



Northwest Mississippi REALTORS® Code of Ethics and Arbitration Policy

General:

- The Northwest Mississippi REALTORS® will operate its own professional standards and grievance committee.
- The committee will be composed of a minimum of 15 trained professional standards and grievance committee members.
- The Northwest Mississippi REALTORS® will not publish the names of Code of Ethics violators.
- Mediation is strongly recommended but not required for both code of ethics and arbitration disputes.
- The association attorney will be present at every hearing to ensure that procedures are followed. The hearing will be video recorded by the association. The association will allow a party, at his/her own expense to have a court reporter present.
- The professional standards/grievance committee and chair will be reviewed and approved by the President Elect for the following year, their Presidential year as the committee serves.
- The hearing panel will review the information the same day as the scheduled hearing for ethics complaints and arbitration cases.
- The name of the parties will not be included in the decisions presented to the directors for ratification.
- The Professional Standards/Grievance committee will be formed of volunteer REALTOR® members in good standing who have completed the required annual committee training.
- Appeals must be filed within 20 days of decision of committee.
- The board of directors will review, hear appeals and ratify any decisions.
- The hearing panel chair will rule on postponement request.
- Once a complaint has been received by the professional standards administrator (code of ethics or arbitration), the administrator will immediately alert the committee chair. Mediation will be strongly encouraged. If mediation is denied, the chair will meet with the grievance committee within two weeks.
- Once a complaint has been filed, the grievance committee will meet to review the complaint. The committee panel will be made up of 3-5 members of the committee.
- If the grievance committee moves forward with the complaint to the hearing panel, the next steps will be taken. The hearing panel will be made up of up 5-7 members of the committee.
- Committee members who serve on panels must not have any conflict of interest with any parties included, such as being from the same company. All committee members must complete annual approved training to serve on the committee.

Code of Ethics:

- There will be no processing fee to file a code of ethics or appeal a code of ethics decision.

Arbitration:

- Voluntary arbitration will be provided as a service with REALTORS® who are or were affiliated with the same firm and with a non-member broker but not with a member of the public.
- There will be filing fee of \$250 from each party to file an arbitration complaint. Arbitration filing fees will not be returned unless the parties settle the complaint prior to the decision of the hearing panel.
- Submission to Arbitration: In the event the respondent fails or refuses to sign the Response and Agreement Form (Part Thirteen, Form #A-4), fails or refuses to make the required deposit, or fails or refuses to take part in the arbitration hearing, the arbitration hearing may be scheduled and conducted in the absence of the respondent.