

# **BYLAWS OF BALDWIN REALTORS®, INCORPORATED**

## **Article I – Name**

**Section 1. Name.** The name of this organization shall be the Baldwin County Association of REALTORS®, Incorporated, hereinafter referred to as the “Association”.

**Section 2. REALTORS®.** Inclusion and retention of the Registered Collective Membership Mark REALTORS® in the name of the Association shall be governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® as from time to time amended.

## **Article II – Objective**

The objectives of the Association are:

**Section 1.** To unite those engaged in the recognized branches of the real estate profession for the purpose of exerting a beneficial influence upon the profession and related interests.

**Section 2.** To promote and maintain high standards of conduct in the real estate profession as expressed in the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

**Section 3.** To provide a unified medium for real estate owners and those engaged in the real estate profession whereby their interests may be safeguarded and advanced.

**Section 4.** To further the interests of home and other real property ownership.

**Section 5.** To unite those engaged in the real estate profession in this community with the Alabama Association of REALTORS® and the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® thereby furthering their own objectives throughout the state and nation and obtaining the benefits and privileges of membership therein.

**Section 6.** To designate, for the benefit of the public, individuals authorized to use the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® as licensed, prescribed, and controlled by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

### **Article III – Jurisdiction**

**Section 1.** The territorial jurisdiction of the Association as a Member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® is Baldwin County, Alabama.

**Section 2.** Territorial jurisdiction is defined to mean:

(a) The right and duty to control the use of the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS®, subject to the conditions set forth in these Bylaws and those of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, in return for which the Association agrees to protect and safeguard the property rights of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® in the terms.

### **Article IV – Membership**

**Section 1.** There shall be six classes of members as follows:

**(A). *REALTOR® Members.*** REALTOR® Members, whether primary or secondary shall be:

(1) Individuals who, as sole proprietors, partners, corporate officers, or branch office managers, are engaged actively in the real estate profession, including buying, selling, exchanging, renting, or leasing, managing, appraising for others for compensation, counseling, building, developing, or subdividing real estate, and who maintain or are associated with an established real estate office in the state of Alabama or a state contiguous thereto. All persons who are partners in a partnership, or all officers in a corporation who are actively engaged in the real estate profession within the state or a state contiguous thereto shall qualify for REALTOR® Membership only, and each is required to hold REALTOR® Membership (except as provided in the following paragraph) in an Association of REALTORS® within the state or a state contiguous thereto unless otherwise qualified for Institute Affiliate Membership.

In the case of a real estate firm, partnership, or corporation, whose business activity is substantially all commercial, only those principals actively engaged in the real estate business in connection with the same office, or any other offices within the jurisdiction of the association in which one of the firm’s principals hold REALTOR® membership, shall be required to hold REALTOR® membership unless otherwise qualified for Institute Affiliate Membership.

NOTE: REALTOR® Members may obtain membership in a “secondary” Association in another state.

(2) Individuals who are engaged in the real estate profession other than as sole proprietors, partners, corporate officers, or branch office managers and are associated with a REALTOR® Member and meet the qualifications.

- (3) Franchise REALTOR® Membership. Corporate officers (who may be licensed or unlicensed) of a real estate brokerage franchise organization with at least one hundred fifty (150) franchisees located within the United States, its insular possessions, and the commonwealth of Puerto Rico, elected to membership pursuant to the provisions in the NAR Constitution and Bylaws. Such individuals shall enjoy all the rights, privileges and obligations of REALTOR® membership (including compliance with the Code of Ethics except: obligations related to association mandated education, meeting attendance, or indoctrination classes or other similar requirements; the right to use the term REALTOR® in connection with their franchise organization’s name; and the right to hold elective office in the local association, state association and National Association. (Adopted 1/96)
- (4) Primary and secondary REALTOR® Members. An individual is a primary member if the association pays State and National Dues based on such Member. An individual is a secondary Member if state and National dues are remitted through another Board/Association. One of the principals in a real estate firm must be a Designated REALTOR® member of the Association in order for licensees affiliated with the firm to select the Association as their “primary” Association.
- (5) Designated REALTOR® Members. Each firm (or office in the case of firms with multiple office locations) shall designate in writing one REALTOR® Member who shall be responsible for all duties and obligations of Membership including the obligation to arbitrate (or mediate if required by the association) pursuant to Article 17 of the Code of Ethics and the payment of Association dues. The “Designated REALTOR®” must be a sole proprietor, partner, corporate officer, or branch manager acting on behalf of the firm’s principal(s) and must meet all other qualifications for REALTOR® Membership.
- (6) Institute Affiliate Members. Institute Affiliate Members shall be individuals who hold a professional designation awarded by an Institute, Society, or Council affiliated with the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® that addresses a specialty area other than residential brokerage or individuals who otherwise hold a class of membership in such Institute, Society, or Council that confers the right to hold office. Any such individual, if otherwise eligible, may elect to hold REALTOR® or REALTOR -ASSOCIATE® membership, subject to payment of applicable dues for such membership.

**(B) Affiliate Members.** Affiliate Members shall be real estate owners and other individuals or firms who, while not engaged in the real estate profession as defined in paragraphs (a) or (b) of this Section, have interests requiring information concerning real estate, and are in sympathy with the objectives of the Association.

**(C) Public Service Members.** Public Service Members shall be individuals who are interested in the real estate profession as employees of or affiliated with educational, public utility, governmental or other similar organizations, but are not engaged in the real

estate profession on their own account or in association with an established real estate business.

**(D) Honorary Members.** Honorary Members shall be individuals not engaged in the real profession who have performed notable service for the real estate profession, for the Association, or for the public.

**(E) Student Members.** Student Members shall be individuals who are seeking an undergraduate or graduate degree with a specialization or major in real estate at institutions of higher learning, and who have completed at least two years of college and at least one college level course in real estate but are not engaged in the real estate profession on their own account or not associated with an established real estate office.

## **Article V – Qualification and Election**

### **Section 1. Application**

- (a) An application for membership shall be made in such manner and form as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors and made available to anyone requesting it. The application form shall contain among the statements to be signed by the applicant (1) that applicant agrees as a condition to membership to thoroughly familiarize himself/herself with the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, the Constitution and Bylaws, and Rules and Regulations of the Association, the State and National Associations, and if elected a Member, will abide by the Constitution and Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Association, State and National Associations, and if a REALTOR® Member will abide by the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® including the obligation to arbitrate controversies arising out of real estate transactions, unless prohibited by laws of the State of Alabama, as specified by Article 17 of the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, as from time to time amended, and (2) that applicant consents that the

Association through its Membership Committee or otherwise, may invite and receive information and comment about applicant from any member or other persons, and that applicant agrees that any information and comment furnished to the Association by any person in response to the invitation shall be conclusively deemed to be privileged and not form the basis of any action for slander, libel, or defamation of character. The applicant shall, with the form of application, have access to a copy of the Bylaws, Constitution, Rules and Regulations, and Code of Ethics referred to above.

- (b) Individuals who are actively engaged in the real estate profession other than as sole proprietors, partners, corporate officers, or branch office managers in order to qualify for REALTOR® Membership, shall at the time of application, be associated either as an employee or as an independent contractor with a Designated REALTOR® Member of the Association or a Designed REALTOR® Member of another Association (if a secondary member) and must maintain a current, valid real estate broker's or salesperson's license or be licensed or certified by an appropriate state regulatory agency to engage in the appraisal of real property, shall complete a course of instruction covering the Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Association, the Bylaws of the State Association, and the Constitution and Bylaws and Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, and shall pass such reasonable and nondiscriminatory written examinations thereon as may be required by the membership Committee and shall agree in writing that if elected to membership he/she will abide by such Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and the Code of Ethics.

## **Section 2. Qualification**

- (a) An applicant for REALTOR® Membership who is a sole proprietor, partner, corporate officer, or branch office manager of a real estate firm shall supply evidence satisfactory to the Association that he/she is actively engaged in the real estate profession, and maintains a current, valid real estate broker's or salesperson's license or is licensed or certified by an appropriate state regulatory agency to engage in the appraisal of real property, has a place of business within the state or a state contiguous thereto (unless a secondary member), has no record of recent or pending bankruptcy, has no record of official sanctions involving unprofessional conduct, agrees to complete a course of instruction covering the Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the association, the Bylaws of the State Association, and the Constitution and Bylaws and Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, and shall pass such reasonable and nondiscriminatory written examination thereon as may be required by the Committee, and shall agree that if elected to membership, he/she will abide by such Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and Code of Ethics.

Article IV, Section 2, of the NAR Bylaws prohibits Member Boards from knowingly granting REALTOR® membership to any applicant who has

unfulfilled sanction pending which was imposed by another Board of Association of REALTOR® for violation of the Code of Ethics.

- (b) Individuals who are actively engaged in the real estate profession other than as sole proprietors, partners, corporate officers, or branch office managers in order to qualify for REALTOR® Membership, shall at the time of application, be associated either as an employee or as an independent contractor with a Designated REALTOR® Member of the association or a Designated REALTOR® Member of another association (if a secondary member) and must maintain a current, valid real estate broker's or salesperson's license or be licensed or certified by an appropriate state regulatory agency to engage in the appraisal of real property, shall complete a course of instruction covering the Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the association, the Bylaws of the State Association, and the Constitution and Bylaws and Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, and shall pass such reasonable and nondiscriminatory written examinations thereon as may be required by the Membership Committee and shall agree in writing that if elected to membership he will abide by such Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and the Code of Ethics.
- (c) The Board/Association will also consider the following in determining an applicant's qualifications for REALTOR® membership:
1. All final finding of Code of Ethic's violations and violations of other membership duties in any other REALTOR® association within the past three (3) years
  2. Pending ethics complaints (or hearings)
  3. Unsatisfied discipline pending
  4. Pending arbitration requests (or hearings)
  5. Unpaid arbitration awards or unpaid financial obligations to this or any other association or association's MLS
  6. Any misuse of the term REALTOR® or REALTORS® in the name of the applicant's firm.

“Provisional” membership may be granted in instances where ethics complaints or arbitration requests (or hearings) are pending in other associations or where the applicant for membership has unsatisfied discipline pending in another association (except for violations of the Code of Ethics; See Article V, Section 2 (a) NOTE 2) provided all other qualifications for membership have been satisfied. Associations may reconsider the membership status of such individuals when all pending ethics and arbitration matters (and related discipline) have been resolved or if such matters are not resolved within six (6) months from the date that provisional membership is approved. Provisional members shall be considered REALTORS® and shall be subject to all the same privileges and obligations of REALTOR® membership. If a member resigns from another association with an ethics complaint or arbitration request pending, the association may condition

membership on the applicant's certification that he/she will submit to the pending ethics or arbitration proceeding (in accordance with the established procedures of the association to which the applicant has made application) and will abide by the decision of the hearing panel.

### **Section 3. Election.**

The procedure for election to membership shall be as follows:

- (a) The Chief Staff Executive (or duly authorized designee) shall determine whether the applicant is applying for the appropriate class of membership.
- (b) Applicants for REALTOR® membership shall be granted provisional membership immediately upon submission of a completed application form and remittance of applicable association dues and any application fee. Provisional members shall be considered REALTORS® and shall be subject to all of the same privileges and obligations of membership. Provisional membership is granted subject to subsequent review of the application by the Board of Directors. If the Board of Directors determines that the individual does not meet all the qualifications for membership as established in the association's bylaws, or, if the individual does not satisfy all of the requirements of membership (for example, completion of a mandatory orientation program) within 90 days from the association's receipt of their application, membership may, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, be terminated.
- (c) Dues shall be computed from the date of application and shall be non-refundable unless the association's Board of Directors terminates the individual's membership in accordance with subsection (a) above. In such instances, dues shall be returned to the individual less a prorated amount to cover the number of days that the individual received association services and any application fee.
- (d) The Board of Directors may not terminate any provisional membership without providing the provisional member with advance notice, an opportunity to appear before the Board of Directors, to call witnesses on his/her behalf, to be represented by counsel, and to make such statements as he deems relevant. The Board of Directors may also have counsel present. The Board of Directors shall require that written minutes be made of any hearing before it or may electronically or mechanically record the proceedings.
- (e) If the Board of Directors determines that provisional membership should be terminated, it shall record its reasons with the Secretary. If the Board of Directors believes that termination of provisional membership may become the basis of litigation and a claim of damage by a provisional member, it may specify that termination shall become effective upon entry in a suit by the association of a

declaratory judgement by a court of competent jurisdiction of a final judgement declaring that the termination violates no rights of the individual.

#### **Section 4. New Member Code of Ethics Orientation.**

Applicants for REALTOR® membership and provisional REALTOR® members shall complete an orientation program on the Code of Ethics of not less than two hours and thirty minutes of instructional time. This requirement does not apply to applicants for REALTOR® membership or provisional members who have completed comparable orientation in another association, provided that REALTOR® membership has been continuous, or that any break in membership is for one year or less.

Failure to satisfy this requirement within 90 days of the date that provisional membership was granted will result in denial of the membership application or termination of provisional membership.

Note: Orientation programs must meet the learning objectives and minimum criteria established from time to time by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

#### **Section 5. Continuing Member Code of Ethics Training.**

Effective January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2021 and for successive three year periods thereafter, each REALTOR® member of the association (with the exception of REALTOR® members granted REALTOR® Emeritus status by the National Association) shall be required to complete ethics training of not less than two hours and thirty minutes of instructional time. This requirement will be satisfied upon presentation of documentation that the member has completed a course of instruction conducted by this or another REALTOR® association, the Alabama Association of REALTORS®, or the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, which meets the learning objectives and minimum criteria established by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® from time to time. REALTOR® members who have completed training as a requirement of membership in another association and REALTOR® members who have completed the New Member Code of Ethics Orientation during any three-year cycle shall not be required to complete additional ethics training until a new three-year cycle commences.

Failure to satisfy the required periodic Code of Ethics training shall be considered a violation of a membership duty. Failure to meet the requirement in any three-year cycle will result in suspension of membership for the first two months (January and February) of the year following the end of any three (3) year cycle or until the requirement is met, whichever occurs sooner. On March 1 of that year, the membership of a member who is still suspended as of that date will automatically be terminated.



## **New Member Fair Housing Orientation**

Applicants for REALTOR® membership and provisional REALTOR® members (where applicable) shall complete Fair Housing training of not less than two (2) hours of instructional time. This requirement will be satisfied upon presentation of documentation that the member has completed a course of instruction conducted by this or another REALTOR® association, the State Association of REALTORS®, the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, or the Institutes, Societies, and Councils, which meets the learning objectives and minimum criteria established by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® from time to time. Fair Housing training approved by a state licensing authority for an existing Fair Housing requirement to gain or maintain licensure shall also fulfill this requirement, provided it also meets the learning objectives and minimum criteria established by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® from time to time. This requirement does not apply to applicants for REALTOR® membership or provisional members who have completed comparable orientation in another association, provided that REALTOR® membership has been continuous, or that any break in membership is for one (1) year or less.

Failure to satisfy this requirement within 90 days of the date of application (or, alternatively, the date that provisional membership was granted), will result in denial of the membership application or termination of provisional membership.

## **Continuing Fair Housing Training**

Effective January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2027, and for successive three year periods thereafter, each REALTOR® member of the association (with the exception of REALTOR® members granted REALTOR® Emeritus status by the National Association) shall be required to complete Fair Housing training of not less than two (2) hours of instructional time. This requirement will be satisfied upon presentation of documentation that the member has completed a course of instruction conducted by this or another REALTOR® association, the State Association of REALTORS®, the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, or the Institutes, Societies, and Councils, which meets the learning objectives and minimum criteria established by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® from time to time. Fair Housing training approved by a state licensing authority for an existing Fair Housing requirement to maintain licensure shall also fulfill this requirement, provided it also meets the learning objectives and minimum criteria established by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® from time to time. REALTOR® members who have completed Fair Housing training as a requirement of membership in another association shall not be required to complete additional Fair Housing training until a new three year cycle commences.

Failure to satisfy the required periodic Fair Housing training shall be considered a violation of a membership duty. Failure to meet the requirement in any three year cycle will result in suspension of membership for the first two months (January and February) of the year following the end of any three year cycle or until the requirement is met, whichever occurs sooner. On March 1 of that year, the membership of a member who is still suspended as of that date will be automatically terminated

## **Section 6. Status Changes.**

- (a) A REALTOR® who changes the conditions under which he/she holds membership shall be required to provide written notification to the Association within 15 days. A REALTOR® (non-principal) who becomes a principal in the firm with which he/she has been licensed or, alternatively, becomes a principal in a new firm which will be comprised of REALTOR® principals may be required to satisfy any previously unsatisfied membership requirements applicable to REALTOR® (principal) Members but shall, during the period of transition from one status of membership to another, be subject to all of the privileges and obligations of a REALTOR® (principal). If the REALTOR® (non-principal) does not satisfy the requirements established in these Bylaws for the category of membership to which they have transferred within 30 days of the date they advised the association of their change in status, their new membership application will terminate automatically unless otherwise so directed by the Board of Directors.

A REALTOR® who is transferring their license from one firm comprised of REALTOR® principals to another firm comprised of REALTOR® principals shall be subject to all of the privileges and obligations of membership during the period transition. If the transfer is not completed within 15 days of the date the association is advised of the disaffiliation with the current firm, membership will terminate automatically, unless otherwise so directed by the Board of Directors.

- (b) Any application fee related to a change in membership status shall be reduced by an amount equal to any application fee previously paid by the applicant.
- (c) Dues shall be prorated from the first day of the month in which the member applies for membership and shall be based on the new membership status for the remainder of the year.

## **Article VI – Privileges and Obligations**

**Section 1.** The privileges and obligations of Members, in addition to those otherwise provided in these Bylaws, shall be specified in this Article.

**Section 2.** Any Member of the Association may be reprimanded, fined, placed on probation, suspended, or expelled by the Board of Directors for a violation of these Bylaws and Association Rules and Regulations consistent with these Bylaws, after a hearing as provided in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the Association. Although Members other than REALTORS® are not subject to the Code of Ethics or its enforcement by the Association, such Members are encouraged to abide by the principles established in the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and conduct their business and professional practices accordingly. Further, Members other than REALTORS® may, upon recommendation of the Membership Committee, or upon recommendation by hearing panel of the Professional Standards Committee, be subject to discipline as described above, for any conduct, which in the opinion of the

Board of Directors, applied on a nondiscriminatory basis, reflects adversely on terms REALTOR® or REALTORS®, and the real estate industry, or for conduct that is inconsistent with or adverse to the objectives and purposes of the local Association, the State Association, and the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

**Section 3.** Any REALTOR® Member of the Association may be disciplined by the Board of Directors for violations of the Code of Ethics or other duties of membership, after a hearing as described in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the Association, provided that the discipline imposed is consistent with the discipline authorized by the Professional Standards Committee of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® as set forth in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the National Association.

**Section 4.** Resignations of Members shall become effective when received in writing by the association staff , provided, however, that if any Member submitting the resignation is indebted to the Association for dues, fees, fines, or other assessments of the Association or any of its services, departments, divisions, or subsidiaries, the association may condition the right of the resigning Member to reapply for membership upon payment in full of all such monies owed.

**Section 5.** If a Member resigns from the association or otherwise causes membership to terminate with an ethics complaint pending, that Board of Directors may condition the right of the resigning Member to reapply for membership upon the applicant’s certification that he/she will submit to the pending ethics proceeding and will abide by the decision of the hearing panel.

(a) If a member resigns or otherwise causes membership to terminate, the duty to submit to arbitration continues in effect even after membership lapses or is terminated, provided that the dispute arose while the former member was a REALTOR®

**Section 6. REALTOR® Members.** REALTOR® Members, whether primary or secondary, in good standing are entitled to vote and to hold elective office in the Association; and may use the terms REALTOR®. For purposes of this section, the term “good standing” means the member satisfies the “Obligations of REALTOR® Member”, is current with all financial and disciplinary obligations to the association and MLS, has completed any new member requirements, and complies with NAR’s trademark rules.

It shall be the duty and responsibility of every REALTOR® member of this association to safeguard and promote the standards, interests, and welfare of the association and the real estate profession, and to protect against conduct that may cause a lack of public confidence in the real estate profession or in REALTORS®. REALTOR® members also must abide by the governing documents and policies of the association, the State Association, and the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, as well as the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, including the duty to mediate and arbitrate controversies arising out of real estate transactions as specified by Article 17 of the Code of Ethics, and in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Code of Ethics and

Arbitration manual.

Every REALTOR® member shall maintain a high level of integrity and adhere to the association's membership criteria. Any violent act or threat of violence to person or property, hateful conduct, or acts of moral turpitude impacting the public shall not be tolerated and may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of membership.

- (a) If a REALTOR® Member is a sole proprietor in a firm, a partner in a partnership or an officer in a corporation, and is suspended or expelled, the firm, partnership or corporation shall not use the terms REALTOR® or REALTORS® in connection with its business during the period of suspension, or until readmission to REALTOR® membership, or unless connection with the firm, partnership or corporation is severed, or management control is relinquished, whichever may apply. The membership of all other principals, partners, or corporate officers shall suspend or terminate during the period of suspension of the disciplined Member, or until readmission of the disciplined Member or unless connection of the disciplined Member with the firm, partnership, or corporation is severed, or unless the REALTOR® who is suspended or expelled removes himself/herself from any form or degree of management control of the firm for the term of the suspension or until readmission to membership, whichever may apply. Removal of an individual from any form or degree of management control must be certified to the association, by the Member who is being suspended or expelled and by the individual who is assuming management control, and the signatures of such certification must be notarized. In the event the suspended or expelled Member is so certified to have relinquished all form or degree of management control of the firm, the membership of other partners, corporate officers, or other individuals affiliated with the firm shall not be affected, and the firm, partnership or corporation may continue to use the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® in connection with its business during the period of suspension or until the former Member is admitted to membership in the Association. The foregoing is not intended to preclude a suspended or expelled Member from functioning as an employee or independent contractor, providing no management control is exercised. Further, the membership of REALTORS® other than principals who are employed or affiliated as independent contractors with the disciplined Member shall suspend or terminate during the period of suspension of the disciplined or until readmission of the disciplined Member, or unless connection of the disciplined Member with the firm, partnership, or corporation is severed, or management control is relinquished, or unless the REALTOR® Member (non-principal) elects to sever his/her connection with the REALTOR® and affiliate with another REALTOR® Member in good standing in the Association, whichever may apply.

If a REALTOR® Member other than a sole proprietor in a firm, partner in a partnership, or an officer of a corporation is suspended or expelled, the use of the terms REALTOR® or REALTORS® by the firm, partnership or corporation shall not be affected.

- (b) In any action taken against a REALTOR® Member for suspension or expulsion under

Section 6 (a) hereof, notice of such action shall be given to all REALTORS® employed by or affiliated as independent contractors with such REALTOR® Member and they shall be advised that the provisions in Article VI, Section 6 (a) shall apply.

**Section 7. Institute Affiliate Members.** Institute Affiliate Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

NOTE: Local associations establish the rights and privileges to be conferred on Institute Affiliate Members except that no Institute Affiliate Member may be granted the right to use the term REALTOR®, REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®, or the REALTOR® logo; to serve as President of the local association; or to be a Participant in the local association's Multiple Listing Service.

**Section 8. Affiliate Members.** Affiliate Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors. Affiliate Members in good standing with the Association shall have the right to vote and to hold office as state director.

**Section 9. Public Service Members.** Public Service Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 10. Honorary Members.** Honorary Membership shall confer only the right to attend meetings and participate in discussions.

**Section 11. Student Members.** Student Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 12. State Association President.** The current President of the Alabama Association of REALTORS® shall be a member of the Baldwin County Association of REALTORS® without payment of dues and shall have all the rights and privileges of a REALTOR® member.

**Section 13. Certification by REALTOR®.** "Designated" REALTOR® members of the Association shall certify to the Association during the month of January on a form provided by the Association, a complete listing of all individuals licensed or certified in the REALTOR®'s office(s) and shall designate a primary Association for each individual who holds membership. Designated REALTORS® shall also identify any non-member licensees in the REALTOR®'s office(s) and if Designated REALTOR® dues have been paid to another Association based on said non-member licensees, the Designated REALTOR® shall identify the Association to which dues have been remitted. These declarations shall be used for purposes of calculating dues under Article X, Section 2(a) of the Bylaws. "Designated" REALTOR® Members shall also notify the association of any additional individuals(s) licensed or certified with the firm(s) within 15 days of the date of affiliation or severance of the individual.

**Section 14. Harassment.** Any member of the association may be reprimanded, placed on probation, suspended or expelled for harassment of an association or MLS employee or Association Officer or Director after a hearing in accordance with the established procedures of the association. Disciplinary action may also consist of any sanction authorized in the association's Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual. As used in this Section, harassment means any verbal or physical conduct including threatening or obscene language, unwelcome sexual advances, stalking, actions including strikes, shoves, kicks, or other similar physical contact, or threats to do the same, or any other conduct with the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating a hostile, intimidating or offensive work environment. The decision of the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken shall be made by the investigatory team comprised of the President, and President-elect and/or Vice President and one member of the Board of Directors selected by the highest-ranking officer not named in the complaint, upon consultation with legal counsel for the association. If the complaint names the President, President-Elect or Vice President, they may not participate in the proceedings and shall be replaced by the Immediate Past President or, alternatively, by another member of the Board of Directors selected by the highest-ranking officer not named in the complaint.

#### **Article VII – Professional Standards and Arbitration**

**Section 1.** The responsibility of the Association and Association members relating to the enforcement of the Code of Ethics, the disciplining of Members, and the arbitration of disputes, and the organization and procedures incident thereto shall be governed by the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, as amended from time to time, which is by this reference incorporated into these Bylaws, provided, however, that any provision deemed inconsistent with the laws of the State of Alabama, shall be deleted or amended to comply with state law.

**Section 2.** It shall be the duty and responsibility of every REALTOR® Member of this Association to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws and the Rules and Regulations of the Association, the Constitution and Bylaws of the State Association, the Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, and to abide by the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, including the duty to arbitrate controversies arising out of real estate transactions as specified by Article 17 of the Code of Ethics, unless prohibited by the laws of the State of Alabama, and as further defined and in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of this Association as from time to time amended.

**Section 3.** The responsibility of the association and association members relating to the enforcement of the Code of Ethics, the disciplining of members, the arbitration of disputes, and the organization and procedures incident thereto, shall be consistent with the cooperative professional standards enforcement agreement entered into by the association with the Mobile Area Association of REALTORS®, which by this reference is made a part of these Bylaws.

## **Article VIII – Use of the Terms REALTOR® and REALTORS®**

**Section 1.** Inclusion and retention of the Registered Collective Membership Mark REALTORS® in the name of the association shall be governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® as from time to time amended.

Use of terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® by Members shall, at all times, be subject to the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and to the Rules and Regulations prescribed by its Board of Directors. The Association shall have the authority to control, jointly and in full cooperation with the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, use of the terms within its jurisdiction. Any misuse of the terms by members is a violation of a membership duty and may subject members to disciplinary action by the Board of Directors after a hearing as provided for in the association's Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual.

**Section 2.** REALTOR® Members of the Association shall have the privilege of using the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® in connection with their places of business within the state or a state contiguous thereto so long as they remain REALTOR® Members in good standing. No other class of Members shall have this privilege.

**Section 3.** A REALTOR® principal member may use the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® only if all the principals of such firm, partnership, or corporation who are actively engaged in the real estate profession within the state or state contiguous thereto are REALTOR® Members or Institute Affiliate Members.

(a) In the case of a REALTOR® principal member whose business activity is substantially all commercial, the right to use the term REALTOR® or REALTORS® shall be limited to office locations in which a principal holds REALTOR® membership. If a firm, partnership, or corporation operates additional places of business in which no principal holds REALTOR® membership, the term REALTOR® or REALTORS® may not be used in any reference to those additional places of business.

**Section 4.** Institute Affiliate Members shall not use the terms REALTOR® or REALTORS®, nor the imprint of the emblem seal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

## **Article IX – State and National Memberships**

**Section 1.** The Association shall be a Member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and the Alabama Association of REALTORS®. By reason of the Association's Membership, each REALTOR® Member of the Member Association shall be entitled to membership in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and the Alabama Association of REALTORS® without further payment of dues. The Association shall continue as a Member of the State and National Associations, unless by a majority vote of all its REALTOR® Members, decision is made to withdraw, in which case the State and National Associations shall be notified at least one month in advance of the date designated for the termination of such membership.

**Section 2.** The Association recognizes the exclusive property rights of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® in the terms REALTOR® or REALTORS®. The Association shall discontinue use of the term in any form in its name, upon ceasing to be Member of the National Association, or upon a determination by the Board of Directors of the National Association that it has violated the conditions imposed upon the terms.

**Section 3.** The Association adopts the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and agrees to enforce the Code among its REALTOR® Members. The Association and all of its Members agree to abide by the Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and policies of the National Association and the Alabama Association of REALTORS®.

## **Article X – Dues and Assessments**

**Section 1. Application Fee.** The Board of Directors may adopt an application fee for REALTOR® Membership in reasonable amount, not exceeding three times the amount of the annual dues for REALTOR® Membership, which shall be required to accompany each application for REALTOR® Membership and which shall become the property of the Association upon final approval of the application.

**Section 2. Dues.** The annual dues of Members shall be as follows:

(a) ***REALTOR® Members.*** The annual dues of each Designated REALTOR® Member shall be in an amount as established annually by the Board of Directors plus an amount to be established annually by the Board of Directors times the number of real estate salespersons and licensed or certified appraisers who (1) are employed by or affiliated as independent contractors, or who are otherwise directly or indirectly licensed with such REALTOR® Member, and (2) are not REALTOR® members of any Association in the state or a state contiguous thereto or Institute Affiliate Members of the Association. In calculating the dues payable to the Association by a Designated REALTOR® Member, non-member licensees as defined in (1) and (2) of this paragraph shall not be included in the computation of dues if the Designated REALTOR® has paid dues based on said non-member licensees in another Association in the state or a state contiguous thereto, provided the Designated REALTOR® notifies the Association in writing of the identity of the Association to which dues have been remitted. In the case of a Designated REALTOR® Member in a firm, partnership, or corporation whose business activity is substantially all commercial, any assessments for non-member licensees shall be limited to licensees affiliated with the Designated REALTOR® (as defined in (1) and (2) of this paragraph) in the office where the Designated REALTOR® holds membership, and any other offices of the firm located within the jurisdiction of this association.

(1) For the purpose of this Section, a REALTOR® Member of a Member Board shall be held to be any Member who has a place or places of business within the state or a state contiguous thereto and who, as a principal, is actively engaged in the real estate profession as defined in Article III, Section 1, of the Constitution of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.



An individual shall be deemed to be licensed with a REALTOR® if the license of the individual is held by the REALTOR®, or by any broker who is licensed with the REALTOR®, or by any entity in which the REALTOR® has a direct or indirect ownership interest and which is engaged in other aspects of the real estate business (except as provided for in Section 2 (a) (1) hereof) provided that such licensee is not otherwise included in the computation of dues payable by the principal, partner, corporate officer, or branch office manager of the entity.

- (2) A REALTOR® with a direct or indirect ownership interest in an entity engaged exclusively in soliciting and /or referring clients and customers to the REALTOR® for consideration on a substantially exclusive basis shall annually file with the association on a form approved by the association a list of the licensees affiliated with that entity and shall certify that all of the licensees affiliated with the entity are solely engaged in referring clients and customers and are not engaged in listing, selling, leasing, renting, managing, counseling or appraising real property. The individuals disclosed on such form shall not be deemed to be licensed with the REALTOR® filing the form for purposes of this section and shall not be included in calculating the annual dues of the Designated REALTOR®. Designated REALTORS® shall notify the association within three (3) days of any change in status of licensees in a referral firm.

The exemption for any licensee included on the certification form shall automatically be revoked upon the individual being engaged in real estate licensed activities (listing, selling, leasing, renting, managing, counseling, or appraising real property) other than referrals, and dues for the current fiscal year shall be payable.

- (3) Membership dues shall be prorated for any licensee included on a certification form submitted to the association who during the same calendar year applies for REALTOR® or REALTOR ASSOCIATE® membership in the association. However, membership dues shall not be prorated if the licensee held REALTOR® or REALTOR®-ASSOCIATE® membership during the preceding calendar year.
- (b) **REALTOR® Members.** The annual dues of REALTOR® Members other than the Designated REALTOR® shall be in an amount established annually by the Board of Directors.
- (c) **Institute Affiliate Members.** The annual dues of each Institute Affiliate Member shall be established in Article II of the Bylaws of the National Association of REALTORS®.
- (d) **Affiliate Members.** The annual dues of each Affiliate Member shall be in an amount established annually by the Board of Directors.
- (e) **Public Service Members.** The annual dues of each Public Service Member shall be in an amount established annually by the Board of Directors.

- (f) **Honorary Members.** Dues payable, if any, shall be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- (g) **Student Members.** Dues payable, if any, shall be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

**Section 2. Assessments.** The Board of Directors may assess the members by class, provided that notice of the classes of membership to be assessed, the amount of the assessment for each of the classes to be assessed, the purpose of the assessment, and when the assessment is due shall be noticed to all affected classes of members at least 30 days prior to the approval of the assessment by the Board of Directors.

**Section 3. Dues Payable.** Dues for all Members shall be payable annually in advance of January 15. Dues for new members shall be computed from the date of application and granting of provisional membership.

(a) If a Designated REALTOR® is holding a license January 1<sup>st</sup> of the dues paying year, and that REALTOR® member does not pay their dues, the Designated REALTORS® shall be responsible for payment of the dues for the nonpaying member. This member becomes a non-member.

(c) In the event a sales licensee or licensed or certified appraiser who holds REALTOR® membership is dropped for nonpayment of Association dues, and the individual remains with the Designated REALTORS® firm, the dues obligation of the “Designated” REALTOR® as set forth in Article X, Section 2 (a) will be increased to reflect the addition of a non-member licensee. Dues shall be calculated from the first day of the current fiscal year and are payable within 30 days of the notice of termination.

**Section 4. Nonpayment of Financial Obligations.** If dues, fees, fines, or other assessments including amounts owed to the Association or the Association’s Multiple Listing Service are not paid within one (1) month after the due date, the nonpaying Member is subject to suspension at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Two (2) months after the due date, membership of the nonpaying Member shall be terminated at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Three (3) months after the due date, membership of the nonpaying member shall automatically terminate, unless within that time the amount due is paid. However, no action shall be taken to suspend or expel a Member for nonpayment of disputed amounts until the accuracy of the amount owed has been confirmed by the Board of Directors. A former Member who has had his/her membership terminated for nonpayment of dues, fees fines, or other assessments duly levied in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws or the provisions of other Rules and Regulations of the Association or any of its services, departments, divisions or subsidiaries may apply for reinstatement in a manner prescribed for new applicants for membership, after making payment in full of all accounts due as of the date of termination.

**Section 5. Deposit.** All monies received by the Association for any purpose shall be deposited to the credit of the Association in a financial institution or institutions selected

by the Chief Staff Executive/Board of Directors. The financial institution shall be FDIC insured.

**Section 6. Expenditures.** The Chief Staff Executive of the Association shall administer the day-to-day finances of the Association, under the direction of the Board of Directors.

**Section 7. Notice of Dues, Fees, Fines, Assessments, and Other Financial Obligations of Members.** All dues, fees, fines, assessments, or other financial obligations to the Association or the Association's Multiple Listing Service shall be noticed to the delinquent Association Member in writing setting forth the amount owed and due date.

**Section 8.** The dues of REALTOR® Members who are REALTOR® Emeritus (as recognized by the National Association) Past Presidents of the National Association or recipients of the Distinguished Service Award shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

## **Article XI – Officers and Directors**

**Section 1. Officers.** The elected officers of the Association shall be: a President, a President-Elect, a Secretary/Treasurer and 2 Regional Vice-Presidents. Secretary and Treasurer positions which may be split. They shall be elected for terms of one year. The current President shall serve as the Immediate Past President when their term is complete as President. This shall be a one-year term.

**(a) The Chief Executive Officer:** He/she shall be the Chief Administrative Officer of the Association, subject to the direction by the President and Board of Directors. He/she shall have the sole authority to employ, manage, supervise, terminate, and fix the compensation of such other staff, and assign suitable titles thereto, as are necessary to conduct the activities of the Association within the approved budget of the Association. He/she shall be the chief financial officer of the Association, shall provide financial reports to the Board of Directors and have all other authority as given by the Board of Directors to conduct the business of the Association.

**Section 2. Duties of Officers.** The duties of the Officers shall be such as their titles, by general usage, would indicate and such as may be assigned to them by the Board of Directors. It shall be the particular duty of the Chief Staff Executive to keep the records of the Association and to carry on all necessary correspondence with the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and the Alabama Association of REALTORS®.

**Section 3. Board of Directors.** The governing body of the Association shall be a Board of Directors consisting of the elected officers. Directors shall be elected to serve for terms of three years, except that at organization, one-third of the elected Directors shall be elected for terms one, two, and three years, respectfully, or for lesser terms as may be necessary to complete the first fiscal year. Thereafter, as many Directors shall be elected each year as are required to fill any vacancy.

### **Electronic Meeting**

“To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Board of Directors or membership may conduct Association business by electronic means.”

### **Unanimous Written Consent**

Unless specifically prohibited by the Articles of Incorporation, any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the Board of Directors may be taken without a meeting if the timeline requirements of the action fall prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting. The President, or in the President’s absence, his/her presiding officer, must authorize the vote on the action without a meeting. The action must be noticed in writing to all members of the Board of Directors and written consent of all voting members must be received for the action to be taken. Dissemination of the notice and receipt of votes shall comply with the Baldwin REALTOR® Policies and Procedures. Written notice of action must include an effective date and a date by which the votes must be received. The Corporate Secretary shall file the written action and record of the vote in the corporate records.

### **Section 4. Election of Officers and Directors.**

At least two months before the annual election, a Nominating Committee of at least 5 REALTOR® Members shall be appointed by the Past President and approved by the Board of Directors. The Nominating Committee shall select one candidate for each office and one candidate for each place to be filled on the Board of Directors. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be distributed to each Member eligible to vote at least three (3) weeks preceding the election. Additional candidates for offices to be filled may be placed in nomination by petition signed by at least 10% of the REALTOR® Members eligible to vote. The petition shall be filed with the Chief Staff Executive at least two weeks before the election. The Chief Staff Executive shall send notice of such additional nominations to all Members eligible to vote before the election.

(a) The election of Officers and Directors shall take place at the annual meeting, or where permitted by state law, electronically. Election shall be by motion from the floor for acceptance of slate, or by ballot, and all votes shall be cast in person.

(b) Where permitted by state law, and in accordance with applicable state requirements, election of officers may be conducted by electronic means, in accordance with procedures established by the Board of Directors.

**Section 5. Vacancies.** Vacancies among the Officers, Board of Directors, Alabama Association of REALTORS® Directors, and any other elected position of the Association shall be filled by simple majority vote of the Board of Directors until the next annual election.

**Section 6. Removal of Officers and Directors.** In the event an Officer or Director

is deemed to be incapable of fulfilling the duties for which elected, but will not resign from office voluntarily, the Officer or Director may be removed from office under the following procedures:

- (a) A petition requiring the removal of an Officer or Director and signed by not less than one-third of the voting membership or a majority of all Directors shall be filed with the President, or if the President is the subject of the petition, with the next-ranking officer, and shall specifically set forth reason(s) the individual is deemed to be disqualified from further service.
- (b) Upon receipt of the petition, and not less than twenty (20) days or more than forty-five (45) days thereafter, a special meeting of the voting membership of the Association shall be held, and the sole business of the meeting shall be to consider the charge against the Officer or Director, and to render a decision on such petition.
- (c) The special meeting shall be noticed to all voting Members at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting and shall be conducted by the President of the Association unless the President's continued service in office is being considered at the meeting. In such case, the next-ranking officer will conduct the meeting of the hearing by the members. Provided a quorum is present, a three-fourths vote of members present and voting shall be required for removal from office.

**Section 7. Chief Staff Executive.** There shall be a Chief Staff Executive, appointed by the Board of Directors, who shall be chief administrative officer of the Association. The Chief Staff Executive shall have the authority to hire, supervise, evaluate and terminate other staff, if any, and shall perform such other duties as prescribed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 8. Election of Directors, Alabama Association of REALTORS®.** The current President and President-Elect shall also serve as a Director of the Alabama Association of REALTORS® as appointed by the Alabama Association of Realtors®. All other directors as authorized by the Alabama Association of Realtors® will be elected at large with election conducted by the Alabama Association of Realtors®.

## **Article XII – Meetings**

**Section 1. Annual Meetings.** The annual meeting of the Association shall be held during October of each year, the date, place, and hour to be designated by the Board of Directors.

**Section 2. Meetings of Directors.** The Board of Directors shall designate a regular time and place of meeting. Absence from three regular meetings without an excuse deemed valid by the Board of Directors shall be construed as resignation.

**Section 3. Other Meetings.** Meetings of the Members may be held at other times as the President or the Board of Directors may determine, or upon the written request of at least 10 percent of the Members.

**Section 4. Notice of Meetings.** Written notice shall be given to every Member entitled to participate in the meeting at least one (1) week preceding all meetings. If a special meeting is called, it shall be accompanied by a statement of the purpose of the meeting.

**Section 5. Quorum.** A quorum for the transaction of business other than Board of Directors meeting shall consist of five (5) percent of the Members eligible to vote. A simple majority of the votes cast is sufficient for Board action.

**Section 6. Electronic Transaction of Business.** To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Board or membership may conduct business by electronic means.

**Section 7. Action without Meeting.** Unless specifically prohibited by the articles of incorporation, any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the board of directors may be taken without a meeting if consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken, shall be signed by all of the directors. The consent shall be evidenced by one or more written approvals, each of which sets forth the action taken and bears the signature of one or more directors. All the approvals evidencing the consent shall be delivered to the Chief Staff Executive to be filed in the corporate records. The action taken shall be effective when all the directors have approved the consent unless the consent specifies a different effective date.

### **Article XIII – Committees**

**Section 1. Standing Committees.** The President shall appoint from among the REALTOR® Members, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors, standing committees: Professional Standards, Grievance, Finance and a MLS Committee.

**Section 2. Special Committees.** The President shall appoint task forces, special committees, as deemed necessary.

**Section 3. Organization.** All committees shall be of such size and shall have duties, functions, and powers as assigned by the task force, President, or the Board of Directors except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

**Section 4. President.** The President shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees and shall be notified of their meetings.

**Section 5. Action without Meeting.** Any action which may be taken at a meeting of a committee may be taken without a meeting if an acknowledgement in writing delivered by mail or electronically, by one or more written consents setting forth the action so taken, is signed by all of the members of a committee entitled to vote on the matter.

**Section 6. Attendance by Telephone.** Members of a committee may participate in any meeting through the use of a video-conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each

other. Such participation shall be at the discretion of the President and shall constitute presence at the meeting.

#### **Article XIV – Fiscal and Elective**

**Section 1.** The fiscal and elective year of the Association shall be January to December 31.

**Section 2.** The elective year of the Board of Directors shall be November 1 to October 31.

#### **Article XV – Rules of Order**

**Section 1.** Robert’s Rules of Order, latest edition, shall be recognized as the authority governing the meetings of the Association, its Board of Directors, and committees, in all instances wherein its provisions do not conflict with these Bylaws.

#### **Article XVI – Amendments**

**Section 1.** These Bylaws may be amended by the majority vote of the members present and qualified to vote at any meeting at which a quorum is present, provided the substance of such proposed amendment or amendments shall be plainly stated in the call for the meeting.

- (a) When Bylaws amendments are mandated by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® policy, these Bylaws may be automatically amended to reflect the mandate as of the effective date of the mandatory policy authorized by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. The Association shall provide notice of that change in a regular or special membership communications.

**Section 2.** Notice of all meetings at which amendments are to be considered shall be distributed to every member to vote at least one (1) week prior to the meeting.

**Section 3.** Amendments to these Bylaws affecting the admission or qualification of REALTOR® and Institute Affiliate Members, the use of the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS®, or any alteration in the territorial jurisdiction of the Association shall become effective upon their approval as authorized by the Board of Directors of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

#### **Article XVII – Dissolution**

**Section 1.** Upon the dissolution of affairs of this Association, the Board of Directors, after providing for the payment of all obligations, shall distribute any remaining assets to the Alabama Association of REALTORS® or, within its discretion, to any other non-profit tax-exempt organization.

## Article XVIII – Multiple Listing

**Section 1. Authority.** The Association of REALTORS® shall maintain for the use of its Members a Multiple Listing Service which shall be a lawful corporation of the state of Alabama, all the stock of which shall be owned by the Association of REALTORS®.

**Section 2. Purpose.** A Multiple Listing Service is a means by which cooperation among participants is enhanced; 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; by which Participants engaging in real estate appraisal contribute to common databases; and is a facility for the orderly correlation and dissemination of listing information so Participants may better serve their clients and the public.

**Section 3. Governing Documents.** The Board of Directors shall cause any Multiple Listing Service established by it pursuant to this Article to conform its corporate charter, Constitution, Bylaws, Rules, Regulations, and Policies, Practices, and Procedures at all time to the Constitution, Bylaws, Regulations and Policies of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

**Section 4. Participation.** Any REALTOR® member of this or any other Board/Association who is a principal, partner, corporate officer, or branch office manager acting on behalf of the principal, without further qualification, shall be eligible to participate in the Multiple Listing Service upon agreeing in writing to conform to the rules and regulations thereof and to pay costs incidental thereto. However, under no circumstances is any individual or firm, regardless of membership status, entitled to Multiple Listing Service “membership” or “participation” unless they hold a current, valid real estate broker’s license and 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 interest 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. Further, none of the foregoing is intended to convey “participation” or “membership” of 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. (Amended 08/24)



Mere possession of a broker's license is not sufficient to qualify for MLS participation. Rather, the requirement that an individual or firm cooperate 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, share information on listed property and make property available to other brokers for showing to prospective purchasers and tenants when it is in the best interests of their clients. "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. (Adopted 11/08)

The key is that the participant or potential participant actively endeavors to cooperate 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 clients. 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.

(a) A nonmember applicant for MLS participation who is a principal, partner, corporate officer, or branch manager acting on behalf of a principal, shall supply evidence satisfactory to the Membership Committee that he/she has no record of recent or pending bankruptcy; has no record of official sanctions involving unprofessional conduct; agrees to complete a course of instruction (if any) covering the MLS rules and regulations and computer training related to MLS information entry and retrieval, and shall pass such reasonable and non-discriminatory written examination thereon as may be required by the MLS; and shall agree that if elected as a Participant, he/she will abide by such rules and regulation and pay the MLS fees and dues, including the nonmember differential, (if any) as from time to time established. Under no circumstances is any individual or firm entitled to MLS participation or membership unless they hold a current, valid real estate broker's license and or are licensed or

certified by an appropriate state regulatory agency to engage in the appraisal of real property. Use of information developed by or published by a Board Multiple Listing Service is strictly limited to the activities authorized under a Participant's licensure(s) or certification and unauthorized uses are prohibited. Further, none of the foregoing is intended to convey participation or membership or any right of access to information developed by or published by a Association Multiple Listing Service where access to such information is prohibited by law.

- (b) Any applicant for MLS participation and any license (including licensed or certified appraisers) affiliated with an MLS Participant who has access to and use of MLS-generated information shall be encouraged to attend an orientation program of no more than eight (8) classroom hours devoted to the MLS rules and regulations. An online computer training related to MLS information entry and retrieval is required to be completed before access is provided.

**Section 5. Access to Comparable and Statistical Information.** MLS Members who are actively engaged in real estate brokerage, management, mortgage financing, appraising, land development, or building, but who do not participate in the MLS, are nonetheless entitled to receive, by purchase or lease, all information other than current listing information that is generated wholly or in part by the MLS including "comparable" information, "sold" information, and statistical reports. This information is provided for the exclusive use of MLS Members and individuals affiliated with Board Members who are also engaged in the real estate business and may not be transmitted, retransmitted, or provided in any manner to any unauthorized individual, office, or firm except as otherwise specified in the MLS Rules and Regulations. Association members who receive such information, either as an Association service or through the MLS, are subject to the applicable provisions of the MLS rules and regulations whether they participate in the MLS or not.

**Section 6. Subscribers.** Subscribers (or users) of the MLS include non-principal brokers, sales associates, and licensed and certified appraisers affiliated with Participants.

These By-Laws, effective August 2024 replace all previous Constitution and By-Laws passed and amended.