

the REALTOR® Report



News for you from the ND Association of REALTORS®
January 7, 2021

CE FAQ – No Mandatory Topic for 2021

For any education questions you may have please read the updated 2021 Continuing Education FAQ here.
<https://www.ndrealtors.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CE-FAQ-2021.pdf>

Read the Newest NDAR Newsletter Online!

Hard copies of the recent December edition of the NDAR Newsletter were sent to all member offices across ND, but we realize not everyone is visiting their offices on a regular basis right now. If you haven't had the chance to see it – read it here! Find out who won REALTOR® of the Year, Good Neighbor Award, and the new NDAR leadership for 2021. Plus great updates from each local board in the state and also 2021 Convention of the Dakotas information -- and much more!

Read it HERE

<https://www.ndrealtors.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Realtor-Dec-2020-web-ready.pdf>

NAR, DOJ Settlement Explained

The recent settlement that NAR reached with the Department of Justice is a lot of information to soak in, and we are here to help you understand all of the implications of the agreement. Learn about NAR's settlement with the DOJ regarding MLS rules and commissions [here](#). Plus, read these FAQs from NAR regarding the settlement [here](#).

NDHFA Releases Study on Current State of ND Housing

North Dakota Housing Finance Agency (NDHFA) has released "The Current State of Housing in North Dakota," a study of the affordability of the state's single and multifamily housing, the impacts of COVID-19, and housing challenges faced by vulnerable populations in 2020.

Study data was gathered from state, federal, academic and association sources to provide an unbiased report of North Dakota's current housing landscape.

Go [here](#) to read through the study.

NAR to Host Training on Changes to Code of Ethics

NAR will host monthly trainings to provide guidance on the changes to the Code of Ethics that were approved by the NAR Board of Directors on November 13, 2020, and to provide an opportunity to ask questions of our policy experts.

An event reminder from Zoom will be emailed prior to each session with a link to join the meeting. If you miss an email, the same link is used for each session so you can revisit a previous email to attend any meeting. These trainings will be recorded, and will be posted online shortly after each session.

Click [here](#) to register for these trainings.

2021 Homeownership Forum - NDHFA

To provide their real estate partners with an educational opportunity in early 2021, North Dakota Housing Finance Agency (NDHFA) will co-host a series of virtual workshops with Genworth Mortgage Insurance and the Mortgage Guaranty Insurance Corporation.

The Homeownership Forum will be hosted virtually allowing for wide participation by North Dakota lenders and real estate agents and related housing professions, and a unique program will be offered each day. These forums will be held on February 11th and February 18th, 2021, each from 10:00am to 12:00pm. More information, including registration information, will be released later this month.

Fraudulent Calls Are Not from NAR

Please be aware that robocalls and texts from numbers claiming to represent “NAR health insurance” don’t originate from NAR, which will never make unsolicited calls to enroll them in an insurance program or solicit their personal information. Please note that NAR has legitimate insurance offerings available through the REALTOR Benefits® Program. Learn more [here](#).

Applying for Leadership Program

NAR is accepting applications through Feb. 12 for the [2022 Leadership Academy](#). This program identifies, inspires, and mentors emerging leaders from local and state associations. It also allows future leaders to experience multiple facets of leadership and define their leadership style. If you are an emerging leader, go online and apply today.

Fairhaven: A Fair Housing Simulation is Live

Fairhaven: A Fair Housing Simulation is an interactive online simulation where learners confront discrimination in real estate from the point of view of both agent and client. This simulation is made available at no cost.

In the fictional town of Fairhaven, agents work against the clock to sell homes, confronting different scenarios where discrimination gets in the way. Learners make choices about how to handle each scenario and receive feedback they can apply to their daily business interactions. In an innovative approach, the course also places agents in the role of a client experiencing discrimination. The client point-of-view scenarios are paired with powerful testimonials illustrating the impact of housing discrimination in real people's lives.

NAR members can navigate to <https://fairhaven.realtor> and log in using their NAR single sign-on credentials to launch the platform. The training takes 60-100 minutes to complete, depending upon the learner's performance.

Avoiding Fair Housing Pitfalls

Common scenarios, such as providing a buyer with school performance information or taking a pocket listing, can open you up to potential discrimination issues. NAR is addressing these fair housing concerns with its [ACT initiative](#). Click the link to find out more today.

Cyber Crime Resources for 2021

NAR's insurance broker, AON, provided us with a report about a sharp increase in identity theft and unemployment fraud. According to the report, phishing attacks have increased 600% since February and ransomware attacks rose 148% in March alone.

Given the rise in cybercrime, please keep these resources in mind:

- [Window to the Law: Preventing Cybercrime During COVID-19](#)
- [Cybersecurity Checklist](#)
- [Data Security and Privacy Toolkit](#)
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5 Issues to Watch in 2021

Maintaining independent contractor status, ensuring COVID-19 relief for businesses, and protecting REALTORS® in anti-money laundering policies are key areas NAR's Business Issues Policy Committee will focus on in 2021. Read more about key business policy issues for 2021 [here](#).

100 Days to Greatness® - Awesome New Benefit

As part of our continued efforts to provide valuable resources for members, NAR partnered with Buffini & Company to launch [100 Days to Greatness®](#), a 14-week training program featuring industry expert Brian Buffini. The program is aimed at newer agents looking for a firm foundation and those returning to the business after a hiatus—but the program will also serve those looking to take their business to the next level.

Exclusive Member Benefit: NAR Members receive a benefit of \$100 off the 100 Days to Greatness Program. Brokers can offer 100 Days to Greatness as a companion program to their onboarding processes to help give agents a strong foundation in their business.

New Benefit: Life Insurance

Introducing member-exclusive group term life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment insurance, now available through the REALTOR Benefits® Program. Benefits include negotiated group rates, and there's a range of coverage amounts to suit your needs.

Go [here](#) to read more about your new life insurance options.

Year-Round Safety Resources

Want to help yourself avoid risky situations that could mean the difference between life and death? Visit the [REALTOR® Safety Program](#) year round for tools, tips, and resources to keep yourself safe on the job.

The goal of the REALTOR® Safety Program is to reduce the number of safety incidents that occur in the industry, so every REALTOR® comes home safely to his or her family every night. We will accomplish this goal together with our members by improving the Safety Culture in the industry: Talk about safety; create a safety plan and follow it; and encourage your fellow REALTORS® to do the same.

Get Ready for Taxes: Steps to take now to make tax filing easier in 2021

The IRS is encouraging taxpayers to take necessary actions this fall to help them file their federal tax returns timely and accurately in 2021, including special steps related to Economic Impact Payments (EIP).

An important first step to getting taxes ready is to gather all tax records. Having records organized makes preparing a tax return easier. It may also help discover potentially overlooked deductions or credits. A special page outlines steps taxpayers can take now to make tax filing easier in 2021.

IRS makes it easier to set up payment agreements; offers other relief to taxpayers struggling with tax debts

The IRS announced a number of changes designed to help struggling taxpayers impacted by COVID-19 more easily settle their tax debts with the IRS.

The IRS will automatically add certain new tax balances to existing Installment Agreements, for individual and out of business taxpayers. This taxpayer-friendly approach will occur instead of defaulting the agreement, which can complicate matters for those trying to pay their taxes.

To reduce burden, certain qualified individual taxpayers who owe less than \$250,000 may set up Installment Agreements without providing a financial statement or substantiation if their monthly payment proposal is sufficient.

Reminder to all taxpayers: Gift cards are not used to make tax payments

Gift cards are a popular and convenient gift for all occasions. They are also a tool that scammers use to steal money from people. Scammers often target taxpayers by asking them to pay a fake tax bill with gift cards. They may also use a compromised email account to send emails requesting gift card purchases for friends, family or co-workers. The IRS reminds taxpayers gift cards are for gifts, not for making tax payments.