



GUIDE TO FILING AN ETHICS COMPLAINT

Who Can File a Complaint?

Anyone may file an Ethics Complaint against any member of West Central Association of Realtors. All members agree to abide by the Code of Ethics as a condition of membership. It is because of their obligation to abide by the Code of Ethics that a complaint may be filed.

Is Your Complaint an Ethics or Arbitration?

Ethics - charges that a REALTOR has violated an Article(s) of the National Association of REALTORS Code of Ethics.

Arbitration - a dispute arising out of a real estate transaction, usually a commission dispute.

If your situation concerns both ethics and arbitration, they will be handled separately. Arbitration cases are always processed first. Only when the arbitration is completed, will the ethics complaint be considered.

Filing an Ethics Complaint

- The respondent will be notified and a reply requested
- All parties will be sent a list of the Professional Standards Committee, along with a form to challenge any of the members serving on the hearing panel
- All parties will be given 21 day notice of the hearing date
- An Outline of Procedures will be included in materials you receive prior to the hearing

In the Event Your Case is Forwarded on to a Hearing...

- The respondent will be notified and an Agreement to Arbitrate will be requested, along with a \$250 deposit
- All parties will be sent a list of the Professional Standards Committee, along with a form to challenge any of the members serving on the hearing panel
- All parties will be given a 21 day notice of the hearing date
- An Outline of Procedures will be included in materials you receive prior to the hearing

The function of the Professional Standards Committee is to hold ethics and arbitration hearings. These hearings provide an opportunity for the Complainant and the Respondent to explain "his/her side of the story" by presenting testimony and witnesses, if any. Once all the facts have been presented, the Hearing Panel, will determine whether the Code of Ethics has been violated, or, in the case of arbitration, how the dispute should be settled.

Please note that all parties, including the individual(s) filing the complaint, will be required to attend the hearing and present their case to the hearing panel.

What the Association Can and Cannot Do

In the case of Ethics violations, (money damages may not be a part of an ethics proceeding) the Association may discipline REALTORS in one or more of the following ways:

- Letter of warning or reprimand
- Direct the REALTOR to attend an ethics class or other training appropriate to the violation
- Place the REALTOR on probation
- Suspend membership
- Expel the REALTOR from membership
- Fine the REALTOR up to \$15,000

A REALTOR Association does have limitations to its authority. We cannot try a member for violation of the law or any alleged violations of the law. We cannot suspend or terminate a real estate license. The Ohio Division of Real Estate has jurisdiction over real estate licenses and should be contacted for violations of the law at 614- 466-4100.

You will be informed by the Association office about each step of the process as it occurs. If you have any questions relating to filing your complaint, please call West Central Association of REALTORS at 419-227-5432.

West Central Association of REALTORS

Board or State Association

400 S. Cable Road

Lima

OH

45805

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Ethics Complaint

To the Grievance Committee of the West Central Association of REALTORS.

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Complainant(s)

Respondents (Name and Firm Name)

Complainant(s) charge(s):

An alleged violation of Article(s) _____ of the Code of Ethics or other membership duty as set forth in the Bylaws of the Association in Article IX, Section 3 and alleges that the above charge(s) (is/are) supported by the attached statement which is signed and dated by the complainant(s).

The complaint is true and correct to the best knowledge and belief of the undersigned and is filed within one hundred eighty (180) days after the facts constituting the matter complained of could have been known in the exercise of reasonable diligence or within one hundred eighty days after the conclusion of the transaction, whichever is later.

I (we) declare that to the best of my (our) knowledge and believe, my (our) allegation(s) in this complaint are true.

Please check the appropriate box if circumstances giving rise to this ethics complaint are involved in:

Civil Litigation Criminal Litigation Ohio Division of Real Estate Investigation Mediation/Arbitration
Other _____

You may file an ethics complaint in any jurisdiction when a REALTOR is a member or MLS participant. Note that the REALTOR Code of Ethics, Standard of Practice 14-1 provides, in relevant part, "REALTORS shall not be subject to disciplinary proceedings in more than one Board of REALTORS...with respect to alleged violations of the Code of Ethics relating to the same transaction event."

Have you filed, or do you intend to file, a similar or related complaint with another Association of Realtors?

Yes No

If so, name of the other Association _____ Date Filed _____

I understand that should the Grievance Committee dismiss this ethics complaint in part or in total, that I have twenty (20) days from my receipt of the dismissal notice to appeal the dismissal to the Board of Directors.

COMPLAINANT(S):

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------|------|
| NAME (Type/Print) | Signature | Date |
|-------------------|-----------|------|

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------|------|
| NAME (Type/Print) | Signature | Date |
|-------------------|-----------|------|

Address