or for audio delivery of listing content. Minimal displays are exempt from the disclosure requirements established in this policy but only when linked directly to a display that includes all required disclosures. Audio delivery of listing content is exempt from the disclosure requirements only when all required disclosures are subsequently delivered electronically to the registered consumer performing the property search or linked to through the device's application. *(Amended 05/17)*

8. With respect to any participant's IDX display that
 - a. allows third-parties to write comments or reviews about particular listings or displays a hyperlink to such comments or reviews in immediate conjunction with particular listings, or
 - b. displays an automated estimate of the market value of the listing (or hyperlink to such estimate) in immediate conjunction with the listing, either or both of those features shall be disabled or discontinued with respect to the seller's listing at the request of the seller. The listing broker or agent shall communicate to the MLS that the seller has elected to have one or both of these features disabled or discontinued by all participants. Except for the foregoing and subject to paragraph 9, a participant's IDX display may communicate the participant's professional judgment concerning any listing. Nothing shall prevent an IDX display from notifying customers that a particular feature has been disabled at the request of the seller. *(Amended 05/12)*
9. Participants shall maintain a means (e.g., e-mail address, telephone number) to receive comments about the accuracy of any data or information that is added by or on behalf of the participant beyond that supplied by the MLS and that relates to a specific property. The participant shall correct or remove any false data or information relating to a specific property upon receipt of a communication from the listing broker or listing agent for that property explaining why the data or information is false. However, the participant shall not be obligated to remove or correct any data or information that simply reflects good faith opinion, advice, or professional judgment. *(Amended 05/12)*
10. An MLS participant (or where permitted locally, an MLS subscriber) may co-mingle the listings of other brokers received in an IDX feed with listings available from other MLS IDX feeds, provided all such displays are consistent with the IDX rules, and the MLS participant (or MLS subscriber) holds participatory rights in those MLSs. As used in this policy, "co-mingling" means that consumers are able to execute a single property search of multiple IDX data feeds resulting in the display of IDX information from each of the MLSs on a single search results page; and that participants may display listings from each IDX feed on a single webpage or display. *(Adopted 11/14)*
11. Participants shall not modify or manipulate information relating to other participants' listings. MLS participants may augment their IDX displays of MLS data with applicable property information from other sources to appear on the same webpage or display, clearly separated from the data supplied by the MLS. The source(s) of the information must be clearly identified in the immediate proximity to such data. This requirement does not restrict the format of MLS data display or display of fewer than all of the available listings or fewer authorized fields. *(Adopted 05/15)*
12. An MLS participant's IDX display must identify the listing firm, and the email or phone number provided by the listing Participant in a reasonably prominent location and in a readily visible color and typeface not smaller than the median used in the display of listing data. *(Amended 11/21)*

Policies Applicable to Multiple Listing Services

The following guidelines are recommended but not required to conform to National Association policy. MLSs may:

1. prohibit display of expired or withdrawn listings* *(Amended 5/21)*

***Note:** If “sold” information is publicly accessible, display of sales price of completed transactions may be prohibited. *(Amended 5/21)*

2. prohibit display of confidential information fields intended for cooperating brokers rather than consumers including showing instructions and property security information. *(Amended 5/21)*
3. prohibit display of the type of listing agreement, e.g., exclusive right to sell, exclusive agency, etc.
4. prohibit display of seller’s(s’) and occupant’s(s’) name(s), phone number(s), and e-mail address(es)
5. require that the identity of listing agents be displayed
6. require that any display of other participants’ listings indicate the source of the information being displayed
7. require that other brokers’ listings obtained from other sources, e.g., from other MLSs, from non-participating brokers, etc., display the source from which each such listing was obtained
8. require participants to indicate on their websites and in any other IDX display that the information being provided is for consumers’ personal, non-commercial use and may not be used for any purpose other than to identify prospective properties consumers may be interested in purchasing. *(Amended 05/12)*
9. establish reasonable limits on the amount of data/number of listings that consumers may retrieve or download in response to an inquiry. Such number shall be determined by the MLS, but in no instance may the limit be fewer than five hundred (500) listings or fifty percent (50%) of the listings available for IDX display, whichever is less. *(Amended 11/17)*
10. limit the right to display other participants’ listings to a participant’s office(s) holding participatory rights in the same MLS.
11. require a notice on all MLS data displayed indicating that the data is deemed reliable but is not guaranteed accurate by the MLS. Participants’ IDX sites and displays may also include other disclaimers necessary to protect the participant and/or the MLS from liability. *(Amended 05/12)*

This policy acknowledges that the disclosures required under Subsections 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11 (above) may not be possible in displays of minimal information (e.g., “thumbnails”, text messages, “tweets”, etc., of 200 characters or less) or for audio delivery of listing content. Minimal displays are exempt from the disclosure requirements established in this policy but only when linked directly to a display that includes all required disclosures. Audio delivery of listing content is exempt from disclosure requirements only when all required disclosures are subsequently delivered electronically to the registered consumer performing the property search or linked to through the device’s application. *(Amended 5/17)*

Additional Local Issues/Options

1. Where MLS participatory rights are available to non-member brokers or firms as a matter of law or local determination, the right to IDX display of listing information may be limited, as a matter of local option, to participants who are REALTORS®. *(Amended 05/12)*
2. MLSs may, but are not required to, limit the right to display listing information available pursuant to IDX to MLS participants licensed as real estate brokers.
3. MLSs may, but are not required to, limit the right to display listing information pursuant to IDX to MLS participants engaged in real estate brokerage. *(Amended 11/09)*
4. MLSs may, but are not required to, allow non-principal brokers and sales licensees affiliated with MLS participants to use information available through IDX to populate their own websites or to use in other IDX displays.

Even if use of information through IDX is provided to non-principal brokers and sales licensees affiliated with MLS participants, such use is subject to the affiliated participants' consent and control and the requirements of state law and/or regulation, and MLS rules. *(Amended 05/12)*

5. MLSs cannot prohibit participants from downloading and displaying or framing other brokers' listings obtained from other sources, e.g., other MLSs, non-participating brokers, etc., but can, as a matter of local option, require that listings obtained through IDX feeds from REALTOR® Association MLSs be searched separately from listings obtained from other sources. *(Amended 11/14)*

Note: An MLS participant (or where permitted locally, an MLS subscriber) may co-mingle the listings of other brokers received in an IDX feed with listings available from other MLS IDX feeds, provided all such displays are consistent with the IDX rules, and the MLS participant (or MLS subscriber) holds participatory rights in those MLSs. As used in this policy, "co-mingling" means that consumers are able to execute a single property search of multiple IDX data feeds resulting in the display of IDX information from each of the MLSs on a single search results page; and that participants may display listings from each IDX feed on a single webpage or display. *(Adopted 11/14)*

6. MLSs may, as a matter of local option, charge the costs of adding or enhancing their downloading capacity to participants who will download listing information. Assessment of such costs should reasonably relate to the actual costs incurred by the MLS. *(Amended 11/06)*
7. MLSs may prohibit advertising controlled by participants (including co-branding) on any pages displaying IDX-provided listings. *(Amended 05/12)*

MLSs permitting advertising (including co-branding) on pages displaying IDX-provided listings may prohibit deceptive or misleading advertising (including co-branding).

For purposes of this provision, co-branding will be presumed not to be deceptive or misleading if the participant's logo and contact information is larger than that of any third party. *(Amended 11/09)* **M**

Section 2 Use of MLS Information in Advertising and Other Public Representations (Policy Statement 7.80)

Information from MLS compilations of current listing information, from statistical reports, and from any sold or comparable reports may be used by MLS participants as the basis for aggregated demonstrations of market share or for comparisons of firms in public mass-media advertising and other public representations. MLSs may, as a matter of local determination, prohibit advertising or representations about specific properties which are listed with other participants or which were sold by other participants (as either listing or cooperating broker).

Any print or non-print form of advertising or other public representation based in whole or in part on information supplied by the MLS must clearly disclose the source of the information and the period of time over which such claims are based. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 3 Transmittal of Participants' Listings to Aggregators (Policy Statement 7.87)

MLSs are not required to transmit participants' listings to third-party aggregators or to operate a public website displaying listing information. If an MLS transmits participants' listings to third-party aggregators and/or operates a public website displaying listing information, all exclusive listings, regardless of type, will be included in the data feed (unless a participant withholds consent for such transmission), except that MLSs may exclude from such data feed any listing where both of the following conditions are present:

- a. the listed property's street address or a graphic display of the property's specific location will be displayed to the public; and
- b. the seller displays on the property a "for sale by owner" sign or other sign or notice indicating that the seller is soliciting direct contact from buyers. *(Adopted 11/06)* **M**

Section 4 Electronic Display of Other Participants' Listings (Policy Statement 7.98)

MLSs may, but are not required to, give participants the ability to authorize electronic display of their listings by other participants outside the context of the Internet Data Exchange ("IDX") policy and rules and the Virtual Office Website ("VOW") policy and rules.

Participants may not be required to consent to display or distribution of their listings through non-IDX and non-VOW channels as a condition of participation in MLS or as a condition of participation in IDX, except as otherwise provided for in the IDX rules. Electronic display and distribution pursuant to this policy contemplates, but is not limited to, Short Message Services ("SMS")/texting technologies, and interactive "social media." All electronic displays and/or distribution of other participants' listings conducted pursuant to this policy must comply with state law and regulations and applicable rules. *(Amended 5/17)*

Displays addressed by this policy may be subject to technological limitations on disabling/discontinuing third-party comments/reviews, disabling/discontinuing automated displays of market value, "refreshing" displays on a periodic basis, and possibly other issues which should be taken into consideration when developing rules and policies governing such displays. *(Adopted 11/12)* **M**

Homes Magazines

Section 5 Regulation of Advertising in Association or Commercial Publications

It is recommended that associations of REALTORS® discontinue and avoid any association or MLS regulation of advertising placed in a commercial advertising publication published by a commercial publisher and sponsored or endorsed by the association and that further, the association document in writing that it is not responsible for any regulation or regulations of advertising by the commercial publishers.

Further, if an association or its multiple listing service publishes a commercial advertising publication other than the regular MLS books/cards/sheets, it shall not seek to regulate the content of such advertising beyond reserving, with the advice of association legal counsel, the right to reject scurrilous advertising that might create liability to the association. *(Approved 11/77, Reaffirmed 11/85)* **R**

Other Advertising Issues

Section 6 Services Advertised as “Free” (Policy Statement 8.4)

MLS Participants and Subscribers must not represent that their brokerage services to a client or customer are free or available at no cost to clients, unless the Participant or Subscriber will receive no financial compensation from any source for those services. **M**

Section 1 Statewide Data Sharing Defined (Policy Statement 8.10)

A statewide data share should deliver MLS data through a common technology interface (e.g., API) of all data fields to all Participants of MLSs in the statewide data share. However, the data should not include MLS-only data fields that are viewable only to the listing Participant and the respective local MLS.

Note: Considerations should be given to:

- Inclusion of local data fields (non-RESO Standard fields).
- Individual MLS’s “attached document” retention policies and state laws regarding the sharing and retention of documents related to a previous transaction (privacy laws). **R**

E. Participants’ Rights

Section 1 Participation Should Be Optional

No REALTOR® shall be required to participate. A requirement to participate in a multiple listing service in order to gain and maintain REALTORS® membership is an inequitable limitation on its membership (from Official Interpretation No. 1 of Bylaws, Article I, Section 2, adopted by the Board of Directors of the National Association, November 15, 1960). However, if a REALTOR® chooses to participate in the activity, the REALTOR® should be required to exchange information on the same basis, according to the same rules and costs imposed on all who participate. **M**

Section 2 Association Membership as Prerequisite to MLS Participation (Policy Statement 7.7)

To the extent permitted by law, the National Association remains firmly and unequivocally committed to the principle that association membership is a reasonable condition of participation in the association's multiple listing service providing membership in the association is readily available to all eligible and qualified individuals on reasonable and nondiscriminatory terms and conditions. *(Amended 11/04)* R

Section 3 Participation in an Association Multiple Listing Service of a Branch Office Manager Who Is Not a Principal of the Real Estate Firm (Policy Statement 7.24)

In the event a REALTOR® has a principal office in one and only a branch office in another association, and the branch office manager is a REALTOR® member of the second association but is not a principal of the real estate firm with which he is affiliated, the branch manager shall be considered as standing in the shoes of the principal, and shall be eligible for participation in the multiple listing service of any association's MLS where he qualifies as a participant.

(Amended 11/96) I

Section 4 MLS Participation by Brokers Acting as Agents of Potential Purchasers (Policy Statement 7.40)

No association or association MLS may make or maintain a rule which would preclude an individual or firm, otherwise qualified, from participating in an association MLS solely on the basis that the individual or firm functions, to any degree, as the agent of potential purchasers under a contract between the individual (or firm) and the prospective purchaser (client). However, in instances where the Participant is representing the potential purchaser as an agent, the Participant cannot function simultaneously as the subagent of the listing broker without buyer and seller consent or as provided by state law; and must make his true position clearly known to all interested parties at first contact. *(Amended)* M

Section 5 Immediate Access to MLS by Association Members if Provided to Nonmember (Policy Statement 7.14)

Where the multiple listing service of an association of REALTORS® is required by law to provide access to nonmembers and immediate access is provided to such nonmembers, similar immediate access shall be provided to applicants for membership in the association of REALTORS® subject to any required orientation in multiple listing policies and procedures. Otherwise, the application for association membership shall be processed in the normal manner. *(Amended 11/04)*

Such access to MLS shall be provided to applicants for association membership as described, waiving the provisions of Interpretations No. 9 and No. 18, Official Interpretations of Article I, Section 2, Bylaws of the National Association, and of Point 5 of the Membership Qualification Criteria of the National Association for Applicants for REALTOR® Members Who Are Sole Proprietors, Partners, Corporate Officers, or Branch Office Managers in a Real Estate Firm. *(Amended 11/04)*

After providing such access to MLS, the applications of such applicants for association membership should proceed on a normal basis and all association membership qualifications and all Official Interpretations of Article I, Section 2, Bylaws of the National Association have full force and effect. *(Amended 11/04)* M

Section 6 Presentation of Offers (Policy Statement 7.71)

Consistent with Standard of Practice 1-6, MLSs may require that listing brokers make arrangements for prompt presentation of offers and, where offers cannot be presented promptly, that listing brokers explain to cooperating brokers why offers they procured could not be presented. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 7 Showings and Negotiations (Policy Statement 7.70)

As established in Official Interpretation No. 10 of the National Association's Bylaws, rules giving cooperating brokers the right to negotiate directly with an exclusively-represented seller are an inequitable limitation on REALTORS®. Appointments for showings and negotiations with sellers for the purchase of listed property published in MLS compilations shall be conducted through the listing broker, except:

1. where the listing broker gives the cooperating broker specific authority to show and/or negotiate directly, or
2. after reasonable efforts a cooperating broker cannot contact the listing broker or the listing broker's representative. However, listing brokers, at their discretion, may preclude any direct contact or negotiations by cooperating brokers. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 8 Rights of Cooperating Brokers in Presentation of Offers (Policy Statement 7.73)

Cooperating participants or their representatives have the right to participate in the presentation of any offer they secure to purchase or lease to the seller or lessor. They do not have the right to be present at any discussion or evaluation of the offer by the seller or lessor and the listing broker. However, if a seller or lessor gives written instructions to a listing broker that cooperating brokers may not be present when offers they procure are presented, cooperating brokers have the right to a copy of those instructions. This policy is not intended to affect listing brokers' right to control the establishment of appointments for presentation of offers.

Where the cooperating broker is not present during the presentation of the offer, the cooperating broker can request in writing, and the listing broker must provide, written affirmation stating that the offer has been submitted to the seller, or written notification that the seller has waived the obligation to have the offer presented. *(Amended 11/19)* **M**

Section 9 Rights of Listing Brokers in Presentation of Counter-offers (Policy Statement 7.74)

Listing participants or their representatives have the right to participate in the presentation of any counter-offer made by a seller or a lessor. They do not have the right to be present at any discussion or evaluation of a counter-offer by the purchaser or lessee (except where the cooperating broker is a sub-agent). However, if a purchaser or lessee gives written instructions to the cooperating broker that the listing broker may not be present when a counter-offer is presented, the listing broker has a right to a copy of those instructions. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 10 Code of Ethics (Policy Statement 7.5)

Adherence to the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® shall be a privilege and obligation of REALTORS® and REALTOR-ASSOCIATE's. *(Amended 11/96)* **I**

Section 11 Arbitration (Policy Statement 7.4)

Arbitration facilities of an association of REALTORS® may be invoked by a nonmember participant in the multiple listing service, who can also be compelled to arbitrate using the association's facilities. *(Amended 11/96)* **M**

Section 12 Lease of MLS Compilations (Policy Statement 7.78)

MLS participants are entitled to lease print or electronic copies of MLS compilations in sufficient number to provide the participant and each authorized individual affiliated with the participant with one copy of such compilation subject to payment of applicable fees and charges. *(Adopted 11/04)* **M**

Section 13 Caravans (Policy Statement 7.2)

Any facility offered by the multiple listing service for the physical viewing of properties listed and filed with the multiple listing service, including MLS caravans and MLS open houses, must be made available to all participants in the multiple listing service. Nothing herein shall require an owner to use any particular facility for the viewing of his property, including but not limited to caravans and open houses. **M**

Section 14 Ownership of Listing and Listing Content (Policy Statement 7.85)

The listing broker owns the listing agreement. Prior to submitting a listing to the MLS, the listing broker should own, or have the authority to license all listing content (e.g., photographs, images, graphics, audio and video recordings, virtual tours, drawings, descriptions, remarks, narratives, pricing information, and other details or information related to listed property) to be published in the MLS compilation of listing information. *(Amended 5/16)*

Use of listings and listing information by MLSs for purposes other than the defined purposes of MLS requires participants' consent. Such consent cannot be required as a condition of obtaining or maintaining MLS participatory rights. MLSs may presume such consent provided that listing brokers are given adequate prior notice of any intended use unrelated to the defined purpose of MLS, and given the opportunity to affirmatively withhold consent for that use.

Participants cannot be required to transfer any rights (including intellectual property rights) in their listings or listing content to MLS to obtain or maintain participatory rights except that MLSs may require participants to grant the licenses necessary for storage, reproduction, compiling, and distribution of listings and listing information to the extent necessary to fulfill the defined purposes of MLS. MLSs may also require participants to warrant that they have the rights in submitted information necessary to grant these rights to MLS. *(Adopted 5/05, Amended 5/16)* **M**

Section 15 Digital Millennium Copyright Act, Safe Harbor (Policy Statement 7.99)

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) is a federal copyright law that enhances the penalties for copyright infringement occurring on the Internet. The law provides exemptions or "safe harbors" from copyright infringement liability for online service providers (OSP) that satisfy certain criteria. Courts construe the definition of "online service provider" broadly, which would likely include MLSs as well as participants and subscribers hosting an IDX display.

One safe harbor limits the liability of an OSP that hosts a system, network or website on which Internet users may post user-generated content. If an OSP complies with the provisions of this DMCA safe harbor, it cannot be liable for copyright infringement if a user posts infringing material on its website. This protects an OSP from incurring significant sums in copyright infringement damages, as statutory damages are as high as \$150,000 per work. For this reason, it is highly recommended that MLSs, participants and subscribers comply with the DMCA safe harbor provisions discussed herein.

To qualify for this safe harbor, the OSP must:

1. Designate on its website and register with the Copyright Office an agent to receive takedown requests. The agent could be the MLS, participant, subscriber, or other individual or entity.
2. Develop and post a DMCA-compliant website policy that addresses repeat offenders.
3. Comply with the DMCA takedown procedure. If a copyright owner submits a takedown notice to the OSP, which alleges infringement of its copyright at a certain location, then the OSP must promptly remove allegedly infringing material. The alleged infringer may submit a counter-notice that the OSP must share with the copyright owner. If the copyright owner fails to initiate a copyright lawsuit within ten (10) days, then the OSP may restore the removed material.
4. Have no actual knowledge of any complained-of infringing activity.
5. Not be aware of facts or circumstances from which complained-of infringing activity is apparent.
6. Not receive a financial benefit attributable to complained-of infringing activity when the OSP is capable of controlling such activity.

Full compliance with these DMCA safe harbor criteria will mitigate an OSP's copyright infringement liability. For more information see 17 U.S.C. §512. *(Adopted 11/15)* **I**

Section 16 Clear Cooperation (Policy Statement 8.0)

Within one (1) business day of marketing a property to the public, the listing broker must submit the listing to the MLS for cooperation with other MLS participants. Public marketing includes, but is not limited to, flyers displayed in windows, yard signs, digital marketing on public facing websites, brokerage website displays (including IDX and VOW), digital communications marketing (email blasts), multi-brokerage listing sharing networks, and applications available to the general public. *(Adopted 11/19)* **M**

Section 17 Right of Participant to MLS Data Feed of Listing Content (Policy Statement 8.3)

A Multiple Listing Service must, upon request, promptly provide an MLS Participant (or the Participant's designee) a data feed containing, at minimum, all active MLS listing content input into the MLS by or on behalf of the Participant and all of the Participant's off-market listing content available in the MLS system. The delivery charges for the Participant's listing content shall be reasonably related to the actual costs incurred by the MLS. The data feed must be in compliance with RESO Standards as provided for in MLS Policy Statement 7.90.

Note: MLSs will not limit the use of the Participant's listing content by the Participant or the Participant's designee. *(Adopted 5/20)* **M**

Section 18 One Data Source (Policy Statement 8.6)

MLSs must offer a participant a single data feed in accordance with a participant's licensed authorized uses.

At the request of a participant, MLS must provide the single data feed for that participant's licensed uses to that participant's designee. The designee may use the single data feed only to facilitate that participant's licensed uses on behalf of that participant. *(Amended 11/21)* **M**

Section 19 Brokerage Back Office Feed (Policy Statement 8.7)

That participants are entitled to use, and MLSs must provide to participants, the BBO Data, for BBO Use subject to the Terms below:

"BBO Data" means all real property listing and roster information in the MLS database, including all listings of all participants, but excludes (i) MLS only fields (those fields only visible to MLS staff and the listing participant), and (ii) fields and content to which MLS does not have a sufficient license for use in the Brokerage Back Office Feed.

"BBO Use" means use of BBO Data by participant and subscribers affiliated with the participant for the following purposes:

- Brokerage management systems that only expose BBO Data to participant and subscribers affiliated with participant.
- Customer relationship management (CRM) and transaction management tools that only expose the BBO Data to participant, subscribers affiliated with participant, and their bona fide clients as established under state law.
- Agent and brokerage productivity and ranking tools and reports that only exposes BBO Data to participant and subscribers affiliated with participant.
- Marketplace statistical analysis and reports in conformance with NAR MLS Policy Statement 7.80, which allows for certain public distribution.

BBO Use may only be made by participant and subscriber affiliated with participant, except that at the request of a participant, MLS must provide BBO Data to that participant's designee. The designee may use the BBO Data only to facilitate the BBO Use on behalf of that participant and its affiliated subscribers.

There is no option for participants to opt-out their listings from the Brokerage Back Office Feed Use as defined.

"Terms" mean the following:

- MLSs may impose reasonable licensing provisions and fees related to participant's license to use Brokerage Back Office Feed Data. MLSs may require the participant's designee to sign the same or a separate and different license agreement from what is signed by the participant. Such provisions in a license agreement may include those typical to the MLS's data licensing practices, such as security requirements, rights to equitable relief, and dispute resolution terms. (The foregoing examples are not a limitation on the types of provisions an MLS may have in a license agreement.)
- Use of roster information may be limited by the MLS participation agreement and license agreements.
- Brokerage Back Office Feed Use is subject to other NAR MLS policies and local rules.
- MLSs in their reasonable discretion may expand the definition of Brokerage Back Office Feed Use in conformance with other NAR MLS policies, such as Policy Statement 7.85, which provides that "Use of listings and listing information by MLSs for purposes other than the defined purposes of MLS requires participants' consent." (*Adopted 11/21*) **M**

F. Enforcement of Rules

Section 1. Appropriate Procedures for Rules Enforcement (MLS Policy Statement 7.21)

Filing Complaints

When requested by a complainant, MLSs must provide a process for processing complaints without revealing the complainant's identity. If the complaint is forwarded to hearing, then the MLS Committee, Grievance Committee, MLS staff or other representative must serve as the complainant when the original complainant does not consent to participating in the process or the disclosure of his or her name.

Administrative Sanctions

In any instance where a participant in an association multiple listing service is charged with violation of the MLS bylaws or rules and regulations of the service, and such charge does not include alleged violations of the Code of Ethics or the Standards of Conduct for MLS participants, or a request for arbitration, the MLS may impose administrative sanctions. Recipients of an administrative sanction may request a hearing before the professional standards committee of the association.

MLS participants and subscribers can receive no more than three (3) administrative sanctions in a calendar year before they are required to attend a hearing for their actions and potential violations of MLS rules, except that the MLS may allow more administrative sanctions for violations of listing information provided by participants and subscribers before requiring a hearing. The MLS must send a copy of all administrative sanctions against a subscriber to the subscriber's participant and the participant is required to attend the hearing of a subscriber who has received more than three (3) administrative sanctions within a calendar year.

Appeals

If the participant refuses to accept any sanction or discipline proposed, the circumstances and the discipline proposed shall be appealed to the board of directors of the association of REALTORS® which shall, if it deems the finding of violation proper and the sanction appropriate to the offense, delay the effective date of sanction until final entry by a court of competent jurisdiction in a suit filed by the association for declaratory relief, except in those states where declaratory relief is not available, declaring that the disciplinary action and proposed sanction violates no rights of the multiple listing service participant.

If the MLS committee has a procedure established to conduct hearings, the decision of the MLS committee may be appealed to the board of directors of the association of REALTORS®. If a separately incorporated MLS has an established procedure for the conduct of hearings, the decisions of the hearing tribunal shall be appealable to the board of directors of the MLS.

Complaints of Unethical Conduct

Alleged violations of the Code of Ethics or the Standards of Conduct for MLS participants shall be referred to the association's grievance committee for processing in accordance with the professional standards procedures of the association. If the charge alleges a refusal to arbitrate, such charge shall be referred directly to the board of directors of the association of REALTORS®. *(Amended 11/20)* **M**

Section 2 Rules and Regulations

The rules and regulations should be designed to guide participants but must avoid arbitrary restrictions on business practices. They should be based on experience and not be restrictive upon the personal rights of participating individuals. (Rules and regulations are provided elsewhere in this Handbook for association of REALTORS®' review and adoption.) **R**

Section 3 The Use of Fines as Part of Rules Enforcement (Policy Statement 7.22)

Generally, warning, censure, and the imposition of a moderate fine is sufficient to constitute a deterrent to violation of the rules and regulations of the multiple listing service. Suspension or termination is an extreme sanction to be used in cases of extreme or repeated violation of the rules and regulations of the service. **I**

Section 4 Financial Penalty Not to Exceed \$15,000 (Policy Statement 7.89)

Notwithstanding the limitations established in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual or in other National Association policy, multiple listing services operated as committees of associations of REALTORS® or as separate, wholly-owned subsidiaries of one or more associations of REALTORS® are authorized to impose financial penalties on participants or subscribers as discipline for violations of MLS rules or other MLS governance provisions not greater than fifteen thousand (\$15,000) dollars. *(Adopted 11/07)* **M**

Section 5 MLS Disciplinary Guidelines

Associations of REALTORS® and their multiple listing services have the responsibility of fostering awareness, understanding, and appreciation for the duties and responsibilities of MLS participants and subscribers, and of receiving and resolving complaints alleging violations of the rules and regulations. The REALTOR® organization is firmly committed to vigorous, fair, and uniform enforcement. Enforcement achieves a number of goals. Where participants or subscribers are wrongly or mistakenly charged with violations, the hearing process provides personal and professional vindication. Where violations are determined, enforcement process educates participants and subscribers about their duties and obligations, and serves as a meaningful deterrent of future violations.

Allegations of conduct inconsistent with the rules are often viewed by respondents as threats to their professional and personal reputations. This can result not only in their mounting vigorous defenses but also, at times, to threats of legal challenge should a violation be determined and discipline imposed. Given that MLS participation can have significant economic value, associations and their MLSs need to strictly adhere to their established procedures when considering potential violations. This caution ensures that the rights of the parties will be observed, and legal exposure of associations and their MLSs will be minimized.

At the same time, well-founded caution should not be confused with reservation, reluctance, or hesitancy. Rules become aspirations at best, and potentially meaningless, if not enforced with vigor and determination.

Fundamental to fair and consistent enforcement is reasonable and judicious use of discipline, as both an educational device and as punishment. Associations and their MLSs have a wide variety of sanctions available to them that may be imposed for violations. These range from simple letters of warning to termination of MLS rights and privileges. Between these extremes are mandatory attendance at remedial education sessions, financial penalties, probation, and suspension.

The National Association does not recommend specific penalties for certain offenses or for violations of particular rules. This is in deference to the wisdom and autonomy of the hearing panel privy to the details of complaints coming before them; in recognition of the fact that no two complaints are identical; and in view of the facts that the details of each hearing, including the experience of respondents, their history of prior violations, and mitigating or extenuating circumstances, may all come into play in determining an appropriate penalty. At the same time, there are key points to be considered with respect to imposition of discipline.

- Discipline that can be imposed is strictly limited to those forms authorized in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual and to any additional form authorized by the National Association's board of directors.
- Discipline should be commensurate with the offense. Unintentional or inadvertent violations should result in penalties designed to educate respondents about the conduct expected of them. Only authorized forms of discipline may be utilized.
- Discipline should be progressive. The disciplinary emphasis on violations by new members or by long-standing members with no history of prior violations should be primarily educational. Repeated or subsequent violations should be addressed with more serious forms of discipline, including substantial fines, suspension, and termination of MLS rights and privileges.

- A gray area can exist with respect to “first time violations” that are clearly not the result of ignorance or mistake but rather demonstrate flagrant disregard for the rules. While the educational aspect of enforcement cannot be disregarded, the fact that the rules exist to protect clients and customers, the public, and to ensure effective, efficient functioning of the MLS, must also be considered in determining commensurate discipline.
- Mitigating or extenuating circumstances should be considered in determining appropriate discipline. The fact that a respondent recognizes or acknowledges inappropriate conduct or took steps to remediate or minimize harm or injury, should be considered in determining appropriate discipline.
- Respondent’s records of earlier violations or, conversely, the fact that they have not violated the rules in the past, can be considered in determining appropriate discipline. Hearing panels cannot consider past violations in deciding whether the conduct currently complained of violates the rules.

Crafting appropriate, meaningful discipline can challenge panels that have concluded the rules have been violated. This discussion is offered as guidance, rather than as a hard and fast template, to assist panels in meeting their responsibility in ensuring the rules’ viability and vitality through vigorous and evenhanded enforcement.

Progressive Discipline

Discipline imposed for violation of the rules should be progressive. The severity of discipline should increase incrementally for subsequent violations. The disciplinary emphasis where first time violations occur should be primarily educational. Repeated or subsequent violations should result in more serious forms of discipline being utilized, including substantial fines, suspension, and termination of MLS rights and privileges. At the same time, a gray area can exist where a first-time violation is not attributable to ignorance or oversight, but rather to blatant disregard for the rules. While the educational emphasis of enforcement cannot be disregarded, the fact the rules exist to protect clients and customers, the public, and to ensure the effective, efficient functioning of the MLS must be carefully considered in determining appropriate discipline.

Factors hearing panels should consider in determining appropriate discipline include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- The nature of the violation
- Harm caused by the violation. Was the violation a minor mistake causing little or no harm or, alternatively, was a client, customer, member of the public, or another participant harmed?
- Was the violation inadvertent or unintentional or, conversely, was it the result of knowing disregard for the obligations of MLS participants and subscribers?
- How much real estate experience did the violator have? Did he, or should he, have known better?
- Has the violator been found in violation of the rules previously? How often? How recently? Is the current violation related or similar to earlier violations?
- Are there mitigating or extenuating circumstances that should be considered in determining appropriate discipline?
- Did the violator acknowledge the violation? Did the violator express remorse or contrition?

- Are there other factors that ought to be considered? (*Adopted 11/07*) |

Administrative Sanctions

The following is guidance for issuing administrative sanctions for MLS rule violations:

- **Category 1** violation means a rule violation relating to listing information provided by a participant or subscriber.
- **Category 2** violation means a rule violation relating to IDX and VOW displays.
- **Category 3** violation means a rule violation relating to cooperation with a fellow participant or subscriber, and mandatory submission of listings to the service

First Category 1 violation (or first violation within three [3] years):

Possible discipline:

- Letter of warning
- Fine of \$500 or less
- Attendance at relevant education session

Any combination of the above

Repeat Category 1 violation (within three [3] years):

Possible discipline:

- Attendance at relevant education session(s) or course
- Fine of \$2,000 or less

Any combination of the above

First Category 2 violation (or first violation within three [3] years):

Possible discipline

- Letter of reprimand
- Fine of \$2,000 or less
- Attendance at relevant education session(s)

Any combination of the above

Repeat Category 2 violation (within three [3] years):

Possible discipline:

- Attendance at relevant education session(s) or course
- Fine of \$10,000 or less
- Suspension from the MLS or from the MLS' lockbox key access for three (3) months or less

Any combination of the above

First Category 3 violation (or first violation within three [3] years):

Possible discipline:

- Letter of reprimand
- Fine of \$10,000 or less
- Attendance at relevant education session(s)
- Suspension from MLS or from use of the MLS' lockbox key access for ninety (90) days or less

Any combination of the above

Repeat Category 3 violation (within three [3] years):

Possible discipline:

- Attendance at relevant education session(s) or course
- Fine of \$15,000 or less
- Suspension from MLS or from use of the MLS' lockbox key access for six (6) months or less
- Termination from MLS or from use of the MLS' lockbox key access for 1 to 3 years

Any combination of the above

MLSs are encouraged to use the MLS Schedule of Fines Table provided in Appendix 4 to establish standardized administrative sanctions for violations of the MLS rules.

Scope of MLS Handbook for addressing MLS Rule Violations

Potential violations of the MLS rules will be processed in accordance with MLS Policy Statement 7.21, and under the process provided for in Section 9 of the NAR model MLS Rules and Regulations. Potential violations of a data license agreement are not governed by NAR policy and will thus follow the terms for resolution in the agreement itself. *(Amended 11/20)* **I**

No Compensation Offers in MLS (Policy Statement 8.11)

The MLS must not accept listings containing an offer of compensation in the MLS to other MLS Participants and Subscribers. Further, the MLS may not create, facilitate, or support any non-MLS mechanism (including by providing listing information to an internet aggregator's website for such purpose) for Participants, Subscribers, or sellers to make offers of compensation to buyer brokers or other buyer representatives.

Use of MLS data or data feeds to directly or indirectly establish or maintain a platform of offers of compensation from multiple brokers to buyer brokers or other buyer representatives is prohibited and must result in the MLS terminating that Participant's access to any MLS data and data feeds.

The multiple listing service must not have a rule requiring the listing broker to disclose the amount of total negotiated commission in his listing contract, and the multiple listing service shall not publish the total negotiated commission on a listing which has been submitted to the MLS by a participant. The multiple listing service must prohibit disclosing in any way the total commission negotiated between the seller and the listing broker, or total broker compensation (i.e. combined compensation to both listing brokers and buyer brokers).

The multiple listing service shall not have a rule requiring the listing broker to disclose the amount of total negotiated commission in his listing contract, and the multiple listing service shall not publish the total negotiated commission on a listing which has been submitted to the MLS by a participant. The multiple listing service must prohibit disclosing in any way the total commission negotiated between the seller and the listing broker, or total broker compensation (i.e. combined compensation to both listing brokers and buyer brokers).

Note 1: Multiple listing services must give participants the ability to disclose to other participants any potential for a short sale. As used in MLS rules, short sales are defined as a transaction where title transfers, where the sales price is insufficient to pay the total of all liens and costs of sale, and where the seller does not bring sufficient liquid assets to the closing to cure all deficiencies. Multiple listing services may, as a matter of local discretion, require participants to disclose short sales when participants know a transaction is a potential short sale. *(Amended)* **M**

Required Consumer Disclosure (Policy Statement 8.12)

Disclosure of Compensation: MLS Participants and Subscribers must:

1. Disclose to prospective sellers and buyers that broker compensation is not set by law and is fully negotiable. This must be included in conspicuous language as part of any listing agreement, buyer written agreement, and pre-closing disclosure documents (if any).
2. Conspicuously disclose in writing to sellers, and obtain the seller's authority, for any payments or offer of payment that the listing Participant or seller will make to another broker, agent, or other representative (e.g. real estate attorney) acting for buyers. This disclosure must include the amount or rate of any such payment and be made in writing in advance of any payment or agreement to pay. **M**

Written Buyer Agreements Required (Policy Statement 8.13)

Unless inconsistent with state or federal law or regulation, all MLS Participants working with a buyer must enter into a written agreement with the buyer prior to touring a home. The written agreement must include:

- a. a specific and conspicuous disclosure of the amount or rate of compensation the Participant will receive or how this amount will be determined, to the extent that the Participant will receive compensation from any source.
- b. the amount of compensation in a manner that is objectively ascertainable and not open-ended.
- c. a term that prohibits the Participant from receiving compensation for brokerage services from any source that exceeds the amount or rate agreed to in the agreement with the buyer; and
- d. a conspicuous statement that broker fees and commissions are not set by law and are fully negotiable. **M**

Section 2 Agency (Policy Statement 7.11)

In the multiple listing service of an association of REALTORS®, the cooperating broker in a cooperative real estate transaction is the subagent of the listing broker, the agent of the buyer, or is acting in another recognized agency or nonagency capacity. Such relationships must be fully disclosed to all parties to the contract and to all brokers involved. *(Amended 11/96)* **I**

Section 3 Display of the Listing Broker's Offer of Compensation (Policy Statement 8.8)

MLSs must include the listing broker's offer of compensation for each active listing displayed on its consumer-facing website(s) and in MLS data feeds provided to participants and subscribers and must permit MLS participants or subscribers to share such information through IDX and VOW displays or through any other form or format provided to clients and consumers. The information about the offer of compensation must be accompanied by a disclaimer stating that the offer is made only to participants of the MLS where the listing is filed. *(Amended 11/21)* **M**

H. Lock Box/Key Repositories

Section 1 Lock Box Security Requirements (Policy Statement 7.31)

Eligibility for coverage under NAR's blanket errors and omissions insurance program is contingent on compliance with the following security measures whether the system is operated by the association, its MLS, or by a recognized lock-box vendor on behalf of an association or MLS: *(Amended 5/17)*

1. **Types of keys.** Any physical or electronic key, programmer, or other device (hereinafter referred to as key) by which a lockbox can be opened, must be non-duplicative. Being non-duplicative means that it cannot be readily copied in the manner that other types of keys ordinarily are. *(Amended 5/17)*

A mobile device (such as, a smart phone, tablet, fob, etc.) can transmit a key to access a lockbox using standard protocols, including, Bluetooth, ZigBee, infrared technology, and others. The applications and software used by mobile devices must contain security controls to allow only authorized users access to the lockbox. *(Adopted 5/17)*

As a matter of local discretion, the listing broker or agent can issue temporary codes/access to the lockbox and property on terms and conditions agreed to in advance by the seller. Temporary codes/access must expire within seventy-two (72) hours after being issued or must be under the control of the listing broker or agent. Temporary codes must be a minimum field size of five (5) characters. *(XX,XXX) (Adopted 5/17)*

2. **Security protocols.** Keys must be obtained from the original manufacturer, from a recognized vendor of lockbox systems or from any other legitimate source. Prior to utilizing previously used keys, lids, or boxes, associations and MLSs must obtain sufficient information from the original manufacturer and surrounding associations and MLSs in order to determine whether the key's pattern, code, or configuration is already in use. *(Amended 5/17)*

Electronic lockboxes and electronic keys running on mobile devices must incorporate security protocols to prevent the following types of cyber-attacks:

- where an unauthorized user can override or escalate their security credentials
- where the communication session between the electronic lockbox and key are recorded and played back later to gain unauthorized access
- forging of electronic credentials that could allow an unauthorized user the ability to masquerade as an authorized user

- digitally signed updates to electronic keys running on mobile devices or electronic lockbox firmware plus a secured update process to prevent unauthorized software from being introduced into the lockbox system
 - transmission(s) of frequencies to deceive the lockbox electronics into opening (*Adopted 5/17*)
3. **Availability of lockbox system and keys.** Any lockbox system must be designated as either an activity of an association of REALTORS® or an association-owned and operated MLS. (*Amended 5/17*)

If the lockbox system is an activity of an association of REALTORS®, then every REALTOR® and REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® and every non-principal broker, sales licensee and licensed or certified appraiser affiliated with a REALTOR®, shall be eligible to hold a key subject to their execution of a lease agreement with the association. (*Amended 11/96*)

If the lockbox system is an activity of an association-owned and operated MLS, then every MLS participant and every non-principal broker, sales licensee and licensed or certified appraiser who is affiliated with an MLS participant and who is legally eligible for MLS access shall be eligible to hold a key subject to their execution of a lease agreement with the MLS. (*Amended 5/17*)

As a matter of local discretion, associations and MLSs can determine that key lease agreements executed by non-principal brokers, sales licensees, unlicensed personal assistants, administrative and clerical staff, and licensed, certified, or those seeking to be licensed or certified as appraisers, must also be cosigned by the designated REALTOR® or the office's broker of record. Lease agreements shall spell out the responsibilities of the parties and shall incorporate by reference any applicable rules or regulations or other governing provisions of the association or MLS that relate to the operation of the lockbox system. The lease agreement shall also provide that keys may not be used under any circumstances by anyone other than the keyholder, except as provided elsewhere in this statement of policy. (*Amended 5/17*)

Associations and MLSs may, at their discretion, lease keys to affiliate members of associations who are actively engaged in a recognized field of real estate practice or in related fields. In such instances, the lease agreement shall be signed by the keyholder and by a principal, partner, or corporate officer of the keyholder's firm. (*Adopted 5/17*)

Individuals may be required to pay lockbox costs as part of association dues or as part of MLS participation fees pursuant to MLS Policy Statement 7.57, Categorization of MLS Services, Information, and Products and pursuant to NAR Bylaws Official Interpretation #32. No one shall be required to lease a key from the association except on a voluntary basis. (*Adopted 5/17*)

Associations and MLSs may refuse to sell or lease lockbox keys, may terminate existing key lease agreements, and may refuse to activate or reactivate any key held by an individual who has been convicted of a crime within the past seven (7) years under the following circumstances: (*Amended 5/17*)

- A. The association or MLS determines that the conviction(s) relates to the real estate business or puts clients, customers, other real estate professionals, or property at risk, for example through dishonest, deceptive, or violent acts; and (*Amended 5/17*)

B. The association or MLS gives the individual an opportunity to provide and the association or MLS must consider mitigating factors related to the individual's criminal history, including, but not limited to, factors such as:

- i) the individual's age at the time of the conviction(s)
- ii) nature and seriousness of the crime
- iii) extent and nature of past criminal activity
- iv) time elapsed since criminal activity was engaged in
- v) rehabilitative efforts undertaken by the applicant since the conviction(s)
- vi) facts and circumstances surrounding the conviction(s) and
- vii) evidence of current fitness to practice real estate (*Amended 5/17*)

Associations and MLSs should be sure to evaluate individuals uniformly, and avoid making exceptions for one individual while denying an exception to another individual with a similar criminal history. (*Amended 5/17*)

Associations or MLSs may suspend the right of lockbox keyholders to use lockbox keys following their arrest and prior to a final determination on any such charge if, in the determination of the association or MLS, the charge relates to a crime that relates to the real estate business or puts clients, customers, other real estate professionals, or property at risk. (*Amended 5/17*)

4. **Audit requirement.** Associations or MLSs shall maintain current records as to all keys issued and in inventory, including registered users accessing lockboxes through applications and software used by mobile devices. There shall be an audit, at least annually, of all keys, whether issued or in inventory. This requirement may be satisfied by a physical inventory or by receipt of a statement signed by the keyholder and the designated REALTOR®, broker of record, or, in the case of an affiliate member, by a principal, partner, or corporate officer of the keyholder's firm, attesting that the key is currently in possession of the keyholder. (*Amended 5/17*)
5. **Seller authority required.** Lockboxes may not be placed on a property without written authority from the seller. This authority may be established in the listing contract or any other written document. Inclusion in MLS compilations cannot be required as a condition of placing lockboxes on listed property. (*Amended 5/17*)
6. **Reporting missing keys.** Associations or MLSs must charge keyholders and their cosignatories with the joint obligation of immediately reporting lost, stolen, or otherwise unaccountable for keys to the association or MLS. Upon receipt of notice, the association or MLS must take any steps deemed necessary to resecure the system. (*Amended 5/17*)

7. **Rules and procedures governing lockbox systems.** Associations or MLSs must adopt written, reasonable, and appropriate rules and procedures for administration of lockbox systems which may include appropriate fines, not to exceed \$15,000. Any issuing fees, recurring fees, or other administrative costs shall be established at the discretion of the association or MLS and set forth in the rules and procedures. All keyholders, whether or not they are association members or MLS participants, shall agree, as a condition of the key lease agreement, to be bound by the rules and procedures governing the operation of the lockbox system. *(Amended 5/17)*

Key lease agreements may contain a liquidated damages provision to offset some or all of the costs in reestablishing the security of the system if it is determined that the security has been compromised through the negligence or fault of the keyholder. *(Amended 11/97)*

8. **Issuing electronic programmers or keypads on temporary basis.** In the event electronic lockbox programmers or keypads are sold or leased, a designated REALTOR® principal or an office's broker of record may purchase or lease additional programmers or keypads to be issued on a temporary basis to other keyholders in the same office in the event their programmer or keypad becomes non-functional outside normal business hours or under circumstances where a replacement programmer or keypad is not reasonably available from the issuing association or MLS. When a programmer or keypad is issued on a temporary basis, it shall be the responsibility of the REALTOR® principal or the broker of record to advise the association or MLS in writing that the programmer or keypad has been issued, to whom, and the date and time of issuance within forty-eight (48) hours. It shall also be the responsibility of the REALTOR® principal or the broker of record to advise the association or MLS in writing within two (2) business days after possession of the previously issued programmer or keypad has been reassumed. *(Amended 5/17)*
9. **Requiring "approved" lockbox systems.** *As a matter of local discretion, associations and MLSs may require placement of an "approved" lockbox on listed properties if any device giving access to real estate professionals or service providers is authorized by the seller and occupant and is placed on the property. The purpose of this requirement, if adopted by an association or MLS, is to ensure cooperating participants and subscribers have timely access to listed properties. Requiring that a lockbox or other access device be "approved" does not limit the devices that satisfy the requirement to lockboxes leased or sold by an association or MLS. The association or MLS may require that the devices be submitted in advance for approval, and the access device may be any lockbox or other access device that provides reasonable, timely access to listed property. The association or MLS also may revoke the approval or subject the participant to discipline if the device is used in a manner that fails to continue to satisfy this requirement. (Amended 05/17)*

Section 2 Lock Box Key Deposits (Policy Statement 7.32)

Any funds accepted by a member association or association MLS as deposits for lock box keys shall be retained by the association or its MLS in a separate account so that the funds will be available to be refunded to depositors upon return of the lock box key to the association or its MLS. The funds deposited are to be retained for this purpose only and are not to be utilized in any other manner. The separate fund may be an interest bearing account with the interest retained by the association or association MLS unless as a requirement of law, or at the discretion of the association or association MLS, such interest shall be paid to the depositors. **M**

Section 3 Centralized Key Repositories (Policy Statement 7.46)

A centralized key repository is defined as a system operated by an association multiple listing service which enables an MLS participant to place keys to listed properties in a central location to be made available to other participants and their affiliated licensees to facilitate the showing of listed properties. Under certain circumstances and subject to strict operational rules and regulations, an association multiple listing service may choose to operate a centralized key repository in lieu of a lock box system and still be eligible for coverage under the errors and omissions insurance program of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. *(Approved 2/86)* **I**

Section 4 Minimum Security Measures for Centralized Key Repositories of Association Multiple Listing Services (Policy Statement 7.47)

1. A centralized key repository is defined as a system operated by a multiple listing service which enables a participant to place keys to listed property in a central location to be made available to other participants and their affiliated sales licensees to facilitate the showing of listed property.
2. Use of the system must be strictly limited to participants and their affiliated sales licensees.
3. Keys to listed property may not be submitted unless the property is exclusively listed by the participant and the listing agreement includes a provision whereby the seller specifically authorizes the listing participant to place keys in the system. In lieu of such authorization in the listing agreement, the MLS may require the seller's authorization be provided on a separate document prepared by the MLS.
4. All keys to listed property must be stored in a locked, secure area in the association or MLS office.
5. All keys become the property of the association or MLS.
6. No key may be issued without the consent of the listing office. Any individual requesting a key must indicate, in writing, who in the listing office has authorized the showing.
7. All keys must be coded in a manner which prevents their identification with a particular property until issued by an authorized representative of the association or MLS.
8. Lost or stolen keys must be reported to the association or MLS as quickly as possible.
9. A police report must be filed as quickly as possible whenever a key is lost or stolen.
10. Any person losing a key must immediately advise the property owner and the listing broker and offer to have all necessary locks changed as quickly as possible.
11. The issuance of keys must be discontinued immediately upon request of the seller.
12. Keys must be issued for a specified period of time and failure to return a key within the allotted time shall be considered as a violation of the rules or procedures. When a key is more than twenty-four (24) hours overdue, the association or MLS must contact the person to whom the key was issued and the principal broker or branch manager of the firm to confirm the key has not been lost or stolen and to request its immediate return.
13. Keys must be destroyed upon expiration of the listing or upon closing (whichever occurs first) or earlier at the direction of the listing participant.

14. All rules and procedures for the operation of any centralized key repository must be in writing and be submitted to the National Association for review and approval prior to implementation.
15. Any association member or employee involved in the administration or operation of the system shall be bonded. **M**

I. Virtual Office Websites: Policy Governing Use of MLS Data in Connection with Internet Brokerage Services Offered by MLS Participants

Virtual Office Websites (VOW) Policy (Policy Statement 7.91)

I. Definitions and Scope of Policy

1. For purposes of this policy, the term “Virtual Office Website” (VOW) refers to a participant’s Internet website, or a feature of a participant’s Internet website, through which the participant is capable of providing real estate brokerage services to consumers with whom the participant has first established a broker-consumer relationship (as defined by state law) where the consumer has the opportunity to search MLS data, subject to the participant’s oversight, supervision, and accountability.
 - a. A participant may designate an “Affiliated VOW Partner” (AVP) to operate a VOW on behalf of the participant, subject to the participant’s supervision and accountability and the terms of this policy.
 - b. A non-principal broker or sales licensee affiliated with a participant may, with the participant’s consent, operate a VOW or have a VOW operated on its behalf by an AVP. Such a VOW is subject to the participant’s supervision and accountability and the terms of this policy.
 - c. Each use of the term “participant” in this policy shall also include a participant’s non-principal brokers and sales licensees (with the exception of references in this section to the “participant’s consent” and the “participant’s supervision and accountability,” and in Section III.10.a., below, to the “participant acknowledges”). Each reference to VOW or VOWs herein refers to all VOWs, whether operated by a participant, by a non-principal broker or sales licensee, or by an AVP.
2. The right to display listings in response to consumer searches is limited to display of MLS data supplied by the MLS(s) in which the participant has participatory rights. This does not preclude a firm with offices participating in different MLSs from operating a master website with links to such offices’ VOWs.
3. Participants’ Internet websites, including those operated for participants by AVPs, may also provide other features, information, or services, in addition to VOWs (including the “Internet Data Exchange” [IDX] function).
4. The display of listing information on a VOW does not require separate permission from the participant whose listings will be available on the VOW.

5. Except as permitted in Sections III. and IV., MLSs may not adopt rules or regulations that conflict with this policy or that otherwise restrict the operation of VOWs by participants.

II. Policies Applicable to Participants' VOWs


1. A participant may provide brokerage services via a VOW that include making MLS active listing data available, but only to consumers with whom the participant has first established a lawful consumer-broker relationship, including completion of all actions required by state law in connection with providing real estate brokerage services to clients and customers (hereinafter "Registrants"). Such actions shall include, but are not limited to, satisfying all applicable agency, non-agency, and other disclosure obligations, and execution of any required agreement(s).
2. A participant's VOW must obtain the identity of each Registrant and obtain each Registrant's agreement to terms of use of the VOW, as follows.
 - a. A Registrant must provide his or her name and a valid e-mail address. The participant must send an e-mail to the address provided by the Registrant confirming that the Registrant has agreed to the terms of use (described in Subsection c., below). The Registrant may be permitted to access the VOW only after the participant has verified that the e-mail address provided is valid and that Registrant received the terms of use confirmation.
 - b. The Registrant must supply a user name and a password, the combination of which must be different from those of all other Registrants on the VOW, before being permitted to search and retrieve information from the MLS database via the VOW. The user name and password may be established by the Registrant or may be supplied by the participant, at the option of the participant. An e-mail address may be associated with only one user name and password. The Registrant's password and access must expire on a date certain, but may be renewed. The participant must, at all times, maintain a record of the name and e-mail address supplied by the Registrant, and the user name and current password of each Registrant. Such records must be kept for not less than one hundred eighty (180) days after the expiration of the validity of the Registrant's password. If the MLS has reason to believe that a participant's VOW has caused or permitted a breach in the security of the data or a violation of MLS rules related to use by one or more Registrants, the participant shall, upon request, provide to the MLS a copy of the record of the name, e-mail address, user name, current password, and audit trail, if required, of any Registrant identified by the MLS to be suspected of involvement in the violation.
 - c. The Registrant must be required affirmatively to express agreement to a "terms of use" provision that requires the Registrant to open and review an agreement that provides at least the following:
 - i. that the Registrant acknowledges entering into a lawful consumer-broker relationship with the participant
 - ii. that all data obtained from the VOW is intended only for the Registrant's personal, non-commercial use

- iii. that the Registrant has a bona fide interest in the purchase, sale, or lease of real estate of the type being offered through the VOW
- iv. that the Registrant will not copy, redistribute, or retransmit any of the data or information provided, except in connection with the Registrant's consideration of the purchase or sale of an individual property
- v. that the Registrant acknowledges the MLS' ownership of and the validity of the MLS' copyright in the MLS database

After the Registrant has opened for viewing the terms of use agreement, a mouse click is sufficient to acknowledge agreement to those terms. The terms of use agreement may not impose a financial obligation on the Registrant or create any representation agreement between the Registrant and the participant.

The terms of use agreement shall also expressly authorize the MLS and other MLS participants or their duly authorized representatives to access the VOW for the purposes of verifying compliance with MLS rules and monitoring display of participants' listings by the VOW.

- d. An agreement entered into at any time between the participant and Registrant imposing a financial obligation on the Registrant or creating representation of the Registrant by the participant must be established separately from the terms of use, must be prominently labeled as such, and may not be accepted solely by mouse click.
3. A participant's VOW must prominently display an e-mail address, telephone number, or specific identification of another mode of communication (e.g., live chat) by which a consumer can contact the participant to ask questions or get more information about properties displayed on the VOW. The participant or a non-principal broker or sales licensee licensed with the participant must be willing and able to respond knowledgeably to inquiries from Registrants about properties within the market area served by that participant and displayed on the VOW.
 4. A participant's VOW must protect the MLS data from misappropriation by employing reasonable efforts to monitor for and prevent scraping or other unauthorized accessing, reproduction, or use of the MLS database.
 5. A participant's VOW must comply with the following additional requirements.
 - a. No VOW shall display the listing or property address of any seller who has affirmatively directed its listing broker to withhold its listing or property address from display on the Internet. The listing broker or agent shall communicate to the MLS that a seller has elected not to permit display of the listing or property address on the Internet. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a participant who operates a VOW may provide to consumers via other delivery mechanisms, such as e-mail, fax, or otherwise, the listing or property address of a seller who has determined not to have the listing or address for its property displayed on the Internet.

- b. A participant who lists a property for a seller who has elected not to have the property listing or the property address displayed on the Internet shall cause the seller to execute a document that conforms to the form attached to this policy as Appendix A. The participant shall retain such forms for at least one (1) year from the date they are signed.
 - c. With respect to any VOW that:
 - i. allows third parties to write comments or reviews about particular listings or displays a hyperlink to such comments or reviews in immediate conjunction with particular listings, or
 - ii. displays an automated estimate of the market value of the listing (or hyperlink to such estimate) in immediate conjunction with the listing, the VOW shall disable or discontinue either or both of those features as to the seller's listing at the request of the seller. The listing broker or agent shall communicate to the MLS that the seller has elected to have one or both of these features disabled or discontinued on all participants' websites. Except for the foregoing and subject to Subsection d., below, a participant's VOW may communicate the participant's professional judgment concerning any listing. Nothing shall prevent a VOW from notifying its customers that a particular feature has been disabled at the request of the seller.
 - d. A VOW shall maintain a means (e.g., e-mail address, telephone number) to receive comments about the accuracy of any data or information that is added by or on behalf of the VOW operator beyond that supplied by the MLS and that relates to a specific property displayed on the VOW. The VOW operator shall correct or remove any false data or information relating to a specific property upon receipt of a communication from the listing broker or listing agent for that property explaining why the data or information is false. However, the VOW operator shall not be obligated to remove or correct any data or information that simply reflects good faith opinion, advice, or professional judgment.
 - e. Each VOW shall refresh MLS data available on the VOW not less frequently than every three (3) days.
 - f. Except as provided elsewhere in this policy or in MLS rules and regulations, no portion of the MLS database may be distributed, provided, or made accessible to any person or entity.
 - g. Every VOW must display a privacy policy that informs Registrants of the ways in which information obtained from them will be used.
 - h. A VOW may exclude listings from display based only on objective criteria, including, but not limited to, factors such as geography, list price, or type of property. (*Amended 11/21*) 
6. A participant who intends to operate a VOW must notify the MLS of its intention to establish a VOW and must make the VOW readily accessible to the MLS and to all MLS participants for purposes of verifying compliance with this policy and any other applicable MLS rules or policies.

7. A participant may operate more than one VOW itself or through an AVP. A participant who operates a VOW itself shall not be precluded from also operating VOWs in conjunction with AVPs.

III. Policies Applicable to Multiple Listing Services

1. A multiple listing service shall permit MLS participants to operate VOWs or to have VOWs operated for them by AVPs, subject to the requirements of state law and this policy.
2. An MLS shall, if requested by a participant, provide basic downloading of all MLS non-confidential listing data, including, without limitation, address fields, listing types, photographs, and links to virtual tours. Confidential data includes only that which participants are prohibited from providing to customers orally and by all other delivery mechanisms. They include fields containing the information described in Section IV.1. of this policy, provided that sales prices may be deemed confidential and withheld from display. For purposes of this policy, downloading means electronic transmission of data from MLS servers to a participant's or AVP's server on a persistent basis. An MLS may also offer a transient download. In such case, it shall also, if requested, provide a persistent download, provided that it may impose on users of such download the approximate additional costs incurred by it to do so. *(Amended 5/21)*
3. This policy does not require an MLS to establish publicly accessible sites displaying participants' listings.
4. If an MLS provides a VOW-specific feed, that feed must include all of the non-confidential data included in the feed described in Subsection 2., above, except for listings or property addresses of sellers who have elected not to have their listings or addresses displayed on the Internet.
5. An MLS may pass on to those participants who will download listing information the reasonably estimated costs incurred by the MLS in adding or enhancing its downloading capacity to enable such participants to operate VOWs.
6. An MLS may require that participants:
 - a. utilize appropriate security protection, such as firewalls, as long as such requirement does not impose security obligations greater than those employed concurrently by the MLS, and/or
 - b. maintain an audit trail of Registrants' activity on the VOW and make that information available to the MLS if the MLS has reason to believe that any VOW has caused or permitted a breach in the security of the data or a violation of applicable MLS rules.
7. An MLS may not prohibit or regulate display of advertising or the identification of entities on VOWs (branding or co-branding), except to prohibit deceptive or misleading advertising or co-branding. For purposes of this provision, co-branding will be presumed not to be deceptive or misleading if the participant's logo and contact information (or that of at least one participant, in the case of a VOW established and operated by or for more than one participant) is displayed in immediate conjunction with that of every other party, and the logo and contact information of all participants displayed on the VOW is as large as the logo of the AVP and larger than that of any third party.

8. Except as provided in this policy, an MLS may not prohibit participants from enhancing their VOWs by providing information obtained from sources other than the MLS, additional technological services (such as mapping functionality), or information derived from non-confidential MLS data (such as an estimated monthly payment derived from the listed price), or regulate the use or display of such information or technological services on any VOW.
9. Except as provided in generally applicable rules or policies (such as the REALTORS® Code of Ethics), an MLS may not restrict the format of data display on a VOW or regulate the appearance of VOWs.
10. Subject to the provisions below, an MLS shall make MLS listing data available to an AVP for the exclusive purpose of operating a VOW on behalf of a participant. An MLS shall make MLS listing data available to an AVP under the same terms and conditions as those applicable to participants. No AVP has independent participation rights in the MLS by virtue of its right to receive data on behalf of a participant or the right to use MLS data, except in connection with operation of a VOW for a participant. AVP access to MLS data is derivative of the rights of the participant on whose behalf the AVP is downloading data.
 - a. A participant, non-principal broker or sales licensee, or AVP may establish the AVP's right to receive and use MLS data by providing to the MLS a writing in which the participant acknowledges its or its non-principal broker's or sales licensee's selection of the AVP to operate a VOW on its behalf.
 - b. An MLS may not charge an AVP, or a participant on whose behalf an AVP operates a VOW, more than a participant that chooses to operate a VOW itself (including any fees or costs associated with a license to receive MLS data, as described in Subsection g., below), except to the extent that the MLS incurs greater costs in providing listing data to the AVP than the MLS incurs in providing listing data to a participant.
 - c. An MLS may not place data security requirements or restrictions on use of MLS listing data by an AVP that are not also imposed on participants.
 - d. An MLS must permit an AVP to download listing information in the same manner (e.g., via a "Real Estate Transaction Standard" [RETS] feed or via a "File Transfer Protocol" [FTP] download), at the same times and with the same frequency that the MLS permits participants to download listing information.
 - e. An MLS may not refuse to deal directly with an AVP in order to resolve technical problems with the data feed. However, the MLS may require that the participant on whose behalf the AVP is operating the VOW participate in such communications if the MLS reasonably believes that the involvement of the participant would be helpful in order to resolve the problem.
 - f. An MLS may not condition an AVP's access to a data feed on the financial terms on which the AVP provides the site for the participant.
 - g. An MLS may require participants and AVPs to execute license or similar agreements sufficient to ensure that participants and AVPs understand and agree that data provided by the MLS may be used only to establish and operate a VOW on behalf of the participant and not for any other purpose.

- h. An MLS may not:
 - i. prohibit an AVP from operating VOWs on behalf of more than one participant, and several participants may designate an AVP to operate a single VOW for them collectively,
 - ii. limit the number of entities that participants may designate as AVPs for purposes of operating VOWs, or
 - iii. prohibit participants from designating particular entities as AVPs, except that, if an AVP's access has been suspended or terminated by an MLS, that MLS may prevent an entity from being designated an AVP by another participant during the period of the AVP's suspension or termination.
- i. Except as stated below, an MLS may not suspend or terminate an AVP's access to data:
 - i. for reasons other than those that would allow an MLS to suspend or terminate a participant's access to data, or
 - ii. without giving the AVP and the associated participant(s) prior notice and the process set forth in the applicable provisions of the MLS rules for suspension or termination of a participant's access.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, an MLS may immediately terminate an AVP's access to data:

- i. if the AVP is no longer designated to provide VOW services to any participant,
 - ii. if the participant for whom the AVP operates a VOW ceases to maintain its status with the MLS,
 - iii. if the AVP has downloaded data in a manner not authorized for participants and that hinders the ability of participants to download data, or
 - iv. if the associated participant or AVP has failed to make required payments to the MLS in accordance with the MLS' generally applicable payment policies and practices.
11. An MLS may not prohibit, restrict, or impede a participant from referring Registrants to any person or from obtaining a fee for such referral.

IV. Requirements that MLSs May Impose on the Operation of VOWs and Participants

- 1. An MLS may impose any, all, or none of the following requirements on VOWs, but may impose them only to the extent that equivalent requirements are imposed on participants' use of MLS listing data in providing brokerage services via all other delivery mechanisms.
 - a. A participant's VOW may not make available for search by or display to Registrants the following data, intended exclusively for other MLS participants and their affiliated licensees:
 - i. expired, withdrawn, or pending listings

- ii. sales price on sold data if the actual sales price of completed transactions is not accessible from public records (*Amended 5/21*)
 - iii. the type of listing agreement, i.e., exclusive-right-to-sell or exclusive agency
 - iv. the seller(s) and occupant(s) name(s), phone number(s) and e-mail address(es), where available
 - v. instructions or remarks intended for cooperating brokers only, such as those regarding showing or security of the listed property
 - b. The content of MLS data that is displayed on a VOW may not be changed from the content as it is provided in the MLS. MLS data may be augmented with additional data or information not otherwise prohibited from display as long as the source of such other data or information is clearly identified. This requirement does not restrict the format of MLS data display on VOWs or display of fewer than all of the listings or fewer authorized data fields.
 - c. There shall be a notice on all MLS data displayed indicating that the data is deemed reliable, but is not guaranteed accurate by the MLS. A participant's VOW may also include other appropriate disclaimers necessary to protect the participant and/or the MLS from liability.
 - d. Any listing displayed on a VOW shall identify the name of the listing firm, and the email or phone number provided by the listing participant in a readily visible color, and reasonably prominent location, and in typeface not smaller than the median typeface used in the display of listing data. (*Amended 11/21*)
 - e. The number of current or, if permitted, sold listings that Registrants may view, retrieve, or download on or from a VOW in response to an inquiry may be limited to a reasonable number. Such number shall be determined by the MLS, but in no event may the limit be fewer than five hundred (500) listings or fifty percent (50%) of the listings in the MLS, whichever is less. (*Amended 11/17*)
 - f. Any listing displayed on a VOW shall identify the name of the listing agent.
2. An MLS may also impose the following other requirements on the operation of VOWs.
 - a. Participants displaying other brokers' listings obtained from other sources, e.g., other MLSs, non-participating brokers, etc., shall display the source from which each such listing was obtained.
 - b. A maximum period, no shorter than ninety (90) days and determined by the MLS, during which Registrants' passwords are valid, after which such passwords must be changed or reconfirmed.
 3. An MLS may not prohibit participants from downloading and displaying or framing listings obtained from other sources, e.g., other MLSs or from brokers not participating in that MLS, etc., but may require either:
 - a. that such information be searched separately from listings obtained from other sources, including other MLSs, or

- b. if such other sources are searched in conjunction with searches of the listings available on the VOW, that any display of listings from other sources identify such other source.