

MLS Clear Cooperation Policy



MLSs can adopt the specific policy language under Listing Procedures. Below are the changes to the NAR model MLS Rules. These changes will be reflected in the Model MLS Governing Documents found in the 2020 Handbook on Multiple Listing Policy (updated version expected January 2020):

Section 1.01 – Clear Cooperation

Within one (1) business day of marketing a property to the public, the listing broker must submit the listing to the MLS for cooperation with other MLS participants. Public marketing includes, but is not limited to, flyers displayed in windows, yard signs, digital marketing on public facing websites, brokerage website displays (including IDX and VOW), digital communications marketing (email blasts), multi-brokerage listing sharing networks, and applications available to the general public. (Adopted 11/19)

Note: Exclusive listing information for required property types must be filed and distributed to other MLS Participants for cooperation under the Clear Cooperation Policy. This applies to listings filed under Section 1 and listings exempt from distribution under Section 1.3 of the NAR model MLS rules if it is being publicly marketed, and any other situation where the listing broker is publicly marketing an exclusive listing that is required to be filed with the service and is not currently available to other MLS Participants.

Section 1.3 Exempt Listings

If the seller refuses to permit the listing to be disseminated by the service, the participant may then take the listing (office exclusive) and such listing shall be filed with the service but not disseminated to the participants. Filing of the listing should be accompanied by certification signed by the seller that he does not desire the listing to be disseminated by the service.

Note 1: Section 1.3 is not required if the service does not require all (indicate type[s] of listing[s] accepted by the service) listings to be submitted by a participant to the service.

Note 2: MLS Participants must distribute exempt listings within (1) one business day once the listing is publicly marketed. See Section 1.01, Clear Cooperation.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do ALL REALTOR® Association MLSs have to adopt the MLS Clear Cooperation Policy?

Yes. By establishing a national policy, it is mandatory that all REALTOR® Association MLSs adopt the policy and have the same consistent standard.

Can a seller or the listing broker “opt out” of the policy’s obligations?

No. The new policy does not include an “opt out.” Any listing that is “publicly marketed” must be filed with the service and provided to other MLS Participants for cooperation within (1) one business day.

What is the meaning of “business day?”

Business days exclude Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. The NAR MLS Advisory Board specifically revised the policy’s timeframe due to concerns with enforcement to provide greater flexibility for days when submitting the listing to the service could be a challenge. For consistency among all REALTOR® Association MLSs, the approved timeframe is 1 business day.; “holidays” include all recognized federal and state holidays.

How does the new deadline of “1 business day from marketing a property to the public” correspond with the existing local MLS’s filing deadline, which varies from MLS to MLS?

The local MLS’s filing deadline, typically found in Section 1 of the MLS rules, is the amount of time that a broker has to file the listing with the service after receiving all of the appropriate signatures on the listing contract. Once a broker begins to publicly market the property, they have 1 business day to file the property with the service. Specific questions about filing deadlines can be directed to your local MLS.

Is the new policy consistent with Article 3 of the NAR Code of Ethics?

Yes. By joining the MLS, Participants agree to be bound by the MLS Rules and Regulations. Per the policy’s rationale, the public marketing of a listing indicates that the MLS participant has concluded that cooperation with other MLS participants is in their client’s best interests.

Why was this policy approved?

Brokers and MLSs from across the country asked NAR to consider policy that will reinforce the consumer benefits of cooperation. The MLS creates an efficient marketplace and reinforces the pro-competitive, pro-consumer benefits that REALTORS® have long sought to support. After months of discussion and consideration within NAR’s MLS Technology and Emerging Issues Advisory Board, this proposal was brought forth for the industry to discuss and consider, then approved by NAR’s Board of Directors.

What exclusive listings and property types are applicable under the new MLS Statement 8.0?

The obligations of Statement 8.0 were specifically adopted to address concerns with residential “for sale” exclusive listing contracts required to be filed with the service.

Does the new policy require changes to the local MLS rules?

Yes. MLSs can adopt the specific policy language under Listing Procedures. Below are the changes to the NAR model MLS Rules. These changes will be reflected in the Model MLS Governing Documents found in the 2020 Handbook on Multiple Listing Policy (updated version expected January 2020)

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Who made the decision that this policy was needed?

NAR's MLS Technology and Emerging Issues Advisory Board is made up of brokers and MLS executives from across the country. Two dozen volunteers review industry concerns from a wide range of business and regional viewpoints.

Potential policy changes are discussed within the group to create a positive impact on the industry and to address broker needs within the marketplace. The policy was strongly supported by the NAR MLS Committee and the NAR Board of Directors.

Does Policy Statement 8.0 require listings to be included in an MLS's IDX displays?

No. While listings that are displayed on the Internet must be submitted to the MLS and distributed to other MLS participants for cooperation, submitting a listing for cooperation within the MLS does not necessarily require that listing to be included in an MLS's IDX display, if the seller has opted out of all Internet display. Per MLS rules, participants can work with their listing clients to determine an appropriate marketing plan, taking into account the client's needs and full disclosure of the benefits to market exposure.

Does Policy Statement 8.0 prohibit office exclusives?

No. "Office exclusive" listings are an important option for sellers concerned about privacy and wide exposure of their property being for sale. In an office exclusive listing, direct promotion of the listing between the brokers and licensees affiliated with the listing brokerage, and one-to-one promotion between these licensees and their clients, is not considered public advertising. Common examples include divorce situations and celebrity clients. It allows the listing broker to market a property among the brokers and licensees affiliated with the listing brokerage. If office exclusive listings are displayed or advertised to the general public, however, those listings must also be submitted to the MLS for cooperation.

Does Policy Statement 8.0 require listings to be submitted to the MLS if they are advertised to a select group of brokers outside the listing broker's office?

Yes. "Private listing networks" that include more brokers or licensees than those affiliated with the listing brokerage constitute public advertising or display pursuant to Policy Statement 8.0. Listings shared in multi-brokerage networks by participants must be submitted to the MLS for cooperation.

Does Policy Statement 8.0 apply to non-active listings?

Yes. Policy Statement 8.0 applies to any listing that is or will be available for cooperation. Pursuant to Policy Statement 8.0, "coming soon" listings displayed or advertised to the public by a listing broker must be submitted to the MLS for cooperation with other participants. MLSs may enact "coming soon" rules providing for delays and restrictions on showings during a "coming soon" status period, ensuring flexibility in participants'

listing and marketing abilities, while still meeting the participant's obligations for cooperation.

If the MLS has established a coming soon status, or other pre-marketing solution that shares listing data with all MLSs participants and subscribers, does that comply with the cooperation requirements of the policy?

Yes.

Does Policy Statement 8.0 require a broker to turn in every listing to the MLS within 24 hours of signing the listing?

No. MLSs have different local rules as to listing turn-in times. If a listing is marketed to the public, however, Policy Statement 8.0's 24 hour turn-in timeline goes into effect.

How can an MLS address compliance?

Compliance is up to local determination. The policies in the markets previously discussed usually include an escalating process of warnings and fines. Reporting of non-compliance is often taken care of by the marketplace. When listings are publicly marketed, agents and consumers become aware and can report unsubmitted listings by MLS participants to the MLS.

Why was the time-frame within the recommendation updated to 'one business day'?

The MLS Tech and Emerging Issues Advisory Board held a conference call on October 30, 2019. Based on feedback and concerns over the time enforcement, the time-frame was changed from '24 hours' to 'one business day.'

What is the timeline for this Policy?

The policy is effective from January 1, 2020 with local implementation required by no later than 5/1/2020

How can I report an Off-MLS Property?

If you believe a property is being publicly marketed and is not listed in the MLS, you can submit documentation and request an MLS Review. MIAMI MLS requires documentation to investigate. Upload a file or image reflecting the public marketing and email to OffMLS@Miamiire.com.

This documentation includes at least one of the following:

- Photo of For Sale Sign
- Copy of screen shot showing the link to the site with the property on it
- Copy of Flyer with the listing information
- Email blast solicitation
- Screen shot of listing appearing on a private network
- Screen shot of listing appearing on Social Media