

The Code and use of the REALTOR® Marks in Association Social Media Activity

1. Authority from the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice:

A. Standard of Practice 1-2 states, in part: "The duties imposed by the Code of Ethics encompass **all real estate-related activities and transactions whether conducted in person, electronically, or through any other means.**"

B. Article 2 states, in part: "REALTORS® shall **avoid exaggeration, misrepresentation, or concealment of pertinent facts** relating to the property or the transaction."

C. Article 12 states: "REALTORS® shall be **honest and truthful** in their real estate communications and shall present a **true picture in their advertising, marketing, and other representation**. REALTORS® shall ensure that their **status as real estate professions is readily apparent in their advertising, marketing, and other representations**, and that the recipients of all real estate communications are, or have been, notified that those communications are from a real estate professional."

1. SOP 12-8 states: "The obligation to present a true picture in representations to the public **includes information presented, provided, or displayed on REALTORS®' websites**. REALTORS® shall use **reasonable efforts to ensure that information on their websites is current**. When it becomes apparent that information on a REALTOR®'s website is no longer current or accurate, REALTORS® shall promptly take corrective action."

D. Article 15 states: "REALTORS® shall **not knowingly or recklessly make false or misleading statements about competitors, their businesses, or their business practices.**"

1. SOP 15-2 states: "The obligation to refrain from making false or misleading statements about **competitors' businesses and competitors' business practices includes the duty to not knowingly or recklessly repeat, retransmit, or republish false or misleading statements made by others**. This duty applies whether false or misleading statements are repeated in person, in writing, by technological means (e.g., the Internet), or by any other means."

2. REALTOR® trademarks in usernames

A. The rules governing the use of the REALTOR® marks are the same regardless of the medium in which the marks are being used.

1. REALTOR® marks must be used with the **name of a member or with the legal name of a member broker's real estate business**.

2. REALTOR® marks **may not be used with descriptive words or phrases**.

B. Two exceptions to rules for use of the REALTOR® marks when used in a domain name or username on the Internet:

1. Requirements to use capitalization and the registration symbol "®" with the REALTOR® marks do not apply.

2. The REALTOR® marks do not need to be separated by punctuation from a member's name or real estate business name.

C. Examples of Acceptable and Unacceptable Usernames

[http://www.realtor.org/LetterLw.nsf/files/What's%20Your%20Username.pdf/\\$FILE/What's%20Your%20Username.pdf](http://www.realtor.org/LetterLw.nsf/files/What's%20Your%20Username.pdf/$FILE/What's%20Your%20Username.pdf)

D. NAR Trademarks Social Media Toolkit for AEs is available on REALTOR.org on the Law & Policy page

<http://www.realtor.org/letterlw.nsf/pages/TrademarkSocialMediaToolkit?OpenDocument&Login>