

Code of Ethics Research Guide

NAR Archives Research Guide

The National Association of REALTORS® Archives produces Research Guides with the goal of helping members, scholars, and staff locate information held in the Archives. Each Guide covers one series of records, providing historical background and context on how the materials relate to NAR as a whole. In addition, the Guides contain content lists, brief notes about the materials, and box locations within the Archives. Researchers can use these Guides to gain a better understanding of the materials and quickly decide which records may be most relevant to their research.

Code of Ethics Series B11

<https://realtor.soutrnglobal.net/Portal/Members/en-US/RecordView/Index/5808>

Upon NAR's founding in 1908, one of the primary objectives of the new association was to establish a code of ethics to "formulate the essentials of proper real estate business conduct." The first formal rules of ethics were created by the Kansas City Real Estate Board. The national Code of Ethics, which relied heavily on the provisions set forth in the Kansas City code, was formally adopted in 1913 by the National Association of Real Estate Exchanges, establishing "criteria by which conduct in the real estate business came to be judged both by the public and by those practicing the business." The 1913 Code was adopted as a working document, but by 1915, the Code was considered to be "completed."

In 1924, the code was completely rewritten to make it stronger and clearer. The Code was mandated to be adopted by local member boards, giving it a stronger enforcement element than in the past. It also outlined the four sections of the Code that persist today: The Preamble, Duties to Client, Duties to the Public, Duties to other REALTORS®.

In 1978, the Standards of Practice were added to the Code of Ethics as "statements of general principles related to various Articles of the Code of Ethics." The Standards of Practice expand upon certain articles of the Code of Ethics and offer interpretations of those articles in practice.

The Code of Ethics has been revised and updated through the decades since its original inception, but the core of the Code remains to hold REALTORS® to higher business standards to protect buyers and sellers

Collection:

B11:01 Code of Ethics

B11:01 Box 1

- Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, 1913-2016
 - Published editions of the NAR Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice
 - Editions include: 1913, 1914, 1915, 1924, 1928, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1955, 1956, 1962, 1974, 1978, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022

B11:01 Box 2

- Histories of the Code of Ethics
 - “History and Rationale of the Code of Ethics, 1913-1991” by Chet Smith, Senior Consultant to the Executive Vice President
 - A timeline of major events and rationale in the Code of Ethics’ history
 - “The REALTORS® Code of Ethics” by Herbert U. Nelson, 1925
 - An article from NREJ written about the history and recent changes of the Code of Ethics.
 - Pearl Janet Davies notes on the history and development of the Code of Ethics, 1940s-1950s
 - Correspondence on the history of the Code of Ethics, 1922-1959
 - Code of Ethics history features in “Fair Housing Focus”, “Commonwealth,” and “Orange County REALTOR®”, 2013
- Code of Ethics Reprint Agreements, 1975-1978
- Correspondence about Code of Ethics Revisions, 1929-1994

B11:01 Box 3

- Proposed Changes to the Code of Ethics, 1948
- Code of Ethics Posters
 - Poster-sized editions of the Code of Ethics, 1928, 1956, 1987, and 2011
- Braille Code of Ethics, 2007
- Spanish Translation of the Code of Ethics, 1974
- Code of Ethics bookmarks, 1991 and 1996
- Facsimiles of the Code of Ethics

B11:02 Interpretations of the Code of Ethics

The first edition of the Interpretations of the Code of Ethics was published in January 1963 by the Professional Standards Committee. It was “presented to member boards of the National Association of Real Estate Boards as a guide in reaching proper decisions when applying the Code of Ethics to situations that may arise within the respective boards. It is also commended as a training aid in real estate education programs.” It shows specific cases where the Code of Ethics has been applied for “the benefit of public, colleagues, and clients.”

B11:02 Box 1

- Suggestions for Book of Interpretations, 1962
 - Suggestions for interpretations to be included in a book of code of ethics interpretations.
- Suggested press releases, 1963
 - Suggested press releases from the REALTOR®-Public Relations Committee for Board Presidents introducing the new “Interpretations of the Code of Ethics”
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- Interpretations of the Code of Ethics
 - Edition 1, April 1963
 - 4 bound copies

B11:02 Box 2

- Edition 2, April 1964
 - Second Printing, March 1963—two copies
 - 1 bound copy
- Edition 3, May 1965
 - 1 bound copy
- Edition 4, July 1967
 - 2 copies

B11:02 Box 3

- Second Printing, November 1968—one copy
- Third Printing (revised), September 1969—two copies

B11:02 Box 3-4

- Edition 5, November 1970
 - 3 bound copies
 - Second Printing (revised), May 1974—three copies

B11:02 Box 5

- Edition 6, January 1976
 - 3 bound copies
- Edition 7, May 1978
 - 3 bound copies
- Edition 8, May 1982
 - 1 copy
 - Second Printing, Feb 1983—two copies

B11:02 Box 6

- Third Printing (revised), September 1984—three copies
- Fourth Printing (revised), September 1985—two copies

- Fifth Printing (revised), June 1986—two copies
- Sixth Printing (revised), September 1987—three copies
- Edition 9, September 1988
 - 2 copies
 - Second Printing, December 1988—two copies

B11:02 Box 7

- Third Printing, 1990
- Edition 10, 1992
 - 3 copies
- Edition 11, 1994
 - 2 copies
- Edition 12, 1995
 - 2 copies
- Edition 13, 1996
 - 2 copies
- Edition 14, 1998
 - 2 copies

B11:02 Box 8

- Edition 31, 2019
 - 2 copies
- Edition 32, 2020
 - 2 copies
- Edition 34, 2022
 - 3 copies

B11:03 Code of Ethics Commentaries and Analysis

B11:03 Box 1

- Articles and newspaper clippings about the Code of Ethics, 1924-1972
 - Articles and newspaper clippings on the Code of Ethics from various publications, including
 - "The REALTOR" (Colorado Association newsletter)
 - "The Landsman"
 - The "Brooklyn Eagle" and the "Brooklyn Times"
 - "Los Angeles Realtor"
 - The "Atlanta Journal"
 - "The Round Table" (NAREB Secretaries newsletter)
 - "Seattle Post"
 - "Real Estate Bulletin" (the Real Estate Division's newsletter)
 - "The Akron REALTOR"
 - REALTOR'S Headlines
 - "Baltimore Real Estate and Building News"
 - "National Capital Area Realtor"
 - "The Jayhawk REALTOR"
 - "Rolling Meadows Herald"
 - The "Chicago Tribune"
- Speech transcripts about the Code of Ethics, 1926-1975
 - Transcripts of speeches given discussing the Code of Ethics, professional standards, the Code's importance, and what makes it unique in the real estate business.
- MacChesney files on the Code of Ethics, 1927-1943
 - Correspondence, legal opinions, and commentary on the Code of Ethics from NAREB's General Counsel Nathan MacChesney.
- The Real Estate Code of Ethics article, 1925
 - Reprint of an article by NAREB EVP Herbert U. Nelson about the Code of Ethics in the Journal of Land & Public Utility Economics.
- Suggested Paragraphs on Realtor's Code of Ethics, Nov. 26, 1930
 - Brief essays, bullet points, facts, and quotes on the Code of Ethics.
- Commentaries on the Code of Ethics, 1959 and 1965
 - A commentary on the Code of Ethics written by EVP Eugene Conser while the Professional Standards Committee was developing the official Interpretations of the Code of Ethics.
 - From the intro: "They are not intended to be detailed interpretations of the provisions of the Code of Ethics, but rather to suggest the application of the Code to situations which may commonly arise. They are published here at the request of many individuals and local boards in the hope they may prove helpful to Realtors and to Realtor organizations in assisting to guide ethical conduct pending publication of the official "Book of Interpretations."

B11:03 Box 2-6

- Professionalism in Real Estate Practice: A Ready Reference to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice of the National Association of REALTORS®, 1984-2022
 - An annual pamphlet explaining and synthesizing the Code of Ethics

B11:04 Education and Training

B11:04 Box 1-2

- Professional Standards Training Manual, 1978-1995
 - Manual created by NAR's Member Policy division to assist local associations in training members of Professional Standards Committees and Grievance Committees.
 - Includes updated pages sent to local associations.

B11:04 Box 3

- Code of Ethics training VHS tapes, 1990-1995
 - All include the digitized version on CD
 - "Promise of Performance" The Code of Ethics, 1990
 - 1 tape
 - Steps for Successful Code Enforcement, 1993
 - 2 tapes
 - Enforcement of the Code of Ethics: Mediation and the Conduct of Arbitration Hearings, 1995
 - 3 tapes

B11:04 Box 4

- REALTOR® Professionalism Series, 1990-1996
 - A series of educational pamphlets exploring various aspects of the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice
 - The Code of Ethics of the National Association of REALTORS®
 - Member Training in the Code of Ethics
 - Strict Enforcement of the Code of Ethics: Tempered by Concern for Due Process
 - Pride in Professionalism: Conducting business professionally provides improved real estate transactions
 - Advantages of Using REALTORS® in Real Estate Transactions
 - Filing an Ethics Complaint with the Local Board/Association of REALTORS®
 - Ethics Hearing Flow Diagram: The Right Way-Start to Finish
 - Filing a Request for Arbitration with the Local Board/Association of REALTORS®
 - Arbitration Hearing Flow Diagram: The Right Way-Start to Finish
 - Mediation: The Way to Go
 - Function of the Grievance Committee of a Board/Association of REALTORS®
 - Function of the Professional Standards Committee of a Board/Association of REALTORS®
 - Role and Function of the State Association Grievance and Professional Standards Committees
 - Arbitration Between Members of Different Boards/Associations of REALTORS®
 - Procuring Cause in the Resolution of Real Estate Business Disputes
 - Director Action for Member Refusal to Arbitrate
 - Judicial Enforcement of Arbitration Awards
 - Rehearing and Appeals for the Decision of an Ethics Hearing Panel
 - Article 10 of the Code of Ethics: The commitment of REALTORS® to Provide Equal Professional services to all persons irrespective of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin

- Board/Association Use of Declaratory Relief Procedure: Reduces Potential Liability
 - Caveats of Board/Association Operation
- Professional Standards Procedures manual, 1996
 - From cover sheet: "This packet contains materials that you may find useful when presenting professional standards enforcement programs locally -- professional standards procedures outlines and overheads. This information relative to Code enforcement is developed to assist Boards and State Associations in promulgating the current policies of the National Association in a consistent and uniform manner."
- Educational brochures
 - Got a Complaint! The Code of Ethics Awareness Brochure, 1996
 - Includes "the history of the Code of Ethics, answers to some commonly asked questions, and an ethics complaint/arbitration request checklist.
 - A Pathway to Professional Conduct, 2012
 - A brochure encouraging conduct "beyond those standards...issues of courtesy and etiquette to be mindful of when dealing with properties, clients, customers, and fellow REALTORS®."

B11:04 Box 5-6

- Standards for Success training materials, 1990-1991
 - A training course on the Code of Ethics to "introduce the Code of Ethics and help apply it in common business transactions...and to practice applying the Code of Ethics in a variety of typical situations."
 - Includes facilitator and participant manuals, overhead transparency materials, and VHS videos of course materials.

B11:04 Box 7

- Rules of Success in Real Estate: Lectures on the Code of Ethics, 1967
 - A set of lectures and examination questions to educate members about the Code of Ethics.
- Code of Ethics Training Kit, 1993 and 1995
 - A training kit developed to educate members about the 1992 and 1994 revisions to the Code of Ethics.

B11:05 Mediation and Arbitration

B11:05 Box 1

- Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual
 - “This manual has been prepared as a guide to Local Boards and State Associations as to the procedures to be followed in bringing disciplinary action against members or hearing disputes submitted to arbitration.”
 - First published in 1973 and “closely patterned after the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual which, as amended, has been followed by many boards in California and elsewhere since January of 1965.”
 - First edition, 1973
 - Second edition, 1976
 - Third edition, 1980
 - Fourth edition, 1982
 - Fourth edition, second printing (revised), 1984
 - Fourth edition, third printing (revised), 1985
 - Fourth edition, fourth printing (revised), 1986

B11:05 Box 2

- Fourth edition, fifth printing (revised), 1987
- Fourth edition, sixth printing (revised), 1988
- Fifth edition, 1990
- Sixth edition, 1991
- Seventh edition, 1992
- Eighth edition, 1993

B11:05 Box 3

- Ninth edition, 1994
- Tenth edition, 1995
- Eleventh edition, 1996
- Twelfth edition, 1997
- Thirteenth edition, 1998

B11:05 Box 4

- Thirteenth edition, 1998
- Fourteenth edition, 1999
- Fifteenth edition, 2000

B11:05 Box 5

- Sixteenth edition, 2001
- Seventeenth edition, 2002
- Eighteenth edition, 2003

B11:05 Box 6

- Nineteenth edition, 2004
- Twentieth edition, 2005
- Twenty-first edition, 2006

B11:05 Box 7

- Twenty-second edition, 2007
- Twenty-third edition, 2008

B11:05 Box 8

- Twenty-fourth edition, 2009
- Twenty-fifth edition, 2010

B11:05 Box 9

- Twenty-sixth edition, 2011
- Twenty-seventh edition, 2012

B11:05 Box 10

- Twenty-eighth edition, 2013
- Twenty-ninth edition, 2014

B11:05 Box 11

- Thirtieth edition, 2015
- Thirty-first edition, 2016
- Thirty-second edition, 2017

B11:05 Box 12

- Thirty-fourth edition, 2019
- Thirty-fifth edition, 2020
- Thirty-sixth edition, 2021

B11:05 Box 13-14

- Mediator/Mediation Training materials, 2001-2009
 - Training seminars offered by the Professional Standards Committee and NAR “to create a cadre of REALTORS® and association executives selected by their respective state associations, having previous mediation training and experience, whose skills could be enhanced and who would then be positioned to meet two critical needs. First, those individuals will serve as part of the core group of trained mediator providing mediation as a member service and, second, and equally as important, they will return home and train additional REALTORS® and association executives so that in a relatively short time every board and association will have adequate resources to offer mediation to their members.”

B11:05 Box 15

- Homesellers/Homebuyers Dispute Resolution System Mediation: A Constructive Alternative to Litigation Guidelines for Member Boards/Associations, 1990-1994
 - A guide on the implementation of the Dispute Resolution System (DRS) for member boards. Includes two VHS tapes.
 - “The Homesellers/Homebuyers Dispute Resolution System (DRS) is an alternative dispute resolution system that uses mediation. The program offers sellers, buyers, brokers, and other parties in a real estate transaction an efficient affordable method of resolving disputes out of court.”

B11:05 Box 15

- Arbitration Correspondence and notes, 1926-1945
- Arbitration Training Materials

B11:06 Professional Standards Committee

The Professional Standards Committee “interprets the Code of Ethics, considers and recommends appropriate action on inquiries of Member Boards and Board Members concerning the enforcement of the Code of Ethics, and recommends amendments to the Code of Ethics as it deems necessary or advisable.” Included in this series are the Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee minutes. This is a subcommittee of the Professional Standards Committee, which meets to “intensively consider the issues presented by Board Members and Member Boards and make recommendations to the full Professional Standards Committee.”

B11:06 Box 1

- Committee on the Code of Ethics, 1924-1928
 - Predating the Professional Standards Committee, the Ethics Committee (or Committee on the Code of Ethics) was established to draft and revise a Code of Ethics
- Professional Standards Committee Minutes, 1946-1964

B11:06 Box 2

- Professional Standards Committee Minutes, 1965-1970

B11:06 Box 3

- Professional Standards Committee Minutes, 1971-1991

B11:06 Box 4

- Professional Standards Committee Minutes, 1992-1994

B11:06 Box 5

- Professional Standards Committee Minutes, 1995-1999

B11:06 Box 6

- Professional Standards Committee Minutes, 2000-2002

B11:06 Box 7

- Professional Standards Committee Minutes, 2002-2004

B11:06 Box 8

- Professional Standards Committee Minutes, 2005-2007

B11:06 Box 9

- Professional Standards Committee Minutes, 2008-2010

B11:06 Box 10

- Professional Standards Committee Minutes, 2011-2013

B11:06 Box 11

- Professional Standards Committee Minutes, 2014-2016

B11:06 Box 12

- Professional Standards Committee Minutes, 2017-2019

B11:06 Box 13

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes and Meeting Materials, 1987

B11:06 Box 14

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes and Meeting Materials, 1987-1988

B11: 06 Box 15

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes and Meeting Materials, 1988-1989

B11:06 Box 16

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes and Meeting Materials, 1989-1990

B11:06 Box 17

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes and Meeting Materials, 1990-1991

B11:06 Box 18

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes and Meeting Materials, 1991-1992

B11:06 Box 19

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes and Meeting Materials, 1992-1993

B11:06 Box 20

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes and Meeting Materials, 1993-1994

B11:06 Box 21

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes and Meeting Materials, 1994-1995

B11:06 Box 22

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes and Meeting Materials, 1995

B11:06 Box 23

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes and Meeting Materials, 1996

B11:06 Box 24

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes and Meeting Materials, 1997

B11:06 Box 25

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes, 1998-2001

B11:06 Box 26

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes, 2001-2003

B11:06 Box 27

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes, 2003-2004

B11:06 Box 28

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes, 2005

B11:06 Box 29

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes, 2006-2007

B11:06 Box 30

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes, 2007-2009

B11:06 Box 31

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes, 2009-2011

B11:06 Box 32

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes, 2011-2014

B11:06 Box 33

- Interpretations and Procedures Subcommittee Minutes, 2014