

**BYLAWS**

**OF THE**

**GREATER AUGUSTA ASSOCIATION**  
**OF REALTORS, INC.**

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## **ARTICLE I-NAME**

**Section 1. Name.** The name of this organization shall be Greater Augusta Association of REALTORS, Inc., hereafter 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-OBJECTIVES**

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 VIRGINIA 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, those 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 shall include the Cities of Staunton and Waynesboro and the County of Augusta.

**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 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, or 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, or is licensed or certified to engage in the appraisal of real property, and who maintain or are associated with an established real estate office in the state of Virginia, 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 as described in Section 1(b) of Article IV.

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 board in which one of the firm's principals holds REALTOR membership, shall be required to hold REALTOR membership unless otherwise qualified for Institute Affiliate Membership as described in Section 1(b) of Article IV. (Amended 1/01)

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, or corporate officers, or branch office managers and are associated with a REALTOR Member and meet the qualifications set out in Article V.

**(3)** Corporate officers (who may be licensed or unlicensed) of a real estate brokerage franchise organization with at least one hundred fifty (150) franchisees located with 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 of 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; the right to hold elective office in the local Association, State Association and National Association.

**(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 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 pursuant to Article 17 of the Code of Ethics and the payment of Association dues as established in Article X of the Bylaws. The "Designated REALTOR" must be a sole proprietor, partner, corporate officer or branch office manager acting on behalf of the firm's principal(s) and must meet all other qualifications for REALTOR Membership established in Article V, Section 2, of the Bylaws.

**(b) 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.

**(c) 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. Further, affiliate membership may be granted to licensed or certified appraisers who, if otherwise eligible, do not elect to hold REALTOR membership in the Association, provided the applicant is engaged exclusively in a specialty of the real estate business other than brokerage of real property.

**(d) 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.

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

**(f) 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 Constitutions, Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Association, the State and National Associations, and if elected a Member, will abide by the Constitutions and Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Association, State and National Associations, and if a REALTOR, 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 as specified by Article 17 of the Code of Ethics, and as further specified in 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.

### **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 Membership Committee 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 non-discriminatory 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.(\*)

(\*). NO RECENT OR PENDING BANKRUPTCY is intended to mean that the applicant or any real estate firm in which the applicant is a sole proprietor, general partner, or corporate officer or branch office manager is not involved in any pending bankruptcy or insolvency proceedings or, has not been adjudged bankrupt in the past three (3) years. If a bankruptcy proceeding as described above exists, membership may not be rejected unless the Association establishes that its interests and those of its members and the public could not be adequately protected by requiring that the bankrupt applicant pay cash in advance for Association and MLS fees for up to one (1) year from the date that membership is approved or from the date that the applicant is discharged from bankruptcy (whichever is later). In the event that an existing member initiates bankruptcy proceedings, the member may be placed on a "cash basis" from the date that bankruptcy is initiated until one (1) year from the date that the member has been discharged from bankruptcy.

NO RECORD OF OFFICIAL SANCTIONS INVOLVING UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT is intended to mean that the Association may only consider (a) judgments against the applicant within the past seven (7) years of violations of (1) civil rights laws; (2) real estate license laws; (3) or other laws prohibiting unprofessional conduct against the applicant rendered by the courts or other lawful authorities. (b) criminal convictions if (1) the crime was punishable by death or imprisonment in excess of one year under the law under which the applicant was convicted and (2) no more than seven years have elapsed since the date of the conviction or the release of the applicant from the confinement imposed for that conviction, whichever is the later date.

NOTE: Article IV, Section 2 of the NAR Bylaws prohibits Member Boards from knowingly granting REALTOR or REALTOR-ASSOCIATE membership to any applicant who has an unfulfilled sanction pending which was imposed by another Board or Association of REALTORS for violation of the Code of Ethics. (Adopted 1/01)

**(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, has no record of official sanctions involving unprofessional

conduct,\* 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 non-discriminatory written examinations thereon as may be required by the committee and shall agree in writing that if elected to membership he/she will abide by the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS and by the constitution, Bylaws, and Rules and Regulations of the local Association, State Association, and the National Association.

\*No record of official sanctions involving unprofessional conduct is intended to mean that the Board may only consider: (a) judgments against the applicant within the past three (3) years of violations of (1) civil rights laws, (2) real estate license laws, and (3) or other laws prohibiting unprofessional conduct against the applicant rendered by the courts or other lawful authorities. (b) criminal convictions if (1) the crime was punishable by death or imprisonment in excess of more than one year under the law under which the applicant was convicted, and (2) no more than ten years have elapsed since the date of the conviction or the release of the applicant from the confinement imposed for that conviction, whichever is the later date.

Failure to complete orientation within twelve (12) months after an applicant is advised that he has been elected to membership, or failure to pass any test required by the Committee, will result in automatic suspension of membership until orientation is completed or the test passed, as applicable. Orientation will not be required of a member who has completed new member orientation within the prior twelve (12) months period. A Secondary member who has completed orientation in their Primary Association may review documents provided by the Committee and sign for verification of review in lieu of attending an in person or virtual orientation held by GAAR within 10 days of receipt of documents. These documents include MLS Rules & Regulations, SUPRA lockbox and key documents and Committee descriptions.

**(c)** The Association will also consider the following in determining an applicant's qualifications for REALTOR membership:

1. All final findings of Code of Ethics violations and violations of other membership duties in this or any other 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 any other association or association 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) 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 months from the date that provisional membership is approved. Provisional members shall be considered REALTORS and shall be subject to all of 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)** The board of directors shall review the qualifications of the applicant and the recommendations of the chief staff executive (or duly authorized designee) and then vote on the applicant's eligibility for membership. If the applicant receives a majority vote of the board of directors, he/she shall be declared elected to membership and shall be advised by written notice.

**(c)** The board of directors may not reject an application without providing the applicant with advance notice of the findings, 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/she 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.

**(d)** If the board of directors determines that the application should be rejected, it shall record its reasons with the chief staff executive (or duly authorized designee). If the board of directors believes that denial of membership to the applicant may become the basis of litigation and a claim of damage by the applicant, it may specify that denial shall become effective upon entry in a suit by the association for a declaratory judgment by a court of competent jurisdiction of a final judgment declaring that the rejection violates no rights of the applicant. (NAR Adopted 1/98, Amended 1/05)

### **Section 4. New Member Code of Ethics Program and New Member Fair Housing Training**

Applicants for REALTOR membership and provisional REALTOR members (where applicable) shall complete a 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 365 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.

NOTE: Orientation programs must meet the learning objectives and minimum criteria established from time to time by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS. (Adopted 1/01)

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 the REALTOR membership has been continuous, or that any break in membership is for one (1) year or less.

Failure to satisfy this requirement within 365 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.

## **Section 5. Continuing Member Code of Ethics Program and Fair Housing Training**

Effective January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2021, and for successive three year periods thereafter, each REALTOR member of the 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 State Association of REALTORS, 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 program during any three year cycle shall not be required to complete additional ethics training until a new three year cycle commences.

Failure to satisfy this requirement shall be considered a violation of a membership duty for which REALTOR membership shall be suspended until such time as the training is completed.

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 be automatically terminated. (Adoped 1/01, revised 11/19).

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 they hold 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 they have 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 5 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 transfer fee or reinstatement fee shall be paid upon change of status in an amount established by the Board of Directors from

time to time. 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 of transition. If the transfer is not completed within 15 days of the date the board is advised of the disaffiliation with the current firm, membership will terminate automatically unless otherwise so directed by the Board of Directors.

NOTE: The Board of Directors, at its discretion, may waive any qualification which the applicant has already fulfilled in accordance with the Association's Bylaws.

**(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 quarter in which the member is notified of election by the Board of Directors 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 not inconsistent with these Bylaws, after a hearing as provided in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the Virginia REALTORS. Although members other than REALTORS Members are not subject to the Code of Ethics nor 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 REALTOR Members may, upon recommendation of the Membership Committee, or upon recommendation by a hearing panel of the Virginia Association Professional Standards Committee, be subject to discipline as described above, for any conduct, which in the opinion of the Virginia REALTORS Board of Directors, applied on a non discriminatory basis, reflects adversely on the 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 Virginia REALTORS 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 Virginia REALTORS, 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 Board of Directors, 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, the 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.**

(a) 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 term REALTOR. For purposes of this section, the term "good standing" means the member satisfies the "Obligations of REALTOR Members", 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.

(b) If a REALTOR Member is a principal in a firm, partnership, or 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 re admission to REALTOR Membership, or unless connection with the firm, partnership, or corporation is severed, 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 re admission of the disciplined Member, or unless connection of the disciplined Member with the firm, partnership, or corporation is severed, whichever may apply. Further, the membership of REALTORS other than principals who are employed by or affiliated as independent contractors with the disciplined Member shall suspend or terminate during the period of suspension of the disciplined Member or until re admission of the disciplined Member or until connection of the disciplined Member with the firm, partnership, or corporation is severed, 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 who is other than a principal in a firm,

partnership, or corporation is suspended or expelled, the use of the terms REALTOR or REALTORS by the firm, partnership, or corporation shall not be affected.

**(c)** In any action taken against a REALTOR Member for suspension or expulsion under Section 6(b) 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(b) 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.

**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 Members 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. 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 hold 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 individual(s) licensed or certified with the firm(s) within thirty (30) days of the date of affiliation or severance of the individual.

**Section 13. 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 an investigation in accordance with the procedures of the Association. As used in this Section, harassment means any verbal or physical conduct including threatening or obscene language, unwelcome sexual advances, stalking, action 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. Disciplinary action may include any sanction authorized in the association's Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual. 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.

Harassment in any form is strictly prohibited. Harassment includes inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action, or gesture based on another person's sex, color, race, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and any other protected characteristic.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to: epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and the display or circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual or group based on a protected characteristic.

NOTE: Suggested procedures for processing complaints of harassment are available on line at <http://www.realtor.org>, or from the Member Policy Department. (Amended 5/08)

## **ARTICLE VII – PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND ARBITRATION**

**Section 1.** The responsibility of the Association and of 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 from time to time amended, which by this reference is made a part of these Bylaws, provided, however, that any provision deemed inconsistent with state law 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 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 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.

**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 with the Virginia REALTORS entered into by the Association, which by this reference is made a part of these Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE VIII – USE OF THE TERMS REALTOR AND REALTORS**

**Section 1.** Use of the 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 Member who is a principal of a real estate firm, partnership, or corporation 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 a state contiguous thereto are REALTOR Members of the Association or Institute Affiliate Members as described in Section 1(b) of Article IV.



**(a)** In the case of a REALTOR member who is a principal of a real estate firm, partnership, or corporation 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, partner, corporation officer, or branch office manager of the firm, partnership, or corporation holds REALTOR membership. If a firm, partnership, or corporation operates additional places of business in which no principal, partner, corporate officer, or branch office manager holds REALTOR membership, the term REALTOR or REALTORS may not be used in any reference to those additional places of business. (Amended 1/01)

**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 VIRGINIA 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 VIRGINIA 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 of 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 and REALTORS. The Association shall discontinue use of the terms in any form in its name, upon ceasing to be a 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 has entered into a Cooperative Professional Standards Enforcement Agreement with the Virginia REALTORS. 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 VIRGINIA 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 annual dues for REALTOR Membership, which shall be required to accompany

each application for REALTOR Membership and which shall become the property of the Board upon final approval of the application.

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

**(a)** REALTOR Members. The annual dues of each Designated REALTOR Member shall be \$175.00 plus an amount equal to \$175.00 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 Section 2(a)(1) and (2) of this Article shall not be included in the computation of dues if the DR 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.\*(Amended 1/05)

**(1)** For the purpose of this Section a REALTOR Member of a Member Association 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, partner or corporate officer, or branch office manager of a real estate firm, partnership, or corporation, 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 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, or corporate officer or branch office manager of the entity.

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.

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.

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)** The annual dues of each REALTOR Member other than the Designated REALTOR shall be established annually by the Board of Directors.

**(c)** Institute Affiliate Members. The annual dues of each Institute Affiliate Member shall be as established in Article II of the bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS.

NOTE: The Institutes, Societies and Councils of the National Association shall be responsible for collecting and remitting dues to the National Association for Institute Affiliate Members(\$75.00). The National Association shall credit \$25.00 to the account of a local association for each Institute Affiliate Member whose office address is within the assigned territorial jurisdiction of that association, provided, however, if the office location is also within the territorial jurisdiction of a Commercial Overlay Board (COB), the \$25.00 amount will be credited to the COB, unless the Institute Affiliate Member directs that the dues be distributed to the other Board. The National Association shall also credit \$25.00 to the account of state associations for each Institute Affiliate Member whose office address is located within the territorial jurisdiction of the state association. Local and state associations may not establish any additional entrance, initiation fees or dues for Institute Affiliate Members, but may provide service packages to which Institute Affiliate Members may voluntarily subscribe.

**(d)** Affiliate Members. The annual dues of each Affiliate Member shall be established by the Board of Directors.

**(e)** Public Service Members. The annual dues of each Public Service Member shall be established 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 3.** Dues Payable. Dues for all Members shall be payable annually in advance on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of November and shall be delinquent on November 30. Dues

shall be computed from the first day of the quarter in which a member is notified of election and shall be prorated for the remainder of the year.

**(a)** 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 REALTOR's 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 non paying Member is subject to suspension at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Two (2) months after the due date, membership of the non-paying Member may be terminated at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Three (3) months after the due date, membership of the non-paying 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. Application forms must be submitted as for new applicants for membership. Fees shall be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

**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 resolution of the Board of Directors.

**Section 6.** Expenditures. The Board of Directors shall administer the day to day finances of the Association. Capital expenditures in excess of \$5,000 or available cash, whichever is less, may not be made unless authorized by 51% of the REALTOR Members at a Association Meeting, provided a quorum is present.

**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 Association 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 Emeriti (as recognized by the National Association), Past Presidents of the National Association or

recipients of the Distinguished Service Award and Outstanding Service Award shall be as 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 First Vice President, a Secretary and a Treasurer. The Secretary and Treasurer may be the same person. They shall be elected for terms of one year.

**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 Secretary to keep the records of the Association and to carry on all necessary correspondence with the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS and the VIRGINIA REALTORS.

**Section 3.** Board of Directors. The governing body of the Association shall be a Board of Directors consisting of the Elected Officers; the immediate past President who will serve for a period of one (1) year, and six (6) REALTOR Members of the Association. 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 of one, two and three years, respectively, or for such 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 vacancies. Only REALTOR members of GAAR who have been full time, active members for at least three (3) years may serve as Officers or Directors.

(a) Term Limits. No Director shall serve for more than six (6) consecutive years without a one year absence, except the immediate past President may serve a seventh consecutive year.

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

(a) At least two (2) months before the annual election, a Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Board of Directors. The Committee shall consist of the current President, President-Elect and three REALTOR members who do not currently serve on the Board of Directors. The Nominating Committee shall select at least one and not more than two candidates for each office and at least one and not more than two candidates for each place to be filled on the Board of Directors. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be mailed or delivered to each Member eligible to vote at least three (3) weeks preceding the election. Additional candidates for the offices to be filled may be placed in nomination by petition signed by at least 20% of the REALTOR Members eligible to vote. The petition shall be

filed with the Secretary at least two (2) weeks before the election. The Secretary shall send notice of such additional nominations to all Members eligible to vote before the election.

**(b)** The election of officers and directors shall take place at the annual meeting. Voting shall be by written ballot. If authorized by the Board of Directors, electronically submitted ballots will be accepted on or before a time set by the Board of Directors for the close of voting and communicated to Members in the Notice of the annual meeting. To be accepted, any electronic transmission must set forth the member's personal password. The ballot shall contain the names of all candidates and the offices for which they are nominated.

**(c)** The President, with the approval of the Board of Directors, shall appoint an Election Committee of three (3) REALTOR Members to conduct the election. In case of a tie vote, the issue shall be determined by lot.

**Section 5.** Vacancies. Vacancies among the Officers and the Board of Directors shall be filled by a simple majority vote of the Board of Directors until the next annual election.

**Section 6.** Removal of Officers and Directors. In the event that 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 procedure:

**(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 the reasons 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 REALTOR Members present and voting shall be required for removal from office.

## ARTICLE XII – MEETINGS

**Section 1. Annual Meetings.** The annual meeting of the Association shall be held during September 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 meetings. Unexcused absence from three regular and/or called meetings shall be construed as resignation. Each absence shall be reviewed and voted on by the Board of Directors to determine whether or not the absence is excused.

**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% of the Members eligible to vote.

**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. Notices may be given to Members by any means permitted by law.

**Section 5. Quorum.** A quorum for the transaction of business at all meetings, except Board of Director's meetings, shall be in excess of 20% of the REALTOR Members. A quorum for the Board of Directors' meetings shall be in excess of 50% of the Board of Directors.

**Section 6. Member Voting.** The Board of Directors can require that any vote be by written ballot, and the Board of Directors may authorize ballots to be submitted electronically on or before a time set by the Board of Directors for the close of voting and communicated to Members in the Notice of the meeting. To be accepted, any electronic transmission must set forth the member's personal password.

## ARTICLE XIII – COMMITTEES

**Section 1. Standing Committees.** The President shall appoint from among the REALTOR Members, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors, the following standing Committees and their Chairs:

Association Technology	Lockbox
Awards	Member Outreach
Budget	MLS
Building & Grounds	Public Relations
Community Service	Strategic Plan
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion	Trade Show
Education	YPN
Legislative/JPAC	

Appointments to the Virginia Professional Standards Committee and the Virginia Grievance Committee shall be consistent with the Cooperative Professional Standards Enforcement Agreement entered into with the Virginia REALTORS.

**Section 2. Special Committees.** The President shall appoint, subject to confirmation of the Board of Directors, 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 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. Attendance.** Any Committee member who fails to attend three (3) regular or special meetings of the Committee shall be deemed to have resigned from the Committee and the vacancy shall be filled as herein provided for original appointees.

**Section 6. Executive Committee.** The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the Association; President, President-Elect, First Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. A quorum for the Committee shall be three, one of whom must be the President. The purpose of the Executive Committee shall be to meet at the direction of the President to make recommendation to the full Board of Directors on issues which shall include, but are not limited to, Employee/Personnel issues and Bylaws compliance.

#### **ARTICLE XIV – FISCAL AND ELECTIVE YEAR**

**Section 1.** The fiscal and elective year of the Association shall be the calendar year.

#### **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 a majority vote of the Members. Voting shall be at any regular or special meeting provided a quorum is present, or by written ballot. The substance of any proposed amendment or amendments shall be plainly stated in the call for the meeting. If voting is to be by written ballot, electronically submitted ballots will be accepted on or before the time set by the Board of Directors for the close of voting and communicated to Members in the Notice of the meeting. To be accepted, any electronic transmission must set forth the member’s personal password. The Board of Directors may, at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors at which a quorum is present, approve amendments to the Bylaws, which are mandated by NAR policy.

**Section 2.** Notice of all meetings at which amendments are to be considered shall be given to every member eligible to vote at least one (1) week prior to the meeting by any means permitted by law.

**Section 3.** Amendments to these Bylaws affecting the admission or qualification of REALTOR and Institute Affiliate Members, the use of the term 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 or winding up of affairs of this Association, the Board of Directors, after providing for the payment of all obligations shall distribute any remaining assets to the VIRGINIA REALTORS, or, within its discretion, to any other nonprofit tax exempt organization.

## **ARTICLE XVIII – MULTIPLE LISTING**

**Section 1. Authority.** The Association of REALTORS shall maintain a Multiple Listing Service which shall be subject to the Bylaws of the Board of REALTORS and such Rules and Regulations as may be hereinafter adopted.

**Section 2. Purpose.** A Multiple Listing Service is a means by which authorized Participants make blanket unilateral offers of compensation to other Participants (acting either as subagents, buyer agents, or in any other agency or non-agency capacities defined by law) 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 data bases; and is a facility for the orderly correlation and dissemination of listing information so participants may better serve their clients and the public. Entitlement to compensation is determined by the cooperating broker's performance as a procuring cause of sale (or lease).

**Section 3. Participation.** Any REALTOR member of this or any other Association who is a principal, partner, or corporate officer, or branch manager acting on behalf of the principal, without further qualification, shall be eligible to participate in Multiple Listing upon agreeing in writing to conform to the Rules and Regulations thereof and to pay the 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 offer or accept compensation to and from other Participants or are licensed or certified by an appropriate state regulatory agency 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 or published by a Board Multiple Listing Service where access to such information is prohibited by law.(Amended 11/08)

(\*)NOTE: Generally, Boards of REALTORS, when there is more than one principal in a real estate firm, define the chief principal officer of the firm as the MLS "Participant." Brokers or salespersons other than principals are not considered "Participants" in the Service, but have access to and use of the Service through the principal(s) with whom they are affiliated.

(\*\*)Note: Mere possession of a broker's license is not sufficient to qualify for MLS participation. Rather, the requirement that an individual or firm offers or accepts cooperation and compensation 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 and/or to accept offers of cooperation and compensation made by listing brokers or agents in the MLS. "Actively" means on a continual and on-going basis during the operation of the Participant's real estate business. The "actively" requirement is not intended to preclude MLS participation by a Participant or potential Participant that operates a real estate business on a part time, seasonal, or similarly time-limited basis or that has its business interrupted by periods of relative inactivity occasioned by market conditions. Similarly, the requirement is not intended to deny MLS participation to a participant or potential Participant who has not achieved a minimum number of transactions despite good faith efforts. Nor is it intended to permit an MLS to deny participation based on the level of service provided by the Participant or potential Participant as long as the level of service satisfies state law.

The key is that the Participant or potential Participant actively endeavors to make or accept offers of cooperation and compensation with respect to properties of the type that are listed on the MLS in which participation is sought. 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 make or accept offers of cooperation and compensation. An MLS may evaluate whether a Participant or potential Participant "actively endeavors during the operation of its real estate business" to "offer or accept cooperation and compensation" 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 on a nondiscriminatory manner to all Participants and potential Participants.(Adopted 11/08)

**Section 4. Supervision.** The activity shall be operated under the supervision of the Multiple Listing Committee, in accordance with the Rules and Regulations subject to approval of the Board of Directors.

**Section 5. Appointment of Committee.** The President shall appoint, subject to the confirmation of the Board of Directors, a Multiple Listing Committee of at least nine (9) Members. All members of the Committee shall be Participants in Multiple Listing except, at the option of the local Association, REALTORS or REALTORS-ASSOCIATES affiliated with Participants may be appointed to serve in such numbers as determined by the local Association. The Committee Members so named shall serve two-year terms. The Committee shall select its Chairman from among the members thereof. (The Chairman may be designated by the President).

**Section 6. Joint Working Group.** The President shall serve as the Association representative on the Joint Working Group with Harrisonburg/Rockingham Association of REALTORS and the Charlottesville Area Association of REALTORS.

**Section 7. Vacancies.** Vacancies in unexpired terms shall be filled as in the case of original appointees.

**Section 8. Attendance.** Any Committee Member who fails to attend three (3) regular or special meetings of the Committee, without excuse acceptable to the Chairman of the Committee, shall be deemed to have resigned from the Committee and the vacancy shall be filled as herein provided for original appointees.

## **ARTICLE XIX INDEMNIFICATION AND LIMITATION ON LIABILITY**

**Section 1.** Indemnification of Directors and Officers. Except as provided in Section 2 of this Article, the Association shall indemnify every individual made a party to a

proceeding because he/she is or was director or officer against liability incurred in the proceeding if: (i) he conducted himself/herself in good faith; and (ii) he/she believed, in the case of conduct in his official capacity with the Association, that his/her conduct was in its best interests and, in all other cases, that his conduct was at least not opposed to its best interests (or in the case of conduct with respect of an employee benefit plan, that his/her conduct was for a purpose he/she believed to be in the interest of the participants of and beneficiaries of the plan); and (iii) he/she had no reasonable cause to believe, in the case of any criminal proceeding, that his/her conduct was unlawful.

**Section 2.** Indemnification Not Permitted. The Association shall not indemnify any individual (i) against his/her willful misconduct or a knowing violation of the criminal law or (ii) in connection with a proceeding by or in the right of the Association in which he/she was adjudged liable to the Association except to the extent permitted in Section 4(i) of this Article, or (iii) in connection with any other proceeding charging improper personal benefit to him/her, whether or not involving action in his official capacity, in which he/she was adjudged liable on the basis that personal benefit was improperly received by him/her.

**Section 3.** Effect of Judgment or Conviction. The termination of a proceeding by judgment, order, settlement or conviction is not, of itself, determinate that an individual did not meet the standard of conduct set forth in Section 1 of this Article or that the conduct of such individual constituted willful misconduct or a knowing violation of the criminal law.

**Section 4.** Determination and Authorization. Unless ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction, any indemnification under Section 1 of the Article shall be made by the Association only as authorized in the specific case upon a determination that indemnification of the individual is permissible in the circumstances because: (i) he/she met the standard of conduct set forth in Section 1 of the Article and, with respect to a proceeding by or in the right of the Association in which such individual was adjudged liable to the Association, he/she is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnification in view of all of the relevant circumstances even though he/she was adjudged liable; and (ii) the conduct of such individual did not constitute willful misconduct or a knowing violation of the criminal law.

Such determination shall be made: (i) by the Board of Directors of the Association by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of directors not at the time parties to the proceeding; or (ii) if a quorum cannot be obtained under paragraph (i) of this subsection, by majority vote of a committee duly designated by the Board of Directors (in which designation directors who are parties may participate), consisting solely of two or more directors not at the time parties to the proceeding; or (iii) by special counsel: a. selected by the Board of Directors or its committee in the manner prescribed in paragraph (i) or (ii) of this subsection; or b. if a quorum of the Board of Directors cannot be obtained under paragraph (i) of this subsection and a committee cannot be designated under paragraph (ii) of this subsection, selected by majority vote of the full Board of Directors, in which

selection directors who are parties may participate; or (iv) by the members, but directors who are at the time parties to the proceeding may not vote on the determination.

Authorization of indemnification, evaluation as to reasonableness of expenses and determination and authorization of advancements for expenses shall be made in the same manner as the determination that indemnification is permissible, except that if the determination is made by special legal counsel, authorization of indemnification and evaluation as to reasonableness of expenses shall be made by those selecting such counsel.

**Section 5.** Advance for Expenses. The Association shall pay for or reimburse the reasonable expenses incurred by any individual who is a party to a proceeding in advance of final disposition of the proceeding if: (i) he/she furnished the Association a written statement of his good faith belief that he/she has met the standard of conduct described in Section 1 of this Article and a written undertaking, executed personally or on his/her behalf, to repay the advance if it is ultimately determined that indemnification of such individual in the specific case is not permissible; and (ii) a determination is made in the manner specified in Section 4 that the facts then known to those making the determination would not preclude indemnification under this Article. An undertaking furnished to the Association in accordance with the provisions of this section shall be an unlimited general obligation of the individual furnishing the same but need not be secured and may be accepted by the Board without reference to financial ability to make repayment.

**Section 6.** Indemnification of Employees and Agents. The Association may, but shall not be required to, indemnify and advance expenses to employees and agents of the Association to the same extent as provided in this Article with respect to directors and officers.

**Section 7.** Limitation on Liability of Directors and Officers. In accordance with Section 13.1-870.1 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, or any successor provision thereto, in any proceeding brought by or in the right of the Association or brought by or on behalf of members of the Association, the liability of, and the damages assessed against a director or officer of the Association arising out of a single transaction, occurrence or course of conduct shall not exceed the amount of compensation received by the director or officer from the Association during the twelve months immediately preceding the act or omission for which liability was imposed; provided however, a director or officer who serves the Association without compensation for his services shall not be liable for damages in any such proceeding; and provided further, however, that the liability of a director or officer shall not be limited as provided in this Section 7 if the director or officer engaged in willful misconduct or a knowing violation of the criminal law.

**Section 8.** Definitions: In this Article:

"Director" and "officer" mean an individual who is or was a director or officer of the Association, as the case may be, or who, while a director or officer of the Association is or was serving at the Association's request as a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee or agent of another foreign or domestic corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other enterprise. A director or officer shall be considered to be serving an employee benefit plan at the Association's request if his/her duties to the Association also impose duties on, or otherwise involve services by, him/her to plan or to participants in or beneficiaries of the plan.

"Individual" includes, unless the context requires otherwise, the estate, heirs, executors, personal representatives and administrators of an individual.

"Expenses" includes but is not limited to counsel fees.

"Liability" means the obligation to pay a judgment, settlement, penalty, fine, including any excise tax assessed with respect to an employee benefit plan, or reasonable expenses incurred with respect to a proceeding.

"Official capacity" means: (i) when used with respect to a director, the office of director in the Association; (ii) when used with respect to an officer, the office of the Association held by him/her or (iii) when used with respect to any employee or agent, the employment or agency relationship undertaken by him/her on behalf of the Association. "Official capacity" does not include service for any foreign or domestic corporation or other partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other enterprise.

"Party" includes an individual who was, is or is threatened to be made a named defendant or respondent in a proceeding.

"Proceeding" means any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative and whether formal or informal.

**Section 9.** Provisions Not Exclusive. As authorized by the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act, the provisions of this Article are in addition to and not in limitation of the specific powers of a corporation to indemnify directors and officers set forth therein. If any provision of this article shall be adjudicated invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, such adjudication shall not be deemed to invalidate or otherwise affect any other provision hereof or any power or indemnity which the Association may have under the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act or other laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**Section 10.** Effect of Amendment of Article. The amendment or repeal of the provisions of this Article shall not deny or limit indemnification hereunder of an individual against liability incurred in a proceeding as a result of conduct before amendment or

repeal of the same or delete the limitation provided herein on the amount of such liability or increase the amount of such liability to an amount greater than the amount provided herein.

**Section 11.** Application of Article. The provisions of this Article shall apply to liability incurred by an individual who is a party to a proceeding as a result of conduct before and after resolution of the same.

## **ARTICLE XX – LOCKBOX SYSTEM**

**Section 1. Authority.** The Association of REALTORS shall maintain a Lockbox System which shall be subject to the ByLaws of the Association of REALTORS and such Rules and Regulations as may be adopted.

**Section 2. Purpose.** The purpose of the Lockbox System is to provide a reasonably secure system of accessing properties in the owners' absence.

**Section 3. Participation.** The Lockbox System shall be an activity of the Association. Every REALTOR and REALTOR-ASSOCIATE and every non-principal broker, sales licensee and licensed or certified appraiser affiliated with a REALTOR, shall be eligible to hold a key, subject to their execution of a lease agreement with the Association. In the case of non-principal brokers, sales licensees, and licensed or certified appraisers, the lease agreement shall be cosigned by the designated REALTOR or the office's broker of record.

**Section 4. Supervision.** The Lockbox System shall be operated under the supervision of the Lockbox System Committee subject to the approval of the Board of Directors and in accordance with the Rules and Regulations.

**Section 5. Appointment of Committee.** The President shall appoint, subject to confirmation of the Board of Directors, a Lockbox Committee of a minimum of three (3) Licensees. All Members of the Committee shall be Designated REALTORS (Brokers) or Licensees who are affiliated with and have consent of Designated REALTORS (Brokers) to serve on the Committee. The Committee members so named shall serve two-year terms, the original appointments being divided between one-year terms and two-year terms. The Committee shall select its Chairman from among the members thereof, unless the Chairman is designated by the President.

**Section 6. Vacancies.** Vacancies in unexpired terms shall be filled as in the case of original appointees.

**Section 7. NAR Minimum Security Measures.** The Greater Augusta Association of REALTORS, Inc. adopts Section 7.31 "Minimum Security Measures for Common Lock Box Systems of Boards or Board Multiple Listing Services" of the National Association of REALTORS as found in the Handbook on Multiple Listing Policy, as from time to time amended, which by this reference is made a part of the ByLaws. Any Rules and Regulations adopted in connection with the Lockbox\_System and all agreements mandated thereby shall conform to these Minimum Security Measures at all times.

NAR Approved: February 1, 2018

Beginning 2019, Bylaws are now Certified to NAR by March of every year and are not submitted for approval.

Revised: November, 2019

Certified: March, 2020

Certified: March, 2021

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GAAR Amendment: September, 2022

GAAR Amendment: September, 2023

GAAR Review: February, 2024 (No changes)

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Certified: January, 2025