

PROCEDURES FOR FILING A GRIEVANCE

Complaints should be typewritten and submitted. Complaints should be written in your own words. Anything you Highlight, please also underline or circle with a dark pen, so it may be reproduced. Be sure to include time lines, emails, letters, etc.

Review the attached Code of Ethics and cite any of the Articles (Duties to Clients and Customers -or- Duties to the Public) which you feel have been violated and why. It is important to include all supportive evidence or documentation such as contracts, listing agreements, etc., pertaining to the complaint.

Submit this to the REALTORS® ASSOCIATION OF LAKE & SUMTER COUNTIES, INC., 3001 S.R. 19, TAVARES, FLORIDA 32778, ATTN: GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE. Only those complaints which are in reference to members of this association can be handled by this Committee. If you require assistance in preparation of this complaint, please contact the Association 352-343-3003.

Once the complaint is received, the Grievance Chairman will review it and call a meeting of the Committee to take action. Any complaint received will be sent to the Respondent and the Designated Broker of the firm where the respondent is licensed.

The Grievance Committee will determine whether or not there is a **possible** violation of the Code of Ethics based on the written complaint and evidence submitted. They will also review any response and evidence from the Respondent. The Grievance Committee functions somewhat like the Grand Jury in this respect. If it should be determined that there is a possible violation, then the Grievance Committee will forward this complaint to the Professional Standards Committee who will hold a formal hearing. This body has the authority to recommend punishment should the REALTOR® and/or ASSOCIATE be found to have violated the Code of Ethics. All final decisions are made by the Board of Directors which acts as an appellate body. Times vary in accordance to giving due process; therefore, a possible time of 60 to 90 days should be allowed for the processing of a complaint by the Grievance Committee. Both the complainant and the respondent will be notified of the Grievance Committee's decision.

The following type of complaints are **not** handled by the Grievance Committee:

1. **Escrow Deposit Disputes:** The proper forms necessary for filing an escrow deposit dispute and/or procedures can be obtained from the State of Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, 1940 North Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0783. Their telephone number is (850) 487-1395 and you can obtain information on filing a complaint on www.myfloridalicense.com.
2. **Commission Disputes:** These complaints are only screened by the Grievance Committee for possible ethics violations but are ordinarily automatically forwarded to the Professional Standards Committee for Arbitration. If you have a question on Arbitration call the Association office at 352-343-3003.
3. **Complaints for Damages:** These are properly handled in a court of law.