# REALTOR® Association Core Standards
# Technology Compliance Guide

## Website

Every association must have an **interactive website** that has **active links** to:

- Professional standards information
- Professional standards enforcement resources
- Websites of other levels of the association

### A. Rationale

Associations need to provide information to members in a convenient, internet-based form. Members need to be able find information about programs, products and services provided by Local, State and National associations (including NAR's official property listing site website REALTOR.com). Information about these products and services should be prominently displayed.

### B. Definitions

The following terms are used in this section:

- **Webpage**: A page of information that is located on the Internet with a Uniform Resource Locator (URL). Typically, a user will enter a URL into a browser to find a Webpage.
- **Website**: A collection of Webpages.
- **Link**: An element of a Webpage uses a URL to changes the:
  - Visible section of a Webpage (akin to a section of a report if the report is written on a single page)
  - Entire Webpage being viewed
- **Interactive Website**: A Website that includes Webpages having user-oriented controls such as buttons or links.
- **Active Link**: A link whose URL resolves (points) to a Webpage that is active (exists).
- **Professional standards enforcement resources**: Includes arbitration filing processes.

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## C. Compliance Organization

State Associations will ensure that each Local Association located in the state complies with the Core Standard. The National Association will ensure that each State Association complies with the Core Standard.

## D. Compliance Reporting

Each association will provide its Compliance Organization with the URL to the Webpages that have Active Links to:

- Professional Standards Information.
- Professional standards enforcement resources
- Websites of other levels of the association
- REALTOR.com

Any logins and associated passwords required to access the above resources should be submitted.

## E. Best Practices

The following links will be incorporated into the association's website:

- NAR Links for Professional Standards Information:
  - www.realtor.org/topics/professional-standards
- NAR Association Links:
  - www.realtor.org
  - www.realtor.org/news-releases
  - www.realtor.org/member-benefits
- REALTOR.com
  - www.realtor.com
- RPR
  - www.narrpr.com

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Required active links must be regularly reviewed to make sure they continue to be live and point to the relevant information or organizations. Links must be placed on front page/home page and be visible and conspicuous to visitors.

## Member Communication

Every association must utilize an email or other Internet based means for member communication.

### A. Rationale

Associations need to provide information to members in a convenient, Internet-based form.  Associations should survey member communication channel preferences and provide options that meet member needs. In order to maximize their investment in the association, Members need communications about important events, activities and programs to be sent to them by the association.  Notification must be performed through traditional e-mail means.

An association can choose to supplement e-mail communications using social media channels.  Associations need to have dedicated staff assigned to respond to email communications in a timely manner (within one business day). In these cases, all members must still be able to receive the electronic communication meaning e-mail notification is still required.  An Association can avoid e-mail notification if the member only wishes to receive social media-based communication and opts-out of e-mail notifications.

An **active and valid e-mail address** for the association must be referenced within the body of the member communication.  This allows staff to assist members who have questions related to the communication. Association staff is required to monitor and respond to e-mail from members sent to the specified e-mail address.

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In the case of social-media based communications, an e-mail address is still required.  Although most social media channels provide a feedback mechanism which should be monitored, including an e-mail address ensures that a member feedback will be addressed.

## B. Definitions

The following terms are used in this section:

- **Member Communication**: A notification of an association event to the membership of the association.
- **E-Mail Address**: An Internet address of the form [USER_NAME]@[ORGANIZATION].
- **Active E-Mail Address**: An E-Mail Address that is monitored by an association staff member on a daily basis.

## C. Compliance Organization

State Associations will ensure that each Local Association located in the state complies with the Core Standard. The National Association will ensure that each State Association complies with the Core Standard.

## D. Compliance Reporting

Each association will provide its Compliance Organization with a copy of one member communication executed by the association during the compliance year.

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**E. Best Practices**

The following suggestions can be incorporated into the web-based communication strategy for the membership:

- Conduct annual surveys of member communication preferences.
- Confirm that members are receiving communications. This can be done via surveys or as part of a third party e-mail service contract.
- Be aware of one of the primary reasons members may not be getting your e-mail. Most e-mail services that members use for their e-mail have SPAM-fighting features. Here is an article you can start with to understand SPAM:

  www.realtor.org/field-guides/field-guide-to-reducing-spam-email

- Include a standard footer at the bottom of the e-mail identifying the association and the contact e-mail address:

  *Copyright* © [**YEAR**] [**ASSOCIATION**], *All rights reserved.*
  *Contact*: [**ASSOCIATION EMAIL ADDRESS**]

  Substitute the appropriate values for the association between the brackets. An example (do not use this footer, it is only supplied as an example and the link is not active) might be:

  *Copyright* © 2014 Best Association of REALTORS®, *All rights reserved.*
  *Contact*: membership@best_aor.com

- Consider using an outside service to deliver membership messages. Even if you take steps to make sure your membership messages are not interpreted as SPAM, there is a chance that someone will report you as a spammer. This reporting can disable your e-mail communications until the misunderstanding can be cleared up. Sometimes this can take many days. Outside services (sometimes referred to as "blast email services") safeguards the association's email services.

- Maintain a regular schedule for your member communications.

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- When using e-mail, make sure your e-mail vendor takes advantage of anti-spam technologies such as SPF, DKIM, and DMARC.
- Ensure that your member communications comply with CAN-SPAM legislation and regulations at both the national and state levels.