

REOPENING REAL ESTATE

In anticipation of the Governor easing restrictions on the real estate industry, Michigan Realtors® has worked to develop proposed guidelines. We have looked to our neighboring states (most notably Illinois) where real estate services are allowed to continue under their current stay at home orders. In addition, we have also pulled best practices from states like New York, California, and Washington that have been similarly impacted by COVID-19.

We propose the following guidance as a starting point to make sure public health is kept a priority while allowing the real estate market to move forward:

- Real estate licensees should continue to work remotely to the greatest extent possible, in-person meetings are allowed only when necessary to develop a new listing, for a client to view a property, or to sign necessary documents;
- No in-person real estate open houses shall be permitted;
- Property photography/videography, showings, inspections, appraisals, and final walk-throughs shall be arranged by appointment and limited to no more than four people in the home at any one time;
- Private showings limited to owner-occupied, vacant homes, vacant land, commercial, and industrial property; (There are also states that allow for the showing of occupied rentals with the permission of the current tenant)
- Travel shall be allowed for the installation/retrieval of real estate signs and placement/retrieval of lockboxes.
- All in-person activities must abide by Michigan/CDC guidelines for social distancing.

In addition to these considerations, Michigan Realtors® proposes the following additional protocol for our members to follow for in-person meetings or showings:

- Consider limiting in-person showings to potential buyers who have been pre-approved for financing or have provided proof of funds adequate for purchase. Use photographs, virtual showings and floor plans to help buyer-clients narrow down their needs and wants prior to any in-person showings;
- Realtors® should work to avoid overlapping appointments;
- Confirm in advance that the seller has authorized in-person showings;
- Consider providing marketing materials and other information relevant to the property electronically in advance of the showing;
- Ask sellers to turn on all of the lights and leave interior doors, drapes and blinds, etc. open. Remind sellers to clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces prior to and after the showing;
- Agents conducting showings may wish to meet their clients at the property rather than drive clients to showings. If meeting clients, ask them to wait in the car for agent's arrival;
- Discourage anyone who does not need to view the property from attending a showing;
- Maintain at least a six-foot social distance at all times and abide by Michigan/CDC social distancing guidelines
- Ask buyers and showing agents to refrain from touching any surface in the property.
- Encourage the use of gloves and masks. Do not share phones, pens, or tablets;
- After a showing, follow up discussions should continue outside the property, via email, or phone.

Lastly, Michigan Realtors® has already developed forms to help our members work with and educate the public on best practices to stay safe when selling and viewing properties. These include a showing certification and an addendum/amendment for listing agreements.