

CORE STANDARDS BEST PRACTICES FOR LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

Educating Leadership

- Incorporate Core Standards into leadership training to get buy-in from incoming leaders on specific activities that they might not otherwise recognize as important.
- Highlight items that may have an impact on the budget such as AE professional development (e.g., tuition for [AE Institute](#) attendance).
- Ensure volunteer leaders understand the interplay between Core Standards and the strategic plan and they are aware of the elements required in each Strategic Plan (e.g., advocacy, consumer outreach, DEI, and Fair Housing).
- Ensure there is a plan in place for someone to assume responsibility for completing Core Standards in the event the association is temporarily without an AE.
- Provide leadership with periodic updates throughout the year on progress toward completing Core Standards.
- Ensure that leadership is apprised of the review and submission process and that they are aware of the timetable, including the state association's review and deadlines.

Completing the Core Standards Certification Form

- Start the Certification Form early and add items as they occur throughout the year. Consider weekly/monthly calendar reminders to update the form with anything that recently occurred, while it is top of mind for all.
- If staff other than the AE are responsible for entering information, clarify roles and add them to the list of Assigned Users. Alternatively, create a shared document to track progress, assigning one person to make entries into the Certification Form. Remember to remove Assigned Users when they leave the association or are no longer responsible for entering information.
- Maintain regular communication with staff who are responsible for completing components of Core Standards to ensure everyone is on track and items are not overlooked until the last minute.
- Verify with your association's CPA whether a financial audit, review, or compilation is sufficient for compliance. Use an Engagement Letter to confirm with the CPA that the audit/review/compilation will be completed by a specific date to ensure they have time to complete their work before the Core Standards deadline.
- Understand use of the "State Review" button, which allows local associations to request input/review from the state association prior to final submission.

Meeting Code of Ethics Standards

SECTION I – CODE OF ETHICS

- Consider an annual review of your training materials to ensure they are updated with any recent changes.
- Do you have enough trained mediators? How often are mediators trained/recertified?
- If you have not adopted mandatory mediation, have a discussion with your leadership about the benefits.
- Does your policy include a citation system? Is this something you should adopt?

Meeting Advocacy Standards

SECTION II – ADVOCACY

- Know your state and federal campaign finance laws and annually review your compliance.
- Does your association take advantage of the latest tools provided by NAR to implement Calls for Action?
 - Find out more with the [Calls for Action Toolkit](#) on the REALTOR® Party website.
- Can you achieve the Triple Crown? How close did you come last year?
 - For more information visit the [Triple Crown](#) page on the REALTOR® Party website.
 - Strive to achieve the following:
 - Meet or exceed your share of the state's NAR RPAC Fundraising Goal
 - Meet or exceed your Participation criteria
- Plan in advance to conduct the two Vote-Act-Invest activities/initiatives. It will make compliance easier.
- Make sure DEI is on your radar and incorporated in your strategic plan for purposes of buy-in.

Meeting Consumer Outreach Standards

SECTION III – CONSUMER OUTREACH

- Take some time to get comfortable with the new format.
- For the “Voice for Real Estate” component, do you have specific, recurring activities?
- Community Involvement can often be delegated to a committee.

Meeting Governance, Operations and Training Standards

SECTION IV – GOVERNANCE, OPERATIONS AND TRAINING

- Make sure leadership training is up to date, including DEI/Fair Housing components.
- AE professional development – AEI is obvious, but there are budget constraints.
 - Does the state offer scholarships?
 - [William D. North AE Institute Scholarship](#)
 - [Judith Lindenau RCE Scholarship](#)
- For states that provide a variance report between licensees affiliated with brokers and the membership data, do you have a strategy for using it?
 - Do you follow up with Designated REALTORS® to collect the nonmember assessment(s) under the DR dues formula?
 - If not provided by the state, are you completing this audit yearly by comparing the Real Estate Commission report with your member database?
- If the state doesn't require Fair Housing for license renewal, how are you preparing for the new 2-hour requirement beginning in 2025?
- Make sure your M1 Point of Entry (even if it is you!) is aware of the requirement for updating membership records in M1 within one week of receipt.
- To comply with the cybersecurity standard, consider partnering with other associations.
- Consider Payment Card Industry Compliance (handling credit cards), Personal Identity Information Policy (PII Policy) and the right to be forgotten in the system, dual authentication policy, and BYOD (Bring your own device) policy.

Note: The requirements of Section V - Technology were combined with Section IV – Governance, Operations and Training. Section VI - Financial Solvency was renumbered.

Meeting Financial Standards

SECTION V – FINANCIAL SOLVENCY

- Plan well in advance to verify where you fit into the new parameters and communicate early with the CPA providing the Compilation, Review or Audit.

PREPARING FOR AN APPEAL HEARING (in the event of a finding of non-compliance)

- Determine what, if any, communication the state will provide to the appeal hearing panel.
- Review the next steps as provided on the [Core Standards Appeal Hearing Process](#) page of nar.realtor.
- Alert local leadership to discuss why Core Standards were not met and confirm who will participate in the appeal hearing.
- Discuss with the state association to clearly understand which item(s) caused you not to meet Core Standards. Can these item(s) be addressed before the appeal hearing? If

yes, prepare documentation to present to the appeal hearing panel. If no, be prepared to explain to the appeal hearing panel why these item(s) were not met.

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