



**GREATER
CHATTANOOGA
REALTORS®**

ANTITRUST POLICY

OVERVIEW

Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® is not organized for the purpose of, and may not play any role in, the competitive decisions of its members, nor in any way restrict competition among members or potential members. Rather, it serves as a forum for a free and open discussion of diverse opinions without in any way attempting to encourage or sanction any particular business practice.

Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® provides a forum for exchange of ideas in a variety of settings, including its annual meeting, educational programs, committee/council/task force meetings, and Board meetings. The Board of Directors recognizes the possibility that the Association and its activities could be viewed by some as an opportunity for anti-competitive conduct. Therefore, this statement supports the policy of competition served by the antitrust laws and to communicate the Association's uncompromising policy to comply strictly in all respects with those laws.

While recognizing the importance of the principle of competition served by the antitrust laws, Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® also recognizes the severity of the potential penalties that might be imposed on not only the Association but its members as well in the event that certain conduct is found to violate the antitrust laws. Should the Association or its members be involved in any violation of federal/state antitrust laws, such violation can involve both civil and criminal penalties that may include imprisonment for up to three (3) years as well as fines up to three hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000) for individuals and up to ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) for the Association, plus attorney fees. In addition, damage claims awarded to private parties in a civil suit are tripled for antitrust violations. Given the severity of such penalties, the Board intends to take all necessary and proper measures to ensure that violations of the antitrust laws do not occur.

POLICY

To ensure that the Association and its members comply with antitrust laws, the following principles will be observed:

- The Association or any committee, council, task force, or activity of the Association shall not be used for the purpose of bringing about or attempting to bring about any understanding or agreement, written or oral, formal or informal, expressed or implied, among two (2) or more members or other competitors with regard to prices or terms and conditions of

contracts for services or products. Therefore, discussions and exchanges of information about such topics will not be permitted at Association meetings or other activities.

- There will be no discussions discouraging or withholding patronage or services from, or encouraging exclusive dealing with, any supplier or purchaser or group of suppliers or purchasers of products or services, any actual or potential competitor or group of actual or potential competitors, or any private or governmental entity.
- There will be no discussions about allocating or dividing geographic or service markets or customers.
- There will be no discussions about restricting, limiting, prohibiting, or sanctioning advertising or solicitation that is not false, misleading, deceptive, or directly competitive with Association products or services.
- There will be no discussions about discouraging entry into or competition in any segment of the marketplace.
- There will be no discussions about whether the practices of any member, actual or potential competitor, or other person are unethical or anti-competitive, unless the discussions or complaints follow the prescribed due process provisions of the Association's bylaws.
- Certain activities of the Association and its members are deemed protected from antitrust laws under the First Amendment right to petition government. The antitrust exemption for these activities, referred to as the Noerr-Pennington Doctrine, protects ethical and proper actions or discussions by members designed to influence: 1) legislation at the national, state, or local level; 2) regulatory or policy-making activities (as opposed to commercial activities) of a governmental body; or 3) decisions of judicial bodies. However, the exemption does not protect actions designed to cover-up anticompetitive conduct.
- Speakers at committees, educational meetings, or other business meetings of the Association shall be informed that they must comply with the Association's antitrust policy in the preparation and the presentation of their remarks. Meetings will follow a written agenda approved in advance by the Association or its legal counsel.
- Meetings will follow a written agenda. Minutes will be prepared after the meeting to provide a concise summary of important matters discussed and actions taken or conclusions reached.

At informal discussions at the site of any Association meeting, all participants are expected to observe the same standards of personal conduct as are required of the Association in its compliance.

It is recommended that Association Board members read, date, and retain a copy of this statement for their personal files.