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Dispute Resolution Center

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The professional standard that sets REALTORS® apart from other real estate licensees is the REALTORS® pledge to abide by the Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics of the National Association of REALTORS® sets forth a REALTOR®'s obligation to clients and customers, to the members of the public and to one another.

The Long Island Board of REALTORS®, Inc. (LIBOR) is responsible for enforcing the REALTORS® Code of Ethics by offering its members and their clients or customers and members of the public certain services to economically resolve disputes without going to court. These services include ombudsman, mediation, and the handling of ethics and arbitration complaints.

Occasional disagreements arise between REALTORS® and/or between REALTORS® and their clients or customers. When this occurs, ethics complaints and/or arbitration requests can be brought before the Professional Standards Department of LIBOR in an attempt to resolve any such disputes.

Our full time Professional Standards Department Staff can be reached at **(631) 661-4800 (press 8)** to answer any of your questions. Please see below for further details about each of the services.

Ombudsman Assistance

Many complaints can be averted with enhanced communication and initial problem solving. This can be accomplished by the Ombudsman program.

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The Ombudsman role is primarily one of communication and conciliation, not adjudication. They discuss misunderstandings and disagreements with the parties involved in an effort to identify key issues, offer conciliation and to do so in a timely manner. As a result, an Ombudsman's goal is to facilitate efficient resolutions of concerns before they ripen into disputes or complaints.

For more information about Ombudsman, [Click Here \(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/about-ombudsman\)](#)

To request Ombudsman assistance, [Click Here \(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/ombudsman-form\)](#)

Mediation

Mediation is available on a voluntary basis prior to the filing of an Arbitration or Ethics request **and** then again as part of the Arbitration process.

Mediation is an informal dispute resolution process where the parties attempt to settle their differences before they are required to attend a formal hearing.

Mediation is a negotiation facilitated by a trained Mediator. The Mediator assists the parties in a dispute to arrive at a mutually agreeable settlement. The Mediator clarifies issues while remaining dispassionate and focused. He or she guides the discussions between the parties. By providing a forum in which the parties can tell their sides of the story in a nonconfrontational way, the Mediator helps find common ground on which to resolve the dispute.

Mediation is less adversarial than arbitration or ethics proceedings or litigation. The arbitration and ethics process produces a decision imposed upon the parties whether they like it or not. With mediation, the parties will optimally settle their financial differences by consensus rather than by the decree of a hearing panel.

Mediation provides a casual forum in which the parties can design a creative resolution to their dispute. The parties have a vested interest in the successful outcome of the mediation. If the parties cannot reach a settlement, arbitration or ethics hearings are still available to them.

For Mediation FAQ, [Click Here \(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/mediation-facts-and-questions\)](#)

If you have not filed an arbitration or ethics complaint and would like to request mediation, [Click Here. \(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/mediation-request\)](#)

Ethics

LIBOR is responsible for enforcing the REALTORS® Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics imposes duties above and in addition to those imposed by law or regulation. Only real estate professionals who choose to become REALTORS® are subject to the Code of Ethics of the National Association of REALTORS®.

All REALTORS® pledge to abide by the Code of Ethics which sets forth a REALTOR®'s obligation to clients and customers, to members of the public and to one another.

The REALTORS® Code of Ethics consists of seventeen (17) Articles. The duties imposed by many of the Articles are explained and illustrated through accompanying Standards of Practice or case interpretations. Ethics Hearings determine whether the Code of Ethics has been violated, not whether the law or real estate regulations have been broken.

Sometimes difficulties between or with REALTORS® may result from misunderstanding, miscommunication, or lack of adequate communication. If you have a problem with a REALTOR®, you may want to speak with him or her or with the principal broker in the firm. Open, constructive discussion often resolves questions or differences, eliminating the need for further action.

If after discussing matters with the REALTOR® you are still not satisfied, you may want to take advantage of the informal Ombudsman program or Mediation program or file an ethics complaint.

To learn more about the Ethics Complaint Process, [Click Here \(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/ethics-complaint-process\)](/legal/dispute-resolution-center/ethics-complaint-process)

To file an Ethics Complaint Online, [Click Here \(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/ethics-complaint-form\)](/legal/dispute-resolution-center/ethics-complaint-form)

To Print an Ethics Complaint Form [Click Here \(/docs/default-source/default-document-library/602---ethics-complaint-forms.pdf?sfvrsn=8b67f4b7_16\)](/docs/default-source/default-document-library/602---ethics-complaint-forms.pdf?sfvrsn=8b67f4b7_16)

[Download a Copy of the Code of Ethics \(PDF\) \(/legal/code-of-ethics\)](/legal/code-of-ethics)

Citation Program

The Long Island Board of Realtors®, Inc. (LIBOR) adopted a new Ethics Citation Program to improve the process of reporting and resolving certain ethics complaints. The Citation Program is limited to specific Article violations of the Realtor® Code of Ethics as listed on the table for citable offenses (see link below). It is an alternative to the ethics hearing process.

The Citation Program is part of LIBOR's ongoing effort to ensure fairness and integrity in real estate transactions according to the Realtors® Code of Ethics. The Citation Program is intended to increase professionalism in the marketplace for our membership, streamline the

ethics hearing process, and protect the interest of the general public.

How the Citation Program Works:

1. A Realtor® or member of the public files an Ethics Complaint through the LIBOR Ethics Complaint process.
2. The complaint goes to the Grievance Committee for review.
3. If the Grievance Committee decides the Articles cited in the complaint make the case eligible for the Citation Program, the case goes to a Citation Panel.
4. If the Citation Panel determines there is enough evidence to support the complaint, they will fine the Realtor® based on the Citation Violation Fine Schedule. There is no hearing unless the Respondent timely requests one.
5. The Respondent is given 20 days to request a due process hearing.
6. If Respondent requests a due process hearing within the required time period, the Complaint goes through the normal Ethics Hearing process.
7. If Respondent accepts the Citation, or fails to request a due process hearing within the required time period, the fine must be satisfied.

Why the Citation Program?

For Complainants, the Citation Program works quicker than the normal Ethics process by not having to participate in the lengthy and time consuming ethics complaint and hearing process allowing LIBOR to quickly discipline unethical conduct. The Complaint must assert an alleged violation of only the Articles included in the Citation Program (see link below) for the Citation Process to be implemented.

For Respondents who elect to participate in the Citation Program, they have the opportunity to avoid a time-consuming hearing process and obtain a quick resolution of ethics violations. The Citation Program is a confidential process that provides fairness to all parties.

[Click here \(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/citation-program-info\)](/legal/dispute-resolution-center/citation-program-info) to review LIBOR's Citation Program.

[Click here \(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/citation-fines\)](/legal/dispute-resolution-center/citation-fines) to review the Articles of the Code of Ethics included in the Citation Program and the Schedule of Fines.

[Click here \(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/ethics-complaint-form\)](/legal/dispute-resolution-center/ethics-complaint-form) to file an Ethics Complaint.

Arbitration

By becoming a member of LIBOR, you agree that in exchange for the benefits of membership in LIBOR, you will be bound by the duties imposed by the National Association of REALTORS® Code of Ethics, including the duty to arbitrate.

Arbitration is a legally binding process by which REALTOR® Principals (MLSLI Participants,

Designated Realtors®, or Office Managers) may request a hearing before members of the LIBOR Professional Standards Committee when there are contractual or specific non-contractual disputes as defined in Standard of Practice 17-4 between REALTOR® principals who are associated with different firms arising out of real estate transactions.

Arbitration under Article 17 of the Code of Ethics is binding on all parties. Unless there is evidence of procedural deficiency, it is not subject to further review or appeal.

Please contact the LIBOR Professional Standards Staff at **(631) 661-4800 (press 8)** for additional information.

For more information about Arbitration, [\(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/arbitration\)](/legal/dispute-resolution-center/arbitration) Click Here [\(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/arbitration\)](/legal/dispute-resolution-center/arbitration)

For helpful tips for Complainants and Respondents, [\(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/ethics-tip-page\)](/legal/dispute-resolution-center/ethics-tip-page) Click Here [\(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/ethics-tip-page\)](/legal/dispute-resolution-center/ethics-tip-page)

To file an Arbitration Request Online, [Click Here \(/legal/dispute-resolution-center/request-and-agreement-to-arbitrate\)](/legal/dispute-resolution-center/request-and-agreement-to-arbitrate)

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[Department of State \(http://www.dos.ny.gov/licensing/index.html\)](http://www.dos.ny.gov/licensing/index.html)

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 [Communication Opt-In \(https://visitor.r20.constantcont](https://visitor.r20.constantcont)

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