



**BYLAWS OF THE  
Rhode Island Commercial and Appraisal Board of REALTORS®, Inc.**

(Last Amended 12/8/2021)

**ARTICLE I – NAME**

**Section 1. Name.** The name of this organization shall be the Rhode Island Commercial & Appraisal Board of REALTORS®, Incorporated, hereinafter referred to as the “Board” or “RICABOR”.

**Section 2. REALTORS®.** Inclusion and retention of the Registered Collective Membership Mark REALTORS® in the name of the Board shall be governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® as from time to time amended

**ARTICLE II – OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Board are:

**Section 1.** To unite those engaged in the recognized branches of the real estate profession for the purpose of exerting a beneficial influence upon the profession and related interests.

**Section 2.** To promote and maintain high standards of conduct in the real estate profession as expressed in the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

**Section 3.** To provide a unified medium for commercial real estate owners and those engaged in the commercial real estate and appraisal professions whereby their interests may be safeguarded and advanced.

**Section 4.** To further the interests of commercial real property ownership

**Section 5.** To unite those engaged in the commercial real estate and appraisal professions in this community with the Rhode Island Association of REALTORS® and the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, thereby furthering their own objectives throughout the state and nation, and obtaining the benefits and privileges of membership therein.

**Section 6.** To designate, for the benefit of the public, individuals authorized to use the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® as licensed, prescribed, and controlled by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

### **ARTICLE III – JURISDICTION**

**Section 1.** The territorial jurisdiction of the Board as a Member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, is the State of Rhode Island.

**Section 2.** Territorial jurisdiction is defined to mean:

- (a) The right and duty to control the use of the terms REALTOR® AND REALTORS®, subject to the conditions set forth in these Bylaws and those of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, in return for which the Board agrees to protect and safeguard the property rights of the National Association in the terms.

### **ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1.** There shall be seven classes of Members as follows: REALTOR® Members, Affiliate Members, Institute Affiliate Members, Public Service Members, Honorary Members, Student Members and REALTOR® Emeritus members.

**REALTOR® Members.** REALTOR ® Members whether primary or secondary member shall be:

- (1) Individuals who, as sole proprietors, partners, corporate officers, or branch office managers, are engaged actively in the real estate profession, including buying, selling, exchanging, renting or leasing, managing, appraising for others for compensation, counseling, building, developing or subdividing real estate, and who maintain or are associated with an established real estate office in the state of Rhode Island or a state contiguous thereto. All persons who are partners in a partnership, or all officers in a corporation who are actively engaged in the real estate profession within the state or a state contiguous thereto shall qualify for REALTOR® membership only, and each is required to hold REALTOR® membership (except as provided in the following paragraph) in an association of REALTORS® within the state or a state contiguous thereto, unless otherwise qualified for Institute Affiliate membership.

In the case of a real estate firm, partnership, or corporation, whose business activity is substantially all commercial, only those principals actively engaged in the real estate business in connection with the same office, or any other offices within the jurisdiction of the association in which one of the firm's principals holds REALTOR® membership, shall be required to hold REALTOR® membership unless otherwise qualified for Institute Affiliate membership.

- (2) Individuals who are engaged in the real estate profession other than as sole proprietors, partners, corporate officers, or branch office managers and are associated with a REALTOR® member and meet the qualifications.

- (3) Franchise REALTOR® Membership. Corporate officers (who may be licensed or unlicensed) of a real estate brokerage franchise organization with at least one hundred fifty (150) franchisees located within the United States, its insular possessions and the commonwealth of Puerto Rico, elected to membership pursuant to the provisions in the *NAR Constitution and Bylaws*. Such individuals shall enjoy all of the rights, privileges, and obligations of REALTOR® membership (including compliance with the Code of Ethics) except: obligations related to association-mandated education, meeting attendance, or indoctrination classes or other similar requirements; the right to use the term REALTOR® in connection with their franchise organization's name; and the right to hold elective office in the local association, state association, and National Association.

NOTE: An individual is a primary member if the association pays state and National dues based on such member. An individual is a secondary member if state and National dues are remitted through another association. One of the principals in a real estate firm must be a designated REALTOR® member of the association in order for licensees affiliated with the firm to select the association as their "primary" association.

- (4) Designated REALTOR® Members. Each firm (or office in the case of firms with multiple office locations) shall designate in writing one REALTOR® member who shall be responsible for all duties and obligations of membership, including the obligation to arbitrate (or to mediate if required by the association) pursuant to Article 17 of the Code of Ethics and the payment of association dues. The "Designated REALTOR®" must be a sole proprietor, partner, corporate officer, or branch office manager acting on behalf of the firm's principal(s) and must meet all other qualifications for REALTOR® membership.
- (5) REALTOR® Members shall be eligible to vote and to hold elective or appointed office of the Board.
  - (a) Institute Affiliate Members. Institute Affiliate members shall be individuals who hold a professional designation awarded by an Institute, Society, or Council affiliated with the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS that addresses a specialty area other than residential brokerage or individuals who otherwise hold a class of membership in such Institute, Society, or Council that confers the right to hold office. Any such individual, if otherwise eligible, may elect to hold REALTOR® or REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® membership, subject to payment of applicable dues for such membership.
  - (a) Affiliate Members. Affiliate Members shall be real estate owners and other individuals or firms who, while not engaged in the real estate profession as defined in paragraph (a) or (b) of this section, have interests requiring information concerning real estate, and are in sympathy with the objectives of the Board. Affiliate Membership shall also be granted to individuals licensed or certified to engage in real estate practice who, if otherwise eligible, do not elect to hold REALTOR® membership in the board, provided the applicant is engaged exclusively in a specialty of the real estate business other than brokerage of real property. Affiliate members shall be eligible to vote and hold elective or appointed office of the Board.
  - (c) Public Service Members. Public Service Members shall be individuals who are interested in the real estate profession as employees of or affiliated with educational, public utility, governmental or other similar organizations, but are not engaged in the real estate profession

on their own account or in association with an established real estate business. They shall be eligible to vote and to hold elective or appointed office of the Board.

(d) Honorary Members. Honorary Members shall be individuals not engaged in the real estate profession who have performed notable service for the real estate profession, for the Board, or for the public. They shall not be eligible to vote or to hold elective office in the Board. They shall be eligible to hold appointive committee positions of the Board.

(e) Student Members. Student members shall be individuals who are actively seeking an undergraduate or graduate degree with a specialization or major in real estate or real estate finance at institutions of higher learning, and who have completed at least two years of college and at least one college level course in real estate but are not engaged in the real estate profession on their own account or not associated with an established real estate office. The Board of Directors shall determine membership fees, if any, for a Student Member. Student Members shall not be eligible to vote or hold elective office.

(f) REALTOR® Emeritus. REALTOR® Emeritus status shall be granted by the National Association of REALTORS® and by the Rhode Island Commercial and Appraisal Board of REALTORS® to an individual who has maintained REALTOR® or REALTOR®-Associate membership or both for a cumulative period of 40 years and also have completed at least one (1) year of service at the National Association level. However, for applications filed through 2019, the one (1) year service requirement may also be met through service at the state or local level. This provision will sunset at the end of 2019. Applications submitted in 2020 and beyond will require proof of one (1) year of service at the National Association level and any other criteria mandated by the National Association of REALTORS®.

## **ARTICLE V – QUALIFICATION AND ELECTION**

### **Section 1. Application.**

(a) An application for membership shall be made in such manner and form as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors and made available to anyone requesting it. The application form shall contain among the statements to be signed by the applicant (1) that applicant agrees as a condition to membership to thoroughly familiarize himself with the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Rules and Regulations of the Board, the State and National Associations, and if elected a Member, will abide by the Constitutions and Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Board, State and National Associations, and if a Realtor® Member, will abide by the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, including the obligation to arbitrate (or to mediate if required by the association) controversies arising out of real estate transactions as specified by Article 17 of the Code of Ethics, and as further specified in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, as from time to time amended, and (2) that applicant consents that the Board, through its Membership Committee or otherwise, may invite and receive information and comment about applicant from any Member or other persons, and that applicant agrees that any information and comment furnished to the Board by any person in response to the invitation shall be conclusively deemed to be privileged and not form the basis of any action for slander, libel or defamation of character. The applicant shall, with the application

form, have access to a copy of the Bylaws, Constitution, Rules and Regulations, and Code of Ethics referred to above.

**Section 2. Qualification.**

- (a) An applicant for Realtor® Membership who is a sole proprietor, partner, corporate officer, or branch manager of a real estate firm shall supply evidence satisfactory to the Board through its Membership Committee or otherwise that he is actively engaged in the real estate profession, and maintains a current, valid real estate broker's or salesperson's license or is licensed or certified by an appropriate state regulatory agency to engage in the appraisal of real property, has a place of business within the State or a state contiguous thereto (unless a secondary member, has no record of recent or pending bankruptcy, has no record of official sanctions involving unprofessional conduct, agrees to complete a course of instruction covering the Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Board, the Bylaws of the State Association, and the Constitution and Bylaws and Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, and shall pass such reasonable and nondiscriminatory written examination thereon as may be required by the Membership Committee, and shall agree that if elected to membership, he will abide by such Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and Code of Ethics. <sup>1</sup>
  
- (b) Individuals who are actively engaged in the real estate profession other than as sole proprietors, partners, corporate officers, or branch office managers in order to qualify for REALTOR® Membership, shall at the time of application, be associated either as an employee or as an independent contractor with a Designated REALTOR® Member of the Board or a Designated REALTOR® Member of another Board (if a secondary member) and must maintain a current, valid real estate broker's or salesperson's license or be licensed or certified by an appropriate state regulatory agency to engage in the appraisal of real property, has no record of official sanctions involving unprofessional conduct<sup>2</sup>, shall complete a course of instruction covering the Bylaws and Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, and shall pass such reasonable and nondiscriminatory written examinations thereon as may be required by the Membership Committee and shall agree in writing that if elected to membership he will abide by the by such Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations and the Code of Ethics.
  
- (c) RICABOR will also consider the following in determining an applicant's qualifications for REALTOR® membership:
  - 1. All final findings of Code of Ethics violations and violations of other membership duties in this or any other REALTOR® association within the past three (3) years.
  - 2. Pending ethics complaints (or hearings)
  - 3. Unsatisfied discipline pending
  - 4. Pending arbitration requests (or hearings)
  - 5. Unpaid arbitration awards or unpaid financial obligations to any other association or association MLS
  - 6. Any misuse of the term REALTOR® or REALTORS® in the name of the applicant's firm.

"Provisional" membership may be granted in instances where ethics complaints or arbitration requests (or hearings) are pending in other associations or where the applicant for membership has unsatisfied discipline pending in another association (except for violations of the Code of Ethics; see Article V, Section 2(a), NOTE 2), provided all other qualifications for membership have been satisfied. Associations may reconsider the membership status of such individuals when all pending ethics and arbitration matters (and related discipline) have been resolved or if such matters are not resolved within six (6) months from the date that provisional membership is approved. Provisional members shall be considered REALTORS® and shall be subject to all of the same privileges and obligations of REALTOR® membership. If a member resigns from another association with an ethics complaint or arbitration request pending, the association may condition membership on the applicant's certification that he/she will submit to the pending ethics or arbitration proceeding (in accordance with the established procedures of the association to which the applicant has made application) and will abide by the decision of the hearing panel.

### **Section 3. Election**

The procedure for election to membership shall be as follows:

- (a) The Chief Staff Executive (or duly authorized designee) shall determine whether the applicant is applying for the appropriate class of membership. The Board of Directors shall review the qualifications of the applicant and the recommendations of the Chief Staff Executive (or duly authorized designee) and then vote on the applicant's eligibility for membership. If the applicant receives a majority vote of the Board of Directors, he shall be declared elected to membership and shall be advised by written notice. An application for the Board of Directors shall act upon membership within thirty (30) days from the date of receipt of the application for membership.
- (b) The Board of Directors may not reject an application without providing the applicant with advance notice of the findings, an opportunity to appear before the Board of Directors, to call witnesses on his behalf, to be represented by counsel, and to make such statements as he deems relevant. The Board of Directors may also have counsel present. The Board of Directors shall require written minutes be made of any hearing before it or may electronically or mechanically record the proceedings.
- (c) If the Board of Directors determines that the application should be rejected, it shall record its reasons with the Chief Staff Executive (or duly authorized designee). If the Board of Directors believes that denial of membership to the applicant may become the basis of litigation and a claim of damage by the applicant, it may specify that denial shall become effective upon entry in a suit by the Board for a declaratory judgment by a court of competent jurisdiction of a final judgment declaring that the rejection violates no rights of the applicant.

### **Section 4. New Member Code of Ethics Orientation.**

Applicants for REALTOR® membership and provisional REALTOR® members (where applicable) shall complete an orientation program on the Code of Ethics of not less than two (2) hours and thirty (30) minutes of instructional time. This requirement does not apply to applicants for REALTOR® membership or provisional members who have completed comparable

orientation in another association, provided that REALTOR® membership has been continuous, or that any break in membership is for one (1) year or less.

Failure to satisfy this requirement within 180 days of the date of application (or, alternatively, the date that provisional membership was granted), will result in denial of the membership application or termination of provisional membership.

### **Section 5. Continuing REALTOR® Code of Ethics Training.**

Effective January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024, and for successive three (3) year periods thereafter, each REALTOR® member of the association (with the exception of REALTOR® members granted REALTOR® Emeritus status by the National Association) shall be required to complete ethics training of not less than two (2) hours and thirty (30) minutes of instructional time. This requirement will be satisfied upon presentation of documentation that the member has completed a course of instruction conducted by this or another association, the State Association of REALTORS®, the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, or any other recognized educational institution or provider which meets the learning objectives and minimum criteria established by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® from time to time. REALTOR® members who have completed training as a requirement of membership in another association and REALTOR® members who have completed the New Member Code of Ethics Orientation during any three (3)-year cycle shall not be required to complete additional ethics training until a new three (3)-year cycle commences.

Failure to satisfy the required periodic ethics training shall be considered a violation of a membership duty. Failure to meet the requirement in any three (3)-year cycle will result in suspension of membership for the first two months (January and February) of the year following the end of any three (3)-year cycle or until the requirement is met, whichever occurs sooner. On March 1 of that year, the membership of a member who is still suspended as of that date will be automatically terminated.

### **Section 6. Status Changes.**

- (a) A REALTOR® who changes the conditions under which he holds membership shall be required to provide written notification to the Board within 10 days. A REALTOR® (non-principal) who becomes a principal in the firm with which he has been licensed or, alternatively, be a principal in a new firm which will be comprised of REALTOR® principals may be required to satisfy any, previously, unsatisfied membership requirements applicable to REALTOR® (principal) Members but shall, during the period of transition from one status of membership to another, be subject to all of the privileges and obligations of a REALTOR® (principal). If the REALTOR (non-principal) does not satisfy the requirements established in these Bylaws for the categories of membership to which they have transferred within 10 days of the date they advised the Board of their change in status, their new membership application will terminate automatically unless otherwise so directed by the Board of Directors.

A REALTOR® who is transferring their license from one firm comprised of REALTOR® principals to another firm comprised of REALTOR® principals shall be subject to all of the privileges and obligations of membership during the period of transition. If the transfer is not completed within 10 days of the date the board is advised

of the disaffiliation with the current firm, membership will terminate automatically unless otherwise so directed by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors, at its discretion, may waive any qualification which the applicant has already fulfilled in accordance with the Board's Bylaws.

A REALTOR® who has allowed their real estate license to expire at the renewal period designated by the governing regulatory agency, shall have a period of 10 days to provide proof of license reinstatement to the Board. If no such evidence is provided, membership shall terminate automatically.

- (b) Any application fee related to a change in membership status shall be reduced by an amount equal to any application fee previously paid by the applicant.
- (c) Dues shall be prorated from the first day of the quarter in which the member is notified of election by the Board of Directors and shall be based on the new membership status for the remainder of the year.

## **ARTICLE VI – PRIVILEGES AND OBLIGATIONS**

**Section 1.** The privileges and obligations of Members, in addition to those otherwise provided in these Bylaws, shall be specified in this Article.

**Section 2.** Any member of the Board may be reprimanded, fined, placed on probation, suspended, or expelled by the Board of Directors for a violation of these Bylaws and Board Rules and Regulations not inconsistent with these Bylaws, after a hearing as provided in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the Board. Although Members other than REALTORS® are not subject to the Code of Ethics nor its enforcement by the Board, such Members are encouraged to abide by the principles established in the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and conduct their business and professional practices accordingly. Further, Members other than REALTORS® may, upon recommendation of the Membership Committee, or upon recommendation by a hearing panel of the realtor Committee, be subject to discipline as described above, for any conduct, which in the opinion of the Board of Directors, applied on a nondiscriminatory basis, reflects adversely, on the terms REALTOR® or REALTORS®, and the real estate industry, or for conduct that is inconsistent with or adverse to the objectives and purposes of RICABOR, the State Association, and the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

**Section 3.** Any REALTOR® member of the association may be disciplined by the board of directors for violations of the Code of Ethics or other duties of membership, after a hearing as described in the *Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual* of the association, provided that the discipline imposed is consistent with the discipline authorized by the Professional Standards Committee of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® as set forth in the *Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual* of the National Association.

**Section 4.** Resignations of Members shall become effective when received in writing by the Board of Directors, provided, however, that if any Member submitting the resignation is indebted to the Board for dues, fees, fines, or other assessments of the Board or any of its services, departments, divisions, or subsidiaries, the Board may condition the right of the resigning Member to reapply for membership upon payment in full of all such monies owed.



**Section 5.** If a member resigns from the association or otherwise causes membership to terminate with an ethics complaint pending, that board of directors may condition the right of the resigning member to reapply for membership upon the applicant's certification that he/she will submit to the pending ethics proceeding and will abide by the decision of the hearing panel. The complaint shall be processed until the decision of the association with respect to disposition of the complaint is final by this association (if respondent does not hold membership in any other association) or by any other association in which the respondent continues to hold membership. If an ethics respondent resigns or otherwise causes membership in all Boards to terminate before an ethics complaint is filed alleging unethical conduct occurred while the respondent was a REALTOR®, the complaint, once filed, shall be processed until the decision of the association with respect to disposition of the complaint is final. In any instance where an ethics hearing is held subsequent to an ethic respondent's resignation or membership termination, any discipline ratified by the Board of Directors shall be held in abeyance until such time as the respondent rejoins an association of REALTORS®.

- (a) If a Member resigns or otherwise causes membership to terminate, the duty to submit to arbitration (or to mediate if required by the association) continues in effect even after membership lapses or is terminated, provided that the dispute arose while the former member was a REALTOR®.

**Section 6. REALTOR® Members.** REALTOR® members, whether primary or secondary, in good standing whose financial obligations to the association are paid in full shall be entitled to vote and to hold elective office in the association; may use the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS; and have the primary responsibility to safeguard and promote the standards, interests, and welfare of the association and the real estate profession.

- (a) If a REALTOR® Member is a sole proprietor in a firm, a partner in a partnership or an officer in a corporation and is suspended or expelled, the firm, partnership, or corporation shall not use the terms REALTOR® or REALTORS® in connection with its business during the period of suspension, or until readmission to REALTOR® Membership, or unless connection with the firm, partnership, or corporation is severed, whichever may apply. The membership of all other principals, partners, or corporate officers shall suspend or terminate during the period of suspension of the disciplined Member, or until readmission of the disciplined Member, or unless connection of the disciplined Member with the firm, partnership, or corporation is severed, whichever may apply. Further, the membership of REALTORS® other than principals who are employed by or affiliated as independent contractors with the disciplined Member shall suspend or terminate during eth period of suspension of the disciplined Member or until readmission of the disciplined Member or until connection of the disciplined Member with the firm, partnership, or corporation is severed, or unless the REALTOR® Member (non-principal) elects to sever his connection with the REALTOR® and affiliate with another REALTOR® Member in good standing in the Board, whichever may apply.

If a REALTOR® Member who is other than a principal in a firm, partnership, or corporation is suspended or expelled, the use of the terms REALTOR® or REALTORS® by the firm, partnership, or corporation shall not be affected.

- (b) In any action taken against a REALTOR® Member for suspension or expulsion under Section 6(a) hereof, notice of such action shall be given to all REALTORS® employed by or affiliated as independent contractors with such REALTOR® Member and they shall be advised that the provisions in Article VI, Section 6(a) shall apply.

**Section 7. Institute Affiliate Members.** Institute Affiliate Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, provided, however, no Institute Affiliate Member may be granted the right to use the term REALTOR®, Realtor-Associate®, or the REALTOR® logo and no Institute Affiliate Member may serve as President of RICABOR

**Section 8. Affiliate Members.** Affiliate Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 9. Public Service Members.** Public Service Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 10. Honorary Members.** Honorary Membership shall confer only the right to attend meetings, participate in discussions, and be appointed to RICABOR committees.

**Section 11. Student Members.** Student Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 12. REALTOR® Emeritus Members.** REALTOR® Emeritus Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 13. Certification by REALTOR®.** “Designated” REALTOR® Members of the Board shall certify to the Board during the month of March, on a form provided by the Board, a complete listing of all individuals licensed or certified in the REALTOR®’s office(s) and shall designate a primary Board for each individual who holds membership. Designated REALTOR® shall also identify any non-member licensees in the REALTOR®’s office and if Designated REALTOR® dues have been paid to another Board based on said non-member licensees, the Designated REALTOR® shall identify the Board to which dues have been remitted. These declarations shall be used for purposes of calculating dues under Article X, Section 2(a) of the Bylaws. “Designated” REALTOR® Members shall also notify the Board of any additional individual(s) licensed or certified with the firm(s) with 10 days of the date of affiliation or severance of the individual. There shall be a fee, determined annually by the Board of Directors, assessed to Designated REALTORS® who do not file their annual Board Certification Form by the deadline specified in their final notice.

**Section 14. Harassment.** Any member of the association may be reprimanded, placed on probation, suspended or expelled for harassment of an association or MLS employee or Association Officer or Director after an investigation in accordance with the procedures of the association. As used in this Section, harassment means any verbal or physical conduct including threatening or obscene language, unwelcome sexual advances, stalking, actions including strikes, shoves, kicks, or other similar physical contact, or threats to do the same, or any other conduct with the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance by

creating a hostile, intimidating or offensive work environment. The decision of the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken shall be made by the investigatory team comprised of the President, and President-elect and/or Vice President and one member of the Board of Directors selected by the highest ranking officer not named in the complaint, upon consultation with legal counsel for the association. Disciplinary action may include any sanction authorized in the association's Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual. If the complaint names the President, President-Elect or Vice President, they may not participate in the proceedings and shall be replaced by the Immediate Past President or, alternatively, by another member of the Board of Directors selected by the highest ranking officer not named in the complaint. (9/09)

## **ARTICLE VII – PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND ARBITRATION**

**Section 1.** The responsibility of the association and of association members relating to the enforcement of the Code of Ethics, the disciplining of members, and the arbitration of disputes, and the organization and procedures incident thereto, shall be governed by the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, as amended from time to time, which is by this reference incorporated into these Bylaws, provided, however, that any provision deemed inconsistent with state law shall be deleted or amended to comply with state law.

**Section 2.** It shall be the duty and responsibility of every REALTOR® member of this association to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws and the rules and regulations of the association, the Constitution and Bylaws of the State Association, the Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, and to abide by the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, including the duty to mediate and arbitrate controversies arising out of real estate transactions as specified by Article 17 of the Code of Ethics, and as further defined and in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of this association, as from time to time amended.

## **ARTICLE VIII – USE OF THE TERMS REALTOR® AND REALTORS®**

Inclusion and retention of the Registered Collective Membership Mark REALTORS® in the name of the association shall be governed by the *Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®* as from time to time amended.

**Section 1.** Use of the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® by members shall, at all times, be subject to the provisions of the *Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®* and to the Rules and Regulations prescribed by its board of directors. The association shall have the authority to control, jointly and in full cooperation with the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, use of the terms within its jurisdiction. Any misuse of the terms by members is a violation of a membership duty and may subject members to disciplinary action by the board of directors after a hearing as provided for in the association's Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual.

**Section 2.** REALTOR® members of the association shall have the privilege of using the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS® in connection with their places of business within the state or a

state contiguous thereto so long as they remain REALTOR® members in good standing. No other class of members shall have this privilege.

**Section 3.** A REALTOR® principal member may use the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS®, only if all the principals of such firm, partnership, or corporation who are actively engaged in the real estate profession within the state or a state contiguous thereto are REALTOR® members or Institute Affiliate members.

- (a) In the case of a REALTOR® principal member whose business activity is substantially all commercial, the right to use the term REALTOR® or REALTORS® shall be limited to office locations in which a principal holds REALTOR® membership. If a firm, partnership, or corporation operates additional places of business in which no principal holds REALTOR® membership, the term REALTOR® or REALTORS® may not be used in any reference to those additional places of business.

**Section 4.** Institute Affiliate Members shall not use the terms REALTOR® or REALTORS®, nor the imprint of the emblem seal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

## **ARTICLE IX – STATE AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

**Section 1.** The association shall be a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and the Rhode Island Association of REALTORS®. By reason of the association's membership, each REALTOR® member of the Member Board shall be entitled to membership in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and the Rhode Island Association of REALTORS® without further payment of dues. The association shall continue as a member of the State and National Associations, unless by a majority vote of all of its REALTOR® members, decision is made to withdraw, in which case the State and National Associations shall be notified at least one month in advance of the date designated for the termination of such membership.

**Section 2.** The association recognizes the exclusive property rights of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® in the terms REALTOR® and REALTORS®. The association shall discontinue use of the terms in any form in its name, upon ceasing to be a member of the National Association, or upon a determination by the board of directors of the National Association that it has violated the conditions imposed upon the terms.

**Section 3.** The association adopts the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and agrees to enforce the Code among its REALTOR® members. The association and all of its members agree to abide by the *Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations*, and policies of the National Association.

## **ARTICLE X – DUES AND ASSESSMENTS**

**Section 1. Application Fee.** The board of directors may adopt an application fee for REALTOR® membership in reasonable amount, not exceeding three (3) times the amount of the annual dues for REALTOR® membership, which shall be required to accompany each

application for REALTOR® membership and which shall become the property of the association upon final approval of the application.

**Section 2. Dues.** The annual dues of members shall be as follows:

- (a) REALTOR® Members. The annual dues of each Designated REALTOR® member shall be in such amount as established annually by the board of directors, plus an additional amount to be established annually by the board of directors times the number of real estate salespersons and licensed or certified appraisers who (1) are employed by or affiliated as independent contractors, or who are otherwise directly or indirectly licensed with such REALTOR® member, and (2) are not REALTOR® members of any association in the state or a state contiguous thereto or Institute Affiliate members of the association. In calculating the dues payable to the association by a designated REALTOR® member, non-member licensees as defined in (1) and (2) of this paragraph shall not be included in the computation of dues if the designated REALTOR® has paid dues based on said non-member licensees in another association in the state or a state contiguous thereto, provided the designated REALTOR® notifies the association in writing of the identity of the association to which dues have been remitted. In the case of a designated REALTOR® member in a firm, partnership, or corporation whose business activity is substantially all commercial, any assessments for non-member licensees shall be limited to licensees affiliated with the designated REALTOR® (as defined in (1) and (2) of this paragraph) in the office where the designated REALTOR® holds membership, and any other offices of the firm located within the jurisdiction of this association.
- (1) A REALTOR® member of a Member Board shall be held to be any member who has a place or places of business within the state or a state contiguous thereto and who, as a principal is actively engaged in the real estate profession as defined in Article III, Section 1 of the Constitution of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. An individual shall be deemed to be licensed with a REALTOR® if the license of the individual is held by the REALTOR®, or by any broker who is licensed with the REALTOR®, or by any entity in which the REALTOR® has a direct or indirect ownership interest and which is engaged in other aspects of the real estate business provided that such licensee is not otherwise included in the computation of dues payable by the principal of the entity.

A REALTOR® with a direct or indirect ownership interest in an entity engaged exclusively in soliciting and/or referring clients and customers to the REALTOR® for consideration on a substantially exclusive basis shall annually file with the association on a form approved by the association a list of the licensees affiliated with that entity and shall certify that all of the licensees affiliated with the entity are solely engaged in referring clients and customers and are not engaged in listing, selling, leasing, renting, managing, counseling, or appraising real property. The individuals disclosed on such form shall not be deemed to be licensed with the REALTOR® filing the form for purposes of this section and shall not be included in calculating the annual dues of the designated REALTOR®. Designated REALTORS® shall notify the association within three (3) days of any change in status of licensees in a referral firm.

The exemption for any licensee included on the certification form shall automatically be revoked upon the individual being engaged in real estate licensed activities (listing, selling, leasing, renting, managing, counseling, or appraising real property) other than referrals, and dues for the current fiscal year shall be payable.

Membership dues shall be prorated for any licensee included on a certification form submitted to the association who during the same calendar year applies for REALTOR® or REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® membership in the association. However, membership dues shall not be prorated if the licensee held REALTOR® or REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® membership during the preceding calendar year.

(b) REALTOR® Members. The annual dues of REALTOR® members other than the designated REALTOR® shall be as established annually by the board of directors.

(c) Institute Affiliate Members. The annual dues of each Institute Affiliate member shall be as established in Article II of the Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

(d) NOTE: The Institutes, Societies and Councils of the National Association shall be responsible for collecting and remitting dues to the National Association for Institute Affiliate Members (\$105.00). The National Association shall credit \$35.00 to the account of a local association for each Institute Affiliate Member whose office address is within the assigned territorial jurisdiction of that association, provided, however, if the office location is also within the territorial jurisdiction of a Commercial Overlay Board (COB), the \$35.00 amount will be credited to the COB, unless the Institute Affiliate Member directs that the dues be distributed to the other board. The National Association shall also credit \$35.00 to the account of state associations for each Institute Affiliate Member whose office address is located within the territorial jurisdiction of the state association. Local and state associations may not establish any additional entrance, initiation fees or dues for Institute Affiliate Members, but may provide service packages to which Institute Affiliate Members may voluntarily subscribe.

(e) Affiliate Members. The annual dues of each Affiliate Member shall be established annually by the Board of Directors.

(f) Public Service Members. The annual dues of each Public Service Member shall be established annually by the Board of Directors.

(g) Honorary Members. Dues payable, if any, shall be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

(h) Student Members. Dues payable, if any, shall be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

(i) REALTOR® Emeritus Members. Dues payable, if any, shall be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

**Section 3. Dues Payable.** Dues for all Members shall be payable annually in advance on the first day of December. 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.

- (a) In the event a sales licensee or licensed or certified appraiser who holds REALTOR® membership is dropped for nonpayment of RICABOR dues, and the individual remains with the designated REALTOR® 's firm, the dues obligation of the "designated" REALTOR® (as set forth in Article X, Section 2 (a)) 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 10 days of the notice of termination.

**Section 4. Nonpayment of Financial Obligation.** If dues, fees, fines, or other assessments including amounts owed to the Board or the Board's Multiple Listing Service are not paid within one (1) month after the due date, the nonpaying Member is subject to suspension at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Two (2) months after the due date, membership of the nonpaying Member may be terminated at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Three (3) months after the due date, membership of the nonpaying Member shall automatically terminate unless within that time the amount due is paid. However, no action shall be taken to suspend or expel a Member for nonpayment of disputed amounts until the accuracy of the amount owed has been confirmed by the Board of Directors. A former Member who has had his membership terminated for nonpayment of dues, fees, fines, or other assessments duly levied in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws or the provisions of other Rules and Regulations of the Board 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. An officer or director not current with dues and other RICABOR financial obligations shall have all rights and privileges suspended and shall be replaced on the board (see Article XI, Section 5).

**Section 5. Deposit and Expenditures.** Deposits and expenditures of funds shall be in accordance with policies established by the Board of Directors. All monies received by the Board for any purpose shall be deposited to the credit of the Board in one or more federally insured financial institution(s) selected by the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors shall administer the day to day business of the RICABOR. The Board of Directors may delegate administrative authority for day to day business to the Chief Executive Officer.

Unbudgeted capital expenditures in excess of \$5,000 may not be made unless authorized by 15 % of the RICABOR members eligible to vote in a special election.

**Section 6. Notice of Dues, Fees, Fines, Assessments, and other Financial Obligations of Members.** All dues, fees, fines, assessments or other financial obligations to the Board or Board Multiple Listing Service, if such exists, shall be noticed to the delinquent RICABOR Member in writing setting forth the amount owed and due date.

**Section 7.** The dues of REALTOR® Members who are REALTOR® Emeritus (as recognized by the National Association), Past Presidents and Past Treasurers of the National Association or recipients of the Distinguished Service Award shall be as determined by the Board of Directors.

NOTE: A Member Board's dues obligation to the National Association is reduced by an amount equal to the amount which the association is assessed for a REALTOR® member, times the number of REALTOR® Emeriti (as recognized by the National Association), past presidents and

past treasurers of the National Association, and recipients of the Distinguished Service Award of the National Association who are REALTOR® members of the association. The dues obligation of such individuals to the local association should be reduced to reflect the reduction in the association's dues obligation to the National Association. The association may, at its option, choose to have no dues requirement for such individuals except as may be required to meet the association's obligation to the State Association with respect to such individuals. Member Boards should determine whether the dues payable by the association to the State Association are reduced with respect to such individuals. It should be noted that this does not affect a "designated" REALTOR®'s dues obligation to the association with respect to those licensees employed by or affiliated with the "designated" REALTOR® who are not members of the local association.

## **ARTICLE XI – OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

**Section 1. Officers.** The elected officers of the Board shall be: a President, a President-Elect, a Treasurer, Corporate Secretary and Immediate Past President. At least one elected officer shall be from the commercial REALTOR® and one from the appraisal/specialty membership group. The elective term of office for the President and President-Elect shall be one year. The elective term of office shall be one year for the Treasurer and Corporate Secretary. In order to become an Officer of the Board, one must have actively served as a Director and must be a member in good standing. The Officers of the Board are volunteers and receive no compensation. The Board's Executive Committee is comprised of these Officers.

**Section 2. Duties of Officers.** The duties of the officers shall be such as their titles, by general usage, would indicate and such as may be assigned to them by the Board of Directors on their position descriptions. It shall be the particular duty of the Corporate Secretary or Chief Staff Executive, to keep the records of the Board and to carry on all necessitate correspondence with the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and the Rhode Island Association of REALTORS®.

**Section 3 Board of Directors.** The governing body of the RICABOR shall be a Board of Directors consisting of the elected officers, and up to 7 REALTOR® Members. The non-officers of the Board shall consist of at least one from the commercial REALTORS® and one from the appraisal/specialty membership group. Directors shall be elected to serve for terms of three years. As many Directors shall be elected each year as are required to fill vacancies. To be President, a member must have served for 3 years as an officer or director of the Board. The Directors of the Board are volunteers and receive no compensation.

- (a) Term Limits. The term of office for the immediate past President shall be one year.
- (b) All members of the Board of Directors shall be eligible to vote on matters before the Board except the President who shall only vote when there is a tie vote.
- (c) In order to be considered for election to the Board of Directors, a member must be a member in good standing.
- (d) Each Officer and each Director shall have a Fiduciary responsibility to the Board of Directors and the Association.



**Section 4. Election of Officers and Directors.** The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Immediate Past President (as Chair), two (2) Past Presidents, current Board President and President-elect. At least two (2) months before the annual election, The Nominating Committee shall select one or more candidates for each office and one or more candidates for each place to be filled on the Board of Directors. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be mailed, e-mailed or faxed to each Member eligible to vote at least three (3) weeks preceding the election. Additional candidates for the offices to be filled may be placed in nomination by petition signed by at least 10 % of the REALTOR® Members eligible to vote. The petition shall be filed with the Secretary at least two (2) weeks before the election. The Secretary or Chief Executive Officer shall send notice of such additional nominations to all Members eligible to vote not less than four days before the election.

(a) The election of Officers and Directors shall take place at the annual meeting. Election shall be by ballot and all votes shall be cast in person. The ballot shall contain the names of all candidates and the offices for which they are nominated.

(b) The Nominating Committee or the Chief Executive Officer shall conduct the election. In case of a tie vote, the issue shall be determined by lot.

**Section 5 Vacancies.** Vacancies by resignation, administrative removal or death among the Officers and the Board of Directors shall be filled by a simple majority of the Board of Directors until the next annual election.

**Section 6. Removal of Officers and Directors.**

(a) 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 upon Majority Vote of the Board of Directors.

(b) In the event that an Officer or Director fails to attend two meeting of the Board of Directors in any year, the Officer or Director may be removed from office upon Majority Vote of the Board of Directors, unless the absence is determined to be for “good cause” upon Majority Vote of the Board of Directors.

**Section 7. Chief Staff Executive or Chief Executive Officer.** There may be a Chief Staff Executive, appointed by the Board of Directors, who shall be the chief administrative officer of the RICABOR. The Chief Staff Executive shall have the authority to hire, supervise, evaluate and terminate other staff, if any, and shall perform such other duties as prescribed by the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE XII – MEETINGS**

**Section 1. Annual Meetings.** The annual meeting of the Board shall be held during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of each year, the date, place, and hour to be designated by the President and President-Elect in cooperation with staff.

**Section 2. Meetings of Directors.** The Board of Directors shall designate a regular time and place for their meetings. Absence from two (2) regular meetings shall be construed as

resignation from the Board of Directors. A quorum for the transaction of business shall be a majority of the board of directors, except as may otherwise be required by state law.

**Section 3. Other Meetings.** Meetings of the Members may be held at other times as the President or the Board of Directors may determine, or upon the written request of at least 10% of the Members eligible to vote.

**Section 4. Notice of Meetings.** Written notice shall be given to every Member entitled to participate in the meeting at least one (1) week preceding all meetings. Written notice may be made by e-mail, fax or US Mail. If a special meeting is called, the written notice shall be accompanied by a statement of the purpose of the meeting.

**Section 5. Quorum.** A quorum for the transaction of business at general and/or special meetings of the membership shall consist of a majority of the members eligible to vote, except as may otherwise be required by state law, given proper written notice of at least one week.

**Section 6. Electronic Transaction of Business.** To the fullest extent permitted by law, the board of directors or membership may conduct business by electronic means. If e-mail or other electronic means are utilized, the Board members voting and results of such voting shall be immediately distributed to all Board members and the motion voted on and the vote results shall be entered into the minutes of the next subsequent meeting of the Board.

## ARTICLE XIII – COMMITTEES

**Section 1. Standing Committees.** The President shall appoint from among any class of members except student members, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors, the standing committees below:

Standing Committees:

- Professional Standards
- Grievance
- Finance
- REALTOR® of the Year
- RPAC/Government Affairs
- Education
- East Coast Commercial Property Network

Two (2) unexcused absences from committee meetings per year shall be accepted as a resignation by the member on their committee assignment.

**Section 2. Special Task Forces or Work Groups.** The President shall appoint, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors, special task forces or work groups, including Education and Community Works, as deemed necessary.

**Section 3. Organization.** 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 these bylaws.

**Section 4. President.** The president shall be an ex officio member of all standing committees and shall be notified of their meetings.

**Section 5. Ex Officio Member.** The President of the Rhode Island Association of REALTORS shall be considered a Member in good standing with RICABOR dues waived, and shall have the authority to vote on issues when they have a directive from the Board of Directors as a delegate of the Board at National meetings where the Board is not otherwise represented for voting purposes.

**Section 6. Action without Meeting.** Any committee may act by unanimous consent in writing without a meeting. The consent shall be evidenced by one or more written approvals, each of which sets forth the action taken and bears the signature of one or more of the members of the committee.

**Section 7 Attendance by Telephone.** Members of a committee may participate in any meeting through the use of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. Such participation shall be at the discretion of the Committee Chairman and shall constitute presence at the meeting.

#### **ARTICLE XIV – FISCAL AND ELECTIVE YEAR**

**Section 1.** The fiscal year of the RICABOR shall be January 1 to December 31.

**Section 2.** The elective year of the RICABOR shall be January 1 to December 31.

The annual meeting and election of officers for the succeeding elective year shall take place during the last quarter of the current elective year. (see Article XI, Section 4.)

#### **ARTICLE XV – RULES OF ORDER**

**Section 1** Robert’s Rules of Order, latest edition, shall be recognized as the authority governing the meetings of the Board, its Board of Directors, and committees, in all instances wherein it’s provisions do not conflict with those bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE XVI – AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1.** These 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.

When Bylaws amendments are mandated by NAR policy, these Bylaws may be automatically amended to reflect the mandate as of the effective date of the mandatory policy authorized by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. The RICABOR’s Board of Directors shall provide notice of that change in a regular or special membership communication.

**Section 2.** Notice of all meetings at which amendments to these bylaws are to be considered shall be delivered by e-mail, fax or mailed to every member eligible to vote not less than one (1) week prior to the meeting.

**Section 3.** Amendments to these 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 RICABOR shall become effective upon their approval as authorized by the Board of Directors of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

## **ARTICLE XVII – DISSOLUTION**

**Section 1.** Upon the dissolution of the RICABOR, the Board of Directors, after providing for the payment of all obligations, shall distribute any remaining assets to the Rhode Island Association of REALTORS® or, within its discretion, to any other non-profit tax exempt organization.