

# Realtor Code of Ethics Is Supplemented by 'Pathways to Professionalism'

Like all members of the National Association of Realtors (NAR), I'm required to attend a 4-hour Code of Ethics class every few years. 2016 is one of those years, and we'll all have to re-take it by December 2018. (It used to be every four years.)

The Code, which was created in 1913 and is updated regularly, contains 17 articles, 9 of which concern our duties to clients and customers, 5 of which concern our duties to the public, and 3 of which concern our duties to fellow Realtors®. We (and members of the public) can file an ethics complaint against any Realtor, which can result in a hearing and disciplinary action if found guilty. Note: Not all licensed real estate agents are Realtors, and only Realtors can be accused of violating the Realtor Code of Ethics.

But there's more to our business than obeying real estate law and the Code of Ethics. There's also the question of courtesy and professionalism, and toward that end, NAR has created a program called "Pathways to Professionalism," which is now part of the Code of Ethics class.

I consider these teachings so important that I am printing NAR's document here in its entirety. Here it is:

While the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice of the National Association establishes objective, enforceable ethical standards governing the professional conduct of Realtors, it does not address issues of courtesy or etiquette.

Based on input from many sources, the Professional Standards Committee developed the following list of professional courtesies for use by Realtors on a voluntary basis. This list is not all-inclusive, and may be supplemented by local custom and practice.

## I. Respect for the Public

1. Follow the "Golden Rule": Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
2. Respond promptly to inquiries and requests for information.
3. Schedule appointments and showings as far in advance as possible.
4. Call if you are delayed or must cancel an appointment or showing.
5. If a prospective buyer decides not to view an occupied home, promptly explain the situation to the listing broker or the occupant.
6. Communicate with all parties in a timely fashion.
7. When entering a property ensure that unexpected situations, such as pets, are handled appropriately.
8. Leave your business card if not prohibited by local rules.
9. Never criticize property in the presence of the occupant.
10. Inform occupants that you are leaving after showings.
11. When showing an occupied home, always ring the doorbell or knock—and announce yourself loudly before entering. Knock and announce yourself loudly before entering any closed room.
12. Present a professional appearance at all times; dress appropriately and drive a clean car.

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By **JIM SMITH, Realtor®**

13. If occupants are home during showings, ask their permission before using the telephone or bathroom.
14. Encourage the clients of other brokers to direct questions to their agent or representative.
15. Communicate clearly; don't use jargon or slang that may not be readily understood.
16. Be aware of and respect cultural differences.
17. Show courtesy and respect to everyone.
18. Be aware of—and meet—all deadlines.
19. Promise only what you can deliver—and keep your promises.
20. Identify your Realtor and your professional status in contacts with the public.
21. Do not tell people what you think—tell them what you know.

## II. Respect for Property

1. Be responsible for everyone you allow to enter listed property.
2. Never allow buyers to enter listed property unaccompanied.
3. When showing property, keep all members of the group together.
4. Never allow unaccompanied access to property without permission.
5. Enter property only with permission even if you have a lockbox key or combination.
6. When the occupant is absent, leave the property as you found it (lights, heating, cooling, drapes, etc.) If you think something is amiss (e.g. vandalism), contact the listing broker immediately.
7. Be considerate of the seller's property. Do not allow anyone to eat, drink, smoke, dispose of trash, use

8. bathing or sleeping facilities, or bring pets. Leave the house as you found it unless instructed otherwise.
8. Use sidewalks; if weather is bad, take off shoes and boots inside property.
9. Respect sellers' instructions about photographing or videographing their properties' interiors or exteriors.

## III. Respect for Peers

1. Identify your Realtor and professional status in all contacts with other Realtors.
2. Respond to other agents' calls, faxes, and e-mails promptly and courteously.
3. Be aware that large electronic files with attachments or lengthy faxes may be a burden on recipients.
4. Notify the listing broker if there appears to be inaccurate information on the listing.
5. Share important information about a property, including the presence of pets, security systems, and whether sellers will be present during the showing.
6. Show courtesy, trust, and respect to other real estate professionals.
7. Avoid the inappropriate use of endearments or other denigrating language.
8. Do not prospect at other Realtors' open houses or similar events.
9. Return keys promptly.
10. Carefully replace keys in the lockbox after showings.
11. To be successful in the business, mutual respect is essential.
12. Real estate is a reputation business. What you do today may affect your reputation—and business—for years to come.

View a 10-minute video of these guidelines at [www.nar.com/realtor/videos/video-a-pathway-to-professional-conduct](http://www.nar.com/realtor/videos/video-a-pathway-to-professional-conduct)

## Price Reduced on Lakewood Ranch Near Belmar

This ranch style home at **40 S. Ammons St.** is located just a few blocks west of the Belmar shopping center in Lakewood's Meadowlark Hills neighborhood. At 2,930 sq. ft., this 4-bedroom, 3-bathroom home is priced at just \$119 per sq. ft. — quite a bargain compared to the most recent sold properties in the neighborhood. The lot is approximately 1/3 acre and features a large front yard, large backyard with a gazebo, and a well for irrigation. The house needs some updating, but major items such as the roof, furnace, water heater, flooring and paint have been done recently. For all of the details about this home, view the narrated video tour at [www.MeadowlarkHillsHome.info](http://www.MeadowlarkHillsHome.info), then call your agent or Chuck Brown at 303-885-7855 for a private showing. Contract fell due to inspection. Call Chuck for details.



All Agents Are Certified EcoBrokers®

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