

POLICIES & PROCEDURES OF THE
CENTRAL HILL COUNTRY BOARD OF REALTORS®, INC. AND THE
CENTRAL HILL COUNTRY BOARD OF REALTORS®, INC. MULTIPLE LISTING SERVICE

MISSION STATEMENT

The Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® protects private property rights and serves its members by providing valuable services which promote professionalism and ethical standards.

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If any provision of this policy manual conflicts with the laws of the State of Texas; the bylaws of the Association; the rules and regulations or other policies of the MLS; or with any policies or procedures which are mandatory requirements of the Texas Association of REALTORS® or National Association of REALTORS® (collectively, called "the Overriding Documents"), then the provisions of the Overriding Documents will control over this manual.

~~~Amended and Approved by CHCBR Board of Directors 01/2024~~~

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**Article 1. ADMINISTRATION**

Administration of this Association shall consist of the elected Board of Officers and Directors, hereinafter referred to as the "Board of Directors."

**Section 1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The governing body of the Association shall be the elected positions of the Board of Directors and shall consist of Officers and Directors.

**Officers:**

- **President** - serving a one-year term having been President-Elect and shall succeed to the office of Past-President
- **President-Elect** - serving a one-year term and shall succeed to the office of President through election process
- **Vice-President** - serving a one-year term
- **Secretary** - serving a one-year term
- **Treasurer** - serving a two-year term (either REALTOR® or Affiliate members may serve as Treasurer)
- **Directors** - Two local REALTOR® Member Directors - serving a rotational three-year term
- **Immediate Past-President** - serving a one-year term, having been the President the preceding year

A maximum of two (2) REALTORS® sponsored by the same broker may simultaneously serve on the Board of Directors.

The membership has a right to expect from every Board of Directors member: good faith, reasonable care, and prudence in the consideration of every situation, decision or question that is presented to the Board of Directors in managing the Association affairs.

The Board of Directors shall have charge of the general conduct of the affairs of the Association and shall enact such rules for its government as deemed expedient providing that the same shall not be inconsistent with the Bylaws of the Association.

The Board of Directors shall have exclusive management of all finances of the Association. The Board of Directors may, at any time, cause an audit to be made of the books and accounts of the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® by a certified public accountant appointed by the Association.

It shall be the duty and responsibility of the Board of Directors to see that the membership is kept reasonably and properly informed on all matters of particular interest and concern to the membership in respect to the Real-Estate business and the Association. It shall be the further duty and responsibility of the Board of Directors to secure, where time permits, the views of the membership upon any subject or subjects of particular concern to the membership (this procedure to be particularly applicable where the Board of Directors is called upon to pledge the support of the Association on matters affecting the Real Estate business and on matters of civic or national interest.) The object of this provision is to see that the majority views of the Membership are ascertained on matters of importance before the Board of Directors adopts positions on behalf of the Association in respect to such matters.

**Section 2. DUTIES OF THE:**

**President**

The chief duties of the President are:

1. act as legal head of the Association
2. see that the basic policies, general activities, and programs that will further the goals and objectives of the Association are planned, formulated, and presented to the Association
3. see that the membership is kept fully informed of the conditions and operations of the Association
4. exercise general supervision over the Association and all its activities and Members
5. preside at and attend all general membership meetings and meetings of the Board of Directors of the Association
6. call special meetings when necessary
7. appoint committee chairpersons and be ex-officio member of all committees, outline the purpose and duties of these committees, and monitors progress
8. represent and speak for the Association to other organizations and to the public

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9. support and defend policies and programs adopted by the Association
10. promote interest and active participation in the Association
11. sign letters or documents necessary to carry out the will of the Association
12. see that harmony is preserved and that the Bylaws and Policies of the Association are enforced
13. in cooperation with those in financial responsibility, operate within an annual budget
14. see that the finances of the Association are reviewed annually by a Board approved, independent CPA firm
15. promote good will, create a favorable public image, articulate the real estate position of the Association, and develop credibility in matters relating to the Real Estate Industry

### **President-Elect**

The President-Elect is the second-ranking elected officer of the board and will assume the position of President at the conclusion of his or her term. The President-Elect shall take office of the President upon resignation, death, incapacitation, or impeachment of the President and shall complete the remaining term unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors.

The chief duties of the President-Elect are:

1. support the President in fulfilling the goals and objectives of the Association by providing continuity to established programs and ensuring the future programs are consistent with the strategic plan
2. perform any other duties as may be delegated to him/her by the President or the Board of Directors
3. act as chair of the annual installation meeting

### **Vice-President**

The Vice-President shall take office of the President upon resignation, death, incapacitation, or impeachment of the President and President-Elect and shall complete the remaining term unless otherwise determined by the Board of Directors.

The chief duties of the Vice President are:

1. assist the President and make arrangements for guest speakers, programs for regular meetings and special occasions
2. perform such other duties as may be delegated to him/her by the President or the Board of Directors
3. act as chair of the Program committee

### **Past-President**

The Past-President shall automatically have been the preceding President and shall continue to serve on the Board of Directors and shall provide assistance to the Board of Directors as necessary.

### **Secretary**

The chief duties of the Secretary are:

1. assist the Association Executive and officiate in keeping correct minutes of all meetings of the Association
2. perform any other duties as may be delegated to him/her by the President or the Board of Directors

### **Treasurer**

The chief duties of the Treasurer are:

1. work with the Association Executive, and in cooperation with the CPA of the Association, and see that proper accounting practices are carried out in maintaining the records of the Association
2. report to the Association as to the satisfactory condition or otherwise of the books of the Association
3. exhibit books and records to the Association upon demand by the Association
4. advise the Association in regard to financial matters
5. Chair the Finance Committee
6. prepare and present statements of condition of Association funds when so required and requested by the President

### **Directors**

The chief duties of the local Directors are:

1. direct committees assigned to him/her and serve as a member of committees
2. report to the President and Association on all Association activities handled by him/her

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3. be responsible for the general conduct of the affairs of the Association and assist in enacting such rules and regulations for its government as may be deemed expedient providing that the same shall not be inconsistent with the Bylaws or Policies
4. see that the membership is kept reasonably and properly informed on all matters of particular interest and concern to the membership in respect to the Real Estate business
5. perform such other duties as are prescribed by the President or Association

### **State Director**

The chief duties of the State Director are:

1. keep informed on matters affecting Real Estate in the community, the State and Nation, and contribute responsibly to the Association on such matters
2. make sure the aims and objectives of the State Association are accepted and carried out at the local level
3. bring programs and issues from the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® to the attention of the State Association, as required
4. perform such other duties as are prescribed by the President or Association

### **Section 3. REMOVAL OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

In the event that an Officer or Director is deemed to be incapable of fulfilling the duties for which elected, but will not resign from office voluntarily, the Officer or Director may be removed from office under the following procedure:

1. A petition requiring the removal of an Officer or Director and signed by not less than one-third of the voting membership\* or a majority of all Board of Directors members shall be filed with the President, or if the President is the subject of the petition, with the next-ranking officer, and shall specifically set forth the reasons the individual is deemed disqualified from further service.
2. Upon receipt of the petition, and not less than twenty (20) days or more than forty-five (45) days, a special meeting of the voting membership\* of the Association shall be held, and the sole business of the meeting shall be to consider the charge against the Officer or Director and to render a decision on such petition.
3. The special meeting shall be noticed to all voting membership\* at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting and shall be conducted by the President of the Association unless the President's continued service in office is being considered at the meeting. In such case, the next ranking officer will conduct the meeting of the hearing by the Members.
4. Provided a quorum is present\*\*, a three-fourths vote of membership present, and voting shall be required for removal from office

\*Voting Membership = CHCBR Primary and Secondary REALTOR® members in good standing.

\*\*Quorum for transaction of business = 20% of eligible voting membership.

### **Section 4. ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE**

The Association Executive shall be an employee hired by agreement of the Board of Directors and shall conduct the day-to-day business of the Association as directed by the Board of Directors. The Association Executive may assist with committee duties and other activities as directed.

### **Section 5. COMMITTEES**

The President shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees and shall be notified of their meetings. As an ex-officio member, the President has all the rights of any other member of the standing committee, including the right to vote. The President shall appoint a chairperson for the following standing committees from among all board members in good standing (Affiliates included), subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors:

- Finance/Budget
- Multiple Listing Service (MLS)

The President shall appoint, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors, special committees as deemed necessary. All committees shall be of such size and shall have duties, functions, and powers as assigned by the President or the Board of Directors, except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws and Policies. The designation of such committees and the delegation thereto of authority shall not operate to relieve the members of any responsibility imposed upon it or him by law.

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**Section 6. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Social media includes, but is not limited to websites, blogs, social networking sites, discussion groups, and listservs. Social media is a powerful and effective communication and engagement tool, and the Association encourages Association leaders to utilize social media to help raise awareness of the Association's work and issues of interest to Texas REALTORS® and consumers.

These Social Media Guidelines for Association Leaders ("Guidelines") are intended to enable Association leaders to maintain their ability to express themselves personally on social media, while also ensuring that the reputation and work of the Association is protected. In furtherance of these objectives, Association leaders should follow these Guidelines:

1. All Association leaders are encouraged to use social media to promote the Association's mission, policy positions, advocacy efforts, and other association news.
2. It is always acceptable to repost or share any Association published communications and established policy positions.
3. Always be professional, respectful, and ethical when engaging in social media and avoid making statements or posting photographs that could reasonably harm the Association.
4. In the capacity of an Association leader, avoid making statements contrary to NAR's public positions on federal issues, Texas REALTORS® public positions on state issues, and the Association's public positions on local issues, including but not limited to contrary statements about appointees, elected officials, or candidates, and legislative or regulatory matters.
5. When reasonably necessary or useful, include a disclaimer that views expressed by the Association leader are personal to the individual and do not represent the official views of the Association.
6. Do not disclose any confidential information.
7. Avoid any connection to the Association when making personal statements of endorsement or opposition to particular products, services, or companies.
8. Avoid and/or remove statements or content that may create undue opposition or controversy among membership.
9. Avoid making statements or posting photographs that are inappropriate including, but not limited to discriminatory remarks, demeaning or defamatory comments, offensive material, and comments that might constitute harassment.
10. Respect third-party intellectual property, and always use NAR's trademarks in accordance with NAR's Membership Marks Manual. REALTOR® means member of the National Association of REALTORS® and must not be used generically as a synonym for the occupation of "real estate agent" or "broker."

Association leaders who do not adhere to these Guidelines or who otherwise act inappropriately when engaging in social media, may be contacted by the Association Executive to resolve the situation, which may include withdrawing, correcting, or revising the communication at issue. Please be aware that social media presence is a significant factor for the Association's Nominating Committee in determining one's fitness for an Association leadership position. Social media presence may also be a factor when applying for local and state government positions. ALL REALTOR® members' social media activity should be in compliance with the Code of Ethics.

As used in these Guidelines, "Association leaders" includes elected and appointed officers, directors, committee chairs and vice chairs, and other members appointed to positions of leadership.

**ARTICLE 2. NOMINATION AND ELECTION GUIDELINES**

**Section 1. NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS**

1. At least two months before the annual election, a Nominating Committee of at least five (5) REALTOR® Members, and at least two alternate REALTOR® members, shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Board of Directors.
2. The Nominating Committee members should include, but are not limited to, the President-Elect, Immediate Past-President and the last three Past-Presidents. If any of the Past-Presidents are unable to serve, the next Past-President in line would be appointed.
3. Applications for officers and directors shall be transmitted to each member, and interested members shall fill out an application. Any Nominating Committee member who submits an application will be deemed to have resigned from the Nominating committee and may not continue to serve on that committee. The vacancy on the committee shall be filled by an alternate member.
4. A quorum for any meeting of the Nominating Committee shall be five members.

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5. The Nominating Committee shall select candidates for each office and/or position to be filled on the Board of Directors using criteria approved by the Board of Directors.
6. Two candidates shall be selected for each office or position from the qualified applicants, except that if only one application is filed for that office or position, the Nominating Committee may select one candidate.
7. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be electronically transmitted to each Member eligible to vote\* at least four weeks preceding the election.
8. Additional candidates for the offices to be filled may be placed in nomination by filing a petition, signed by at least twenty percent (20%) of the REALTOR® members eligible to vote\*, to the Association Executive at least two weeks before the election. The Association Executive shall send notice of such additional nominations to all Members eligible to vote\* before the election.
9. The election of Officers and Directors shall take place at the annual meeting, or electronically in accordance with procedures established by the Board of Directors.

\*Voting Membership = CHCBR Primary and Secondary REALTOR® members in good standing

## **Section 2. GUIDELINES FOR NOMINEES**

Criteria for all positions:

1. **Jurisdiction:** The principal office of the candidate must be located within the jurisdiction of the board.
2. **Ethics Violations:** Candidates may not have any Ethics or TREC violations in the 12 months preceding the election. (If found in violation after elected, a majority vote of the Board of Directors may remove them from office.)
3. **Maximum Number from Same Brokerage:** Maximum of two people sponsored by the same broker may serve at the same time on the board. In the event a Director or elected officer transfers sponsorship to a broker wherein two board of director members sponsored by the same broker are also serving on the board, the transferring director/officer will be deemed to resign his/her position, unless another board member from that same offices chooses to resign instead. The remaining directors, at their discretion, may appoint another REALTOR® member to temporarily fill the vacancy until the end of the elective year.
4. **Term Limits:** Directors/Officers may serve no more than two consecutive terms in the same position or a maximum of six years consecutively on the board.
5. **Committees:** Candidates should preferably have served as a committee chair.

**President:** It is recommended that a candidate for the position of President has served a minimum of one year on the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® Board of Directors and be a member in good standing for a minimum of three years; however, other qualifications of a candidate (including completion of the Texas REALTORS® Leadership Program - TRLP) may also be considered by the nominating committee.

**President-Elect:** It is recommended that a candidate for the position of President Elect has served a minimum of one year on the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® Board of Directors and be a member in good standing for a minimum of three years; however, other qualifications of a candidate (including completion of the Texas REALTORS® Leadership Program - TRLP) may also be considered by the nominating committee.

**Vice-President:** It is recommended that a candidate for the position of Vice-President has served a minimum of one year on the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® Board of Directors, and be a member in good standing for a minimum of three years; however, other qualifications of a candidate (including completion of the Texas REALTORS® Leadership Program-TRLP) may also be considered by the nominating committee.

**Treasurer:** It is recommended that a candidate for the position of Treasurer should have experience working within the financial sector or have other previous applicable experience and be a member in good standing for a minimum of three years.

**Secretary:** It is recommended that a candidate for the position of Secretary should have demonstrated their level of service through committee leadership and be a member in good standing for a minimum of three years.

**Directors:** It is recommended that a candidate for the position of Director should have demonstrated their level of service through committee leadership and be a member in good standing for a minimum of three years.

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**Section 3. VACANCIES**

Vacancies among the Offices of the Board of Directors shall be filled by a simple majority vote of the Board of Directors until the next annual election.

**ARTICLE 3. VOTING RIGHTS**

**Section 1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The President shall have one vote ONLY in the event of a tie on issues brought to election of the Board of Directors (except standing committees, wherein the president has the right to vote.) The President-Elect, Vice-President, Immediate Past-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and each Director shall have one vote each on issues brought to election of the Board of Directors.

**Section 2. GENERAL MEMBERSHIP**

Each eligible voting member\* of the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® will have one vote on issues brought forth to election within the General Membership.

\*Voting Membership = CHCBR Primary and Secondary REALTOR® members in good standing

**ARTICLE 4. MEETINGS**

**Section 1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors shall designate a regular time and place of meetings. Absence from more than three regular meetings notice/reason shall be construed as resignation. The Executive Board shall consist of the President, President-Elect, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Executive Board cannot make decisions independent of the entire Board of Directors but may make proposals for action to the Board of Directors to approve. New Board of Directors members for the following year will meet in November of the previous year with the then current Board of Directors to review the procedures manual and appropriate meeting procedures. New committee chairs for the following year will meet in November of the previous year with the then current committee chairs to review goals and appropriate meeting procedures.

1. Quorum – A quorum of the Board of Directors shall be a majority of the board of directors present for the transaction of business.
2. Attendance – Absence from three regular Board of Directors meetings without an excuse deemed valid by the board of directors shall be construed as a resignation.
3. Guests – Any member of the Association shall be permitted to attend regularly scheduled Board of Directors meetings as an observer only, unless asked to participate in conversation. Any visiting member will not be eligible to vote and may be asked to be excused for discussions held in Executive Session. Other guests may be asked to attend for committee reports or general information that may aid in the Board of Directors' decision making.
4. Board of Directors Meeting/Discussion Minutes – The Secretary and the Association Executive shall take the minutes and the Association Executive shall keep correct minutes of all Board of Directors meetings of the Association and distribute such minutes to the General Membership upon request.

**Section 2. GENERAL MEMBERSHIP**

1. The annual meeting of the General Membership shall be held during September of each year, the date, place, and hour to be designated by the Board of Directors.
2. The regular General Membership meeting shall be held monthly or at a minimum quarterly, unless it is deemed necessary to change the date or cancel for unusual circumstances.



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3. Attending members must RSVP in advance. Those who RSVP and do not attend will be billed for any costs incurred by CHCBR. Payment shall be made in advance unless otherwise arranged by the Association. CHCBR Board of Directors, Texas REALTORS® Leadership and guest speakers are not charged for their meals.
4. Affiliate members may sponsor part or all of the membership meetings.
5. Other Meetings: Meetings of the members may be held at other times as the President or the Board of Directors may determine, or upon written request of at least 20% of the eligible voters.
6. Quorum: A quorum for the transaction of business of the General Membership shall consist of 20% of eligible voters.
7. Guests: Guests may attend a General Membership Luncheon meeting provided they are accompanied by a member of the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS®. The member will be responsible for costs incurred by the guest.

### **Section 3. CARAVAN**

1. Gillespie County REALTOR® Caravan will be held every Tuesday and will meet at the first property promptly at 8:30 a.m.
2. Only Exclusive Right to Sell or Exclusive Agency listings may be placed on caravan. (No open listings are allowed.) Any REALTOR® who is a member of the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® MLS service may place a home on caravan. Only improved properties will be included on any caravan, i.e., commercial buildings, homes, etc.
3. Properties outside Fredericksburg City limits will be divided into quadrants consisting of Hwy 290 E, RR 1376/Old San Antonio Rd, Hwy 87 S, Hwy 16S, Tivydale RD, Hwy 290 W, 87N RR 965/ Hwy 16 N and RR 1376/RR2721. The properties in each quadrant will be on a weekly rotation schedule. Acceptable distance of property from city limits and caravan route will be at the Caravan Committee's discretion.
4. Listings are limited to being on Caravan to once every 6 months unless major renovations have occurred or the listing firm changes.
5. Serving alcoholic beverages at listings during the caravan is prohibited.
6. If an agent wants to hold an "open house" after the scheduled caravan route, you may submit the property information and open house details to <mailto:chcbrcaravan@gmail.com> and it will be added to the list as long as it is received by the deadline.
7. Real estate professionals who are actively engaged in the real estate industry may attend caravan. Membership in the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® MLS is not required. Office Staff and Assistants must be accompanied by a REALTOR® member.
8. REALTORS® who want to show the property to clients or others should make a separate appointment to do so.
9. Children and other guests are not permitted on caravan.
10. All properties MUST be submitted by 10:00 a.m. on the Monday preceding the Tuesday caravan. A copy of the NAVICA MLS display sheet must be e-mailed to the Caravan Committee Chairperson at [chcbrcaravan@gmail.com](mailto:chcbrcaravan@gmail.com).
11. The listing office must have a representative at the property to be shown.

#### **The Caravan Committee will determine the following:**

1. Maximum of ten properties per caravan
2. the number of properties allowed per office
3. the deletion of any properties
4. the direction of properties on country caravan
5. the cancellation of caravan (in inclement weather -- rain, ice, or snow -- the caravan will be cancelled and the Caravan Committee Chairperson, will notify the Board office and an e-mail will be sent)

### **Section 4. NOTICE of MEETINGS**

Written notice shall be given to every Member in the meeting at least one (1) week preceding all meetings. For election meetings, due notice shall be given fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting to all voting members.

## **ARTICLE 5. FINANCIAL**

### **Section 1. CONTRACTS**

Contracts may be signed only by the President or Association Executive, after approval of the Board of Directors. Personal liability may apply for all others.

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**Section 2. CHECK WRITING AUTHORIZATION**

Any two signatures will be required from the following authorized individuals:

\*President      \*President-Elect      \*Treasurer      \*Immediate Past-President

**Section 3. RETURNED CHECK POLICY**

A \$30.00 returned check fee will be assessed on any check presented with non-sufficient funds.

**Section 4. DUES COLLECTION**

**REALTOR® or Affiliate (Board) Dues:**

Dues for all members shall be payable annually in advance on the 15th day of December. Dues payments received in the Board office after December 15th are subject to a late fee. Dues for new members shall be computed from the first day of the month in which a member is notified of election and shall be prorated for the remainder of the year.

In the event a sales licensee or licensed or certified appraiser who holds REALTOR® membership is dropped for nonpayment of Board dues, and the individual remains with the designated REALTOR®'s firm, the dues obligation of the designated REALTOR® will be increased to reflect the addition of a non-member licensee. Dues shall be calculated from the first day of the current fiscal year and are payable within thirty (30) days of the notice of termination.

**Central Hill Country MLS Dues:**

Dues for all CHCBR MLS Members shall be considered past due if not paid on or by the due date. If dues are not paid by the due date/time, a fine of \$25.00 will be assessed to the agent. Dues shall be computed from the first day of the month in which a Member has joined and shall be prorated for the remainder of the billing cycle. MLS service shall be terminated after 30 days past due for all unpaid agents. If a designated REALTOR® (broker) member is terminated, all agents whose membership is under theirs will also be terminated.

**Applicable for all Services:**

No action will be taken to terminate or expel a Member for non-payment of disputed amounts until the accuracy of the amount owed has been confirmed. A former Member who has had his membership terminated for non-payment of dues, fees, fines or other assessments duly levied in accordance with the provisions of the Bylaws or Policies or the provisions of other Rules and Regulations of the Association or any of its services, departments, divisions or subsidiaries may apply for reinstatement in a manner prescribed for new applicants for membership, after making payment in full of all accounts due as of the date of termination. After a 60-day period, the delinquent or inactive member shall pay the full application fee when reapplying for membership.

**Inactivated Accounts:**

The cost to reactivate an account that was suspended for non-payment is \$100 (in addition to past due amount and late fees.) Listings of offices whose account has been inactivated for nonpayment may be withdrawn from the system.

**Section 5. EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT**

The Association Executive will take in all reimbursement requests by Board of Director members, committee leaders, or other volunteers who acquire expenses while doing official Board business. Any unreasonable expense over \$100 will be sent to the Board of Directors for approval. All expenses shall fall in line with the budget.

A completed and signed expense-report form, with original receipts attached, must be submitted to receive reimbursement. All expenses must be submitted within 30 days of the completed trip. Those expenses submitted after 30 days, under special circumstances, may be approved. In no case will expenses be reimbursed if submitted more than 90 days after the expense is incurred.

**Section 6. TRAVEL/CONVENTION**

All meetings, conferences, and conventions being attended by representatives from the organization will be approved in advance by the Board of Directors. Expenses for these events will be approved by the Board of Directors in advance and should fall in line with the annual budget.

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**Officers/Directors**

The President, President-Elect, and state director shall attend the Texas REALTORS® Winter Meeting, Texas REALTORS® 360 Regional Meeting, and the Texas REALTORS® Convention each year. All current and incoming Board of Directors members are encouraged to attend the Texas REALTORS® Board Leadership Conference each fall. All travel costs and reimbursements for such meetings will be approved by the Board of Directors in accordance with the annual budget.

**Association Executive**

The Association Executive shall be encouraged to attend training as necessary as well as all state and national meetings that may assist in the affairs of the Association. Expenses to attend these meetings or conventions shall be paid by the Association at the discretion and approval of the Board of Directors in accordance with the annual budget. Standard meetings considered should be the NAR Association Executive Institute, Texas REALTORS® AE Seminar, and the NAR Leadership Summit. The Association Executive should also attend all state and national meetings in accordance with the budget.

**Gas Mileage Reimbursement**

The Association Executive will be reimbursed at the current federal employee rate for all travel. Volunteer leaders on the Board of Directors will be reimbursed at the current federal employee rate. Carpooling will always be strongly encouraged for meetings where multiple representatives of the Association may travel to.

**Section 7. PETTY CASH**

There shall be no more than \$110 cash available for incidentals and the day-to-day operation of the Association within the designated office of the Association. Such funds shall be accounted for by means of receipts and petty cash requests.

**Section 8. EXPENDITURES**

The Board of Directors shall administer the day-to-day finances of the Board.

**Section 9. CHARITABLE DONATIONS / EXPENDITURES**

The Association shall have authority to collect, raise and otherwise acquire funds to be used for humanitarian purposes as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors for memorials, gifts, and other such charitable donations for or on the behalf of CHCBR Members. These funds may be raised by means of committee or collected from the public and shall be accounted for in an appropriate manner.

**Section 10. RESERVES & INVESTMENTS**

The Association may open and manage Certificates of Deposit or other special accounts to accommodate accruing interest on monies collected by the Association as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors. At no time shall funds of the Association be "at risk" beyond the capability of normal economic conditions. All financial institutions used shall be either FDIC or National Credit Union Administration insured. It is recommended that the banking institution should be an Affiliate member of the Association. Six (6) months of operating reserves should be maintained in the operating account and the remaining reserves in a money market account and/or certificates of deposit.

**Section 11. BANKING**

The Board of Directors shall decide in which bank or trust company the funds of the Association shall be deposited and execute the authorization as mentioned under "Check Writing Authorization." It is recommended that the banking institution should be an Affiliate member of the Association. All financial institutions used shall be either FDIC or National Credit Union Administration insured.

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**ARTICLE 6. BUSINESS POLICIES & PRACTICES**

**Section 1. OFFICE HOURS**

Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

**Section 2. USE of BOARD OFFICE & EQUIPMENT**

Facilities and equipment of the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® may be used for the general purposes of day-to-day activity to enhance the benefits of the General Membership. Members may coordinate with the Association Executive for any special requests and will be subject to approval based on the Association's calendar of events.

**Section 4. ELECTIVE YEAR**

The elective year of the Association shall be January 1 to December 31.

**Section 5. MEDIA CORRESPONDENCE**

Media correspondence shall be directed to the President or someone of their choosing in regard to representations of the Association. Any advertising, except MLS Data, citing Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® as the source, must be approved in writing by the Association Executive or Board of Directors.

**Section 6. MEMBERSHIP ROSTER**

Membership roster will be available to the public on the CHCBR website and through other avenues. Such membership roster shall include member's photo, first name, last name, company name, company website address, and office phone number. Email and mailing addresses of members will only be available to CHCBR members, be they REALTOR® or Affiliate members. At no point should any email addresses or membership information be SOLD to third parties.

**Section 7. SOLICITATIONS**

Solicitations may be presented to the Board of Directors or the President and managed as deemed appropriate for the request.

**Section 8. POLITICAL ENDORSEMENTS**

Political endorsements shall be presented to the Board of Directors by the Governmental Affairs Committee and must be approved before release to the public and/or membership. Endorsements by the Texas REALTORS® shall be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors, prior to submitting to local membership.

**Section 9. COMMUNICATION**

Written correspondence with the Association shall be directed to the Association office located at 906 N. Milam Street, Fredericksburg, TX 78624. Other forms of communication may be used. E-mail: [mail@chcbr.org](mailto:mail@chcbr.org); Office phone number: 830-997-4758.

**Section 10. RECORDS RETENTION POLICY**

**1. Accounting Records**

- a. Accounts payable (seven years)
- b. Accounts receivable (seven years)
- c. Annual financial statements (permanent)
- d. Bank statements (seven years)
- e. Bank reconciliations (seven years)
- f. Canceled checks- routine matters (seven years)

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- g. Canceled checks- special (loan repayment, etc.) (permanent)
- h. Correspondence: routine (four years)
- i. Deeds and closing papers (permanent)
- j. Deposit slips (four years)
- k. Electronic payment records (seven years)
- l. Employee expense reports (seven years)
- m. Fixed-asset acquisition invoices (after disposal) (seven years)
- n. Freight bills (seven years)
- o. General ledgers (permanent)
- p. Income tax returns (permanent)
- q. Inventory count & costing sheets (seven years)
- r. Insurance policies (after expiration) (four years)
- s. Investments (after disposal) (seven years)
- t. Mortgages, loans & leases (paid) (seven years)
- u. Payroll journals & ledgers (permanent)
- v. Purchase orders (except accounts payable copy) (one year)
- w. Purchase invoices & orders (seven years)
- x. Receiving sheets (two years)
- y. Sales commission reports (five years)
- z. Sales records (seven years)
- aa. Sales tax returns & exemption support (five years)
- bb. Subsidiary ledgers (seven years)
- cc. Tax returns (federal & state) (if applicable) (permanent)
- dd. Trial balances (permanent)

**2. Association Corporate Records**

- a. Articles of Incorporation and amendments (permanent)
- b. Bylaws and amendments (permanent)
- c. Corporate filings (permanent)
- d. Corporate Minute Book (permanent)
- e. IRS Exemption Letter (permanent)

**3. Electronically Stored Information**

- a. Specific documents in electronic formats will be treated according to the timeframes set forth elsewhere in the policy. The policy should state how long an association maintains information stored on its backup tapes and other backup systems. The policy should also state that the purpose of the backups is to restore the association's computer network in the event of a crash.

**4. Employment Records**

- a. Documents relating to job recruitment: advertising, job orders submitted to employment agencies, interviewing, testing, hiring, training, demotions, promotions, layoffs, discharge, and other personnel decisions (one year)
- b. Employee benefit plan documents (duration of plan)
- c. FMLA leave records including: all FMLA information and notices distributed to these employees and records of any FMLA disputes. (three years from the date of application)
- d. Garnishments / wage assignments (three years)
- e. Immigration I-9 forms (duration of employment plus one year, minimum of three years)
- f. Medical records relating to the exposure of the employee to any toxic or hazardous substances. (duration of employment plus 30 years).
- g. Payroll records showing name address, date of birth, occupation, rate of pay, and weekly compensation (three years)

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**Section 11. WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY**

**Whistleblower Policy Purpose.**

The purpose of this Whistleblower Policy is to: (1) encourage staff and volunteers to come forward with credible information on illegal practices or serious violations of adopted policies of the Association; (2) specify that the Association will protect the person from retaliation; and (3) identify where such information can be reported.

**Encouragement of reporting.**

The Association encourages complaints, reports or inquiries about illegal practices or serious violations of the Association's policies, including illegal or improper conduct by the Association itself, by its leadership, or by others on its behalf. Appropriate subjects to raise under this policy include violations of law, financial improprieties, accounting or audit irregularities, harm to public health or safety, ethical violations, or other similar illegal or improper practices or policies. Other subjects on which the Association has existing complaint mechanisms or policies should be addressed through channels described in those mechanisms or policies, such as raising matters of alleged discrimination or harassment, unless those channels are themselves implicated in the wrongdoing. This policy is not intended to provide a means of appeal from outcomes in those other mechanisms.

**Protection from retaliation.**

The Association prohibits retaliation by or on behalf of the Association against staff or volunteers for making good faith complaints, reports, or inquiries under this policy or for participating in a review or investigation under this policy. This protection extends to those whose allegations are made in good faith but prove to be mistaken. The Association prohibits retaliation against staff and volunteers for refusal to participate in an activity that would result in a violation of local, state, or federal law. The Association will not retaliate against a staff member or volunteer who discloses or threatens to disclose to a supervisor, director, vice-president, the chief executive officer, or law enforcement agency or other governmental agency, any activity, policy, or practice of the Association that the person reasonably believes is in violation of a local, state or federal law. The Association reserves the right to discipline staff or volunteers who make bad faith, knowingly false, or vexatious complaints, reports, or inquiries or who otherwise abuse this policy.

**Where to report.**

A complaint, report or inquiry may be made under this policy on a confidential or anonymous basis and will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation. The complaint, report or inquiry should describe in detail the specific facts demonstrating its basis. A complaint, report or inquiry by staff should be directed to a direct supervisor; if this person is implicated in the complaint, report, or inquiry, it should be directed to the next level above the direct supervisor. A complaint, report, or inquiry by a volunteer should be directed to the Association's Chairperson ("Chairman") and if the Chairperson is implicated in the complaint, report, or inquiry, it should be directed to the Association's Chairman-elect or Chief Executive Officer. The Association will conduct a prompt, discreet, and objective review, or investigation. Staff or volunteers must recognize that the Association may be unable to fully evaluate a vague or general complaint, report or inquiry that is made anonymously.

**Section 12. ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY**

**Harassment Prohibited.**

The Association prohibits and will not tolerate harassment of any kind by Association staff, Association volunteer leaders, or Association members on the basis of race, color, physical, or mental disability, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, age (40 or over), citizenship, genetic information, past, current, or prospective service in the uniformed services, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state, or local law. Harassment is prohibited on the Association property and at all Association-related or Association-sponsored events. This policy further extends to harassment on social media platforms.

All Association staff, Association volunteer leaders, and Association members are expected to behave accordingly and take appropriate measures to ensure that the conduct described herein does not occur. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any Association staff, Association volunteer leader, or Association member who violates this policy. The Association is committed to enforcing this policy against all forms of harassment.

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**Harassment Defined.**

Sexual harassment means any harassment based on someone's sex or gender. It is not limited to interactions between members of different sexes. It includes harassment that is not sexual in nature (for example, offensive remarks about an individual's sex or gender), as well as any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or any other conduct of a sexual nature.

**Sexual harassment includes:**

- Verbal (for example, epithets, derogatory statements, threatening or obscene language, slurs, sexually-related comments or jokes, sexual innuendoes, unwelcome sexual advances, or requests for sexual favors).
- Non-Verbal (for example, suggestive or insulting sounds, or whistling).
- Physical (for example, assault or inappropriate or unwanted physical contact, such as touching, pinching, brushing the body).
- Visual (for example, displaying sexually suggestive posters, cartoons, or drawings, sending inappropriate adult-themed gifts, leering, or making obscene or sexual gestures).
- Online (for example, derogatory statements, threatening or obscene language, or sexually suggestive postings in any social media platform including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.)

**Other types of harassment often take a similar form to sexual harassment and include harassment that is:**

- Verbal (for example, epithets, derogatory statements, threatening or obscene language, slurs, derogatory comments, or jokes).
- Physical (for example, assault or inappropriate physical contact).
- Visual (for example, displaying derogatory posters, cartoons, or drawings, or making derogatory gestures).
- Online (for example, derogatory statements, threatening or obscene language, or sexually suggestive postings in any

This list is illustrative only, and not exhaustive. It is impossible to list every type of behavior that can be considered harassment. Any conduct that could create an offensive environment will be considered harassment in violation of this policy.

**Reporting Harassment.**

The Association will take each complaint seriously and conduct a thorough and impartial investigation. The Association will maintain a complete written record of each complaint and will maintain communication with the alleged harasser and the victim throughout the proceedings. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process to the extent practical and appropriate under the circumstances. The Association will take prompt and proportionate action when a violation of this policy has occurred.

**Association staff:**

- If you are Association staff and are subjected to any conduct that you believe violates this policy or witness any such conduct, you may speak to, write, or otherwise contact your direct supervisor or, if the conduct involves your direct supervisor, the next level above your direct supervisor. Although not mandatory, a Complaint Form is available on the Association's website to make your complaint if you wish to use it. Follow the procedures set forth in the Association's Employee Handbook.
- Once a report has been received, a prompt and thorough investigation will be conducted by your direct supervisor (or next level above your supervisor) upon consultation with Association's Legal Counsel.

**Association volunteer leaders and members:**

- If you are an Association volunteer leader or member and are subjected to any conduct that you believe violates this policy or witness any such conduct, you may speak to, write, or otherwise contact the Chairperson of the Association ("Chairman"). Although not mandatory, a Complaint Form is available on the Association's website to make your complaint if you wish to use it.
- Once a report has been received, a prompt and thorough investigation will be conducted by the Chairperson upon consultation with the Association's Legal Counsel. If the report names the Chairperson, that individual is precluded from participating in the investigation and disciplinary action and shall be replaced by the Association's Chairman-elect or Chief Executive Officer.

**No Retaliation.**

No one will be subject to, and the Association prohibits, any form of discipline, reprisal, intimidation, or retaliation for good faith reporting of incidents of harassment of any kind, pursuing any harassment claim or cooperating in related investigations.

**Violations.**

Any Association staff, Association volunteer leader, or Association member, regardless of position or title, who has subjected an individual to harassment or retaliation in violation of this policy, will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment (for

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Association staff) or removal from any office or committee position the Association volunteer leader holds. A violation of this policy may be a factor in determining an Association member's fitness for future Association volunteer leader positions.

**Appeal Process.**

- Association staff found in violation will have a right to appeal the decision to the Association's Chief Executive Officer. Any Association volunteer leader or Association member found in violation will have a right to appeal the decision to the Association's Board of Directors. A written request for appeal must be submitted no more than thirty (30) days after the individual receives notice of a violation of this policy.
- The Association's Legal Counsel is responsible for the administration of this policy. If you have any questions regarding this policy or questions about harassment that are not addressed in this policy, please contact the Association's General Counsel.

**Section 13. CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

**Purpose**

This Confidentiality Policy (Policy) is adopted in order to ensure matters which are to remain known only to certain persons affiliated with the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® (CHCBR) are kept that way. CHCBR members and staff are frequently involved in proceedings or actions that involve information that should be kept private. The purpose of this Policy is to define and set forth what information that is and to inform members and staff of procedures to be followed to ensure confidentiality.

**Scope**

This Policy is applicable to all staff and voluntary governance position volunteers of CHCBR. Voluntary governance positions include all members of the CHCBR Board of Directors, Committees and Task Forces. Any person to which this Policy applies shall be referred to as an "Applicable Person."

**Confidential Information**

Confidential Information includes but is not limited to any information pertaining to CHCBR's current or anticipated operations, procedures, 3rd party relationships and agreements, work product, and personal identification information. Some examples of Confidential Information are:

- Identifying personal or financial information related to any CHCBR employee or member (e.g., driver's license number, address, phone number, credit card number, other financial info, etc.)
- Information related to any previous, current, or anticipated Professional Standards proceedings (including the Ombudsman, Mediation, Ethics, and Arbitration programs)
- Information related to the development and creation of any artwork, marketing material, graphic design, newsletters, websites, and other printed material digital or media to be used by CHCBR, its staff and members.
- Information related to vendor contracts and any proprietary information learned by CHCBR in obtaining and fulfilling its obligations pursuant to vendor contracts.
- Any information related to government affairs and political involvement programming of CHCBR not otherwise required to be made public (e.g., process used to determine campaign contributions, discussions surrounding decisions for campaign contributions and endorsements, etc.)
- Information related to personnel decisions (e.g., hiring, firing, promotion, reprimand, salary increases, etc.)
- Information obtained pursuant to closed meetings of CHCBR Committees or Board of Directors

Any other information not generally known that, if disseminated, could be reasonably expected to adversely affect the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS®

**General Non-Disclosure of Confidential Information**

At no time shall Applicable Persons disclose Confidential Information unless expressly permitted to do so at the discretion or direction of the Board of Directors of CHCBR. Further, unless expressly permitted to do so, at no time shall an Applicable Person make copies of Confidential Information except as may be required in the performance of the person's job duties or voluntary governance position duties.

**Association Governance**

From time to time, it may be necessary or required for meetings of CHCBR leadership (i.e., the Board of Directors and certain committees, etc.) to be held in executive session. The proceedings of these meetings are confidential in nature and should not be disclosed to individuals who were not present at the meeting.



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Any information discussed at a meeting held in executive session or documents that are disseminated are to remain confidential and may not be shared with anyone not in attendance. This provision applies to all Applicable Persons.

**Member Information**

Members of the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® frequently provide information to CHCBR related to their membership requirements. Any information provided to CHCBR for these limited purposes shall be deemed confidential and may not be shared with any other member of CHCBR or with CHCBR staff holding positions to which the information would not be relevant.

**Section 14. CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY:**

No member of Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® (CHCBR) OR CHCBR Multiple Listing Service (MLS) Board of Directors or Staff shall derive any personal profit or gain, directly or indirectly, by reason of his or her participation or employment with CHCBR. This shall also include the member's business or other non-profit affiliations, family and/or significant other, employer, or close associates who may stand to receive a benefit or gain. Each individual shall disclose to the Board President any personal interests which he or she may have in any matter pending before the organization and shall refrain from participation in any discussion or decision on such matter.

In addition, any member of CHCBR's Board of Directors or Staff shall refrain from obtaining any list of clients or donors for personal or private solicitation purposes at any time during the term of their affiliation.

Any new member of the Board of Directors shall be given this policy at the time of their election onto the Board of Directors and the policy will be reviewed annually by the board at a regularly scheduled meeting.

**ARTICLE 7. AWARDS & RECOGNITION**

**Section 1. AWARDS**

The Board of Directors of the Association shall have the authorization to purchase and award members of the Association and/or community with plaques, certificates, gifts, and other such appropriate items. Recipients may include, but are not limited to: committee chairpersons, Citizen of the Year, Rookie of the Year, Affiliate of the Year, Lifetime Achievement, employees, and other deserving persons. REALTOR® of the Year will be nominated by the Awards Committee and voted on by membership. Nominations for the annual awards (except REALTOR® of the Year) will be solicited from the membership one month prior to the awards ceremony. Nominations must be submitted with appropriate documentation provided to the committee members by the Association. The expenses of these purchases shall be appropriately accounted for, fall in line with the budget, and be approved by the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE 8. ENFORCEMENT & AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1. ENFORCEMENT**

It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to enforce the provisions of the Bylaws and Policies and the National Association of REALTORS® Code of Ethics, all without fear or favor and respecting all members of the Association. All Grievance Committee and Professional Standards issues will be directed to the Texas Association of REALTORS®. The Board of Directors shall have the complete and full power in accordance with the provisions of the Bylaws & Policies to expel, suspend, fine or otherwise discipline members of the Association who contravene any of the provisions of the Bylaws or Policies, subject to the right of appeal as herein provided.

**Section 2. BYLAWS AMENDMENTS**

1. The Bylaws may be amended by the majority vote of the Members present and qualified to vote at any meeting at which a quorum is present, provided the substance of such proposed amendment or amendments shall be plainly stated in the call for the meeting, except that the Board of Directors may, at any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors at which a quorum is present, approve amendments to the Bylaws which are mandated by NAR policy.

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2. Notice of all meetings at which amendments are to be considered shall be mailed or sent electronically to every member eligible to vote at least one (1) week prior to the meeting.
3. Amendments to the Bylaws affecting the admission or qualification of REALTOR® and Institute Affiliate Members, the use of the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® or any alteration in the territorial jurisdiction of the Board shall become effective upon their approval as authorized by the Board of Directors of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

**Section 3. POLICY & PROCEDURES AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to this document may be advised by the Association Executive or Officers/Directors with final approval coming from the Central Hill Country Board of REALTORS® Board of Directors.

~~~Amended and Approved by CHCBR Board of Directors 01/2024~~