

5 MYTHS ABOUT VA LOANS p. 19 • COMING-SOON RULES p. 14

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DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE NEW DISCLOSURE?

Find out which properties require this notice p. 16

STAYING
SAFE
DURING
SHOWINGS p. 23



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CONTENTS

23 FEATURE

STAY SAFE OUT THERE

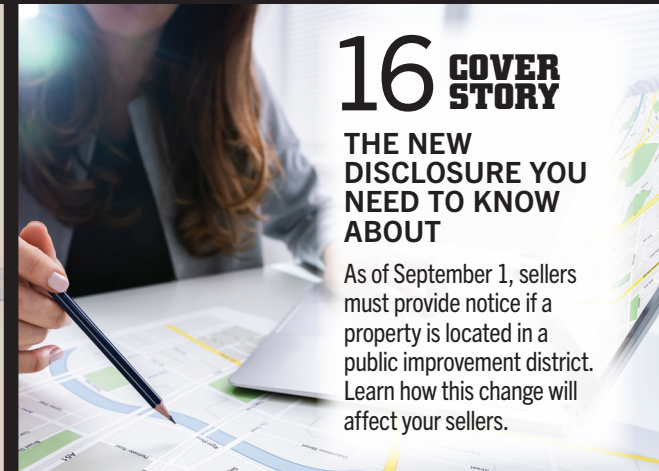
Do you have a plan if your open house or showing turns dangerous? Learn some strategies to always be prepared.



16 COVER STORY

THE NEW DISCLOSURE YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

As of September 1, sellers must provide notice if a property is located in a public improvement district. Learn how this change will affect your sellers.



20 FEATURE

MEET THE 2021 REALTORS® TO WATCH

The four honorees are recognized for their professionalism, excellence in leadership, and community involvement. Learn more about what makes each one stand out.



INSIGHTS

- 4 Chairman: Infinite work of Texas REALTORS®
 Homestead exemption applies in more instances
- 5 New HOA laws

BUSINESS

- 6 How is it possible to have high sales and low inventory?
 What a difference a decade makes
- 7 What goes into converting hotels into housing
- 8 Brokers: Ways you can maximize your agents' potential

Factors to consider in choosing a safer car

Can you be a successful part-time real estate agent?

LEGAL & ETHICS

- 10 When do past repairs become defects to be disclosed?

- 12 How TREC's recovery funds protect consumers
 Avoid trouble from copyright infringement

Your Forms:
Information About Property Insurance for a Buyer or Seller

- 13 Fact or Fiction:
 Do inspectors have to determine the presence of mold?

Must you include the designated broker's name in advertisements?

- 14 What you need to know about "coming soon" listings

SHARE THIS

- 27 Questions to ask before you buy in an HOA

TAKE 5

- 28 Tips to avoid or extinguish burnout



19 FEATURE

DEBUNKING THE MYTHS AROUND VA LOANS

Don't let common misconceptions cause a deal to fall through. Take a closer look at the truth behind VA loans.

24 FEATURE

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Thousands of attendees logged on for free CE credits and an inspiring speech from Jim "Mattress Mack" McIngvale. Learn more about the relevant and hot topics covered.





Chairman

Infinite Work: Texas REALTORS®

Recently, Texas REALTORS® leaders began the transition process to the 2022 Leadership Team. The same scenario takes place at your local REALTOR® association as well as at our National Association of REALTORS® as we anticipate the leadership of Texas's own Leslie Rouda Smith as 2022 NAR president. This natural, evolutionary process is a thought-provoking one. Are we at the end? Or are we at the beginning?

In his book *The Infinite Game*, Simon Sinek says that true leadership doesn't have a start and a finish, a beginning and an end. And that the best leaders understand that they play a short-term role in a long-term journey.

The true value of an organization is measured by the desire others have to contribute to that organization's ability to keep succeeding, not just during the time they are there, but well beyond their own tenure.

– Simon Sinek

Sinek's first two points ring true for Texas REALTORS®:

- Serve a significant purpose
- Protect people.

As times change, the organization transforms, and leadership cycles forward, it is refreshing and assuring to know that regardless of the names and faces on the Leadership Team, Texas REALTORS® will always be about the business of advancing REALTORS® and the communities we serve through advocacy, professionalism, and resources.

Stay tuned. There are great things for all of us as the torch is passed to those who will carry it forward.

M. Jolly
Marvin Jolly

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION EXPANDED

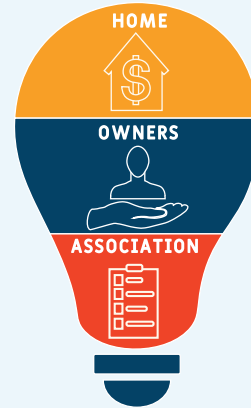
New homeowners will have a way to lower their property's taxable value and save on their property taxes next year.

A new law effective January 1, 2022 will provide property tax relief by allowing homebuyers to file for homestead exemptions in the year when they purchase the property. Currently, new homeowners must wait until the following year to file for the exemption.

Texas REALTORS® supported this legislation, which unanimously passed both chambers of the 87th Texas Legislature.



NEW HOA LAWS



Several new REALTOR®-supported homeowners association reform laws took effect September 1. These changes will bring more balance between the rights of property owners and their property owners' associations.

The 87th Texas Legislature passed these changes as Senate Bill 1588, which was authored by Sen. Bryan Hughes and Rep. Chris Turner.

- Fees are capped for delivery of subdivision information, including the initial resale certificate (at \$375) and updated resale certificates (at \$75).
- TREC will create a publicly accessible central database of Texas HOAs by December 1, 2021. HOAs that have filed management certificates in county records before December 1, 2021 are required to file with TREC by June 1, 2022.
- HOAs are required to maintain websites with management certificates and meeting information and notifications.
- HOAs that have at least 60 lots or contract with a management company are required to file dedicatory instruments with the county and provide certain contact information on all dedicatory instruments and management certificates.
- Property owners have new protections from negative credit reporting when a fine or fee is in dispute, and HOAs are required to give a detailed report of charges and offer a payment plan before reporting delinquencies.
- New laws improve some conflicts of interest within HOA

architectural review boards.

- HOAs are barred from requiring access to lease agreements and are only allowed to request a tenant's contact info and lease beginning and end dates.
- HOAs are required to solicit bids for contracts for services over \$50,000.
- HOAs are barred from prohibiting certain pool safety enclosures, the installation of certain security measures on an owner's private property, or certain religious displays.
- HOA boards are required to provide members with timely notice about meetings.
- New laws improve due process in dispute resolution and provide additional legal avenues when seeking resolution from a dispute with an HOA.

REALTORS® MADE THE DIFFERENCE

The passage of monumental HOA reform legislation wouldn't have happened without you. Texas REALTORS® launched a call for action via email to all members as the bill was moving through the legislative process, providing a convenient way for REALTORS® to urge their representatives to support SB 1588. **The call for action resulted in more than 12,500 supportive messages—a record-high response.**

In addition, the website myhoastory.com collected real-world stories from homeowners and REALTORS® about the challenges they've faced with HOAs.


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HIGH SALES AND LOW INVENTORY? HOW?



At first glance, the Texas housing market is showing two seemingly contradictory trends: strong sales *and* record low inventory in many metros. You might ask: Don't you need lots of inventory to generate high sales volume?

The answer, according to Texas Real Estate Research Center research economist Jim Gaines, is that there are plenty of homes selling—they are just selling so fast that only a few homes appear available at any given time.

"A lot of what's happening is the properties are being sold almost as soon as being listed. And when I say as soon as, I'm talking about the same day or within a week. By the time those properties hit the system, by the time the statistics are calculated and computed, they don't really show up as listings. They show up as being sales, or at least contracts pending."

Gaines compared the situation to just-in-time inventory in manufacturing. "You don't even get a chance to even count it as unsold inventory."

Most of the metros and secondary markets in Texas are experiencing very high demand for houses. "The demand is being fueled by high employment, very low unemployment, and people moving to the state from out of state and from out of the country," says Gaines. "That robust migration into the state has slowed down a little bit but it hasn't stopped."

Historically low interest rates have made homeownership particularly attractive. "Expected rate increases are not going to be enough to really suppress the demand side of the equation," he notes.

Gaines says Texas won't get back to a balanced market until demand falls to match the level of supply, the state adds "magnitudes" of new housing to meet demand, or some combination of the two.

When that happens, the big question is whether prices fall or simply level off.

"Yes, we've had very high-level prices achieved, but we don't see the kind of impact to occur that would necessarily cause those prices to collapse," Gaines says. "So we think that they're not necessarily going to collapse, but they may start leveling off. If you're buying a house today thinking you're going to get anywhere from 5% to 10% appreciation every year for the next 10 years, forget it."



Understanding Months of Inventory

Months of inventory is a ratio used to describe available inventory in the housing market. It's the number of homes listed for sale compared to the average number of homes being sold every month. For example, if your market had 10 homes listed and averaged two sales a month, there would be five months of inventory.

Six months inventory is often cited as a balanced market, but economists consider five to seven months balanced, says Jim Gaines, research economist at the Texas Real Estate Research Center.

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TURNING HOTELS INTO MULTIFAMILY HOUSING

Multifamily housing is an obvious adaptive reuse for vacant hotels and motels. But what goes into converting commercial properties into housing inventory?

NAR offers insights and best practices in *Case Studies on Repurposing Hotels/Motels into Multifamily Housing*. The May report includes survey results from commercial members who worked on these projects from 2018 to 2020 as well as five case studies that describe the conversion process.

A lack of supply has caused rental housing to become increasingly unaffordable, especially to low-income households, the report says. In Texas, gross rent is 38% of the median household income among low-income renters.

Of the survey respondents' projects, 60% were multifamily housing, workforce housing, housing for veterans, or housing for health care workers. Senior housing and assisted living made up another 11%.

Seventy percent of the finished projects offered either market-rate housing (35%) or a mix of market-rate and affordable housing (35%). Thirty percent only offered below market-rate prices.

The majority of affordable housing in the U.S. takes advantage of low-income housing tax credits and other federal tax incentive programs, the report says. However, lodging can be converted without using those credits. Developers can pursue private funding or equity financing. Commercial

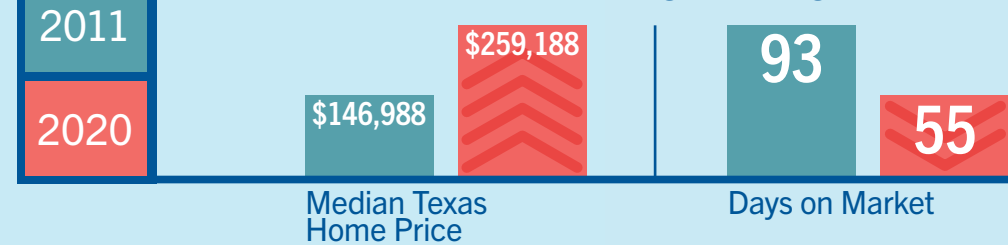


lenders, tax abatement, and public-private partnerships are also options.

Fifty-five percent of survey respondents' projects required rezoning. Zoning regulations determine where affordable housing can be constructed, the report continues. Meeting zoning requirements for a new intended use can be daunting and expensive. They also may need to obtain a zoning variance.

To read the report, visit nar.realtor/research-and-statistics/research-reports.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DECADE MAKES



Median Texas Home Price

Days on Market

See similar stats—including year-by-year numbers for 25 local markets—in *A Decade in Texas Real Estate* at texasrealestate.com/research.



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4 WAYS TO MAXIMIZE AGENTS' POTENTIAL

When your agents succeed, you succeed. But how can you, as a broker, help them reach their full potential? Here are areas to focus on.

Give Them Purpose

Know what drives your brokerage and explain it to agents—for example, “We help first-time buyers achieve their goal of owning a home.” With a shared purpose, everyone will be working toward the same results.

Set Clear Expectations

Part of agents' training should be outlining specific goals and expected performance. Share your brokerage's targets for productivity and how they factor into those benchmarks. Discuss what types of activities take priority.

Avoid Micromanagement

Communicate expectations, provide necessary training, and then get out of the way. If you are overly concerned with minor details or have trouble letting go of control, you will discourage agents' decision-making and undermine their judgment and expertise. Eventually, they will be afraid to act without prior approval—and you lose any added value that person would bring to your brokerage.

Be Open to Questions and Ideas

Supporting your agents will help them thrive, and an obvious way to do that is being available to answer questions and provide advice. But support can also be a willingness on your part to listen to new ideas about your business. Just knowing that you're open to changes and improvements to the brokerage—even if they never suggest any—creates an environment where agents feel empowered.



CHOOSING A SAFER CAR



You may think a car with a good crash rating is safe, but that rating might only apply against similar cars. Some crash ratings—most notably front crash ratings—cannot be used to compare cars in different classes due to weight differences. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) notes that a larger vehicle that weighs more “provides better crash protection than a smaller, lighter one, assuming no other differences.” In tests run by the IIHS in 2019, two smaller vehicles with good crash ratings performed poorly in crash tests against midsize and large cars.

If vehicle safety is one of your priorities when you purchase a new vehicle, the ratings provided by the IIHS and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) are helpful. However, it's important to understand their limits.

CAN YOU BE A SUCCESSFUL PART-TIME REAL ESTATE AGENT?

According to the 2020 Profile of Texas REALTORS® Members, 49% of Texas REALTORS® worked less than 40 hours a week. Having the flexibility for other obligations is a great benefit, but can you still have a profitable real estate career? While the answer is yes, the adage “the more work you put in, the more you get out” applies.

2020 Median gross income based on hours worked per week:



1% of members working less than 20 hours per week made \$250,000 or more

18% of members working 60 hours or more per week made \$250,000 or more

Read the full member profile report at texasrealestate.com/research

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LEGAL & ETHICS

WHEN DO PAST REPAIRS BECOME DEFECTS TO BE DISCLOSED?

A case study

by Lisa Scoble



A seller contacted a real estate agent to act as the seller's agent in a residential home sale. At various times over the years, the seller would notice water intrusion in the front door area. The seller would make repairs himself by re-caulking the front door and window area.

The leaking and repair cycle occurred three or four times in total, but the problem never completely went away. The seller viewed the repairs as simply a home maintenance issue. The seller never hired a contractor to investigate and fix the problem. One month after closing on the sale of the home, a fierce rainstorm produced significant leaking in the front door and front window area of the home.

Disclose a "Fixed" Problem?

The seller's disclosure notice asks if the seller is aware of any defects in the roof or windows, among many other areas of the property. The seller asked the real estate agent whether the past leaking and repairs needed to be disclosed, telling the agent that the leaking had last occurred about two years ago but had been fixed. The agent advised the seller that if the past leaking was fixed, then it did not need to be disclosed. The buyer sued the seller, and the seller filed a third-party complaint against the real estate agent alleging that the agent had instructed the seller on how to complete the disclosure form.

Don't Weigh In on Disclosure Issues

The seller's disclosure notice says the seller acknowledges that the statements in the notice are true to the best of the seller's belief and that no person, including a broker, has instructed or influenced the seller to provide inaccurate information or omit any material information.

In this case, the agent gave an opinion, implicitly if not explicitly, to the seller about what qualified as a defect. This opinion was given in good faith with no intent to hide information or trick the buyer. Nevertheless, the agent did not think clearly about what was being said and whether a repeated problem that has been "fixed" is close enough to a defect or whether to advise the seller to seek specific legal or a contractor's advice.

After lengthy litigation, the seller settled with the plaintiff-buyer for a substantial sum. The real estate agent made a modest contribution to the settlement via the agent's insurance carrier after their deductible was exhausted on legal fees.

Consider Your Options

Ideally, you should not get involved at all in the seller's completion of the seller's disclosure notice unless you know of an undisclosed defect. It is the seller's responsibility to complete the document.

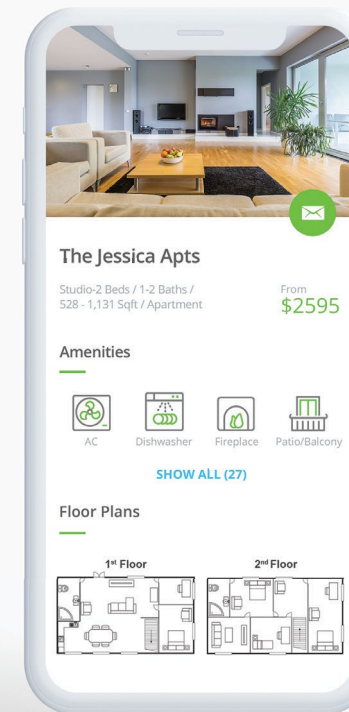
The Texas Real Estate Commission says to review the seller's disclosure notice to make sure the seller has answered all questions and has filled in relevant information. If the seller has left some items undisclosed, you should ask the seller to complete the missing disclosure items. If the seller is unwilling to disclose known defects, you and your broker should decide whether this is a listing you wish to market, as this likely violates the law.

LISA SCOBLE is vice president of program business for Pearl Insurance, a Texas REALTORS® E&O risk management partner.



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Job cost tracking		✓
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TREC MAY PAY DAMAGES IF LICENSE HOLDERS CANNOT

What happens if a client sues an agent or broker and wins, but the license holder can't pay the awarded damages? Clients who find themselves in that situation can apply to the Texas Real Estate Commission, which maintains two "funds of last resort" to cover out-of-pocket damages.

The Real Estate Recovery Trust Account covers damages caused by brokers, sales agents, easement/right-of-way agents, or a license holder's employees. Payments are capped at \$50,000 per transaction with a maximum of \$100,000 per license holder for multiple transactions.

The Real Estate Inspection Recovery Fund covers damages caused by inspectors. Payments may not exceed \$12,500 per transaction with a maximum of \$30,000 per license holder for multiple transactions.

Only certain conduct qualifies for reimbursement:

- Recovery trust account criteria includes when a license holder engages in misrepresentation, dishonesty, or fraud when selling, buying, trading, or leasing real property in their own name, or for their spouse, parents, siblings, or children. Other criteria include negligence or incompetence, dishonesty or bad faith conduct, and material misrepresentation concerning a significant defect known to the license holder that would be a significant factor to a reasonable and prudent buyer in making a decision to purchase real property.
- Inspection recovery fund criteria includes negligence and accepting an assignment if the employment or a fee is contingent on reporting a specific, predetermined condition of the improvements to real property or specific findings other than what the inspector knows to be true when the assignment is accepted. Acting in a dishonest or fraudulent manner, or in a dual capacity as inspector and undisclosed principal or broker/sales agent, also qualifies.

Real estate consumers who seek TREC funds must take several legal steps before applying. They must file suit within two years of the events of the claim, receive a final judgment against the license holder for damages, obtain and file an abstract of judgment, and obtain a writ of execution demanding payment. Consumers may only apply if the license holder does not have the funds required to pay the damages.

Learn more at trec.texas.gov/public/real-estate-recovery-funds.

AVOID TROUBLE FROM COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT WITH DMCA SAFE-HARBOR PROVISION

Members of Texas REALTORS® have been served with cease-and-desist letters and threatened with lawsuits related to their brokerage websites displaying copyrighted photos through the IDX feed from their MLSs.

That's the kind of situation the safe-harbor provision of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) was designed to address. The safe harbor applies to content on your website that you don't control but that infringes someone else's copyright. As long as you comply with the safe harbor's requirements, you are protected from liability for copyright infringement.

Texas REALTORS® has a free model policy for members with information about the DMCA to help you comply with the safe harbor. Designating an agent with the U.S. Copyright Office is one requirement. Posting certain contact information on your website is another requirement.

To download the free model policy, visit texasrealestate.com > For REALTOR® Members > Legal & Ethics > Resources > Manuals and Guides.



Your Forms

Share the **Information About Property Insurance for a Buyer or Seller** form (TXR 2508) with your clients to educate them about the affordability and availability of property insurance. The form encourages buyers to promptly take the steps outlined in the form to obtain property insurance after entering into a contract to avoid closing delays and additional costs. This form can be given to buyers and sellers in residential, commercial, and farm & ranch transactions. **Information About Property Insurance for a Buyer or Seller** is one of more than 130 forms exclusively available to Texas REALTORS®.



Photos & Images © Yuri Kaczkovsky, © Vitalii Vodolazkiy, © Boyko Pictures, © Oleksandr - stock.adobe.com

Fact or Fiction?

A real estate inspector is not required to determine the presence or risk of mold.

FACT. The Texas Real Estate Commission's standards of practice for real estate inspectors do not require inspectors to determine the presence, absence, or risk of mold, mildew, lead-based paint, asbestos, corrosive or contaminated drywall, or any other environmental hazard.

Legal Hotline

800-873-9155

Agents who are sponsored by business entity brokerages have called to ask if they must include the designated broker's name in their advertisements. The answer is no. The TREC rules consider the entity name shown on the business entity brokerage license to be the "broker's name" for the purpose of complying with TREC's advertising rules. Additionally, a DBA of the business entity, if registered with TREC, may be used to satisfy the broker's name requirement. The name of the designated broker for a business entity is not required to be included on the advertisement.

—Ryan Bauman, staff attorney



New E&O Program with Lower Premiums For Our Most Popular Coverage Bundle

Use code "TR50" to save \$50

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Call 800.880.2747 to customize a policy for your office

*Qualification and restrictions apply. Retention payment is required if Damages are paid. Previous transactions covered if you have continuous E&O insurance. All coverage is subject to Underwriting and other qualifications. Read the policy for a full comparison of coverage and benefits. Discount code must be presented at time of purchase. Not applicable on previous policy purchases. Texas License No.: 17030



LEGAL & ETHICS

BEFORE YOU POST THAT “COMING SOON” SIGN ...



You may call them coming-soon listings, pocket listings, or something else, but many in the real estate industry call them a problem. To address the growing use of coming-soon listings—and growing discontent with the practice—NAR in May 2020 adopted the Clear Cooperation Policy, which helps ensure all consumers have access to the same housing opportunities.

But how does the Clear Cooperation Policy work? And what if an MLS has added a “coming soon” or similar status? Find out below.

NAR CLEAR COOPERATION POLICY

What does the Clear Cooperation Policy say?

The policy states that within one business day of marketing a property to the public, the listing broker must submit the listing to the MLS for cooperation with other MLS participants. Business days exclude Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

What is considered public marketing?

Public marketing means any time the listing information is provided outside the listing brokerage. It can include fliers displayed in windows, yard signs, digital marketing on public facing websites, brokerage website displays (including IDX and VOW), digital marketing (email), and multi-brokerage listing sharing networks.

Can a seller or listing broker opt out of the policy’s obligations?

No.

Does the Clear Cooperation Policy prohibit office exclusives?

No. Direct promotion of the listing between license holders affiliated with the sponsoring broker—and one-to-one promotion between these license holders and their clients—is not considered public marketing.

Common examples include divorce situations and celebrity clients. The listing broker is allowed to market a property among the license holders affiliated with his or her listing brokerage. However, if an office exclusive is displayed or advertised to the general public, the listing agent is then required to comply with the policy.

COMING SOON STATUS

If an MLS has established a “coming soon” status that shares listing data with all MLS participants, does that comply with the cooperation requirements of the policy?

Yes. Listing the property as “coming soon” will comply with the Clear Cooperation Policy. Be sure to check that your MLS has such a status.

Can a broker decide whether a listing can be marked as “coming soon” in the MLS?

No. The decision to list a property as “coming soon” should be the seller’s. Otherwise, a listing bro-

ker may be at risk of violating the Code of Ethics, breaching fiduciary duties outlined in TREC rule 531.1, and possibly violating fair housing laws. TREC advertising rules may also apply. “Coming soon” status is not intended to give the listing broker a competitive advantage and cannot be used to circumvent the Clear Cooperation Policy.

Can a broker list property in the MLS as “coming soon” without a listing agreement?

No. The MLS rules require a broker to have a signed listing agreement or certification before submitting a property to the MLS, even if it’s not ready to show.

Can a listing broker show a “coming soon” home to one agent but not others?

Yes, but only if the seller directs the listing broker to allow the showing. Otherwise, a property listed as “coming soon” should not be open to showings. Also, be careful to avoid any practices that violate—or may appear to violate—fair housing rules, such as restricting individuals belonging to protected classes from viewing the property.

Can a “coming soon” property go under contract before going active in the MLS?

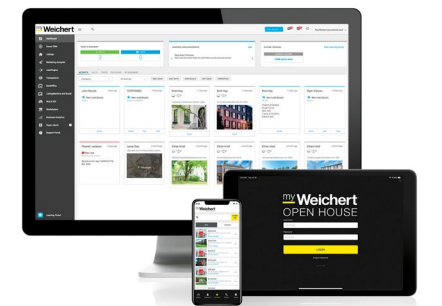
Yes. If the sellers wish to sell the property before the listing goes active, it is their right to do so. However, MLS rules may still require that the sale be reported to the MLS.

Photo: ©MichaelW - stock.adobe.com

Yes,
our tools
do make a difference.

Our innovative tools can make your business soar. If you want to be great, you need great tools. Look no further. Weichert® gives you an incredible set of tools to help you succeed both in the office and on the go. Work smarter with our powerful listing presentation, polished marketing materials and the industry-leading myWeichert® powered by the kvCORE platform – the #1 lead gen system available. Generate more leads. Engage more buyers and sellers. Build better relationships. Weichert tools really do make a difference. Put them to work for you. Give your local Weichert office a call today or visit jobs.Weichert.com

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Weichert®

THE NEW DISCLOSURE YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

Sellers of all types of properties in Texas now have to provide an additional notice if a property is located in a public improvement district.

As of September 1, 2021, Texas sellers are required to provide a new notice to buyers when selling property located in a public improvement district (PID). If a seller fails to provide the required notice, a buyer will have the right to terminate the contract. The seller also may be subject to other penalties. Texas Real Estate Commission and Texas REALTORS® sales contracts have been updated, and TREC has promulgated a new PID notice to meet the new requirements. These new PID notice requirements are similar to current municipal utility district (MUD) notice requirements.

What is a PID?

A public improvement district is a special district created by a city or county under the authority of Chapters 372 or 382 of the Texas Local Government Code. The statutes allow for a city or county to levy a special assessment against properties within the district to pay for improvements to the properties within the district.

What types of property do the new PID notice requirements apply to?

All real estate sales transactions, including resale, new construction, condominiums, commercial, and unimproved property.

What must the PID notice contain?

Specific information about the PID where the property is located, such as the name of the PID and the name of the municipality or county that authorized the PID. Buyers are required to sign the notice as evidence of receipt.

When must the notice be delivered to the buyer?

Sellers of real property located in a PID must provide a notice to buyers prior to the execution of the sales contract. The notice may be given separately or as an addendum to the contract. A separate copy of the notice must also be signed by both sellers and buyers at closing.

What happens if a seller does not deliver the notice prior to execution of the contract but delivers it after execution?

Buyers may terminate the contract at any time prior to closing. If the buyer does not terminate the contract and closes on the property, the buyer may not subsequently sue for damages.

What happens if the seller does not provide the notice, but the buyer receives the notice at closing?

If a copy of the notice is executed at closing, and the buyer closes on the property, the buyer waives the right to terminate and may not subsequently sue for damages.

What happens if the buyer never receives the notice?

Buyers who do not receive the notice may terminate the contract at any time prior to closing. If the buyer does not terminate the contract, the buyer can file a lawsuit for damages after closing. The buyer may file a suit for damages requiring the seller to return all costs related to the purchase of the property to the buyer with the buyer reconveying the property back to the seller. Alternatively, the buyer may file a suit against the seller for damages in an amount not to exceed \$5,000. These penalties are similar to current penalties applicable to the failure to provide a MUD notice.

What contracts have changed to implement this new requirement?

TREC updated its residential sales contracts, including the *One to Four Family Residential Contract (Resale)* (TXR 1601, TREC 20-16) and *Unimproved Property Contract* (TXR 1607, TREC 9-15), to reflect the new statutory requirement for sellers to provide a separate notice. Texas REALTORS® updated several sales contracts, including those pertaining to new residential condominium and commercial transactions, with the identical language found in the updated TREC contracts to reflect the new statutory requirement.

When using the updated contracts, sellers will be required to attach the new PID notice as an addendum if the property is located in a PID.

What notice form does a seller use to provide this notice?

Each PID is required to maintain and file with the county clerk a service plan that includes information about the PID. When a PID next updates its service plan, it must include a copy of the PID notice completed with the required information. Once available, sellers may use this notice to satisfy the requirements of the statute. The service plan and completed PID notice will typically

be publicly available on the PID website.

Additionally, TREC has promulgated a new PID notice form, *Addendum Containing Notice of Obligation to Pay Improvement District Assessment* (TXR 1955, TREC 53-0). The TREC PID

notice requires certain information about the PID to be filled in on the form. Use of the TREC form is voluntary, meaning license holders can use this form or use another notice that meets the requirements of the statute, such as the notice filed by the PID with the service plan. Note that the date on the TREC PID notice is November 8, 2021, even though the notice requirements went into effect September 1. That's because TREC approved its notice for emergency use beginning September 1 and anticipates finalizing the form at its November 8 meeting.

Because sellers are required to provide the notice beginning September 1, 2021, but PIDs are not required to file a copy of the completed notice until they next update their service plans, there may be a period where it will be necessary to search online for the information required to complete the TREC PID notice. Agents may have sellers sign the *Notice of Information From Other Sources* (TXR 2502) when assisting a seller in completing the PID notice form.

What information must be included if a seller is using the TREC PID notice?

- Property address
- Name of the public improvement district
- Name of the municipality (and city council) or county (and commissioners court) that approves and levies assessments
- The statute the PID was created under, which will be either Subchapter A, Chapter 372 of the Local Government Code or Chapter 382 of that same code.
 - Most PIDs are created under Chapter 372 of the Local Government Code. Chapter 382 has limited applicability. Only Bexar County and Comal County can create PIDs using Chapter 382. (Cities within Bexar and Comal Counties must use Chapter 372.) The Bexar County special improvement districts website currently shows several public improvement districts that were created using Chapter 382. Visit bexarcospecialimprovementdistricts.com for details. You can contact Comal County for current improvement district information in that county. For properties located in PIDs outside of Bexar or Comal counties or PIDs created by cities within Bexar and Comal counties, "Subchapter A, Chapter 372, Local Government Code" should be inserted on the PID notice.

As the listing agent, can I fill out the TREC PID notice on behalf of my seller?

Yes. Agents may have sellers sign the *Notice of Information From Other Sources* when assisting a seller in completing the PID

Sellers of real property located in a PID must provide a notice to buyers prior to the execution of the sales contract.

notice form. This is distinct from a seller's disclosure notice, with which an agent should not assist a seller.

How can I determine if the seller's property is located in a PID?

The new law requires PIDs to file a copy of the completed PID notice as part of the PID's service plan. These service plans must be filed with the county clerk of the county in which the PID is located. Sellers can use the filed PID notice

to provide to buyers. However, filing of the service plans will occur over the next year through August 2022 as PID service plans become due. (PIDs are required by law to update service plans annually.)

In the meantime, there are several ways to determine if a property is located in a PID. The MLS is a good place to start because it is searchable by property address. In the MLS, look under the *Taxing Jurisdiction* tab for a specific property. Tax information on the MLS is imported from

county appraisal district (CAD) records. Many CADs, although not all, will show if a property is located in a PID along with the name of the PID. Determining if a new home is located in a PID may require more digging. There may be significant delays from the time a PID is created before it appears in CAD records. For new homes, the builder may be a good source to determine if the property is in a PID. If no information is in the MLS for a property, you can also search the websites of the city and the county where the property is located. Most city and county websites include information about the PIDs created under their jurisdictions, including maps showing the boundaries of the PIDs. Finally, the seller's tax bill may show whether the property is subject to a PID assessment. (Texas REALTORS® is working with industry partners to ensure PID information is available and easy to locate.)

How does a seller determine the name of the city or county that created the PID?

The website for the PID will provide the name of the city or county that authorized the PID and approves and levies assessments. An MLS or CAD website may have a direct link to the PID website. If not, an internet search of the name of the PID should locate the PID website. The PID website may be part of the city or county website.

You may also search online for the PID service plan. The service plan for the individual PID will contain the necessary information and be publicly available on the PID website.

Are any sellers exempted from providing the PID notice?

The requirement to provide the PID notice does not apply to a transfer:

- Under court order or foreclosure
- By a trustee in bankruptcy

- By an owner to the lender or by a trustor to a beneficiary under a deed of trust
- By a lender or a deed of trust beneficiary that acquired the property under a deed of trust sale, court ordered foreclosure, or deed in lieu of foreclosure
- By a fiduciary in the course of the administration of a decedent's estate, guardianship, conservatorship, or trust
- From one co-owner to another of an undivided interest in the property
- To a spouse or blood relative of the seller
- To or from a governmental entity
- Of only mineral interest, leasehold interest, or security interest.

What if a PID service plan is not filed as required?

Sellers, title companies, real estate brokers, examining attorneys, and any agents, representatives, or people acting on their behalf are not liable for damages for failing to provide the notice to a buyer if the city or county failed to file the PID service plan with the county clerk in accordance with the statute.

What if the incorrect notice is unintentionally provided?

Sellers, title companies, real estate brokers, examining attorneys, and any agents, representatives, or people acting on their behalf are not liable for damages for unintentionally providing a notice that is not the correct notice under the circumstances before execution of a sales contract, or at or before closing.

What if the information in the PID service plan is incorrect?

Sellers, title insurance companies, real estate brokers, examining attorneys, vendors of property and tax information, lienholders, and any agents, representatives, or people acting on their behalf are entitled to rely on the accuracy of the service plan last filed by the PID. Information taken from the service plan is presumed to be correct as a matter of law.

When representing buyers, should agents also research whether the property is located in a PID to protect buyers even if no notice is provided by the seller or listing agent?

It is a good idea for buyer's agents to inform their clients of the potential for property being located in a PID and confirm whether a PID notice is required for a specific property the buyer is interested in.

Texas REALTORS® forms help

The General Information and Notice to a Buyer and Seller (TXR 1506) discusses PIDs. Use that form to discuss with your clients whether the property might be located in a PID and the new disclosure requirements for such properties. ★

Buyers who do not receive the notice may terminate the contract at any time prior to closing. If the buyer does not terminate the contract, the buyer can file a lawsuit for damages after closing.

WHAT YOUR CLIENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT VA LOANS

Don't let outdated or incorrect information bias your buyers and sellers.

There's a lot of skepticism around Veterans Administration loans in the housing market. Buyers, sellers, and even some real estate agents may not have all the facts, especially about the appraisal process for VA loans. Kevin Parker, vice president of field mortgage at Navy Federal Credit Union, addresses common misconceptions.

Myth: The VA Inspection and Appraisal Process Takes Too Long

VA loans require VA-certified appraisers. There may be fewer appraisers in your area who are qualified to appraise for VA loans, Parker says. The larger issue is that there's an appraiser shortage industrywide. Fewer people are becoming appraisers, and the requirements to do so have become stricter. "Texas is one of those markets where the appraisal turnaround times are a lot slower overall—not just VA loans, but conventional loans, too." Many people want appraisals to buy or refinance a home, and there aren't enough appraisers to help them quickly.

Myth: There's Going to Be More Bureaucracy Involved

"I think sometimes the misconception comes from outside of real estate ... that because the VA loan is a government product, somehow that's going to equal more bureaucracy and make it more difficult to get." Parker says that in many cases, a VA loan has competitive pricing and a streamlined process thanks to digitized certificates of eligibility and appraisal documentation. Lenders can offer VA loans to borrowers with lower credit scores because the VA shares some of the loan risk.

Myth: VA Appraisals Come in Lower Than Conventional Appraisals

Parker says there's no evidence to suggest properties appraised for VA loans are valued lower than properties appraised for conventional loans.

Enacted in 2010, the Dodd-Frank Act prohibits anyone from influencing appraisals and requires lenders to communicate with appraisers through an appraisal management company. "Today, lenders are all on a level playing field."

YOUR VA LOAN BUYERS CAN STILL CLOSE WITH A LOW APPRAISAL

Federal law requires purchase contracts involving FHA or VA financing to include the language in Paragraph 4 of the *Third Party Financing Addendum*. The buyer's right to terminate due to a low appraisal cannot be waived by the parties. The seller should understand that a VA or FHA buyer could terminate the contract if the appraisal is lower than the sales price. **The VA or FHA buyer does have the option to complete the transaction after receiving the low appraisal by bringing additional cash to closing.** The seller could ask for a much larger option fee as compensation if the buyer backs out.

—Texas REALTORS® legal staff

Myth: VA Loans Have a Bunch of Extra Fees

VA loans don't allow lenders to charge certain so-called junk fees such as processing fees, according to Parker.

Myth: VA Interest Rates Are Not as Good as Conventional Loans

"More times than not, if you compare apples to apples—meaning the same origination fee or loan amount—the VA loan rate is better than a conventional loan rate by about a quarter to a half percent," Parker says. Lower interest rates mean lower mortgage payments.

If your clients are still apprehensive about VA loans, put the loans to the test, Parker says. "We recommend buyers go out and get three different loan estimates from three different lenders." The loans could be conventional, VA, or a combination. Then buyers can compare for themselves. ★

REALTORS® to Watch

Four REALTORS® have been selected to be honored as the 2021 REALTORS® to Watch. The award goes to REALTORS® under the age of 40 for their excellence in leadership, community involvement, and everything else that makes a well-rounded young professional in real estate.

“We had some excellent candidates for the award this year, and these four honorees really earned it,” says Texas REALTORS® 2021 Chairman Marvin Jolly. “It continues to inspire me to see how the honorees promote the REALTOR® brand with their professionalism and dedication to real estate. They’re giving back to their communities in some really amazing ways, and their association involvement is a significant demonstration of their commitment to improving the industry.”

“I’m proud to see these REALTORS® to Watch be recognized for their achievements so far, and I look forward to hearing about the amazing things they will continue to do in the future.”



Bart Stockton
MetroTex

Bart Stockton’s real estate roots run deep. “I remember accompanying my grandmother on property showings and open houses as well as organizing and filing around the office,” he says. “I feel

fortunate to grow up in a family that both valued and helped people realize the dream of homeownership. I knew early on that I wanted to be a part of that.”

A defining characteristic of Stockton’s career is his appreciation for education. He worked alongside his uncle at a family brokerage and real estate school while taking college courses to become a secondary teacher; that’s when he caught the real estate bug.

“I’m an information sponge!” says Stockton. “I love nothing more than learning new things about real estate, even if it’s obscure or not practical to what’s going on at the moment.”

He earned his real estate license in 2003 at the age of 20 and quickly joined his local association because of “the strong value that my uncle and grandmother placed on the REALTOR® brand, mark, and mission.”

“That value was instilled in me and continues to drive me and our company to be more than merely real estate practitioners,” he says.

Stockton manages nearly 100 agents in three offices, and although he is certainly a leader in his position, he describes himself as a reluctant one. He doesn’t seek out leadership positions, but he steps up to further the mission of an organization when the need arises.

Nevertheless, Stockton has extensive experience in leadership positions among industry associations, his church, and civic organizations. The satisfaction of a job well done and leaving something better than how he found it are driving forces when it comes to how he leads.

“I’m fond of telling my agents and students that there is a big difference between 10 years of experience and one year of experience repeated 10 times. I help agents realize that if this is going to be a career, they must look for the learning potential in every transaction.”

In 2008, Stockton received TREC certification to teach qualifying and continuing education courses. He also writes and teaches his own courses and was the contributing editor for a real estate textbook from a national publisher. He even takes courses that he himself teaches to watch other instructors and learn from their styles and experiences to improve his own skills.

“I believe that everyone I meet has something that they can teach me, if I will only get out of the way and let it happen.”

Jessica McCreary
Houston



“When I decided to become a REALTOR®, I knew it came from my most basic instinct, which is to help others,” Jessica McCreary says. “I thrive in being someone’s advocate.”

For McCreary, mentorship is the constant thread that runs through her experience in real estate. When she began her career in 2009, her mentor told her to find a niche and become an expert in it. So McCreary took off in the specialty of estate sales.

“It was an area of real estate many agents had not yet tapped into, and it allowed me to get listings in some of the more elite neighborhoods of Houston, which can be difficult as a new agent,” she says.

McCreary earned her broker’s license in 2015 and started her boutique real estate firm and property management company.

McCreary says one of the industry challenges she had to overcome was her age: she earned her license at 22 and became a broker of her own business when she was just 28.

“Being a new agent in real estate, it is already challenging to get steady business and leads coming in. But you couple this with young age, and it is even more challenging to set yourself apart in an already extremely competitive field because inexperience is assumed,” she says.

McCreary threw herself into association involvement, often participating in Houston Association of REALTORS® committees. She completed training with the Texas REALTORS® Leadership Program (TRLP) and the West Houston Leadership Institute. She also served on the Agent Leadership Council at Keller Williams Memorial for three years, during which time she taught classes to new agents and participated in top-producing panels.

“It was during that time that I found I had a passion for mentoring other agents,” she says. “I sincerely wanted to see them succeed, and I have brought this passion to my brokerage. I see myself more as a mentor than a manager.”

She excels in an entrepreneurial environment, where growth and change are regular aspects of the job. She holds numerous designations and regularly takes classes to stay up to date on new trends and topics.

“I move with intention, and I put into action every goal I set for myself and the brokerage,” she says. “I know that everything I have done in the last 12 years has served a purpose and led me right where I need to be to continue this journey.”



Jessica Rumbaugh
Austin

"I'm the girl who owns way more boots than heels and is happy to muddy up a pair for you while I get the gate," Jessica Rumbaugh says.

Rumbaugh specializes in rural properties with an emphasis on client education and helping to connect

clients with the right resources to meet their goals and be successful landowners. For the last two of her seven-plus years of real estate, she has been a broker and owner of her own business in rural residential properties, farm & ranch, and recreational and hunting properties.

Her interest in the land market came naturally—she has well over 100 years of family history in agriculture and is a fourth-generation farmer and rancher.

She decided to become a real estate agent after having a negative experience selling her home. The agent who helped Rumbaugh sell her home left her feeling pressured into poor situations and unhappy with the experience overall. She channeled her frustration into motivation and took it upon herself to do her own research on the industry and processes.

Seven months later, she got her license. From that day forward, she vowed to always put her clients first, listen to their concerns, answer every question, and treat everyone she encounters in a transaction with integrity and respect.

"I often think about that agent and how we were treated, and I am thankful for the experience because it pushes me to be better in an industry that I otherwise may never have considered as a career," she says.

Her business focus is on client education. Rumbaugh's blog blossomed into a full repertoire of resources for clients and the public. She is also more than happy to assist a fellow REALTOR® with any rural property questions they might have. The pandemic has piqued interest in land sales, as more customers consider leaving the city for rural property, and Rumbaugh says many of her new clients have found her online through her educational resources.

Rumbaugh is active in her community and industry. She has extensive experience on local, state, and national committees and farm & ranch associations, and is also actively involved with the REALTORS® Land Institute. She has won various awards, including the Excellence in Agriculture award with the Texas Farm Bureau, a Texas Proclamation by her state senator for her accomplishments, and a County Activity of Excellence award for organizing youth livestock shows online after COVID-19 canceled the county fair.

"All I wanted to do was show up and do what I could to preserve our community and be a voice to help make it better," she says. "I never would have dreamed I would receive recognition for what I've done."

Jonathan Lindley
Greater McAllen



Jonathan Lindley started taking pre-license courses in high school—before he was old enough to even take the exam. Although he was a bit tentative at first, he found his footing and hasn't looked back.

"Fast-forward 15-plus years later, I wouldn't have had it any other way," Lindley says. "This business has been so rewarding to me, and I am truly thankful for every day I get to be a REALTOR®."

Lindley is now a co-owner and broker in McAllen overseeing more than 20 agents; his real estate specialties include commercial sales and leases, farm & ranch sales, and foreclosure listings.

His advice to new agents is don't be afraid to ask questions and don't be afraid to hear the word no. "A close friend and mentor told me that the answer is always no unless I ask the question," he says.

Lindley became involved in his local association in 2017 and wishes he had sooner. "The networking has been phenomenal, and I feel the people I've met and things I've learned have elevated my career to a whole new level."

He became president of the Greater McAllen Association of REALTORS® in 2020. He says the uncertainty surrounding that year greatly impacted him in his association involvement. Instead of waiting for more stability, Lindley rose to the challenge. He fought to have REALTORS® declared essential workers, helped to establish a diversity and inclusion committee, and worked with association staff and leaders to equip their members with the tools necessary to navigate the new and fast-paced market.

"Our industry is constantly changing, and we need to be in front of those changes not only for our fellow REALTORS® but also for the consumer," Lindley says.

Lindley volunteers with his local and state associations as well as his community at large. Whether leading a food drive or volunteering with his local association to serve meals to underserved communities, raise supplies and monetary donations for assisted living communities, or donating to the local dog shelter, Lindley seeks opportunities to help those around him.

This passion for his community seems to translate well to his career.

"I am in a profession that grants me endless opportunities, but more importantly, I'm in an industry where I feel I am truly changing people's lives," he says. "It's exciting to wake up and not know how the day is going to play out, who you're going to meet, or what impact you will have on them!"

Stay Safe Out There

by Joe Olivieri



Put down your phone, think ahead, and 6 other safety tips.

Touring homes with new clients can be fun and gratifying. But showings have the potential to turn dangerous, especially if you are unprepared.

Bill Jordan, MetroTex Association of REALTORS® 2021 president, teaches the course Real Estate Safety Matters: Safe Business = Smart Business. The Longhorn Real Estate broker offers the following tips for situational awareness during real estate appointments.

Think it through. Before the meeting, ask yourself what you would do if someone tries to harm you. What's the layout of the house? How would you escape? How would you defend yourself? If someone moves into your blind spot, how would you get them out of there? Thinking ahead yields better results that you can implement quickly.

Call the office. Before the meeting, ask clients for a picture of their photo ID, or take a picture of the ID yourself and send it to your brokerage. Before you enter the house, call the office or leave a voice message—within earshot of the clients—and state the time, address, and people present with photos on file. It lets your clients know you are thinking about safety. "It is so easy to just say, *I won't do that to these people* to not make them uncomfortable. But don't make any exceptions. Take precautions with everybody, even the people you might know."

Protect your six o'clock. Don't let anyone get behind you. "You've got to keep all of your clients and visitors in front of you or in your peripheral vision," Jordan says. "You can't let them get outside of that. If that means you move, you need to move." It can happen as quickly as someone holding a door open for you.

Don't get separated. Another common example is touring a home with one person while a second person waits in the car. That could be potentially dangerous because you cannot keep track of both people. Assess the situation. Walk to the car and visit with the second person. Jordan recommends inviting the second person to tour the property with you to give a second opinion. Make sure their car is not blocking yours. If it is, change the parking situation.

Put your phone away. Phones are distracting, and someone who wants to harm you wants to catch you distracted. Don't answer calls or texts during the showing.

Don't count on a firearm. "If you've never been in one of those simulations where somebody attacks you from about 15 paces away, you don't realize that you can't get your weapon out and do anything with it in the time before they have closed the gap between you. At best, a gun becomes something you can throw at them. Don't let that be your only plan of safety." Jordan says pepper spray may be a better option in these situations. It can be accessed and used quickly and gives you a chance to run away.

Be ready to run. Make sure the door is unlocked and you can get to it first. It's OK to stand by the door and tell clients to explore the home on their own. If you feel threatened, get out of the house as fast as you can and try to get someone's attention. "Don't try to fight back. Get some distance."

Trust your gut. Part of situational awareness is accepting the possibility that your client may not be trustworthy and preparing for it. Jordan says it's hard for some people to observe behavior and figure out if a person is up to no good. But your gut knows if you feel uncomfortable in a situation.

"If you watch people, generally your perception is correct. If they're not seriously looking at a house, start backing up toward the door because something's not right. If they're just kind of watching you and acting suspicious, keep yourself close to the door." ✪

JOE OLIVIERI is assistant editor for Texas REALTOR®.



NAR has best practices, training videos, and other tools at nar.realtor/safety. Texas REALTORS® has helpful articles and videos at texasrealestate.com/safety.

Shaping Texas Virtual Education Series



Thousands log on to learn and connect.

REALTORS® from across Texas connected with inspiring discussions and useful training opportunities during the Shaping Texas Virtual Education Series.

The September 8-10 and 13-14 event was organized after the in-person 2021 Shaping Texas Conference was cancelled due to coronavirus concerns. Attendees participated via Zoom or watched livestreamed sessions at [texasrealestate.com](https://www.texasrealestate.com). The event drew more than 4,000 total connections across 13 classes.

In an introductory video, the 2022 Texas REALTORS® Leadership Team reflected on pandemic challenges, recent legislative wins, and what's next for the association.

"I am so proud of our members across the state of Texas who stepped up and faced adversity with resilience and energy," 2021 Chairman **Marvin Jolly** [1] said.

2021 Chairman-elect **Russell Berry** [2] commented, "We're looking at how we can make the transaction stronger and keep the REALTOR® as the center of that transaction."

In his keynote address, **Jim "Mattress Mack" McIngvale** [3], owner of Houston's Gallery Furniture and longtime philanthropist, offered advice from the most pivotal moments in his life and career. He asked REALTORS® the same question University of Texas Athletic Trainer Frank Medina once asked him: "What are you saving it for? Why aren't you giving it all you've got?"

"In life you're going to get knocked down 10 times and you have to get up 11 times. Prepare for setbacks. A setback is simply a setup for a comeback," McIngvale said. He told REALTORS® to show up, outwork your competitors, and never give up.

REALTORS® earned free CE credits in sessions covering some of the most pressing issues in real estate [4]. Challenges in the appraisal industry and affordability in the housing market were among the hot topics. One session discussed how further automation in the real estate transaction will remove costs and friction, allowing REALTORS® to do more business with less effort. "The ABCs of Real Estate" covered disclosure and proper use of forms, while "Protect Yourself with Paperwork" discussed



"In life you're going to get knocked down 10 times and you have to get up 11 times. Prepare for setbacks."

— **Jim McIngvale**



JIM MCINGVALE "MATTRESS MACK"
Texas Businessman and Philanthropist

3

1,261 REALTORS®

earned a total of

5,026 CE hours at

13 free education sessions



The Texas REALTORS® Leadership Team (from left): Immediate Past Chairman **Cindi Bulla**, Chairman-elect **Russell Berry**, President/CEO **Travis Kessler**, Chairman **Marvin Jolly**, Secretary/Treasurer **Marcus Phipps**, 2022 Secretary/Treasurer **David Alan Cox**.

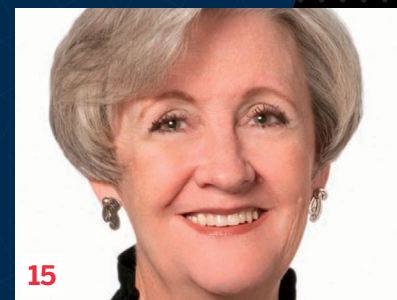
Board of Directors



13



14



15



16



Legislative & GA Education Sessions

Education Sessions

liability and common mistakes in documentation. Politics and public policy took center stage in "Legislative Issues: How Public Policy Affects Texas Real Estate" and "Re-Shaping Texas: Redistricting, Politics, and You." The sessions explained how what happens at the Capitol makes a difference in your real estate business. Attendees heard from Texas Sen. **Larry Taylor** [5]; Texas Rep. **Trent Ashby** [6]; **Bryan Greene** [7], NAR vice president of Policy Advocacy; **Ross Ramsey** [8], executive editor of *The Texas Tribune*; redistricting experts **Michael Li** [9], **Bonnie Bruce** [10], and **Denise Davis** [11]; and **Jim Henson** [12], director of the Texas Politics Project.

Farm & ranch and commercial leaders teamed up to discuss sustainable ground-up development from the practitioner's perspective. The association's Global Committee hosted a panel of digital influencers, who discussed growing global networks through social media strategies. The Virtual Education Series featured an NAR Code of Ethics course that satisfied new training requirements. Another session discussed what's next for MLSs in Texas.

Session recordings are available now at [texasrealestate.com/conference](https://www.texasrealestate.com/conference). CE credit was only available for live attendees.

The Board of Directors met, with the Leadership Team participating from the Texas REALTORS® building and directors from across the state attending via video. During the session, members heard an update from Texan and 2022 NAR President **Leslie Rouda Smith** [13] about the status of the U.S. Department of Justice antitrust settlement with NAR, housing inventory and affordability issues, proposed NAR governance-structure changes, and more.

The Board of Directors also approved a 2022 budget with no dues or assessment increases.

Honors announced at the directors meeting included Distinguished Service Award winners **Hanne Sagalowsky** [14] of MetroTex and **Kay Spiva** [15] of Abilene, REALTOR® Association Certified Executive (RCE) designees Jaime Lee of Texas REALTORS® and Matthew Church of MetroTex, Certified Association Executive designee Ken Hogan of Abilene, and retiring Texas REALTORS® Director of Meeting Planning **Ruth Lyons** [16], who was congratulated for 30 years of service to the REALTOR® organization. ★



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QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU BUY IN AN HOA

Homeowners associations are intended to help protect property values and maintain a pleasant living environment. To accomplish those goals, they impose certain rules on residents. Here are four questions to ask before buying property in an HOA.



CAN YOU AFFORD IT?

HOAs are funded by member dues paid monthly, quarterly, or annually. It's important that you know the cost of the dues and when they're assessed so you can factor that amount into your budget. Also, note the rules and process regarding changing the dues.



WHAT ARE THE RULES?

All members of an association must adhere to a set of rules known as the covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&Rs). These rules regulate many facets of homeownership, such as lawn maintenance, architectural design, and where you can park vehicles. Review a copy of these documents—you don't want to find out after closing that you can't store your boat in your driveway.



WHICH AMENITIES ARE INCLUDED?

HOA dues are often used to maintain common areas and amenities, such as swimming pools and trails. These features may be selling points for you or you may not expect to take advantage of them. Understand what you'll be paying for and note that even if you don't use all the features, they could add to the property's future resale value.



DO YOU WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Many homeowners associations welcome new volunteers for committees or their boards of directors. These can be great ways to meet your neighbors and keep on top of issues affecting your neighborhood.

Texas REALTORS® supported several HOA reforms passed by the Texas Legislature in 2021 that ensure HOA operations are transparent and resident-friendly and provide a balance between private property rights and association rules. Visit myhoastory.com to learn more.

For more help learning about HOAs and deciding if a home is right for you, talk with your REALTOR®.



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TAKE 5



BEAT BURNOUT

Whether it's the demands of a competitive housing market, managing work-life balance, health concerns, or a mix of other challenges, it's natural to occasionally get worn out from your work. Try these steps to avoid or extinguish burnout:

IDENTIFY YOUR FEELINGS

Are you experiencing pressure from too many demands and not enough time? Give yourself permission to vent. Write down what has you overwhelmed and stressed. But don't forget the positives! A great way to rekindle your passion is to make a list of what you enjoy about your career.

DON'T ISOLATE

Remember, you are not alone. Turn to your peers, family, or support groups for help and guidance. Another option is to seek professional help. A therapist can provide coping methods and offer additional resources.

SET REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

It can feel great to say yes, but you can only do so much in a day. Stretching yourself too thin is exhausting. Before you begin your workday, make a list of the tasks that you can realistically do. Permit yourself to not only say no but to have a stopping point.

SWITCH THINGS UP

Habit, monotony, and predictability can be just as draining as having too much going on. Give yourself a new challenge or goal like taking a class to gain a new accreditation or updating your website. And don't forget to reflect and reward yourself for your accomplishments.

UNPLUG AND UNWIND

Having a flexible schedule is a perk of being a REALTOR®. However, the lack of set hours can have you answering your phone or email throughout the day and night. Look into ways to delegate or automate tasks so that you can take a digital break and get in some actual downtime.

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