

# MEMBERSHIP MARKS MANUAL

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## Contents

- INTRODUCTION TO TRADEMARKS ..... 3
- The MARKS: REALTOR®; REALTORS®; REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®; and the REALTOR® Logo..... 3
- DEFINITION OF REALTOR® ..... 4
- LICENSE TO USE THE MARKS ..... 4
- LIMITATIONS ON LICENSE TO USE THE MARKS..... 5
  - Membership Limitation ..... 5
  - Real Estate Business Limitation ..... 6
  - Geographic Limitation ..... 6
  - Context of Use Limitation ..... 6
    - Context of Use for the Term REALTOR®..... 6
    - Context of Use for the REALTOR® Logo..... 9
  - Form of Use Limitation ..... 9
    - Form of Use for the Term REALTOR®..... 9
    - Form of Use for the REALTOR® Logo..... 12
- USE OF THE MARKS WITH A MEMBER’S NAME..... 20
  - Use of the Term REALTOR® with a Member’s Name ..... 20
  - Use of the REALTOR® Logo with a Member’s Name ..... 20
- USE OF THE MARKS WITH A MEMBER’S FIRM NAME ..... 21
  - Use of the term REALTOR® with a Member’s Firm Name..... 21
  - Use of the REALTOR® Logo with a Member’s Firm Name and Logo ..... 22
- USE OF THE MARKS BY A MEMBER BOARD ..... 24
  - Use of the Term REALTOR® with a Member Board’s Name ..... 24
  - Use of the REALTOR® Logo with a Member Board’s Name and Logo ..... 24
- SPECIFIC USES OF THE MARKS ..... 25
  - MARKS May be Used on Merchandise ..... 25
  - News Releases May Use the AP or UPI Style..... 25
  - MARKS May Not be Used as Directory Headings ..... 26
  - MARKS May Not be Used in Institutional Advertising..... 26
  - MARKS May be Used in Connection with Political Activities ..... 27

The Same Rules Apply to Use of the MARKS on the Internet .....	27
TRADEMARK PROTECTION PROGRAM.....	28
Member Boards Are Also Responsible for Trademark Protection Program .....	29
Misuse by a Member.....	29
Unauthorized Use by a Non-Member .....	30
Misuse by the Media.....	30
Unauthorized Use by a Franchise or Conglomerate Organization .....	31
Unauthorized Use on Merchandise, Publications, or Services .....	31
Obtain Written Assurance of Compliance .....	31
Enforcement Action Taken by NAR.....	32
NAR May File Complaint with Member Board .....	32
NAR May Initiate Legal Action .....	32
SAMPLE LETTERS FROM MEMBER BOARD .....	33
Misuse by a Member with a Descriptive Word or Phrase .....	33
Unauthorized Use by a Member with a Non-Real-Estate Business .....	34
Misuse by a Member in Connection with Member’s Firm Name .....	35
Unauthorized Use by a Former Member .....	36
Unauthorized Use by a Non-Member .....	37
Unauthorized Use on Products.....	38
Improper Contextual Use in Email Solicitation.....	39
Improper Contextual Use in Publication.....	40
Improper Form Used in Publication .....	41

## INTRODUCTION TO TRADEMARKS

Trademarks are unique terms, symbols, or combinations of terms and symbols that communicate a specific message to the public. The term "COKE", for example, is a trademark that identifies a specific soft drink produced by The Coca-Cola Company. A service mark is a type of trademark that identifies the source of a service and distinguishes that service provider from all others. For example, the term "FedEx" is a service mark that identifies a specific provider of parcel delivery. A collective mark is a type of trademark that indicates membership in an organized collective group, such as a union, an association, or other organization. The term "Jaycees" is a collective mark that indicates membership in the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce. Over time, trademarks like those mentioned become associated with standards of quality or care and the public looks upon such marks as guarantees of repeated quality or care.

If a trademark owner does not properly protect its mark, it may be lost forever. Many of the words we use in our everyday speech were once valuable trademarks that could have been maintained as such if they had been promoted and protected properly. The words "escalator" and "aspirin" were once valuable trademarks, but for lack of vigilance, care, and public promotion, they lost their distinctive protectable qualities and are now words of ordinary use. Preservation of a trademark requires:

- Use of the trademark only in its intended context;
- Distinguishing the trademark from words of ordinary use by using capital letters and the registration symbol "®"; and
- Enforcing an appropriate program governing proper use and display of the trademark.

### **The MARKS: REALTOR®; REALTORS®; REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®; and the REALTOR® Logo**

The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR) is the proud owner of numerous trademarks including the terms REALTOR®, REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®, REALTORS®, and the REALTOR® Logo (referred to collectively as the "MARKS"). Members and Member Boards of NAR receive a limited license to use the MARKS in connection with their real estate business or REALTOR® association.

The MARKS are collective marks that identify members of NAR and distinguish them from non-members. Since the unique term REALTOR® was first coined in 1915, the public has come to recognize those who use the MARKS as members of NAR and, as such, providers of real estate related services consistent with a strict Code of Ethics and the highest standards of professionalism.

There is only one way to properly pronounce the term REALTOR®: REAL- tor (rē'al-tôr'). Members are encouraged to carefully train new employees and salespeople on the proper pronunciation of the term

REALTOR®. Consistent aural use is just as important as consistent visual use to the preservation of the distinctive and recognizable character of the MARKS.

In order to preserve the value of the MARKS, NAR has implemented a program that governs use of the MARKS. Members and Member Boards are only permitted to use the MARKS in a way that highlights to the public the registered status, significance, and special meaning of the MARKS and distinguishes them from words of ordinary use and other marks or symbols.

The license that members and Member Boards have to use the MARKS is conditioned upon adherence to the rules for proper use of the MARKS set forth in this Membership Marks Manual. These rules are designed to encourage the widest possible consistent use of the MARKS while preserving and perpetuating their meaning and identifying function. To remain valuable and effective in performing their identifying function, the MARKS must be used consistently and correctly.

NAR created a brief, animated video about protecting the REALTOR® trademarks. It's available at: <http://www.realtor.org/videos/why-nar-protects-the-realtor-trademark>.

## **DEFINITION OF REALTOR®**

The term REALTOR® has one, and only one, meaning:

REALTOR® is a federally registered collective membership mark which identifies a real estate professional who is member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and subscribes to its strict Code of Ethics.

The single most important rule governing the MARK is that it may only be used to convey this meaning, and never used to convey another meaning.

## **LICENSE TO USE THE MARKS**

The MARKS are specifically intended for use by members and Member Boards in connection with their real estate business or REALTOR® association programs, products, and services. Upon joining NAR, members and Member Boards are granted a limited, nonexclusive, nontransferable license to use the MARKS pursuant to the rules set forth in this Manual. The license is embodied in the NAR Constitution and Bylaws as well as in the Bylaws of each Member Board. These provisions incorporate by reference the limitations, rules, and policies of this Manual and other policies for use adopted by NAR's Board of Directors.

Individuals who hold REALTOR® or REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® membership in a Member Board are licensed to use one or more of the MARKS in connection with their name and the name of their real estate business. REALTOR® members are licensed to use the "REALTOR®" and "REALTORS®" trademarks when

identifying themselves as members of NAR and REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® members are licensed to use the “REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®” trademark when identifying themselves as members of NAR.

Member Boards are licensed to use the term REALTORS® as part of their name, in the title of their official publication, educational or civic meetings, services, or clinics sponsored by the Member Board, provided that the affiliation of the undertaking with the Member Board is indicated; and to use the REALTOR® Logo in connection with their name or logo.

## LIMITATIONS ON LICENSE TO USE THE MARKS

There are important limitations to the license granted to members and Member Boards. They are the membership, real estate business, geographic, context, and form limitations described in this Manual and are official policy interpretations of NAR’s Constitution and Bylaws regarding use of the MARKS. These limitations, and the guidelines and policies under them, are essential to the orderly, uniform use of the MARKS, and to their preservation and promotion.

### Membership Limitation

Only NAR, its members, and its Member Boards may use the MARKS. A member's license to use the MARKS terminates automatically in the event that for any reason, such individual ceases to be a REALTOR® or REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® member in good standing of a Member Board; or in the event that for any reason, his Member Board ceases to be a Member Board in good standing of NAR at which time the Member Board’s license would also terminate.

Because this limitation requires continuing membership as a condition to use the MARKS, members are not authorized to adopt usages which cannot be readily changed in the event membership ceases. For example, members should exercise forethought before using the MARKS on unalterable business signs, in domain names, or phone numbers which correspond to the letters spelling the term REALTOR®. Also, note, a Member Board must obtain written permission from NAR before allowing the department of transportation in its state to use the MARKS on specialty license plates.

Use of the term REALTOR® as part of the corporate name or business name of any member is prohibited. This prohibition is necessary to avoid the legal formalities of a corporate or business name change in the event of a termination, suspension, or expulsion from membership in a Member Board.

Collateral use of a MARK by a non-member, such as a journalist naming a member in a news article, is acceptable without NAR’s written permission provided that the non-member’s use of the MARK only refers to membership in NAR and does not indicate or imply that the non-member is a member or that NAR endorses, sponsors, or approves of a good or service.

NAR created a brief, animated video about how members may use the REALTOR® trademarks properly. It’s available at: <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules/make-our-marks-remarkable>.

## Real Estate Business Limitation

Members are licensed to use the MARKS only in connection with their real estate business. According to Article III, Section I of the NAR Constitution, the term "real estate business" includes: real estate brokerage, management, appraising, land development, or building. The MARKS may not be used in connection with any other business or personal activities in which a member is engaged.

A member may use the MARKS in connection with the name of her real estate business even though other, non-real estate services are offered under that same business name if:

- Such other services are lawful and the member is licensed or otherwise legally entitled to offer such services; and
- Such other services do not, and are not likely to, undermine or diminish public respect for or understanding of the MARKS, other members, Member Boards, or NAR.

Member Boards may use the MARKS in the title of, or otherwise in connection with, publications, services, activities, or functions sponsored by Member Boards provided that that Member Board's name immediately precedes, follows, or is otherwise included in the title of the publication or service.

Member Boards may not use the MARKS in the name of, or in connection with, Member Board services, activities, or functions for which the Member Board lacks authority under its Bylaws, NAR's Constitution, or federal, state, or local laws or regulations.

NAR created a brief, animated video about how members may use the REALTOR® trademarks properly. It's available at: <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules/make-our-marks-remarkable>.

## Geographic Limitation

Members are licensed to use the MARKS anywhere in connection with the place of business with which their membership is associated.

Member Boards are licensed to use the MARKS in their assigned jurisdictions. When used by a Member Board outside its assigned jurisdiction, the MARKS may not be combined with content that causes confusion or deception as to the Member Board's assigned jurisdiction.

## Context of Use Limitation

### **Context of Use for the Term REALTOR®**

Members are licensed to use the MARKS only in the proper context of identifying a member of NAR. It is vitally important to the preservation of the MARKS that they be recognized consistently by the public as identifiers of NAR members. The MARKS must not be used generically to denote a vocation or a business.

The guidelines and policies concerning context of use are designed to assist the public in recognizing that the term REALTOR® means a registered collective membership mark which identifies a real estate professional who is a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and subscribes to its strict Code of Ethics. The definition of REALTOR® should appear at the bottom of the page on which the term REALTOR® is first used in any written material.

### *The Member Test*

Compliance with the context of use limitation can be tested by substituting the word “member” for the term “REALTOR®.” If the meaning or intended message is unchanged and not compromised by such substitutions, the term REALTOR® is appropriately used. If not, the term REALTOR® should be replaced by another phrase such as “real estate broker,” “real estate agent,” “appraiser,” “property manager,” or other words, as may be appropriate.

To illustrate the Member Test, consider the following statement:

*John Doe is a lawyer, REALTOR®, and insurance agent.*

Substituting “member” for “REALTOR®” yields:

*John Doe is a lawyer, member, and insurance agent.*

The word “member” in the statement clearly does not further the speaker’s apparent purpose of describing Mr. Doe’s professional diversity. It is possible, of course, that the speaker did intend to state that Mr. Doe is a member of NAR as well as a lawyer and an insurance agent. However, there is a possibility that the listener would incorrectly understand the statement to mean that Mr. Doe is a lawyer, real estate broker, and insurance agent. Thus, use of the term REALTOR® in the statement is not appropriate.

The same approach highlights the problem with webpages, social media profiles, letterhead, business cards, signs, and ads that include notices such as:

John Doe, Inc.  
Builders -- REALTORS® -- Insurers

The likely intent of such notices is to advise would-be customers that the services offered include real estate brokerage. Even if the intent is to indicate membership, there is a possibility that such usage may cause the reader to view the term REALTORS® inaccurately as a substitute for “real estate brokers,” rather than an indicator of membership. Thus, use of the term REALTORS® is not appropriate.

If the principals, partners, and corporate officers of Doe’s firm are all members, then the following usage would be acceptable:

John Doe, Inc., REALTORS®  
Builders -- Real Estate Brokers -- Insurers



### *Being a REALTOR® is not a vocation*

Compliance with the Context of Use limitation in the case of oral communication requires forethought and continued awareness that the term REALTOR® does not describe a vocation or profession.

For example, when asked what he does for a living, an unthinking member may answer incorrectly, “I am a REALTOR®.” Obviously, the speaker does not mean that he makes his living as a “member.” Unfortunately, the response makes sense only if the listener assigns to the term REALTOR® the meaning “real estate broker.” Thus, by the answer given, the member has incorrectly used the term REALTOR® and, in the process, may have contributed to a misunderstanding of its meaning.

A response that is sure to clarify the registered status and special meaning of the term REALTOR® is, “I am a real estate broker and a REALTOR®.” If asked to clarify the distinction, the member can provide an explanation of the fact and nature of membership, including the binding commitment of the member to the Code of Ethics.

In addition, because the term REALTOR® may only be used to identify members of NAR, it is not permissible to use the MARKS in reference to non-members such as “non-REALTOR®” or “non-REALTORS®.” Such individuals should simply be referred to as non-members.

### *Never modify REALTOR® with a descriptive term*

The term REALTOR® may never be used in connection with a descriptive word or phrase. Because adjectives may suggest an improper vocational meaning and also tend to distort the consistent understanding and image of the MARKS, thereby undermining their identifying function, members and Member Boards are expressly prohibited from using descriptive words or phrases in connection with the MARKS. This prohibition includes use of geographically descriptive terms like the names of cities, states, and places and is set forth in Article V, Section 7 of the NAR Bylaws.

Wherever the MARKS are used – on business cards, flyers, websites, domain names, usernames, social media profiles, email addresses, or anywhere – they cannot be used adjacent to a descriptive word or phrase.

The following examples are all improper uses because they use a descriptive term in connection with a MARK:

- Consult a professional REALTOR®
- Doe County's leading REALTOR®
- Your local REALTOR®
- Your international REALTOR®
- Commercial REALTOR®
- www.myrealtorfrank.com
- www.bestrealtor.com
- www.listitonrealtor.com
- hometownrealtor@email.com
- chicagorealtorjane@email.com
- Number1realtor
- REALTOR\_dad

While members may never use geographic terms in connection with the MARKS, NAR's Board of Directors has granted Member Boards permission to use geographic locations in connection with the term REALTOR® provided that the geographic description is consistent with the assigned jurisdiction in official publications, domain names, and their NAR-approved association names. For example, it is acceptable for the state association in Ohio to call itself the Ohio Association of REALTORS®. And, it is acceptable for the Ohio association to have an official publication called "Ohio REALTORS®" and the domain name "ohiorealtors.org" as long as it's made clear that the publication and website are offered by the Ohio Association of REALTORS®.

## **Context of Use for the REALTOR® Logo**

The context of use limitation for the REALTOR® Logo requires that it be used only in connection with the member's name or the member's firm name and address. Members and Member Boards are not authorized to use the REALTOR® Logo in the absence of identification of the member, the member's firm, or a Member Board.

However, a member or Member Board may distribute items or awards bearing the MARKS without other identification so long as the purchaser or recipient is a member or Member Board licensed to use the MARKS.

NAR created a brief, animated video about proper use of the REALTOR® trademarks. It's available at: <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules/make-our-marks-remarkable>.

## **Form of Use Limitation**

### **Form of Use for the Term REALTOR®**

The form of use limitation requires members and Member Boards to use the MARKS in a manner that highlights them in relation to adjoining print by: (1) the use of capital letters and, where necessary, boldface print or italics; (2) the use of separating punctuation where appropriate; and (3) the use of the federal registration symbol "®" adjacent to each of the terms.

The preferred format for written use of the MARKS is use of all capital letters with the federal trademark registration symbol. When the preferred format is not feasible, members and Member Boards may use the MARKS with an initial capital letter "R." Unless it is used in a domain name or email address, members and Member Boards are prohibited from having a MARK appear in all lowercase letters.

#### Preferred Form:

REALTOR®

REALTORS®

REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®

Permitted Form (only when use of the “®” is not feasible):

REALTOR  
REALTORS  
REALTOR-ASSOCIATE

Permitted Form (only when use of all capital letters is not feasible):

Realtor®  
Realtors®  
Realtor-Associate®

Permitted Form (when use of the “®” and all capital letters is not feasible):

Realtor  
Realtors  
Realtor-Associate

When REALTOR®, REALTORS®, or REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® are used in the text of webpages, brochures, pamphlets, newsletters, or otherwise in the body of written material, all capital letters and the registration symbol “®” should be used in connection with at least the first use in each section of the body of the written material and in connection with each subsequent appearance to the extent practical. Each following use in that section must at least contain initial capital letters. Furthermore, the first use in any written material should include the definition of REALTOR®.

If all of the text in the body of the written material is in capital letters, the terms REALTOR®, REALTORS® and REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® should be made to stand out by the use of boldface type or by some other means sufficient to distinguish them from words of ordinary use and, in such instances, the registration symbol “®” should be used in connection with every appearance of each MARK. For example:

It will be of interest to your buyers and sellers alike that, as a REALTOR®, you are bound by NAR’s strict Code of Ethics.

IT WILL BE OF INTEREST TO YOUR BUYERS AND SELLERS ALIKE THAT, AS A **REALTOR®**, YOU ARE BOUND BY NAR’S STRICT CODE OF ETHICS.

**IT WILL BE OF INTEREST TO YOUR BUYERS AND SELLERS ALIKE THAT, AS A REALTOR®, YOU ARE BOUND BY NAR’S STRICT CODE OF ETHICS.**

The terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® may be used in connection with, but not as part of, a corporate or business name provided such terms are separated from the business name by appropriate symbols or punctuation. Separating punctuation should be used even when the term appears on a separate line immediately below the firm name. The same rule applies to use of the MARKS in connection with a member’s name.

Proper Form

J.J. Jones, REALTORS®

S.S. Smith -- REALTORS®

S.S. Smith Realty, Inc.,  
REALTORS®

John Jones, REALTOR®

Sarah Smith,  
REALTOR®

S.S. Smith Realty Company  
REALTORS®

Possessives should be avoided whenever possible. Where necessary, possessives are formed as follows:

Singular

REALTOR®'s

REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®'s

Plural

REALTORS®'

REALTOR-ASSOCIATES®'

The examples below serve to illustrate the rules and requirements discussed above and to emphasize correct use of the MARKS by reference to some incorrect usages. The following examples are all improper uses because they hyphenate, reconstruct, expand, combine, abbreviate, or divide the MARKS:

REAL-I-TOR

REALTORrific

Blue Ribbon Chain, R-E-A-L-T-O-R-S

Rltr.

REALTOR - Assistant

The following examples are all improper uses because they use the MARKS or parts of them to create or construct more complex designs or new terms:

BOB's REAL-TORent OF HOMES

REALTER

REALRITE

REALFER

## Form of Use for the REALTOR® Logo

The form of use limitation also applies to the REALTOR® Logo. The REALTOR® Logo consists of an “R” set in Futura Typeface on a sharply contrasting rectangular background to form a block “R” under which is centered the term REALTOR®. The rectangular block and the term REALTOR® centered under that block must be the same contrasting color.

Users of the REALTOR® Logo must adhere to the identification, color, spacing, and size requirements set forth by NAR. Such requirements are designed to assure that through uniform and consistent use, the public will continue to recognize the REALTOR® Logo as a distinctive mark and not simply a decorative symbol.

Members and Member Boards are encouraged to download the REALTOR® Logo from REALTOR.org to ensure use of the proper form. It’s available at: <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules/the-realtor-logo>.

### *Use of an identifier is required with the REALTOR® Logo*

The term REALTOR® is called an “identifier” when it is used with the block “R” to form the REALTOR® Logo. Members and Member Boards must always include the REALTOR® identifier directly below the block “R” when using the REALTOR® Logo. NAR may use the block “R” without an identifier, but it has not authorized such use by members. Member Boards may request special permission to use the block “R” in connection with their Member Board logos or in architectural uses by obtaining written authorization from NAR’s Legal Affairs department. Such requests should be directed to: [trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org).

### **Proper Form**



**Improper Forms**

(No identifier)



(Bold identifier)



(Undersized block "R")



(Oversized identifier)



(Incorrect spacing)



(Incorrect spacing)



REALTOR®

(Improper color and framing)



*The stylized “R” must sharply contrast in color with the rectangular background and be the same color as the field on which the rectangular background appears*

An element of the REALTOR® Logo is a rectangular block underlying the stylized “R.” This rectangular block must always be a solid color that contrasts sharply with the stylized “R” and the underlying paper stock or other material. With one exception for use of NAR’s official colors, the stylized “R” must be the same color as the field on which the rectangular background appears.

Typically, the rectangular block and REALTOR® identifier appear in a dark color while the stylized “R” is light. It is permissible to reverse the usual color contrast of the REALTOR® Logo to a light block on a dark background if the background is sufficiently dark to insure a high degree of contrast. When the contrasting colors of the REALTOR® Logo are reversed in this way, the usual colors of the block, the stylized “R”, and the term REALTOR® must all be reversed so that both the block and the REALTOR® identifier appear in the light color on the dark background.

NAR has adopted as its official colors REALTOR® Blue and REALTOR® Gold and strongly encourages widespread use of these colors in combination as a means of making the appearance of the REALTOR® Logo uniform and prominent. REALTOR® Blue (PMS 293) and REALTOR® Gold (PMS 873) have been standardized by Pantone, Inc. Any printer can purchase these colors from any licensed Pantone Matching System ink manufacturer. This is preferable to having a printer attempt to independently match the official colors. If the stylized “R” appears in REALTOR® Gold, then the rectangular block must appear in REALTOR® Blue, regardless of the background on which the REALTOR® Logo is being displayed.

Although use of REALTOR® Blue and REALTOR® Gold is strongly encouraged, the REALTOR® Logo may be printed or displayed in any single color provided that the background on which the REALTOR® Logo is to appear is white or a sharply contrasting single color. For example, if dark green ink is chosen for printing letterhead on white paper, the REALTOR® Logo may also appear in dark green.

If two colors are used for printing letterhead or stationery, the darker of the two color choices should be used for printing the REALTOR® Logo. For example, when using dark brown and orange to print letterhead, the REALTOR® Logo should appear in dark brown. More than two colors should never be used to display the REALTOR® Logo unless those two colors are REALTOR® Blue and REALTOR® Gold.

**Proper Form (when used on a dark background)**



**Improper Form (when used on a dark background)**



***The REALTOR® Logo must appear separated from other objects***

To enhance the distinctiveness and recognizability of the REALTOR® Logo, an “area of isolation” should be maintained around each use of the REALTOR® Logo. This area of isolation is an amount of space equal to half the width of the block “R.” This space keeps the REALTOR® Logo separate from other objects, such as typography, illustration, photography, borders, geometric shapes, or the edge of the printed piece. The REALTOR® Logo must never be framed or outlined.





*The elements of the REALTOR® Logo must remain readable and maintain the same relative proportions and spacing*

The size of the REALTOR® Logo is often determined by the intended application, i.e. business cards, stationery, etc., and the manner in which the mark is to be reproduced. However, the elements of the logo—the block “R,” the REALTOR® identifier, and the ®—must remain readable and maintain the same relative proportions and spacing. The size of the registration symbol, “®”, may be increased as necessary to ensure its readability.

**Proper Form (increased size of ®)**



**Improper Form**



The block “R” in the REALTOR® Logo should never be smaller than 0.375 inches or 20 pixels wide. If the REALTOR® Logo is enlarged to more than three feet in width, then the registration symbol must be readable at a distance of 20 feet.

← .375”W →



← 20 pixels →



The REALTOR® Logo is shown below superimposed on a grid to illustrate the proper size relationships among elements. Such a grid illustration should be provided to sign companies, ad agencies and others retained by members or Member Boards as an aid for large scale applications.



## Improper Uses of the REALTOR® Logo

The examples below serve to illustrate the rules and requirements discussed above and to emphasize correct use of the REALTOR® Logo by reference to some incorrect usages. The following example is improper because it redraws, reshapes, traces, tilts, intersects, photographically alters, or otherwise distort the REALTOR® Logo:



The following examples are all improper uses because they use the block "R" or the Futura "R" as part of a company or individual name, or as the first letter of any words beginning with "R," particularly words like "Real Estate," "Realty," or "REALTOR®":



The following examples are all improper uses because they superimpose the REALTOR® Logo over a graphic pattern or design:



The following examples are all improper uses because they combine the REALTOR® Logo with another symbol or device:



The following examples are all improper uses because they outline or frame the REALTOR® Logo:



The following examples are all improper uses because they use an identifier other than one that is approved and have improper size and typeface:



The following example is an improper use because it reverses the contrast of the block "R" without also reversing the contrast of the identifier below it:



The following example is an improper use because it reduces the REALTOR® Logo to the point where either the identifier or the registration symbol is not legible:



## USE OF THE MARKS WITH A MEMBER'S NAME

### Use of the Term REALTOR® with a Member's Name

Members are licensed by NAR to use one or more of the MARKS in connection with or in reference to themselves and their real estate businesses. Use in connection with a member's name is acceptable as long as it is consistent with the guidelines and policies of this Manual.

For example, to comply with the Form of Use Limitation, the MARK must appear in all capital letters and be set off from the member's name by punctuation. To comply with the Context of Use Limitation, the MARK must never be used with a descriptive term or as a vocational description such as a real estate broker, agent, or licensee. The MARKS are not and may never be used as a designation of a person's licensed status.

It has become customary in some areas for one member to address another member as, for example, "REALTOR® Jones." Such use as a letter salutation or signature is acceptable. For example:

#### **Proper Use**

Dear REALTOR® Jim:

Dear REALTOR® Jones and Mr. Doe:

Sincerely,

REALTOR® Smith

A non-member is never permitted to use the term REALTOR® or REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® adjacent to his name on a business card or anywhere else, even if he is employed by or affiliated with a firm that is permitted to use the term REALTOR®.

Association executives and staff may use the MARKS to identify their positions with their Member Boards. For example: John Smith, Association Executive, ABC Association of REALTORS®.

### Use of the REALTOR® Logo with a Member's Name

As with the terms REALTOR® and REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®, the REALTOR® Logo may also be used in connection with a member's name as long as such use complies with the policies and guidelines regarding display of the REALTOR® Logo as set forth in this Manual.

## USE OF THE MARKS WITH A MEMBER'S FIRM NAME

### Use of the term REALTOR® with a Member's Firm Name

Members are licensed by NAR to use one or more of the MARKS in connection with or in reference to themselves and their real estate businesses by using them adjacent to, but not as a part of, a member's firm name. The MARKS may never be incorporated into the legal name of a member's real estate business.

As used throughout this Manual, "firm name" means the local name by which a member's real estate business is distinguished from other firms by the Member Board, the state licensing authority, and the public.

When selecting a firm name, members are strongly encouraged to utilize the words "Realty," "Real Estate," or similar terms that indicate the real estate nature of their business. When these words are used in the firm name, the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® are more clearly and easily perceived as indicators of membership and professional commitment.

The following examples show the proper use and placement of the MARKS in connection with a member's firm name and are permitted:

#### **Proper Use**

Uptown Realty, Inc., REALTORS®  
Smith, Ltd., REALTORS®  
Sunshine Homes, REALTORS®  
Johnson Realty, REALTORS®

The following examples show the improper use and placement of the MARKS in connection with a member's firm name and are prohibited:

#### **Improper Use**

Uptown REALTORS®, Inc.  
Smith REALTORS®, Ltd.  
Sunshine REALTORS® Homes  
Johnson Realty REALTORS®

In the case of firms that are affiliated with a franchise organization or independent offices owned by a conglomerate, the individual firm name serves to distinguish one franchise or conglomerate office from another of the same franchise or conglomerate. Members who work for such firms may use the MARKS in connection with their firm name. However, franchise organizations, conglomerates, and networks are not authorized by NAR to use the MARKS, and members are prohibited from sublicensing such right to them.

If a member's firm is a franchisee or an independent office of a conglomerate, then it would be proper for the MARK to follow the member's firm name, such as: Franchise Company, member's Firm Name, REALTORS® or member's Firm Name, REALTORS®, Franchise Company.

While the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® may be used in connection with a firm name, they may not be used in conjunction with a description of the firm's other lines of business or any other occupation or vocation of the member, even if the other occupation or vocation is part of or related to the member's real estate business.

For example, if a member is also involved in construction or insurance businesses, it is proper to use the MARKS as follows:

**Proper Use**

Jones, Inc., REALTOR®  
Real Estate Broker/Builder

Smith Realty, REALTORS®  
Real Estate Brokerage-Insurance

However, it is improper to use the MARKS as follows:

**Improper Use**

Jones, Inc., REALTOR®/Builder

Smith Realty  
REALTORS® - Insurance

Use of words such as “Builder” or “Insurer” in conjunction with the terms REALTOR® or REALTORS® may mislead the reader into thinking that the term REALTOR® is an ordinary descriptive word which identifies an occupation or vocation.

Finally, if a member’s firm has brokers or salespersons who are not members of NAR, the member may use the terms REALTOR® or REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®, but not the REALTOR® Logo, on business cards or letterhead used by those non-member brokers or salespersons if those terms are used in connection with the firm name and not the name of such individual and it is otherwise clear that the broker or principals of the firm hold REALTOR® membership and not the non-member brokers or salespersons.

## **Use of the REALTOR® Logo with a Member’s Firm Name and Logo**

The REALTOR® Logo may be used adjacent to a member’s firm name and logo as long as the firm logo does not detract from, or compete with, the distinctiveness or identifiability of the REALTOR® Logo. The REALTOR® Logo may not be used in connection with or adjacent to a franchisor or a conglomerate name or logo.

Salespersons who are affiliated with a REALTOR® but who are not themselves members of NAR may not use business cards with the REALTOR® Logo imprinted thereon. This strict prohibition on use of the REALTOR® Logo on business cards of non-members applies even if the REALTOR® Logo is used immediately adjacent to the name of the firm or member with whom the salesperson is affiliated. Any use of the REALTOR® Logo on the business cards of non-member salespeople has been interpreted by

the Board of Directors of NAR as implying that salesperson is, in fact, a member. Therefore, such use is prohibited.

Decorative or script typefaces of copy adjacent to the REALTOR® Logo are not recommended because they compete with and detract from the REALTOR® Logo. In particular, Futura Black, the typeface used for the stylized "R" in the REALTOR® Logo, should never be used in adjacent copy. The following examples are improper uses because they use Futura typeface for the term or copy adjacent to the REALTOR® Logo:

**REALTOR®**



The following typefaces were chosen for their maximum compatibility with Avant Garde Light, the typeface used for the term REALTOR® as it appears under the block "R". They are also recommended for adjacent copy because of their clear, clean graphic character.

**Helvetica Light**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

**Helvetica Medium**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

**Helvetica Bold**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**

**Univers 45 (Light)**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

**Folio Light**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

**Folio Medium**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**

**Folio Bold**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**



## USE OF THE MARKS BY A MEMBER BOARD

### Use of the Term REALTOR® with a Member Board's Name

Member Boards may use the term REALTOR® or REALTORS® in their name only when the Member Board has obtained written authorization to do so from NAR. Such written authorization is routinely given in the Member Board charter and jurisdiction assignment process. Member Boards must seek prior approval and a revision of their authorization in the case of a name change, adoption of a fictitious business name, or in the event of incorporation or dissolution of corporate status.

While an individual member may not use the MARKS as part of a corporate business name, the Member Board is permitted to incorporate using the MARKS provided the Member Board has already obtained written authorization from NAR to use the term REALTORS® in its name. The following examples illustrate typical uses of the term REALTORS® in the Member Board name:

Kenosha Board of REALTORS®, Inc.  
North Carolina Association of REALTORS®, Inc.  
Pueblo Board of REALTORS®, Inc.  
Wisconsin REALTORS® Association, Inc.  
Minneapolis Area Association of REALTORS®, Inc.

### Use of the REALTOR® Logo with a Member Board's Name and Logo

A Member Board may use the REALTOR® Logo adjacent to its name in connection with the title of its publications, services, activities, or functions if the Member Board's name immediately precedes, follows, or is otherwise prominently included in the title of the publication or service.

A Member Board may use the block "R" portion of the REALTOR® Logo in connection with its name or as part of its logo without the REALTOR® identifier appearing below the block "R" only if it obtains prior written permission from the Legal Affairs Department of NAR. Where such approval is granted, the Member Board will be required to execute a written license agreement with NAR expressly authorizing the proposed use of the block "R" without an identifier.

A Multiple Listing Service operated by a Member Board must obtain a license from NAR in order to use the MLS service mark shown BELOW. A copy of the License Agreement for Use of MLS Service Mark by Member Board is available in Appendix 4 of NAR's Handbook on Multiple Listing Policy.



Any questions regarding a trademark license should be directed to NAR's Legal Affairs Department or emailed to [trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org).

## **SPECIFIC USES OF THE MARKS**

### **MARKS May be Used on Merchandise**

Members may distribute or sell merchandise carrying the MARKS as long as such merchandise includes the member's name or firm name.

Member Boards may distribute or sell merchandise carrying the MARKS to the general public if such merchandise also includes the Member Board's name. Member Boards may distribute or sell merchandise carrying the MARKS only to its members if such merchandise does not include the Member Board's name.

NAR has implemented a trademark licensing program under which approved manufacturers and merchants may sell items bearing the MARKS without the name of individual members, their firms, or Member Boards. These manufacturers and merchants have submitted their products for approval by NAR and have entered into a written agreement with NAR. Such products include a notice that the product is licensed by NAR.

It is acceptable for a member to wear an article of clothing or accessory displaying a MARK even if that article does not include the member's name or firm name. For example, wearing a t-shirt that only uses the REALTOR® Logo is using the MARK directly in connection with the member, so such use complies with the rules regarding proper use of the MARKS.

### **News Releases May Use the AP or UPI Style**

Most newspapers follow either the Associated Press (AP) Style Book or the United Press International (UPI) Style Book in preparing news items for publications. These style books do not call for use of full capitals or a federal registration symbol "®" for registered marks. Therefore, it is permissible for a Member Board or member to follow the AP or UPI guidelines when using a MARK in a news release.

News releases should include the definition of the term REALTOR® at the bottom of each page.

## **MARKS May Not be Used as Directory Headings**

The term REALTOR® should never be used as a subject heading in any directories, such as the “Yellow Pages” phone directory, since such usage is tantamount to suggesting that the term REALTOR® identifies a vocation or line of service rather than membership in NAR. Any use of the MARKS in a directory should include the definition of the term REALTOR®.

## **MARKS May Not be Used in Institutional Advertising**

“Institutional Advertising” refers to television, radio, and other media advertising, the benefit of which inures to a multitude of firms or offices which are not commonly owned or not commonly managed and which may be found in more than one Member Board's jurisdiction or in different states. The advertising is generalized in the sense that it does not mention the local firm name nor does it provide specific address or telephone information with regard to each office benefitted. An example is a national television ad promoting the services of franchisees of a particular franchise organization. Uses of the MARKS in Institutional Advertising that benefits offices of members as well as offices of non-members is strictly contrary to the exclusive rights of NAR in the MARKS, so it is prohibited.

NAR's Constitution and Bylaws provide for the licensing of the MARKS to individual members or Member Boards. By special provision of the Bylaws, firms whose principals, partners, and corporate officers hold REALTOR® membership are entitled to use the MARKS in connection with, but not as part of, their firm name. No authority is given to members or their firms to sublicense the right to use the MARKS to parent corporations, franchise organizations, or networks. Thus, it is impermissible and inappropriate for a franchisor organization or a conglomerate to use a MARK in connection with newspaper, radio, or television ads. Even if a franchise requires that all of its franchisees be members of NAR, the franchise is still prohibited from using the MARKS in its institutional advertising.

Members whose offices are owned by or affiliated with conglomerates or franchise organizations have an obligation in furtherance of proper and authorized use of the MARKS to exert their influence in support of NAR's prohibition on the use of its MARKS in Institutional Advertising.

Ads prepared by franchises or conglomerates that do not use the MARKS but provide space for insertion of the local firm name, address, and one or more of the MARKS are acceptable. For example, a franchise television ad may close with specific firms listed by local name and address with one or more of the MARKS used in connection with each firm whose principals, partners, or corporate officers hold REALTOR® membership in NAR.

## MARKS May be Used in Connection with Political Activities

Article V, Section 6 of the NAR Bylaws authorizes individual members to use the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® in connection with activities in support of specific candidates in specific elections as long as the definition of REALTOR® and the identification of those conducting the activity as members of a specific Member Board are included on all materials related to the members' advocacy, unless not reasonably practical; and all such use of the MARKS ceases immediately after the election.

The support of state or federal candidates through fundraising committees or election committees involves compliance with state and federal laws and may require careful coordination with NAR and state associations. There may also be tax law implications. The same is true of lobbying activities. Accordingly, Member Boards are encouraged to seek competent legal counsel and check with NAR's Legal Affairs Department before implementing any activities in these areas.

## The Same Rules Apply to Use of the MARKS on the Internet

The policies and guidelines set forth in this Manual apply to all uses of the MARKS – including use on the internet and in social media. Therefore, Member Boards may only use the MARKS in their domain name or username if used properly in connection with their name or sponsored activities; and members may only use the MARKS in their domain name or username if used properly in connection with the member's name or firm name.

The Limitation on Form requires Member Boards and members to use separating punctuation, all capital letters, and the registered “®” symbol. This Limitation is relaxed when it is not possible or feasible to use the required form in domain names or usernames.

The following examples are all proper uses of REALTOR® by a member named Jane Smith:

### **Proper Uses**

Janesmithrealtor  
Jsmithrealtor  
Smithrealtor  
jane\_smith\_realtor  
realtorjanesmith  
realtorjsmith  
realtorsmith  
realtor\_smith  
chicagoassociationofrealtors  
Chicago\_association\_of\_realtors  
realtorjanechicago  
chicagojanerealtor  
realtor\_jane\_number1

The following examples are all improper uses of REALTOR® because they each include a descriptive work or phrase in connection with the MARK:

### **Improper Uses**

Chicagorealtor  
Yourchicagorealtor  
your\_chicago\_realtor  
cyberrealtor  
virtualrealtor  
realtor\_mom  
realtorsolution  
localrealtor  
top\_chicago\_realtor  
number1realtor  
hotshotrealtor  
residentialrealtor  
commercial\_realtor  
janechicagorealtor  
jane\_the\_realtor  
jane\_a\_realtor

The same rules set forth in this Manual regarding use of the REALTOR® Logo also apply to use of the REALTOR® Logos online—including use as icons for apps and social media profiles. Therefore, a member may use the REALTOR® Logo as an icon for an app or a social media profile if the app or profile is provided in connection with the member's real estate business and the REALTOR® Logo appears adjacent to the member's name or firm name. A Member Board may use the REALTOR® Logo as an icon for an app or profile if the app or profile is provided in connection with the Member Board's publication or services and the REALTOR® Logo appears adjacent to the Member Board's name. Acronyms and abbreviations are not permitted.

For additional resources, check out the Trademark Use in Social Media page on REALTOR.org at: <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules/trademark-use-on-social-media>.

## **TRADEMARK PROTECTION PROGRAM**

NAR has established a comprehensive Trademark Protection Program that is designed to ensure that the MARKS are used only by or in reference to members of NAR and Member Boards and that all uses of the MARKS are proper in form and context. NAR maintains the MARKS through registrations with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, monitors the internet for proper use, and creates new ways to bring awareness to association staff, members, and the general public.

The goals of the Trademark Protection Program are to preserve the federal trademark registration, create and increase the value of goodwill, and maintain the original intended purpose and meaning of the MARKS. In order to achieve these goals, misuses of the MARKS must be recognized, identified, and corrected.

## Member Boards Are Also Responsible for Trademark Protection Program

NAR Bylaws require each Member Board to cooperate and coordinate with NAR in any and all attempts to halt or prevent any unauthorized or improper use of the MARKS. Member Boards are responsible for ensuring that their members use the MARKS in compliance with the license set forth in the NAR Constitution and Bylaws and the policies and guidelines set forth in this Manual. To achieve this, each Member Board should assist in familiarizing its members with the policies and guidelines in this Manual by conducting education sessions for current members and by covering this topic in new member orientation.

NAR created a brief, animated video about how association staff can help protect the REALTOR® trademarks. It's available at: <http://www.realtor.org/videos/why-nar-protects-the-realtor-trademark>.

Under NAR's Trademark Protection Program, Member Boards have two specific responsibilities:

- First, a Member Board must be familiar with this Manual so it can recognize misuses of the MARKS by its members or by non-members.
- Second, a Member Board must accept reports of trademark misuses and take steps outlined here to rectify the problems.

In many cases, a simple letter from the Member Board explaining the violation to the person misusing the MARKS will result in cooperation and compliance by such person.

### **Misuse by a Member**

When a Member Board learns that one of its members is misusing a MARK, the Member Board should conduct an initial investigation to obtain as much of the following information as possible:

- A description or copy of the alleged misuse;
- The person or firm responsible for the use;
- The contact information of such person or firm;
- The date of the use and where it appeared; and
- Whether the use is continuing.

Upon receipt of this information, the Member Board should contact the member to describe the registered status and special meaning of the MARK and request that the misuse cease promptly. Members should also be reminded that their right to use the MARKS is limited to use in connection with their real estate business and must adhere to the policies and guidelines set forth in this Manual. Members often respond positively to such written reminders and correct their misuse. A sample letter that can be sent by a Member Board regarding a member's misuse of a MARK is available at the end of this Manual.

A copy of all correspondence sent or received by the Member Board relating to a misuse of the MARKS should also be sent to NAR's Trademark Protection Coordinator at [trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org). If the

matter cannot be resolved locally or if an impasse develops, NAR may assume primary responsibility for obtaining compliance.

### **Unauthorized Use by a Non-Member**

Non-members are never authorized to use the MARKS in reference to or in connection with their businesses or themselves. One should recognize, however, that certain uses of the MARKS are not unauthorized uses but rather permissible nominal uses, such as when newspapers, magazines, or radio or television programs use the MARKS to accurately and properly identify an individual as a member of NAR or in reference to a Member Board. Such nominal uses should be reviewed to be sure the MARKS are used in the proper form and context.

When a Member Board learns that a non-member is using a MARK, it should send a letter to the unauthorized user explaining that the MARK is a federally registered collective membership mark owned by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® that is reserved for the exclusive use by or in reference to members of NAR, and demanding that the unauthorized use cease promptly. A sample letter that can be sent by a Member Board to a non-member misusing a MARK is available at the end of this Manual.

A copy of all correspondence sent or received by the Member Board relating to a misuse of the MARKS should also be sent to NAR's Trademark Protection Coordinator via email to [trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org). If the matter cannot be resolved locally or if an impasse develops, NAR may assume primary responsibility for obtaining compliance.

### **Misuse by the Media**

It is the duty of each Member Board to notify editors, publishers, and broadcasters of their improper uses of the MARKS in television, radio, and print media. The media must be reminded periodically that the MARKS identify members of NAR and that the term REALTOR® is not synonymous with "real estate broker," "broker," or "real estate agent." The media must also be advised of the registered status of the MARKS and requested to use initial capital letters to distinguish the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® from words of ordinary use.

In the event a Member Board discovers a misuse of the MARKS in the media, it should send a letter to the media outlet providing notification of the misuse and seeking a correction to be issued. A sample letter that can be sent by a Member Board regarding a misuse by the media is also available at the end of this Manual.

A copy of all correspondence sent or received by the Member Board relating to a misuse of the MARKS should also be sent to NAR's Trademark Protection Coordinator via email to [trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org). If the matter cannot be resolved locally or if an impasse develops, NAR may assume primary responsibility for obtaining compliance.

## **Unauthorized Use by a Franchise or Conglomerate Organization**

In the event a Member Board discovers a franchisor or conglomerate organization to be using the MARKS in conjunction with its franchise or other business activities, the Member Board should notify NAR so NAR can address the unauthorized use. All relevant documentation or other materials explaining and evidencing such use should be forwarded to NAR's Trademark Protection Coordinator at [trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org).

## **Unauthorized Use on Merchandise, Publications, or Services**

In the event a Member Board discovers a product, publication, or service bearing the MARKS and is unsure whether the producer of such product, publication, or service is authorized to use the MARKS pursuant to this Manual, the Member Board should notify NAR so NAR can resolve the matter. All relevant documentation or other materials explaining and evidencing such use should be forwarded to NAR's Trademark Protection Coordinator at [trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org).

## **Obtain Written Assurance of Compliance**

In many cases, the Member Board's initial communication to misusers of the MARKS will achieve the desired result: the misuser will agree to correct or terminate the misuse and provide the Member Board with a written assurance of compliance. In other cases, however, the misuser may refuse to comply, ignore the Member Board's requests, or promise, but never deliver compliance.

If the misuser agrees to comply with the Member Board's request, the Member Board should confirm the agreement in writing and thank the misuser for the prompt cooperation. If the misuser agrees to comply, but refuses to provide a written confirmation of compliance, the Member Board should make a detailed record of the situation (i.e., name of misuser, date, time of day, summary of the discussion noting verbatim assurances of compliance given and the proposed timetable for compliance).

A copy of all correspondence sent or received by the Member Board relating to a misuse of the MARKS should also be sent to NAR's Trademark Protection Coordinator at [trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org).



## **Enforcement Action**

If a Member Board does not receive a written confirmation of compliance from the misuser within one month of the date that the Member Board's first letter was sent, the Member Board should request assistance from NAR's Trademark Protection Coordinator who will work with NAR's Legal Affairs Department to obtain written compliance from the misuser.

In addition to investigating complaints received from Member Boards, NAR's Trademark Protection Coordinator receives and responds to misuses reported by members, the public, and trademark monitoring services. Because NAR believes that voluntary compliance is the most beneficial and cost-effective way of protecting and maintaining the MARKS, it has implemented a written cease and desist process to encourage compliance by misusers. However, if compliance or a satisfactory agreement cannot be reached, NAR will initiate a complaint against a member with her Member Board or take legal action as necessary.

### **File Complaint with the Member Board**

A member's failure to adhere to NAR's rules regarding proper use of the MARKS constitutes a violation of that member's duties of membership in the Member Board. If a member refuses to comply with NAR's requests to correct a misuse, the Member Board's Grievance Committee or NAR may file a complaint against the member for violation of a membership duty.

If the Member Board's Professional Standards Committee finds a violation, then the member may be disciplined consistent with Section 14 of the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual, including but not limited to possible suspension or termination of membership or MLS privileges.

### **NAR May Initiate Legal Action**

If a misuser refuses to comply with NAR's request for compliance, NAR may initiate legal action. Such action could take the form of a trademark infringement lawsuit filed in state or federal court. NAR has been successful in obtaining court orders against infringers ordering that they cease and desist misuse of the MARKS and, in many cases, pay NAR damages relating to the infringement and costs associated with the lawsuit, including attorneys' fees.

In addition to other legal actions NAR may pursue, NAR may file a Uniform Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP) complaint against an individual or company that is misusing a MARK in a domain name. When registering a domain name, every website operator agrees to arbitrate disputes regarding the domain name via the UDRP process. Information about the UDRP process is available on the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers website at: <http://www.icann.org/en/help/dndr/udrp>. NAR has had success using the UDRP process whereby infringers have been ordered to cease use and transfer ownership of the infringing domain name to NAR.

## SAMPLE LETTERS FROM MEMBER BOARD

### Misuse by a Member with a Descriptive Word or Phrase

RE: Misuse of the REALTOR® trademark

Dear Sir/Madam:

As [Insert appropriate title (President, CEO, Association Executive, etc.)] of the [Insert Member Board name], it has been brought to my attention that you are misusing the REALTOR® marks in connection with [Insert description of where the misuse appears].

As a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR), you are licensed to use the REALTOR® marks subject to the terms and conditions set forth in NAR's Constitution and Bylaws and in accordance with the policies and guidelines adopted by NAR (collectively, "trademark rules").

NAR's trademark rules expressly prohibit members from using descriptive words or phrases in connection with the REALTOR® marks. Since you are using the REALTOR® trademark in connection with a descriptive word or phrase, such use is improper and must cease promptly.

As a member of NAR, and therefore someone who understands the importance of protecting and promoting our valuable marks, we are confident that you will discontinue your unauthorized use of the marks, and request that you promptly provide us with your written assurance that you will comply with this request by [Insert date by which written assurance must be received].

For more information, visit <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules> and view a brief, animated video explaining proper use of the REALTOR® trademarks.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. We look forward to receiving your early reply.

[Signature of Officer]

cc: NAR Trademark Protection Coordinator ([trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org))

## Unauthorized Use by a Member with a Non-Real-Estate Business

RE: Unauthorized Use of the REALTOR® Trademark

Dear Sir/Madam:

As [Insert appropriate title (President, CEO, Association Executive, etc.)] of the [Insert Member Board name], it has been brought to my attention that you are misusing the REALTOR® marks in connection with [Insert description of where the misuse appears].

As a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR), you are licensed to use the REALTOR® marks subject to the terms and conditions set forth in NAR's Constitution and Bylaws and in accordance with the policies and guidelines adopted by NAR (collectively, "trademark rules").

These trademark rules prohibit use of the REALTOR® marks by members in any manner or for any activities other than in connection with the member's real estate business. According to Article III, Section I of the NAR Constitution, the term "real estate business" includes: real estate brokerage, management, appraising, land development, or building. Since [Insert description of how the MARK is being misused] does not fall within this definition, your use of the REALTOR® trademark in connection with such business is unauthorized and must cease promptly.

As a member of NAR, and therefore someone who understands the importance of protecting and promoting our valuable marks, we are confident that you will discontinue your unauthorized use of the marks, and request that you promptly provide us with your written assurance that you will comply with this request by [Insert date by which written assurance must be received].

For more information, visit <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules> and view a brief, animated video explaining proper use of the REALTOR® trademarks.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. We look forward to receiving your early reply.

[Signature of Officer]

cc: NAR Trademark Protection Coordinator ([trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org))

## Misuse by a Member in Connection with Member's Firm Name

RE: Misuse of the REALTOR® Trademark

Dear Sir/Madam:

As [Insert appropriate title (President, CEO, Association Executive, etc.)] of the [Insert Member Board name], it has been brought to my attention that you are misusing the REALTOR® marks in connection with [Insert description of where the misuse appears].

As a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR), you are licensed to use the REALTOR® marks subject to the terms and conditions set forth in NAR's Constitution and Bylaws and in accordance with the policies and guidelines adopted by NAR (collectively, "trademark rules").

NAR's trademark rules prohibit members from incorporating, registering, adopting, or using a business name that includes the term REALTOR® or REALTORS®. These marks may be used in connection with, but not as part of, your firm name. Therefore, they must be separated by punctuation from your firm name. For example, Smith Realty, REALTORS®, properly uses a REALTOR® trademark in connection with, but not as part of, the firm name, "Smith Realty."

As a member of NAR, and therefore someone who understands the importance of protecting and promoting our valuable marks, we are confident that you will discontinue your unauthorized use of the marks, and request that you promptly provide us with your written assurance that you will comply with this request by [Insert date by which written assurance must be received].

For more information, visit <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules> and view a brief, animated video explaining proper use of the REALTOR® trademarks.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. We look forward to receiving your early reply.

[Signature of Officer]

cc: NAR Trademark Protection Coordinator ([trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org))

## Unauthorized Use by a Former Member

RE: Unauthorized Use of the REALTOR® Trademark

Dear Sir/Madam:

As [Insert appropriate title (President, CEO, Association Executive, etc.)] of the [Insert Member Board name], it has been brought to my attention that you continue to use the REALTOR® trademark although you are no longer a member of our Board.

Membership in the Board of REALTORS® is entirely voluntary and while we sincerely hope you will rejoin the Board, we respect your right to choose not to do so at this time. However, at the same time, we must ask you to respect our rights in the marks we use to identify individuals as members.

As you know the, terms REALTOR®, REALTORS®, and REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®, and the REALTOR® Logo are federally registered collective membership marks owned exclusively by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR). As such, these marks may only be used by members of NAR and the local Board. Your unauthorized use is an infringement of NAR's legal right. Your use is also misleading and therefore may be a violation of the state real estate license laws.

We request that you immediately discontinue your use of the REALTOR® marks, including use of any designation offered by a REALTOR® affiliated organization, until such time as you become a member in good standing of the local Board and NAR. This includes removing REALTOR®, REALTORS®, the REALTOR® Logo, and any REALTOR® designations from your marketing materials, including websites, domain names, social media, advertisements, business supplies, stationery, brochures, and business cards. If you are a principal in your firm, then please ensure that each of your licensees also complies with this request.

Please provide us with your written assurance that you will comply with this request by [Insert date by which written assurance must be received].

For more information, visit <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules> and view a brief, animated video explaining proper use of the REALTOR® trademarks.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. We look forward to receiving your early reply.

[Signature of Officer]

cc: NAR Trademark Protection Coordinator ([trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org))

## Unauthorized Use by a Non-Member

RE: Unauthorized Use of the REALTOR® Trademark

Dear Sir/Madam:

As [Insert appropriate title (President, CEO, Association Executive, etc.)] of the [Insert Member Board name], it has been brought to my attention that you are using the REALTOR® trademark in connection with your business despite the fact that, according to our records, you are not a Member of this board or of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR).

The terms REALTOR®, REALTORS®, and REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®, and the REALTOR® Logo are federally registered collective membership marks owned exclusively by NAR. The marks serve the singular function of identifying and distinguishing members of NAR from all other persons engaged in real estate activities. They are licensed for exclusive use by such members as a means of indicating their membership.

Since you are not a member of our board and your office is located in our jurisdiction, it is our responsibility to advise you that you are not entitled to use [Insert appropriate term REALTOR®, REALTORS®, REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®, or the REALTOR® Logo] in connection with your business and request that you immediately cease doing so.

If you wish to apply for membership, whereby you would become authorized to use the REALTOR® marks pursuant to NAR's rules, we would be most happy to provide you with information regarding application procedures. Unless such application is submitted and membership approved by our Board of Directors, however, your use of the marks is unauthorized and must be discontinued.

Please provide us with your written assurance that you will comply with this request by [Insert date by which written assurance must be received].

For more information, visit <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules> and view a brief, animated video explaining proper use of the REALTOR® trademarks.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation. We look forward to receiving your early reply.

[Signature of Officer]

cc: NAR Trademark Protection Coordinator ([trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org))

## Unauthorized Use on Products

RE: Unauthorized Use of the REALTOR® Trademark

Dear Sir/Madam:

As [Insert appropriate title (President, CEO, Association Executive, etc.)] of the [Insert Member Board name], it has been brought to my attention that you have imprinted the term [Insert appropriate term REALTOR®, REALTORS®; REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®; or the REALTOR® Logo] on [Insert description of the product on which the infringing use appears (e.g. T-Shirts)] that are produced and distributed by your firm and you have not, to our knowledge, been authorized to do so.

The terms REALTOR®, REALTORS®, and REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®, and the REALTOR® Logo are federally registered collective membership marks owned exclusively by NAR. These marks serve the singular function of identifying and distinguishing members of NAR from all other persons engaged in real estate activities. They are licensed for use by such members as a means of indicating their membership status.

Your use of the marks constitutes an infringement of NAR's exclusive rights therein unless you have been properly licensed to use the marks. In the absence of such license, we request that you immediately refrain from any further use of the marks, including any and all production, distribution, or sale of any products bearing the marks. We will appreciate receiving your prompt written assurance that you intend to comply with our request.

Please provide us with your written assurance that you will comply with this request by [Insert date by which written assurance must be received].

For more information, visit <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules> and view a brief, animated video explaining proper use of the REALTOR® trademarks.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

[Signature of Officer]

cc: NAR Trademark Protection Coordinator ([trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org))

## Improper Contextual Use in Email Solicitation

RE: Misuse of the REALTOR® Trademark

Dear Sir/Madam:

As [Insert appropriate title (President, CEO, Association Executive, etc.)] of the [Insert Member Board name], it has been brought to my attention that you are using the REALTOR® trademark in connection with an email solicitation offering your products and/or services. Your use of the REALTOR® trademark is improper and unauthorized, so we request that such use promptly cease.

The terms REALTOR®, REALTORS®, and REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®, and the REALTOR® Logo are federally registered collective membership marks owned exclusively by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR). These marks serve the singular function of identifying and distinguishing members of NAR from all other persons engaged in real estate activities. These marks are licensed for exclusive use by such members as a means of indicating their membership.

In your email solicitation, you use the term REALTOR® not to identify a person as a member of NAR, but as a synonym for real estate agent or broker. The term REALTOR® should never be used interchangeably with the terms “real estate broker,” “broker,” or “real estate agent,” or in any other context which suggests that a person who deals in real estate is a REALTOR® without regard to his or her membership in NAR.

Your use of the REALTOR® marks is unauthorized and may cause confusion as to NAR’s approval, endorsement, or sponsorship of your product or service.

Please remove the term REALTOR® from the email solicitation and any other relevant materials you maintain. On behalf of all of our members, we appreciate your respect for the proper use of the REALTOR® trademark in your solicitations to those involved in the real estate business.

For more information, visit <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules> and view a brief, animated video explaining proper use of the REALTOR® trademarks.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

[Signature of Officer]

cc: NAR Trademark Protection Coordinator ([trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org))



## Improper Contextual Use in Publication

RE: Misuse of the REALTOR® Trademark

Dear Sir/Madam:

The [Insert Member Board name] appreciates your service to the public and the real estate industry as a respected source of real estate news. You can understand our surprise and disappointment to see that the REALTOR® trademark was incorrectly used in your [Insert description of publication in which the improper form appears – including title, date, issue, and link, if appropriate].

As [Insert appropriate title (President, CEO, Association Executive, etc.)] of the [Insert Member Board name], I want to take this opportunity to remind you that the term “REALTOR®” is a federally registered collective membership mark which identifies real estate professionals who are members of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR) and subscribe to its strict Code of Ethics.

Since REALTOR® is a registered mark and serves this special identifying function, it should be used only in reference to real estate professionals who are members of NAR. The term REALTOR® should never be used interchangeably with the terms “real estate broker,” “broker,” or “real estate agent,” or in any other context which suggests that a person who deals in real estate is a REALTOR® without regard to his or her membership in NAR.

In the future, please capitalize the term REALTOR® in the manner specified in the AP and UPI style books and continue to use it only when referring to members of NAR. If you require any assistance in determining if a particular person is a member of NAR, please consult NAR’s member directory available at: <http://www.realtor.org/directories>.

For more information, visit <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules> and view a brief, animated video explaining proper use of the REALTOR® trademarks.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

[Signature of Officer]

cc: NAR Trademark Protection Coordinator ([trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org))

## Improper Form Used in Publication

RE: Misuse of the REALTOR® Trademark

Dear Sir/Madam:

The [Insert Member Board name] appreciates your service to the public and the real estate industry as a respected source of real estate news. You can understand our surprise and disappointment to see that the REALTOR® trademark was not properly capitalized in your [Insert description of publication in which the improper form appears – including title, date, issue, and link, if appropriate].

As [Insert appropriate title (President, CEO, Association Executive, etc.)] of the [Insert Member Board name], I want to take this opportunity to remind you that the term “REALTOR®” is a federally registered collective membership mark which identifies real estate professionals who are members of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR) and subscribe to its strict Code of Ethics.

Since REALTOR® is a registered mark and serves this special identifying function, it should be used only in reference to real estate professionals who are members of NAR and should never be used to refer to real estate brokers, agents, or professionals in general. The mark REALTOR® should also be distinguished from words of ordinary use by capitalization.

In the future, please capitalize the term REALTOR® in the manner specified in the AP and UPI style books and continue to use it only when referring to members of NAR. If you require any assistance in determining if a particular person is a member of NAR, please consult NAR’s member directory available at: <http://www.realtor.org/directories>.

For more information, visit <http://www.realtor.org/logos-and-trademark-rules> and view a brief, animated video explaining proper use of the REALTOR® trademarks.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

[Signature of Officer]

cc: NAR Trademark Protection Coordinator ([trademark@realtors.org](mailto:trademark@realtors.org))