

Consequences for Failure to Complete Code of Ethics Training

NAR's Board of Directors [approved a change to the Code of Ethics training requirement](#), extending it from every two years to **every three years**. This extends the current cycle deadline from Dec. 31, 2020, to **Dec. 31, 2021**. Earlier this year (2021) the Birmingham Association of REALTORS® membership voted to match NAR's three-year cycle. **The deadline to complete Code of Ethics training is December 31, 2021.**

REALTORS® are required to complete ethics training of not less than 2 hours, 30 minutes of instructional time. The training must meet specific learning objectives and criteria established by the National Association of REALTORS®.

Training may be completed through NAR's online courses or through another method, such as [online or classroom courses via local/state associations](#). The Birmingham Association of REALTORS® **only** accepts completion of the Code of Ethics from the following providers, at this time, and is subject to change:

- * [The National Association of REALTORS®](#)
- * [The Alabama Association of REALTORS®](#)
- * [The CE Shop](#)
- * [The Career Academy of Real Estate](#)
- * [McKissock Learning / Colibri Group / Real Estate Express](#)
- * [Classes scheduled by BAR through our School](#)

What are the consequences of membership suspension?

The [Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual](#) as amended by the NAR Board of Directors at the 2004 Midyear meeting, defines "suspension", in relevant part, as

...suspension of all Board/Association-provided membership rights, privileges and services (including those provided by the State and National Association) not available to nonmembers for a period of not less than thirty (30) days and not longer than one year, on terms and conditions expressly stated for an established period of time, including use of the terms REALTOR® and REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® with automatic reinstatement of all withdrawn membership rights, privileges and services at the end of the period of suspension. The thirty (30) day minimum and one year maximum do not apply where suspension is imposed for a remediable violation of a membership duty (e.g. failure to pay dues or failure to complete educational requirements) ...

The provisions go on to discuss the fact that membership - including the duties to abide by the Code of Ethics and to pay association dues - continues during the term of suspension.

What this means for a REALTOR® who is suspended for not meeting the REALTORS® Ethics Training Requirement is that all the rights, privileges and services she/he is entitled to receive because she/he is a REALTOR® are suspended until she/he satisfies the training requirement. If she meets the requirement the next day, then her/his rights, privileges and services are restored the next day. While suspended, though, her/his obligation to abide by the Code of Ethics continues, as does the obligation to pay dues.

At the May 2005 Midyear Meetings of the National Association of REALTORS®, the NAR Board of Directors amended policy to provide that members suspended for failing to meet the REALTORS® ethics training requirement would subsequently be automatically terminated from membership if they did not complete their training.

What are the consequences of membership suspension on MLS access?

Suspension of REALTOR® membership will, in most instances, have no effect on MLS participatory or user/subscriber privileges. Licensees affiliated with MLS Participants have

subscriber/user rights irrespective of whether they hold REALTOR® membership personally—or whether their REALTOR® membership is in good standing or is suspended. The only exception to this general rule is where it is the REALTOR® (principal)/MLS Participant who is suspended for not meeting the ethics training requirement. Under such circumstances, continued MLS access is not available to licensees affiliated with a suspended Participant unless participatory privileges are transferred to another principal in the firm. MLS participatory privileges cannot be suspended for REALTOR® (principals) in states where MLSs are required by law to provide MLS participatory rights to nonmembers or where an association has voluntarily opened its MLS to nonmember participation.

- [Training Cycles](#)
- [2021 Code of Ethics](#)

This page sets forth frequently asked questions and answers concerning failure to complete Code of Ethics Training, and is an excerpt of enforcement-related [FAQs on the Code of Ethics training requirement](#).

What happens if a REALTOR® doesn't meet the training requirement on time?

Failure to meet the requirement is a violation of a membership duty and will result in suspension of membership for the first two months (January and February) of the year following the end of any three (3) year cycle or until the requirement is met, whichever occurs sooner. On March 1 of that year, the membership of a member who is still suspended as of that date will be automatically terminated.

BAR strongly suggests that members **do not wait** until the last minute to take the Code of Ethics during their 2021 Holiday season. We've learned from previous experience that technology may let you down when you least expect it. There will be thousands of people clamoring to take the Code of Ethics at the end of this year.