



Greater Augusta Association of REALTORS®, Inc.  
1214 Roy Road, Augusta, GA 30909 706.736.0429 [www.augustarealtors.com](http://www.augustarealtors.com)

## **ETHICS COMPLAINT**

Boards and Associations of REALTORS are responsible for enforcing the REALTORS Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics imposes duties about and in addition to those imposed by the law or regulation which apply only to real estate professionals who to become REALTORS.

Many difficulties between real estate professionals (whether REALTORS or not) result from misunderstanding, miscommunication or lack of adequate communication. If you have a problem with a real estate professional, you may want to speak with them or with a principal broker in the firm. Open constructive discussion often resolves questions or differences, eliminating the need for further action.

If, after these steps, you still feel you have a grievance, you want to consider filing an ethics complaint. You will want to keep in that.....

- Only REALTORS and REALTOR Associates are subject to the Code of Ethics of the National Association of REALTORS.
- If the real estate professional (or their broker you are dealing with is not a REALTOR Your only recourse may be the state real estate licensing authority or the courts.
- Boards and Associations of REALTORS determine whether the Code of Ethics has been violated, not whether the law or real estate regulations have been broken. Those decisions can only be made by the licensing authorities or the courts.
- Boards of REALTORS can discipline REALTORS for violating the Code of Ethics. Typical forms of discipline include attendance at courses and seminars designed to increase REALTORS understanding of the ethical duties or other responsibilities of real estate professionals. REALTORS may also be reprimanded, fined, or their membership can be suspended or terminated for serious or repeated violations. Boards and Associations of REALTORS cannot require REALTORS to pay money to parties filing ethics complaints; cannot award “punitive damages” for violations of the Code of Ethics; and cannot suspend or revoke a real estate professional’s license.

- The primary emphasis of discipline for ethical lapses is educational, to create a heightened awareness of and appreciation for the duties the Code imposes. At the same time, more severe forms of discipline, including fines and suspension and termination of membership may be imposed for serious or repeated violations.

Please contact Stacie Adkins at 706-736-0429 if you have any questions or to confirm that the Real Estate Professional you have a complaint against is a REALTOR member that the Greater Augusta Association of REALTORS has jurisdiction over.

## **ARBITRATION REQUESTS**

Arbitration, a form of alternative dispute resolution, is a legal technique for the resolution of disputes outside the courts. The parties to a dispute refer it to one or more persons (the “arbitrators, arbiters or arbitral tribunal), whose decision (the award) they agree to be bound. It is a settlement technique in which a third party reviews the case and imposes a decision that is legally binding for both sides.

A Request for Arbitration must be filed: 1) after the real estate transaction giving rise to the dispute has been completed; 2) within six months after the facts constituting the Arbitration matter could have been known in the exercise of reasonable diligence; 3) by the broker of a real estate agency.

Please contact Stacie Adkins at 706-736-0429 if you have any questions about the Ethics and/or Arbitration process.

For more information on Ethics Complaints and Arbitration you can go to [realtor.org](http://realtor.org) and search Professional Standards.

The forms can be obtained on this website.