

TRREB PROVIDES COVID-19 GUIDANCE TO REALTOR® MEMBERS TO AVOID IN-PERSON BUSINESS DURING PROVINCIAL SHUTDOWN

TORONTO, MARCH 24, 2020 - The Toronto Regional Real Estate Board (TRREB) today issued a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) guidance to its 56,000 REALTOR® Members on the provincial shutdown, as it relates to trading in real estate. The key message is to avoid in-person business, such as open houses and showings with clients, during the provincial state of emergency. This will include home sellers, buyers, tenants and business clients.

TRREB is strongly advising Members to refrain from face-to-face real estate practices during the State of Emergency as they continue to satisfy their ethical duties to their clients. Members are encouraged to use alternative marketing strategies, such as video and virtual tours wherever possible, and to continue to follow directives and guidance being given by the government and public health agencies.

“Realtors have a responsibility to protect their own safety, as well as the safety of their colleagues, clients, and the general public. Members should adapt their practice to ensure that their professional activities are safe and comply with all guidance provided by Health Canada, the Province of Ontario and medical professionals,” said TRREB President Michael Collins.

Real estate was included as one of the essential workplaces announced by the Ontario Government yesterday, with the provincial shutdown scheduled to take effect at 11:59 p.m. tonight. This was primarily to ensure people who had already bought or sold a home, but are still in the process of finding a new home or selling their existing property, were not left in limbo during the provincial shutdown.

“Clients and other consumers are subject to the shutdown orders and should not be visiting properties for open houses in particular. Many aspects of the home buying and selling process can continue to occur without in-person contact, including documentation and signing, and in many circumstances, closings. We’re still at a critical phase with this pandemic, and we all have to do our part to be successful in confronting this challenge in order to protect the health and safety of all,” continued Collins.

“In light of provincial government restrictions on public gatherings and guidance regarding social distancing, TRREB is doing its part to limit face-to-face contact by suppressing public open houses for the time being on its Stratus MLS® System, and removing them from public facing websites: www.TRREB.ca, Collaborate and realtor.ca, until it is safe to restore,” said TRREB CEO John DiMichele.

TRREB will also not enforce its MLS® Rule dealing with showings and inspections while the current government health advisories remain in effect. Property listings on the MLS® System will not be suspended because a property is not available for showings or inspections, which is what the rule requires.

The FAQ TRREB developed for Member use addresses questions surrounding real estate issues related to the provincial shutdown such as:

- What it means to declare real estate an “essential” service;
- Showings and open houses;
- Related businesses such as movers, lawyers, financial Institutions and construction;

- Disclosure of potential COVID 19 exposure;
- Questions Realtors can ask clients or others they interact with in their real estate business;
- Title insurance;
- What lenders and mortgage insurers are doing;
- Impact on municipalities, planning matters, Committee of Adjustment delays and property taxes; and
- TRREB operations.

You can access the full TRREB FAQ with answers via this link.

http://trreb.ca/hlfiles/pdf/FAQ_on_Provincial_Shutdown_Real_Estate_as_Essential_Service.pdf

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The Toronto Regional Real Estate Board is Canada's largest real estate board with more than 56,000 residential and commercial professionals connecting people, property and communities.