



## Guidance from Connecticut REALTORS®

March 23, 2020

Related to the Lamont Administration “Essential Business” Order of March 22, 2020

Connecticut REALTORS® (CTR) is thankful the Lamont Administration has established real estate transactions and related services, including residential leasing and as “essential businesses.” It is crucial to the Connecticut economy, our buyers, sellers and families that real estate transactions under contract are able to close; and new buyers are not left out of the market. Please note: Guidance is expected to be supplemented and amended by the Administration, DECD, CDC and others as we are in an ever-changing situation.

As the essential parts of our business move forward, it is important to the health and safety of the State, our buyers, sellers, families that every best effort be taken to adopt the principles of the CDC and the Governor’s request to “Stay Home, Stay Safe” to the greatest extent practicable.

It is imperative that the only services being provided are those services that are essential to the transaction; and at all times to limit the number of in person activities to those who are essential.

To that end, CTR urges the following:

### **ESSENTIAL activities for real estate agents:**

- Showing a property exclusively to those making the decision, and not others. Restricting the opportunity for a showing to only those who would not proceed with a transaction without entering the property. Family members such as children, parents or friends should not be participating nor should any prospective buyer be provided an opportunity to view multiple properties unless you have certainty a contract may result in the next 30 days.
- Entering a property for the purposes of doing a market analysis when the ability to do that virtually is not possible. You should also take any interior photography at that time. Any individual without an essential need to enter a property for a transaction is not within the scope of “essential.”
- Participating in the home inspection process. Only the inspector, the principle buyer(s) and their agent should be present. If there are a number of things the buyer would like repaired or done prior to closing, we encourage as much as possible that those be delivered in a buyer credit.
- Providing entry to the property for the appraiser. While you may need to open the door for the appraiser and secure the property after the appraisal, you should refrain from entering the property with the appraiser.
- Participating in the final walk-through. You play an essential role in confirming that certain contractual obligations are met. This walk through typically takes place the morning of the closing or the day before once the seller has moved out of the property so there is often no in person impact.

**There is extensive guidance available for avoidance of spreading the virus and cleaning which are not incorporated into this document but of extreme importance for all in-person and on-property activities.** At no time should anyone enter a property if he/she has known exposure to the virus or symptoms or if anyone sheltering in a property has the virus or symptoms. CTR encourages asking questions, but many who are carriers or infected do not show symptoms so any in-person activity needs the most stringent caution and care.

Other services deemed as essential businesses (such as home cleaning and landscaping) can be found at this link:

[https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Coronavirus-for-Businesses/Coronavirus-for-Businesses?fbclid=IwAR2w\\_B4HRQIQpeW2f5zFfOU8yLkJw\\_gYmAiOaZ9kH1sLWdpUI-o9UasSJws](https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Coronavirus-for-Businesses/Coronavirus-for-Businesses?fbclid=IwAR2w_B4HRQIQpeW2f5zFfOU8yLkJw_gYmAiOaZ9kH1sLWdpUI-o9UasSJws)

#### **NON-ESSENTIAL in-person activities of real estate agents:**

- Open houses – both broker open houses and public open houses
- Driving in a car with a customer or client
- Conducting any showing to a prospective buyer who is not likely to enter a contract in the next 30 days
- Entering a property with an appraiser
- Attending a closing

Services not expressly included on the state’s list of “essential businesses”:

- Professional photography
- Home staging

#### **Real Estate Brokerage Offices**

It is imperative that access to your brokerage office building by either the public, agents and staff are for the only services that are essential to the transaction, and that at all times limit the number of in-person activities to those who are essential.

To that end, CTR urges the following:

**Business Office Closures and Tele-working:** The State of Connecticut is urging all businesses to tele-work and to close their office locations to the public to their greatest ability. Real estate licensees and employees who are able to work remotely are safer at home. Many aspects of real estate transactions are already remote or able to be remote. The workforce is being asked to only leave their homes for essential purposes.

As with the directives for non-essential businesses, on site would be restricted to the minimal extent necessary such as access to essential documents, certain accounting activities, security, maintenance and receipt of mail and packages.

#### **State and Local Associations of REALTORS®:**

The state and local association of REALTORS® are non-essential businesses and not essential to real estate transactions. Most staff functions are able to be accomplished remotely through tele-work. Accessing the office location would be restricted to the minimal extent necessary such as accessing essential documents, certain accounting activities, receipt of mail and packages and any necessary cleaning or maintenance.

#### **Practicing Safe Real Estate:**

CTR will be providing a separate document with guidance and information on how many aspects of real estate practice and business can be provided remotely and through electronic means.

*This document is provided based on information known to us to date. It is subject to change at any time. Guidance is subject to change as situations evolve or as any government entity may otherwise dictate. CTR is not your corporate legal counsel. CTR is providing this guidance as our best effort to help you comply with the State of Connecticut Executive Order.*