



## Guidance from Connecticut REALTORS®

March 23, 2020; Updated May 20, 2020

Including Information 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.

As real estate was deemed “essential” from the outset, the reopen provisions aren’t a change for our industry. Please note CTR continues to believe it remains imperative to the health and safety of our clients, members, transaction partners and families 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 continues to urge the following:

### **Continuing to limit in-person 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 remain outside of the property as much as practicable. Prospective buyers should be provided an opportunity to view multiple properties electronically to narrow down to those of greatest interest.
- Participating in the home inspection process. Only the inspector, the principle buyer(s) and their agent should be present. Please note a seller and/or home inspector may ask that no others be present. Please be mindful of any concerns and ensure all parties are communicating so there aren’t surprises the day of the inspection. If there are a number of things the buyer would like repaired or done prior to closing, we encourage discussion as much as possible including what may be potentially 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 verbally, but many who are carriers or infected do not show symptoms so any in-person activity needs the most stringent caution and care.

### **Avoid these in-person activities:**

- Open houses – both broker open houses and public open houses
- Driving in a car with a customer or client
- Entering a property with an appraiser
- Attending a closing

While real estate licensees are able to legally do each of these activities utilizing the state’s mandatory standards for face masks/coverings, group sizes and distancing, there are unnecessary inherent risks with such additional in-person activities that should be avoided.

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

Most real estate brokerage offices remained closed to the public, agents and staff since the start of the emergency order even while real estate was deemed “essential”. For those not already open, a decision on when to reopen continues to remain an individual broker decision. Real estate offices as “essential” are not subject to the state’s certification and the rules unique to the reopening of non-essential businesses. Remember, the state continues to have mandatory standards for face masks/coverings, group sizes and distancing - and continues to encourage all employers to permit tele-work as much as practicable.

### **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. Associations must comply with the state’s certification and other rules for reopening non-essential businesses.

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

CTR has separate documents 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. CTR cannot guarantee any information is error-free. Guidance is subject to change as situations and interpretations evolve or as any government entity may otherwise dictate. CTR is not your corporate legal counsel. Check with your brokerage firm for any additional or other guidance specific to your company.*

**Revised May 20, 2020**