

## CT REALTORS® Statement on Open Houses – Broker and Public Just Say No to In-Person Open Houses!

On March 23, 2020 the membership was notified the CT REALTORS® (CTR) Executive Committee voted unanimously to establish the following policy, "effective immediately, to urge REALTORS® in Connecticut to refrain from conducting broker open houses and public open houses until further notice."

CTR continues to urge all REALTORS® to refrain from conducting in-person broker open houses and public open houses. The **primary reason** to avoid offering in-person open houses:

**Health:** to ensure the greatest possible safety of all those who may reside in a home or who are part of real estate transactions who must enter homes for essential purposes, inviting numerous other people into a home is not in the best interest for our industry at this point in time. Many with the virus are asymptomatic so there is going to be an inherent risk. Open houses pose additional concerns because:

- Those arriving for open houses may not have the appropriate protective coverings and insistence on adherence can lead to onsite conflicts;
- There may be no way to monitor the public as they move through the property limiting assurance PPE remains intact throughout the visit and that surfaces, doorknobs, furniture, etc. are not being touched or exposed to direct particle release;
- This is too serious of a time in public health to have unknown and large numbers of individuals roaming through homes.

There are additional long-standing reasons to rethink in-person open houses:

1. **Personal safety:** inviting the unknown public into a residence is one of the greatest areas of risks to the safety of agents.
2. **Theft:** while agents urge sellers to hide or remove valuables and prescription drugs, unfortunately that can be a reason for the public to enter a home during an open house.

Please note that open houses are not illegal. There are restrictions pursuant to the Governor's Executive Orders on limiting groups of people which apply to how many people may be in a property at the same time and requirements for face masks or face coverings which must be followed. However, CTR still urges you not to host an open house for the reasons noted above.

### **Effective Alternatives to Open Houses:**

- Virtual tours posted with properties
- Scheduling appointments for those interested in viewing a property
- Stacked appointment blocks with separate times for specific customer entry
- Enhanced showings such as 3-D tours, virtual staging appointments
- Virtual showings that can be broadcast to family and friends of prospective buyers too

NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun predicts that post-pandemic open houses may forever be a thing of the past. There are many reasons NOT to move forward with an open house.

*This document is provided based on information known to us to date. CCTR cannot guarantee information is error free. Guidance is subject to change at any time as situations and interpretations evolve or as any government entity may otherwise dictate. CTR is not your corporate legal counsel. Document date: May 19, 2020*