



GREATER PIEDMONT REALTORS® POLICY MANUAL

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The approved version of this manual supersedes all previous versions.**

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Greater Piedmont REALTORS® (GPR) Policy Manual is to supplement the GPR Bylaws, VAR and NAR policies in governing the administration and operation of the Association, and is applicable to all members of the Association. These policies comprise the operational framework in which the Association functions, and shall guide Officers, Directors, Committee and Task Force Chairpersons or Vice Chairpersons, and Staff in implementing the strategic objectives of the Association.

The Association shall be a non-profit corporation having the purpose to enhance the ability of its members to achieve career success in an ethical and professional manner and to promote and protect private property rights.

2. MISSION STATEMENT

We exist to provide outstanding services and leadership to help our members be successful and profitable in real estate.

3. OPERATIONAL POLICIES

A. **Office Location** – The office of the Greater Piedmont REALTORS® shall be 47 Garrett Street, Warrenton, Virginia 20186.

B. **Office Hours** – The office hours of the Greater Piedmont REALTORS® shall be 8:00 am until 5:00 pm Monday through Friday, except for approved Holidays.

Inclement Weather (for GPR Office) – If Fauquier County government offices are closed/delayed opening due to extreme weather conditions (such as heavy snow and ice), the GPR office will also be closed. The county government codes are: Red – Closed; Blue – Open/Employee Liberal Leave; Green – Open. In the event the office is officially closed, every effort will be made to notify you as much in advance as possible. When GPR offices are officially closed, the day will be treated as a paid holiday. In the event that the office has a delayed opening, you will be paid for hours not worked until your arrival. If the office is open, it is your responsibility to come to work. You may use your annual or sick leave if you feel that in your particular situation, staying at home is better.

Inclement Weather (for GPR Meetings & Classes) – If Fauquier County government offices are closed, all GPR Classes and Meetings will be cancelled.

C. **Office Equipment** – Use of GPR equipment, not for GPR purposes, requires approval of the Executive Officer.

D. **Building Security** – The GPR building will be unlocked during normal business hours of Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm. At all other times, the building needs to be locked. GPR staff will be responsible for unlocking and locking during these days/hours. If the tenants have clients that need access outside normal business hours, they need to make arrangements with their clients to call them and allow access to the building.

E. **Smoking Policy** – The GPR Building is a “Smoke Free” building. Cigarette disposal receptacles are located on the side of the building, and should be used for proper disposal of cigarette butts.

If you wish to smoke outside, you need to move to the end of the building near the handicap parking spot only. Smoking is prohibited anywhere else.

- F. **Personnel Manual** – GPR’s Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual shall govern other personnel matters of the Association.
- G. **Bereavement Policy** – GPR will notify all members of the passing of current or past member of the association, when the GPR Staff is notified. The email will include the arrangements, and any information relative to donations, cards, etc. A minimum of \$25 donation will be made on behalf of GPR. For GPR employees and their families, the Executive Committee will determine the appropriate approach.
- H. **Cell Phone Usage** – No Association employee or member volunteer shall use a cellular phone to conduct Association business while operating a motor vehicle. Use of a cellular telephone, personal digital assistant or any other electronic equipment to conduct Association business while driving is not within the scope of any employee’s work or member volunteers’ duty or responsibility to the Association, and no employee or member volunteer is required to use a cell phone while operating a motor vehicle.
- I. **Information Distribution Policy** – Information distributed by GPR would be NAR, VAR, and GPR related, or items sanctioned by them.

All correspondence or surveys sent on behalf of GPR to its members will be distributed by the GPR staff. Exceptions include notes/agendas to committee members, etc.

- J. **Tax Status** – The Greater Piedmont REALTORS® shall be organized as a 501(c)(6) organization under the Internal Revenue Code.
- K. **Privacy and Security Policy** - We recognize the importance of protecting the personal information you provide at the NRDS and GPR web site. We maintain the following privacy policy:
 - 1. We gather the following types of information needed to process your transactions, fulfill your requests, and maintain our membership records:
 - Contact information you provide (for example, your personal and business addresses, phone and fax numbers, email address, firm affiliations and titles), and
 - Information you volunteer, via applications or surveys (for example, education, designations, specialties, affiliations with other real estate organizations and general demographic data).
 - 2. We use this information to:
 - Improve and customize the content and layout of our sites and other communications tools; Notify you of updates to our sites; relevant products and services; and upcoming events and programs; Compile membership directories; Assist state and national REALTOR® associations and affiliated Institutes, Societies and Councils in membership tracking for their use for purposes similar to those listed above.
 - 3. GPR and its employees will not, under any circumstances, sell, offer, trade, or otherwise distribute or make available the personal or company email address of any individual member or member firm to any member of the public, charities, political associations or candidates, vendors, contractors or affinity partners, with the exception of listing them on the GPR website via Membership Directory.

4. GPR will not share, sell or otherwise provide other information about you to third parties with the exception of:
 - Providing firm information to GPR members in good standing.
 - Exhibitors at REALTOR® trade shows for the limited purpose of contacting you one time immediately before and after trade shows, through marketing vehicles approved by NAR, VAR or GPR.
 - When required by law or valid legal process, or to protect the personal safety of our members or the public.
 5. Credit information that you and credit authorizers provide when you make payments by credit card or electronic check for products, dues or other services via the REALTOR® Electronic Commerce Network (“E-Commerce Network”) or by the transaction machine of choice by GPR staff, will only be used to process the transactions you request. This information will be provided to and maintained by reputable credit reporting databases, but will never be sold, shared or provided to other third parties.
 6. We maintain security procedures and standards which we believe are safe. We test these procedures and modify them as needed.
 7. We utilize an Opt-Out policy for sending online notifications regarding services, products and programs. To adjust your communication preferences, please contact a GPR staff member and advise.
 8. Members are required to notify GPR staff of any changes to their contact information (business and personal) by editing your contact information directly in the NRDS system, the GPR members profile system, or by contacting a GPR Staff Member.
 9. Some of our sites contain advertising placed by advertising networks pursuant to agreements between the Greater Piedmont REALTORS® and the advertising network. We do not control these advertising networks, the sites of third parties reached through links on our site or their information collection practices and the Greater Piedmont REALTORS® will not be responsible for the activities of these third parties. The advertising network uses cookies to collect certain non-personally identifiable information when you click on the banner ads appearing on our sites. This information is collected by the advertising network for purposes of measuring and reporting on the advertising to advertisers and the Greater Piedmont REALTORS®. The advertising network may also aggregate the information for certain other statistical and reporting purposes.
 10. The Association shall not provide any information regarding any member to any party other than the member or the member’s principal or supervising broker. Nor shall the Association provide any information not ordinarily available to any member to any party involved in litigation except pursuant to subpoena, or otherwise after consulting with Association counsel. In all cases where the Association usually permits such information to be provided, the information will be provided to the member or the member’s principal or supervising broker, as appropriate, and not to any third party.
- L. **Record Retention and Destruction** – It is the policy of the organization to retain records as required by law and to destroy them when appropriate. The formal records retention policy of the organization is as follows:

Type of Record

Recommended Period

Corporate Documents (bylaws, minutes, Financial operations)	Permanently
Continuing Ed/Post License Files	5 years
Financial documents	7 years
Audits	Permanently
Cancelled checks	7 years
Insurance Policies (expired)	3 years
Legal Documents	Permanently
Contracts and Leases	7 years
Deeds	Permanently
Lawsuits	10 years from settlement
Membership applications	3 years
Payroll and earnings records	7 years
Personnel Records	5 years after termination
RPAC Records	3 years
State and Federal Documents	Permanently
Ethics & Arbitration Violations	3 years
Decision of Ethics Panel & Action of the BOD	Permanently

4. POLICIES GOVERNING CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

- A. **Adherence to NAR Policy**. The Greater Piedmont REALTORS® adopts, supports, and enforces the membership policies of the National Association of REALTORS®.
- B. **Antitrust Policy** – A goal of the Greater Piedmont REALTORS® is to improve the level of products and services offered by its members to the public and to encourage vigorous competition among its members in providing such products and services. In furtherance of this goal, GPR has adopted a policy of strict compliance with antitrust laws.

No members may agree to boycott competitors or suppliers of goods and services, nor may they discuss with each other their competitive business practices, nor may they require that another member share confidential information about their relationship with clients, including brokerage agreements, without the express written consent of their clients, and then only in redacted form excluding all issues of a competitive nature, including, without limitation, term, commission structure, and services to be rendered. Members may make individual decisions about competitive matters and the use of providers of goods and services, and about cooperation with other members (consistent with NAR rules), but may not discuss such decisions with other members or collaborate with other members about such decisions. Members shall always bear in mind that anti-competitive decisions made in collaboration with other members can have the most serious consequences.

- C. **Use of Affiliate Members** - Whenever possible, opportunities should be extended to our affiliate members to bid on association services or product, as long as they are competitively priced. (Board approval 3-11-09)
- D. **Conflict of Interest Policy** – A member of any GPR decision-making body (i.e. Board, Standing Committee, or any other adhoc committee or task force appointed by the Board) will be considered to have a Conflict of Interest whenever the member:

- Is a principal, partner, or corporate officer of a business providing products or services to GPR or in a business being considered as a provider of products or services; or
- Holds a seat on the Board of the business unless the person's only relationship to the business is service on such Board as GPR's representative; or
- Holds an ownership interest of more than one (1) percent of the business.

Members with a Conflict of Interest must immediately disclose their interest at the outset of any discussion by a decision making body pertaining to the business or any of its products or services. Such members may not participate in the discussion relating to that business other than to respond to questions asked of them by other members of the body. Furthermore, no member with a Conflict of Interest may vote on any matter in which the member has a Conflict of Interest, including votes to block or alter the actions of the body in order to benefit the business in which he/she has an interest.

Ownership Disclosure Policy:

- When GPR has an ownership interest in an entity and a member has an ownership interest in the same entity, such member must disclose the existence of his or her ownership interest prior to speaking to a decision making body of any matter involving that entity.
- If a member has personal knowledge that GPR is considering doing business with an entity in which a member has any financial or personal interest, then such member may participate for informational purposes only, and shall thereafter be excused from all subsequent discussion and vote(s) relating to the matter.
- If a member has a financial interest in an entity that the member knows is offering competing products and services as those offered by GPR, then such member must disclose the existence of his/her financial interest prior to speaking to a decision making body about an issue involving those competing products and services.

Each year, each member (as defined above), will execute a statement confirming that they adhere to GPR's conflict of interest policies. (Approved by Board on 12-5-08)

- E. **Whistleblower Policy** – A whistleblower is an employee of GPR who reports information that he/she has reasonable cause to believe discloses a violation of state or federal law to one or more of the parties specified in this policy.

If an employee has information he/she reasonably believes discloses a violation of state or federal law, the employee should contact his/her supervisor, Board President, or General Counsel. Employees are also permitted to contact the appropriate law enforcement or government agency but shall make every reasonable effort to report the incident as set out above before making such report. The employee must exercise sound judgment to avoid baseless allegations. An employee who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the whistleblower will be maintained. However, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law or to provide accused individuals their legal rights of defense. The Company will not retaliate against a whistleblower or any employee who refuses to participate in an activity that would result in a violation of state or federal law. This includes, but is not limited to, protection from retaliation in the form of an adverse employment action such as termination, compensation decreases, or poor work assignments and threats of physical harm. Any employee who believes

he/she is being retaliated against must contact the GPR President immediately. The right of the whistleblower for protection against retaliation does not include immunity for any personal wrongdoing that is alleged and investigated, or disclosures that would constitute a violation of the attorney-client privilege.

- F. **Fundraisers/Raffles** – GPR strives to be active leaders and contributors in its communities. The Community Services Committee is expected to perform due diligence in the approval and disbursement of money for charitable causes.
- a. Prior to approval of a donation from GPR, the requesting Company, Nonprofit, School, etc. must make the request in writing, on their letterhead, to GPR.
 - b. The Committee must properly research the company and ensure the request is for a valid purpose.
 - c. Any donations recommended by the Committee in excess of \$500 must also obtain Board approval, prior to being distributed. (Note – this excludes Scholarships)
 - d. Winners of any prize money or awards valued in excess of \$600, must complete a W9 and provide to the GPR staff prior to receipt of prize/award. The W9 will be given to GPR accountant.
 - e. Raffle tickets and marketing will clearly indicate timelines or deadlines for payout, and the need for the W9, tax responsibility, etc. if applicable.
 - f. Advertisement or Marketing of any raffles will convey all pertinent information.
 - g. Staff/Employees of GPR are prohibited from participating in all GPR drawings/raffles.
 - h. All raffles and other such gaming events shall be conducted in accordance with Virginia law.
- G. **Honor Society Applications** – After submission of the applications, the GPR staff reviews for accuracy and makes appropriate updates/changes. When needed, the staff can utilize an impartial party (e.g. Ethics Instructor, Grievance/PS&A Chair or Vice Chair), to oversee the reviews. If someone has submitted an application, they only have viewing privileges of their application – and not the applications of other applicants.
- H. **Expired Licenses** – REALTOR® Members with expired licenses with the Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation will have their membership and membership related privileges suspended until their license renewal requirements are fulfilled. At such time, a reactivation fee may be required.

5. **DUES AND FEES**

- A. **Payment** - Dues and fees may be paid by check or credit card (Visa, MasterCard, and Discover).
- B. **Partial Payment** - No partial payment of dues or fees will be accepted by the Association.
- C. **Bylaws Reference** - Reference Bylaws Article X Dues and Assessments, Section 4, Nonpayment of Financial Obligations. If dues are not paid by January 1, membership and all services with GPR will be terminated on that date. However, no action will be taken to suspend or expel a member for nonpayment of disputed amounts until the accuracy of the amount owed has been confirmed by the Board.

Non payment of any financial obligations may result in termination of membership and all related services with GPR. This may occur after the member has been notified, via certified US Mail to the home address on file, of the problem and given 10 days to resolve.

Assuming no disputes or payment after 10 days, the member (with a copy to the broker when applicable) will be notified via email that their membership will be terminated in 5 days, along with all related privileges and services due to non payment of financial obligations.

- D. **Rebate of Dues** - No rebate of dues shall be made by the Association to any member in the event of termination of membership for any cause.
- E. **Nonsufficient Funds (Check)**- Any returned checks will be returned to the issuer or re-deposited, with the notice that the amount of the check plus a returned check fee of \$50.00 must be provided to the Association within 10 days. Funds must be remitted by cashier's check, money order, certified check, cash or credit card.

Whenever Association bills are paid with checks that do not have sufficient funds available two times in a twelve month period of time, the company or individual will be put on a "cash only" basis for the following six month period of time. This procedure may be repeated as necessary.

- F. **Termination/Reinstatement** - A former Member who has had his membership terminated for non payment of dues, fees, fines, or other assessments duly levied in accordance with the provisions of the Bylaws or other Rules and Regulations of the Association or any of its services may apply for reinstatement after making payment in full of all accounts due as of the date of termination. Application for reinstatement must also be accompanied by a new member application fee.

6. **MEMBERSHIP**

A. **Process & Fees**

1. Members who transfer from one firm to another within the Association are required to complete a Change of Status Form and submit to the Association within 10 days.
2. New Members are required to pay a New Member Processing Fee as established by the Board.
3. New Firms making application to join the Association are required to pay a new firm fee, as established by the Board.
4. Delinquent payment of dues may result in a late fee as established by the Board.
5. New subscriptions to SentriLock require an activation fee as established by the Board.
6. Re-activation fees to SentriLock may apply for membership that has been suspended, license expiration, etc.
7. Members who request that GPR transfer their lockboxes to another owner (versus performing this function themselves) require a lockbox transfer fee.
8. Non members may apply for a SentriLock card with an additional non member fee.

B. **Orientation Policy**

1. New REALTOR® members shall complete the NAR mandated orientation program on the Code of Ethics of not less than two hours and thirty minutes of instructional time. This requirement does not apply to applicants who have completed comparable orientation in another association, provided that REALTOR® membership has been continuous, or than any break in membership is for one year or less.
2. Failure to satisfy the NAR Ethics Requirement within 90 days will result in denial of membership application and/or termination of provisional membership.

Referenced in GPR Bylaws Section 5 – New Member Code of Ethics Orientation.

- C. **Life Membership** – The requirements to qualify for Life Membership must be fulfilled by December 31st of that year to submit an application.

7. **FINANCIAL POLICIES**

- A. **Check Signers** – Effective 3-11-09 it is GPR’s policy that checks in the amount of \$1,000 or less require only one signature, generally the Chief Executive Officer’s. Checks in an amount more than \$1,000 require two signatures, generally the Chief Executive Officer’s plus one other signature from the President, Vice President, or Secretary/Treasurer.
- B. **Bank Accounts** – When conducted in accordance with approved budgetary guidelines or other special funding duly authorized by the Board, all banking accounts (money markets, savings, checking, Certificates of Deposit, etc.) that are established require a minimum of three signatures from the Chief Executive Officer, President, Vice President, or Secretary-Treasurer.
- C. **Transfer of Funds** - No additional authorization is required for the Chief Executive Office to authorize the transfer of funds from the Association’s money market accounts to the Association’s checking account.
- D. **Audit** - The Board shall authorize a compilation audit of the books and accounts of the Association by a Certified Public Accountant at the close of each fiscal year, or at the discretion of the Board. Audits conducted pursuant to GAAP shall be so conducted only at the direction of the Board.
- E. **Capitalization** – It is the policy of the organization to expense assets in the period purchased if these assets cost \$1,000 or less individually. Assets costing in excess of \$1,000 individually will be capitalized and depreciated in accordance with FASB rules and the organization’s policies.
- F. **Contract Signing Authority** – Contracts requiring the Association approval will need to be signed by the President or appointed delegate, as approved by the Board.
- G. **Credit Cards** – a credit card may be assigned to the Chief Executive Officer for the purpose of charging Association expenses. They will be required to maintain a log of credit card expenses & receipts and provide them to the Accountant monthly with the Credit Card statement for reconciliation.
- H. **Refunds** – Generally, there is a no refund policy, unless published differently on the order form, education class, event, etc. Dues are not refundable. No refunds or returns for store items.
- I. **Travel Reimbursement** – Travel reimbursement for participation in the major VAR and NAR meetings shall be budgeted annually.

The President or BOD’s designees and/or Chief Executive Officer will be reimbursed for attendance at VAR meetings (and NAR meetings when permitted). Up to three attendees will be reimbursed as follows (with priority given to the President, Vice President, Chief Executive Office, or a Board Designee if one of them cannot attend), and require approval prior to travel plans. Additionally, the Chief Executive Officer will be encouraged to attend the NAR AE Institute annually, budget permitting.

1. Early bird registration/conference fees
2. Maximum of 3 nights lodging (4 nights lodging when the event is in the West Coast)

3. Travel via Coach Class airfare, with upgrade to one level or Economy Plus seating on all flights
4. Food cost for actual days at meeting
5. Mileage at current IRS rate

The President will be reimbursed for mileage for traveling to any required meeting that is 50 miles or more (round-trip) from the Association office. For all events where travel is required, carpooling by all attendees is strongly encouraged.

The President and Vice President will have the early bird registration fee paid to attend the VAR Legislative Conference and the VAR Convention. The RPAC/Legislative Chairperson will have the early bird registration fee and/or Day on Hill fee paid to attend the VAR Legislative Conference. Other Board members will have their Day on Hill fee paid to attend the VAR Legislative Conference, and 1 day registration fee paid to attend the VAR Convention, when at least one (1) educational class is attended. (Note – all Governance Meetings for Legislative and Convention are available to attend for free.)

VAR Delegates/Alternates will be reimbursed for mileage to travel to and from the VAR meetings when they are required to attend. All VAR Delegates will be reimbursed for 1 night lodging when required to attend a VAR Delegate Body Meeting on behalf of GPR.

VAR Committee Members will be reimbursed for mileage to travel to and from up to two (2) VAR Committee Meetings annually, if they are required to attend in person.

GPR Members on Committees where stipends or expense reimbursement is provided will be exempt from GPR reimbursement unless otherwise approved by the Board.

Any exceptions to any of the travel reimbursement policies shall require minimum approval of the Executive Committee.

All travel expense requests for reimbursement will only be paid after the expense is incurred, and proper attendance at the event. A travel expense voucher form must be filled out to summarize your expense, with inclusion of all receipts, and submitted to the staff office within 2 weeks of the event for reimbursement. Failure to submit your expense voucher within 2 weeks from when the expense incurred, will result in loss of reimbursement.

If pre-payment for any attendee was made by GPR in advance, and the attendee did not attend, or fulfill the conference/convention requirements, they must reimburse GPR for the full amount within 2 weeks of the event.

8. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Candidate Application Requirements:

1. Shall complete the application.
2. Shall be a member in good standing with the Greater Piedmont REALTORS® for at least 1 year prior to the start of the term.
3. Shall have been an active licensed REALTOR® or Real Estate Appraiser in Virginia for a minimum of 3 years, or, if previously, or currently served on a GPR committee, only need to

have been an active licensed REALTOR® or Real Estate Appraiser in Virginia for a minimum of 2 years prior to the start of the term.

4. Shall be actively engaged in the business of Real Estate as a primary occupation.
5. Shall disclose any finding of violations against their license due to direct action of the candidate by the Virginia Real Estate Board (VAREB) or similar state regulatory authority within the last three (3) years prior to the start of the term, as well as, any previous felony convictions. A felony conviction shall disqualify a candidate or current sitting member from service on the Greater Piedmont REALTORS® Board of Directors.
6. Shall disclose any instances within the immediately preceding three (3) years prior to the start of the term, in which the candidate has been found by a professional standard hearing panel to have violated the REALTOR® Code of Ethics.
7. Shall sign a commitment statement indicating that if elected, candidate will faithfully fulfill all duties including meeting attendance and participation and will serve and abide by Association policies and procedures.
8. For the Executive Committee, which includes the Past President, President, Vice President, and Secretary-Treasurer, previous board experience is required.

General:

- A. The Board of Directors will consist of a) the President, b) the Vice President, c) the Secretary /Treasurer, d) the Immediate Past President, e) the Directors set forth in the Bylaws, f) and the Ex-Officio Affiliate Director.
- B. Each candidate for Officer or Director must be a member in good standing with GPR for one year prior to the start of term.
- C. Unpermitted absence from any three (3) regular meetings (consecutive or nonconsecutive), in a calendar year shall, be treated as a resignation from the Board. Permitted absences may include extenuating situations such as an accident, chronic health condition, or other emergency, and must be reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee.
- D. Duties and Responsibilities:

The Board shall

1. Conduct the general affairs of the Association
2. Delegate and adopt such rules and regulations as deemed proper not in conflict with the Association's Bylaws, Strategic Plan, nor in conflict with VAR and NAR Bylaws and policies and procedures as applicable to local Association; and not in conflict with any regulatory agency policy and/or law as related to the industry.
3. Fill vacancies that may occur on the Board.
4. Account for all monies entrusted in their care.
5. Be responsible to the general membership of the Association for policies as adopted by the Association.
6. Approve the dues to be paid by the membership.
7. Oversee the Committees to see that they are functioning effectively and within their guidelines.
8. All Directors must have active licenses.

9. Refrain from endorsing any REALTOR®, Firm, and/or Affiliate when speaking or acting in the capacity of a GPR Officer or Director.
10. All Directors shall have a working knowledge of the Bylaws of the Association, Policy Manual, Personnel Policy Manual, The Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual, and Robert's Rules of Order.
11. Make every attempt to attend all major functions of the Association.

E. Meetings

1. The Board shall hold regularly scheduled meetings a minimum of one every other month.
2. A special Board meeting may be called by the President or upon written request of at least 10% of the Members eligible to vote.
3. A quorum for the Board shall be one more than half the number of BOD members.
4. The business of the Board and committees of the Board shall be conducted at regularly scheduled meetings or at special meetings properly noticed. Actions of the Board may be taken by unanimous consent of the Directors in lieu of a Meeting upon the written consent and approval of all Directors. Such consent shall be certified by the Secretary in accordance with Virginia law. All such consents shall be signed by each Director; email signatures will not be permitted.
5. Each member of the Board is encouraged to attend all in state VAR meetings – including the Leadership Conference, Leadership training, and the VAR Convention.
6. All requests from members for minutes of any Board meeting shall comply with Virginia Law (subsections B and C of 13.1-934 of the Code of Virginia. A member may inspect and copy the records identified if the member is in good standing for at least six months preceding the request; the demand is made in good faith and for a proper purpose; the member describes in writing with reasonable particularity the purpose and the records the member desires to inspect; and the records are directly connected to their stated purpose.

F. Seminars

1. Each Officer and Director is encouraged to attend VAR Leadership training if one is offered. If Leadership Training is being offered locally, then attendance is required.
2. Each Officer and Director is required to attend Professional Standards Training annually, provided, however, that an Officer or a Director who has served on the Board and attended such training for the preceding three consecutive years, must attend every other year.

9. **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- A. The Executive Committee will consist of the President , the Vice President, the Secretary /Treasurer, the Immediate Past President, and the Chief Executive Officer will be an ex-officio member.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities:

The Executive Committee shall implement the policies of the Board and execute the decisions of the Board in the conduct of the business of the Association. In so doing, the Executive Committee shall have the authority to do the following:

1. Recommend changes and/or additions to the Policy Manual or Personnel Policy Manual for final approval by the Board.
2. When action requiring the approval of the Board is required between regularly scheduled Board, the Executive Committee may poll a majority of the Directors and take such action as the Executive Committee finds appropriate after such polling. Such action shall be reported at the next Board meeting.
3. Make decisions, including those affecting the budget regarding policy interpretation between regular scheduled Board meetings as necessary.
4. Review and make recommendations to the Board for any changes in job descriptions for Officers and/or Directors.
5. Restructure committees and make recommendations for changes or deletion of standing committees, as necessary.
6. The President or members of the Executive Committee shall offer a visit by one or more of them to local firms (time permitting).
7. The President shall serve as the official spokesperson for the Association. In the absence or unavailability of the President, the Vice President or President's designee shall serve as the spokesperson. The President shall have attended formal Spokesperson training, at the expense of the Association, during the two year period prior to assuming office.

10. COMMITTEES

- A. GPR Bylaws provide for standing committees – Grievance/Professional Standards, Member Services, Legislative/RPAC/Public Policy, and Education. Other committees/task forces may include, Technology, Nominating, Community Services, Election, Affiliate, and Marketing and such other ad hoc committees as the Board shall decide.
- B. Appointments
 1. The President-Elect shall designate the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and any Task Force Chairperson for all Committees to function during his/her team as President.
 2. All Association members will be solicited each fall for recommendations for committee membership.
 3. Each committee chairman will submit to the Vice President for his/her approval, a suggested list of committee members no later than December 5th each year. Each chairman and vice chairman should recruit at least two committee members.
 4. The Vice President shall submit these names annually to the Board at their November/December Meeting.
 5. The committee appointments will be made for one year unless otherwise specified.
- C. Guidelines:
 1. Minutes of all meetings shall be taken by an Association Staff member (whenever possible), or a Committee member, and filed in the Association office. If staff is not available to record the minutes of the meeting, the Committee Chairperson is responsible for ensuring recording of the meeting takes place.
 2. In the absence of the Committee Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson shall preside.
 3. The Association inclement weather policy will apply to all scheduled meetings and classes.
 4. All Committee/Task Force meetings will take place during GPR business hours (8:00 – 5:00) if staff is required to be present at the meeting. The Committee Chairperson and Association Executive will make the decision that a staff person be present at the meeting.

5. Committee Chairs are responsible for submitting a summary of the meeting and any requested motions or recommendations for the Board, to the Executive Officer and Vice President at least one week prior to the scheduled Board meetings.

D. Duties of Committees:

Member Services Committee – Purpose: Plan membership meetings of the Association, while encouraging participation by general membership at all GPR events. Develop award programs and award criteria for the Association. Identify programs and recommend strategies, resources, and information that address membership issues.

Cares Committee – Purpose: Organize and participate in functions to raise money for community projects and scholarship funds. Organize and participate in events that benefit the community within the GPR association.

Legislative/RPAC (Public Policy) Committee – Purpose: Monitor local, state, and national proposed legislation and attend legislative functions, presenting the Association's positions (if any) at the direction of the Board. Educate Members about the goals, objectives, and benefits of RPAC. Strive to meet/exceed VAR RPAC Fair Share Goal for percentage participation and percentage fair share collected, and related recognition programs.

Grievance/Professional Standards and Arbitration Committee – Purpose: The Grievance Committee handles initial reviews of formal written complaints to determine if a formal hearing is appropriate concerning alleged violations of the Bylaws, Code of Ethics, or Association rules and regulations. If the rules apply to the case, the case shall be forwarded to Professional Standards for further consideration.

The Grievance Committee will review all requests for arbitration to determine whether the dispute meets the requirements of the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual as an arbitrable dispute, and if so will forward the case to Professional Standards for further consideration.

The Professional Standards and Arbitration Committee serves as a pool of potential members for the Association's Ethics and Arbitration Hearings.

Nominating Committee – Purpose: Follows the Association Bylaws to implement the process for the election of officers and directors. Objective is to fill positions with qualified candidates, who represent a variety of different firms, across the GPR counties.

Election Committee – Purpose: Supervise the ballots, tally the votes, and report the results of the election to the Membership, and retain all ballots cast for a period of 120 days after the election. The Committee will be made up of not less than three REALTOR® members. Any nominee for office will not be eligible to serve on the Election Committee.

Education Committee - Purpose: Provide a variety of education and training opportunities in all types of forums to increase the knowledge and professionalism of the members.

Marketing Committee – Purpose: Improve the recognition of the public benefit to the use of a local REALTOR® in their real estate needs, and to identify current market conditions and the benefits of home and real estate investment ownership.

Technology Committee – Purpose: Partner with the GPR staff to assess technological needs and advancement for the office and Association in the areas of hardware, software, telephone system, computers, website, etc. and make recommendations to the Board for improvements or changes.

Affiliate Committee – Purpose: Provide education, guidance, support and social networking to the GPR REALTORS®, their staff, and the local community. To provide current and new information in all areas of our individual affiliate businesses that effect the real estate environment. The social aspect will allow the affiliate participants and the GPR REALTORS® an opportunity to interact in a friendly and professional environment and further the business relationships with all members.

11. **VAR/NAR**

A. The Association’s Delegates to VAR shall be the President, Vice President, and Immediate Past President or Board’s designees.

GPR candidates for position of NAR Director shall meet the qualifications set by VAR. GPR and VAR Directors shall be notified of any such vacant position. The VAR Nominating Committee will determine the directors to be recommended to NAR.

12. **Policy on Harassment**

GPR is committed to providing a productive and welcoming environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. Members are expected to act with courtesy and mutual respect toward each other, GPR staff, service providers, speakers and event participants.

A. **Policy** – Harassment is illegal conduct and is contrary to the policy of the Greater Piedmont REALTORS®. Any member of the association may be reprimanded, placed on probation, suspended or expelled for harassment of an association or MLS employee or Association Officer or Director after a hearing in accordance with the established procedures of the association. Disciplinary action may also consist of any sanction authorized in the association’s Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual.

As used in this Section, Harassment in any form is strictly prohibited. Harassment includes inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action, or gesture based on another person’s sex, color, race, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and any other protected characteristic. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to: epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and the display or circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual or group based on a protected characteristic.

Sexual harassment is one form of harassment. Sexual harassment may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Like all harassment, sexual harassment is strictly prohibited. Sexual harassment can be:

- Verbal: Sexual innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, or threats.
- Non-Verbal: Sexually suggestive objects or pictures, graphic commentaries, suggestive or insulting sounds, leering, whistling, or obscene gestures.

Physical harassment is another form of harassment that can be unwanted physical contact, including touching, pinching, coerced sexual intercourse, or assault.

B. **Complaint Procedure** – Any employee who believes he/she has suffered harassment by any other employee, including supervisors and co-workers, or by any member of the Association or by

any guest or visitor of the Association must bring the problem to the attention of any of the following individuals (the complaint does not have to be in writing).

- a. His/her supervisor
- b. Executive Officer or
- c. Association's legal counsel

C. **Complaint Investigation** – All complaints will be investigated promptly by the Executive Officer. Should the Executive Officer be involved in the complaint, the Association's legal counsel will conduct the investigation. If the complaint names the President, President-elect or Vice President, they may not participate in the proceedings and shall be replaced by the Immediate Past President or, alternatively, by another member of the Board selected by the highest ranking officer not named in the complaint.

The identity of the employee making the complaint as well as the identity of the individual accused of harassment will be kept strictly confidential. Information regarding the charge of harassment and the investigation of that charge will not be made known to anyone who is not directly involved either as a party, a witness, legal counsel, or the Executive Officer. Witnesses interviewed will be provided only such information as is necessary to elicit from them their observations and other relevant information.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Executive Officer or legal counsel will prepare a written report. Authority for the final resolution of all charges and the determination of appropriate sanctions rests with the Executive Officer with the advice of legal counsel. Should the Executive Officer be involved in the complaint, the President will make these determinations with the advice of legal counsel.

D. **Discipline** – Harassment is a serious offense and any employee found to have engaged in such conduct is subject to severe discipline, including termination.

In the event a complaint of harassment is found to be totally and completely without basis, appropriate disciplinary measures may be taken against the employee who brought the complaint. While this is in no way intended to discourage any employee who believes they have been the victim of harassment from bringing a complaint, the Association recognizes that a charge of harassment can cause serious damage to the accuser's personal reputation and professional career.

13. Advertising Guidelines

A. **Applicability** – These guidelines apply to all real estate advertising (including rentals) that is placed in any advertising media by a licensed REALTOR® Member of GPR. This includes, without, newspapers, display ads, magazines, billboards, yard signs, radio, TV, telephone directories, internet, and some social media. Members will at all times comply with the regulations of the Virginia Real Estate Board (VAREB) in their advertising.

The name of the company must be clearly and legibly displayed on all display signs and other types of advertising and marketing in keeping with VAREB regulations. All display signs must contain the office phone number of the listing agent. All advertising must depict the property accurately and shall not be misleading.

14. **Rules and Regulations for Keyboxes and Electronic Keys**

Rules pertaining to use of the Keybox and electronic keys are covered in the following document: SentiLock Rules and Regulations for the SentiLock Keybox System and the SentiLock User Agreement. Members shall comply with all such rules and will be subject to the appropriate sanctions and penalties for failure to comply.