

FAQ: LOCAL REALTOR® ASSOCIATIONS AND MLS ACCESS

At the 2025 NXT Conference, the NAR Executive Committee voted to [approve 18 changes](#) pursuant to the risk mitigation assessment, including repealing and amending several policies in the MLS Handbook related to association membership and MLS participation. Here's what that means for NAR members and MLS participants:

What was announced at NXT?

NAR's Executive Committee approved 18 changes to the MLS Handbook aimed at strengthening and modernizing NAR's policies, reflecting NAR's efforts to align MLS policies with how real estate professionals do business today. The goals of the changes were to:

- Reinforce matters of local discretion, such as non-member access to MLS;
- Modernize administrative, operations, and enforcement rules; and
- Remove outdated MLS enforcement practices.

What was the intent of Policy Statements 7.7 and 7.55?

Policy Statements 7.7 and 7.55 were not mandatory policies. They simply affirmed the MLSs' local discretion to require membership in a local REALTOR® Association to participate in an MLS or alternatively, open the MLS to non-member participants.

Why were Policy Statements 7.7 and 7.55 repealed?

Policy Statements 7.7 and 7.55 were not mandatory policies. To provide more clarity and further simplify the MLS Handbook, it was deemed unnecessary because they stated something that was already true: that each MLS is able to require association membership to access the MLS if they choose.

What is the effect of repealing Policy Statement 7.7 and 7.55?

The repeal of Policy Statements 7.7 and 7.55 reinforces that MLSs have full discretion over whether or not to require participants to be association members.

What was Policy Statement 7.25?

Policy Statement 7.25 requested associations to inform both the state and national associations if they receive a request for MLS access without association membership. This policy did not change the MLSs' local discretion to require association membership – or opt to not require it.

Why was Policy Statement 7.25 repealed?

Policy Statement 7.25 was not enforced. Therefore, to provide more clarity and further simplify the MLS Handbook, it was deemed unnecessary.

What is the effect of repealing Policy Statement 7.25?

The repeal of Policy Statement 7.25 reinforces that MLSs have full discretion over whether or not to require participants to be association members.

Do these changes mean that MLS participation is available to nonmembers nationwide?

No. Since the mid-1990s there has not been a national NAR requirement for association membership to participate in an MLS. The decision of whether to require association membership continues to be the sole decision of each MLS and will remain that way following this update.

Can a REALTOR® association owned MLS still require association membership?

Yes, this continues to be a local decision for each MLS to either require association membership or to not require it.

Does the repeal of these policy statements reflect any change in NAR's support of REALTOR® association owned MLSs?

No, NAR is committed to providing support to state and local associations and REALTOR® association owned MLSs which includes the insurance program, antitrust defense fund, and other ways.

Do the changes affect the Designated REALTOR® Dues Formula?

No, the MLS changes do not impact the Designated REALTOR® Dues Formula which was established to ensure fairness, efficiency, and equity in how dues are assessed across REALTOR® firms and their receipt of all association resources and services.

What's the difference between association membership and MLS Participation?

Association membership and MLS access are two different things.

- Association membership means the person is a REALTOR®. They commit to the NAR Code of Ethics, and they receive benefits such as advocacy, education, research, business tools, legal resources, and the power of the REALTOR® brand.
- MLS Participation is a separate service —it's the platform where real estate professionals can list and see properties, see and use market data for purposes like valuations and research, and cooperate with other brokers.

When will the repeal go into effect?

The repeal/amendments of the policies take effect January 1, 2026, and will be reflected in the next published edition of the MLS Handbook.

Who can I contact if I have further questions?

Please reach out to NARpolicyquestions@nar.realtor.