

Pathways to Professionalism / Professional Courtesies

While the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice of the National Association of REALTORS® establishes objective, enforceable ethical standards governing the professional conduct of REALTORS®, it does not address issues of courtesy or etiquette. The Maine Association of REALTORS® Board of Directors adopted the following list of professional courtesies for use by REALTORS® on a voluntary basis. This list is divided into three sections: Respect for Public, Respect for Property, and Respect for Peers.

All of the following require an attitude of professionalism that extends to all aspects of the real estate business.

I. Respect for the Public

1. Follow the “Platinum Rule” –Identify how others want to be treated and respond accordingly.
2. Respond to inquiries and requests for information in a timely manner.
3. Schedule appointments and showings as far in advance as possible.
4. Call if you are delayed or must cancel an appointment or showing.
5. If a prospective buyer decides not to view an occupied home, promptly explain the situation to the listing broker or the occupant.
6. Communicate with all parties in a timely manner.
7. When entering a property, ensure that situations, such as pets, are handled appropriately.
8. Leave your business card if requested by listing agent.
9. Never criticize property in the presence of the occupant.
10. Inform occupants that you are leaving after showings, including thanking them.
11. When showing a home, always ring the doorbell or knock – and announce yourself loudly – before entering. Knock and announce yourself loudly before entering any closed room.
12. Present a professional or appropriate appearance at all times; and drive a clean car.
13. If occupants are home during showings, ask their permission before using the bathroom. Never answer the occupant’s phone.
14. Communicate clearly; don’t use acronyms or slang that may not be readily understood by clients or customers. Be mindful of spelling and grammar in all public communications including MLS remarks, advertisements, etc.
15. Be aware of and respect cultural differences.
16. Show courtesy and respect to everyone.
17. Be aware of – and meet – all deadlines.
18. Promise only what you can deliver – and keep your promises.
19. Identify that you are a REALTOR.
20. Do not tell people what you think – tell them what you know.
21. Be mindful of what you say in social media and other electronic communications.
22. Be respectful of smart phone and cell phone use when working with or in presence of others.

II. Respect for Property

1. Be responsible for everyone you allow to enter listed property, including the actions of children.
2. Never allow unaccompanied access (e.g., appraisers, home inspectors) to property without permission.
3. Never allow buyers to enter listed property unaccompanied.
4. When showing property, keep all members of the group together.
5. Enter property only with permission even if you have a lockbox key or combination, even with follow up showings.
6. Spell out instructions that may apply (e.g., limited or no interior photos, removing shoes, etc.)
7. When the occupant is absent, leave the property as you found it (lights, heating, cooling, drapes, etc). If you think something is amiss (e.g. vandalism, broken pipes, inoperable furnace, standing water) contact the listing broker immediately.
8. Be considerate of the seller’s property. Do not allow anyone to eat, drink, smoke, dispose of trash, or bring pets. Leave the house as you found it, including the pets, unless instructed otherwise.
9. If weather is bad, take off shoes and boots inside property or provide booties.

III. Respect for Peers

1. Provide feedback on listings in a timely manner, whether good, bad or indifferent.
2. Identify your REALTOR® status in all contacts with other agents.
3. Respond to other agents’ communications timely and courteously.

4. Notify the listing broker if there appears to be inaccurate information on the listing (e.g., property data sheets, MLS, property disclosure form).
5. Share important information with cooperating licensees about a property, including the presence of pets; security systems; and whether sellers will be present during the showing.
6. When other agents are present at a showing or open house, be sure to identify yourself as an agent.
7. Show courtesy and respect to other real estate professionals.
8. Encourage the customers and clients of other brokers to direct questions to their agent or representative.
9. Give information and business cards to the agent, not directly to the customer or client of the agent.
10. Avoid the inappropriate use of endearments or other denigrating language.
11. Do not prospect at other REALTORS' open houses or showings.
12. If no lockbox, return keys promptly.
13. Properly replace keys in the lockbox after showings; and ensure it is locked.
14. To be successful in the business, mutual respect is essential.
15. Real estate is a reputation business. What you do today may affect your reputation – and business – for years to come.
16. Make efforts to attend broker open houses to be informed about available properties in the market.

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