

**WESTERN UPSTATE ASSOCIATION OF  
REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, INC.**

**BYLAWS**

**Revised: December 2008**

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**BYLAWS OF THE  
WESTERN UPSTATE ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, INC.**

**ARTICLE I - NAME**

**Section 1. Name.** The name of this organization shall be the Western Upstate Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, Incorporated, hereinafter referred to as the “Association”.

**Section 2. REALTORS<sup>®</sup>.** Inclusion and retention of the Registered Collective Membership Mark REALTORS<sup>®</sup> in the name of the Association shall be governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> as from time to time amended.

**ARTICLE II - OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Association are:

**Section 1.** To unite those engaged in the recognized branches of the real estate profession for the purpose of exerting a beneficial influence upon the profession and related interests.

**Section 2.** To promote and maintain high standards of conduct in the real estate profession as expressed in the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>.

**Section 3.** To provide a unified medium for real estate owners and those engaged in the real estate profession whereby their interests may be safeguarded and advanced.

**Section 4.** To further the interest of home and other real property ownership.

**Section 5.** To unite those engaged in the real estate profession in this community with the South Carolina Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> and the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, thereby furthering their own objectives throughout the state and nation, and obtaining the benefits and privileges of membership therein.

**Section 6.** To designate, for the benefit of the public, those individuals authorized to use the terms REALTOR<sup>®</sup> and REALTORS<sup>®</sup> as licensed, prescribed, and controlled by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS.

**ARTICLE III - JURISDICTION**

**Section 1.** The territorial jurisdiction of the Association as a member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> is to include Oconee and Pickens (except the portion of the Pickens County that makes up the Greenville Board;

Jurisdiction being defined as follows: Northern Boundary : North Carolina State Line

Eastern Boundary: Simms School Road to Earle Road; Earle Road to Hwy 93; Highway 93 Northeast to Highway 137; Highway 137 North to Highway 183; Highway 183 North to Shady Grove Road; Shady Grove Road to Little Eastatoee Road; Little Eastatoee Road to Roy F. Jones

Hwy; Roy F. Jones Hwy to Cleo Chapman Hwy; Cleo Chapman Hwy to Horse Pasture Road; Horse Pasture Road to Jocassee Dam Road; Jocassee Dam Road to Oconee County Line.

**Section 2.** Territorial Jurisdiction is defined to mean:

(a) The right and duty to control the use of the terms REALTOR<sup>®</sup> and REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, subject to the conditions set forth in these Bylaws and those of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, in return for which the Association agrees to protect and safeguard the property rights of the National Association in the terms.

#### **ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1.** There shall be six (6) classes of Members as follows:

(a) REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members. REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members, whether primary or secondary shall be:

(1) Individuals who, as sole proprietors, partners, corporate officers, or branch office managers, are engaged actively in the real estate profession, including buying, selling, exchanging, renting or leasing, managing, appraising for others for compensation, counseling, building, developing or subdividing real estate, and who maintain or are associated within an established real estate office in the state of South Carolina or a state contiguous thereto. All persons who are partners in a partnership, or all officers in a corporation who are actively engaged in the real estate profession within the state or state contiguous thereto shall qualify for REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Membership only, and each is required to hold REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Membership (except as provided in the following paragraph) in an Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> within the state or state contiguous thereto unless otherwise qualified for Institute Affiliate Membership as described in Section 1(b) of Article IV.

In the case of a real estate firm, partnership, or corporation, whose business activity is substantially all commercial, only those principals actively engaged in the real estate business in connection with the same office, or any other offices within the jurisdiction of the association in which one of the firm's principals holds REALTOR<sup>®</sup> membership, shall be required to hold REALTOR<sup>®</sup> membership unless otherwise qualified for Institute Affiliate Membership as described in Section 1 (b) of Article IV.

REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members may obtain membership in a "secondary" Association in another state or Association.

(2) Individuals who are engaged in the real estate profession other than sole proprietors, partners, corporate officers, or branch office managers and are associated with a REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member and meet the qualifications set out in Article V.

(3) Franchise REALTOR<sup>®</sup> membership. Corporate officers (who may be licensed or unlicensed) of a real estate brokerage franchise organization with at least on hundred fifty (150) franchises located within the United States, its insular possessions and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, elected to membership pursuant to the provisions in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> Constitution and Bylaws. Such individuals shall enjoy all of the rights, privileges and obligation of REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Membership (including compliance with the

Code of Ethics) except: obligations related to Association mandated education, meeting attendance, or indoctrination classes or other similar requirements; the right to use the term REALTOR<sup>®</sup> in connection with their franchise organization's name; the right to hold elective office in the local Association, State Association and National Association.

(4) Primary and secondary REALTORS<sup>®</sup> Members: An individual is a primary member if the Association pays State and National dues based on such member. An individual is a secondary member if state and national dues are remitted through another Association. One of the principals in a real estate firm must be a Designated REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member of the Association in order for licensees affiliated with the firm to select the association as their "primary" Association.

(5) Designated REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members. Each firm or office in the case of firms with multiple office locations shall designate in writing one REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member who shall be responsible for all duties and obligations of Membership including the obligation to arbitrate pursuant to Article 17 of the Code of Ethics and the payment of Association dues as established in Article X of the Bylaws. The Designated REALTOR<sup>®</sup> must be a sole proprietor, partner, corporate officer, BIC, or branch office manager acting on behalf of the firm's principal(s) and must meet all other qualifications for REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Membership established in Article V, Section 2, of the Bylaws.

(b) Institute Affiliate Members. Institute Affiliate Members shall be individuals who hold a professional designation awarded by an Institute, Society, or Council affiliated with the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> that addresses a specialty area other than residential brokerage or individuals who otherwise hold a class of membership in such Institute, Society or Council that confers the right to hold office. Any such individual, if otherwise eligible, may elect to hold REALTOR<sup>®</sup> or REALTOR ASSOCIATE<sup>®</sup> membership, subject to payment of applicable dues for such membership.

(c) Affiliate Members. Affiliate Members shall be real estate owners and other individuals or firms who, while not engaged in the real estate profession as defined in paragraphs (a) or (b) of this Section, have interests requiring information concerning real estate, and are in sympathy with the objectives of the Association.

(d) Public Service Members. Public Service Members shall be individuals who are interested in the real estate profession as employees of or affiliated with educational, public utility, governmental or other similar organizations, but are not engaged in the real estate profession on their own account or in association with an established real estate business.

(e) Honorary Members. Honorary Members shall be individuals not engaged in the real estate profession who have performed notable service for the real estate profession, for the Association, or for the Public.

(f) Student Members. Student Members shall be individuals who are seeking an undergraduate or graduate degree with a specialization or major in real estate at institutions of higher learning, and who have completed at least two years of college and at least one college

level course in real estate, but are not engaged in the real estate profession on their own account or not associated with an established real estate office.

## **ARTICLE V - QUALIFICATION AND ELECTION**

### **Section 1. Application.**

(a) An application for membership shall be made in such manner and form as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors and made available to anyone requesting it. The application form shall contain among the statements to be signed by the applicant (1) that applicant agrees as a condition to membership to thoroughly familiarize himself with the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Rules and Regulations of the Association, the State and National Associations, and if elected a Member, will abide by the Constitutions and Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Association, State and National Associations, and if a REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member will abide by the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> including the obligation to arbitrate controversies arising out of real estate transactions as specified by Article 17 of the Code of Ethics, and as further specified in the Codes of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> as from time to time amended, and (2) that applicant consents that the Association, through its Membership Committee or otherwise, may invite and receive information and comment about applicant from any Member or other persons, and that applicant agrees that any information and comment furnished to the Association by any person in response to the invitation shall be conclusively deemed to be privileged and not form the basis of any action for slander, libel, or defamation of character. The applicant shall, with the form of application, have access to a copy of the Bylaws, Constitution, Rules and Regulations, and Code of Ethics referred to above.

### **Section 2. Qualification.**

(a) An applicant for REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Membership who is a sole proprietor, partner, corporate officer, or branch office manager of a real estate firm shall supply evidence satisfactory to the Membership Committee that he is actively engaged in the real estate profession, and maintains a current, valid real estate broker's or salesperson's license or is licensed or certified by an appropriate state regulatory agency to engage in the appraisal of real property, has a place of business within the state or a state contiguous thereto (unless a secondary member), has no record of recent or pending bankruptcy\*, has no record of official sanctions involving unprofessional conduct\*\*, agrees to complete a course of instruction covering the Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Association, the Bylaws of the State Association, and the Constitution and Bylaws and Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, and shall pass such reasonable and nondiscriminatory written examination thereon as may be required by the Committee and shall agree that if elected to membership, he will abide by such Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations and the Code of Ethics.

(b) Individuals who are actively engaged in the real estate profession other than as sole proprietors, partners, corporate officers, or branch office managers in order to qualify for REALTOR Membership, shall be at the time of application, be associated either as an employee or as an independent contractor with a Designated REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member of the Association or a

Designated REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member of another Association (if a secondary member) and must maintain a current, valid real estate broker's or salesperson's license or be licensed or certified by an appropriate state regulatory agency to engage in the appraisal of real property, shall complete a course of instruction covering the Bylaws and Rules and Regulations of the Association, the Bylaws of the State Association, and the Constitution and Bylaws and Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> and if elected to membership he will abide by the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, and by the Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules and Regulations of the local Association, State Association, and the National Association.

(c) An applicant for reinstatement of membership in any class shall be required to submit such application and meet such qualification as required for an applicant applying for membership in that class for the first time.

The Association will also consider the following in determining an applicant's qualifications for REALTOR<sup>®</sup> membership:

1. All final findings of Code of Ethics violations and violations of other membership duties in any other association within the past three (3) years
2. Pending ethics complaints (or hearings)
3. Unsatisfied discipline pending
4. Pending arbitration requests (or hearings)
5. Unpaid arbitration awards or unpaid financial obligations to any other association or Association MLS
6. Any misuse of the term REALTOR<sup>®</sup> or REALTORS<sup>®</sup> in the name of the applicant's firm.

“Provisional” membership may be granted in instances where ethics complaints or arbitration requests (or hearings) are pending in other associations or where the applicant for membership has unsatisfied discipline pending in another association (except for violations of the Code of ethics; See article V, Section 2(a) Note 2) provided all other qualifications for membership

### **Section 3. Election.**

The procedure for election to membership shall be as follows:

(a) The Chief Staff Executive (or duly authorized designee) shall determine whether the applicant is applying for the appropriate class of membership.

(b) The Board of Directors shall review the qualifications of the applicant and the recommendations of the Chief Staff Executive (or duly authorized designee) and then vote on the applicant's eligibility for membership. If the applicant receives a majority vote of the Board of Directors, he shall be declared elected to membership and shall be advised by written notice.

(c) The Board of Directors may not reject an application without providing the applicant with advance notice of the findings, an opportunity to appear before the Board of Directors, to call witnesses on his behalf, to be represented by counsel, and to make such statements as he deems relevant. The Board of Directors may also have counsel present. The Board of Directors shall

require that written minutes be made of any hearing before it or may electronically or mechanically record the proceedings.

(d) If the Board of Directors determines that the application should be rejected, it shall record its reasons with the Chief Staff Executive (or duly authorized designee). If the Board of Directors believes that denial of membership to the applicant may become the basis of litigation and a claim of damage by the applicant, it may specify that denial shall become effective upon entry in a suit by the Board for a declaratory judgment by a court of competent jurisdiction of a final judgment declaring that the rejection violates no rights of the applicant.

#### **Section 4. New Member Code of Ethics Orientation.**

Applicants for REALTOR<sup>®</sup> membership and provisional REALTOR<sup>®</sup> members (where applicable) shall complete an 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 for REALTOR<sup>®</sup> membership or provisional members who have completed comparable orientation in another association, provided that REALTOR<sup>®</sup> membership has been continuous, or that any break in membership is for one year or less.

Failure to satisfy this requirement within 90 days of the date of application (or, alternatively, the date that provisional membership was granted), will result in denial of the membership application or termination of provisional membership.

#### **Section 5. Continuing Member Code of Ethics Training.**

Effective January 1, 2001, through December 31, 2004, and for successive four year periods thereafter, each REALTOR<sup>®</sup> member of the association shall be required to complete quadrennial ethics training of not less than two hours and thirty minutes of instructional time. This requirement will be satisfied upon presentation of documentation that the member has completed a course of instruction conducted by this or another association, the State Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, or any other recognized educational institution or provided which meets the learning objectives and minimum criteria established by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> from time to time. REALTOR<sup>®</sup> members who have completed training as a requirement of membership in another association and REALTOR<sup>®</sup> members who have completed the New Member Code of Ethics Orientation during any four year cycle shall not be required to complete additional ethics training until a new four year cycle commences.

Failure to satisfy this requirement shall be considered a violation of membership duty for which REALTOR<sup>®</sup> membership shall be suspended until such time as the training is completed.

Failure to meet the requirement for the second (2005 through 2008) cycle and subsequent four (4)-year cycles will result in suspension of membership for the first two months (January and February) of the year following the end of any four (4) year cycle or until the requirement is met, whichever occurs sooner. On March 1 of that year, the membership of a member who is still suspended as of that date will be automatically terminated. (*Adopted 1/01, revised 5/05*)

## **Section 6. Status Changes.**

(a) A REALTOR<sup>®</sup> who changes the conditions under which he holds membership shall be required to provide written notification to the Association within 30 days. A REALTOR<sup>®</sup> (non-principal) who becomes a principal in the firm with which he has been licensed or, alternatively, becomes a principal in a new firm which will be comprised of REALTOR<sup>®</sup> principals may be required to satisfy any previously unsatisfied membership requirements applicable to REALTOR<sup>®</sup> (principal) Members but shall, during the period of transition from one status of membership to another, be subject to all of the privileges and obligations of a REALTOR<sup>®</sup> (principal). If the REALTOR<sup>®</sup> (non-principal) does not satisfy the requirements established in these Bylaws for the category of membership to which they have transferred within 90 days of the date they advised the Association of their change in status, their membership application will terminate automatically unless otherwise so directed by the Board of Directors.

A REALTOR<sup>®</sup> who is transferring their license from one firm comprised of REALTOR<sup>®</sup> principals to another firm comprised of REALTOR<sup>®</sup> principals shall be subject to all of the privileges and obligations of membership during the period of transition. If the transfer is not completed within 90 days of the date the association is advised of the disaffiliation with the current firm, membership will terminate automatically unless otherwise so directed by the Board of Directors.

(The Board of Directors, at its discretion, may waive any qualification which the applicant has already fulfilled in accordance with the Association's Bylaws.)

(b) Any application fee related to a change in membership status shall be reduced by an amount equal to any application fee previously paid by the applicant.

(c) Dues shall be prorated from the first day of the quarter in which the member is notified of election by the Board of Directors and shall be based on the new membership status for the remainder of the year.

## **ARTICLE VI - PRIVILEGES AND OBLIGATIONS**

**Section 1.** The privileges and obligations of Members, in addition to those otherwise provided in these Bylaws, shall be specified in this Article.

**Section 2.** Any Member of the Association may be reprimanded, fined, placed on probation, suspended, or expelled by the Board of Directors for a violation of these Bylaws and Association Rules and Regulations not inconsistent with these Bylaws, after a hearing as provided in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the Association. Although Members other than REALTORS<sup>®</sup> are neither subject to the Code of Ethics nor its enforcement by the Association, such Members are encouraged to abide by the principles established in the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> and conduct their business and professional practices accordingly. Further, Members other than REALTORS<sup>®</sup> may upon recommendation of the Membership Committee, or upon recommendation by a hearing panel of the Professional Standards Committee, be subject to discipline as described above, for any conduct, which in the opinion of the Board of Directors, applied on a nondiscriminatory basis, reflects adversely on the

terms REALTOR<sup>®</sup> or REALTORS<sup>®</sup> and the real estate industry, or for conduct that is inconsistent with or adverse to the objectives and purpose of the local Association, the State Association, and the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>.

**Section 3.** Any REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member of the Association may be disciplined by the Board of Directors for violations of the Code of Ethics or other duties of membership, after a hearing as described in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the Association, provided that the discipline imposed is consistent with the discipline authorized by the Professional Standards Committee of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> as set forth in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the National Association.

**Section 4.** Resignations of Members shall become effective when received in writing by the Board of Directors, provided, however, that if any Member submitting the resignation is indebted to the Association for dues, fees, fines, or other assessments of the association or any of its services, departments, divisions, or subsidiaries, the Association may condition the right of the resigning Member to reapply for membership upon payment in full of all such monies owed.

**Section 5.** If a Member resigns from the Association or otherwise causes membership to terminate with an ethics complaint pending, the Board of Directors may condition the right of the resigning Member to reapply for membership upon the applicant's certification that he/she will submit to the pending ethics proceeding and will abide by the decision of the hearing panel.

(a) If a member resigns or otherwise causes membership to terminate, the duty to submit to arbitration continues in effect even after membership lapses or is terminated, provided that the dispute arose while the former member was a REALTOR<sup>®</sup>.

**Section 6.** REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members, whether primary or secondary, in good standing whose financial obligations to the Association are paid in full shall be entitled to vote and to hold elective office in the Association; may use the terms REALTOR<sup>®</sup> and REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, which use shall be subject to the provisions of Article VIII; and have the primary responsibility to safeguard and promote the standards, interests, and welfare of the Association and the real estate profession.

(a) If a REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member is a principal in a firm, partnership, or corporation and is suspended or expelled, the firm, partnership, or corporation shall not use the terms REALTOR<sup>®</sup> or REALTORS<sup>®</sup> in connection with its business during the period of suspension, or until readmission to REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Membership, or unless connection with the firm, partnership, or corporation is severed, whichever may apply. The membership of all other principals, partners, or corporate officers shall suspend or terminate during the period of suspension of the disciplined Member, or until readmission of the disciplined Member, or unless connection of the disciplined Member with the firm, partnership, or corporation is severed, whichever may apply. Further, the membership of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> other than principals who are employed by or affiliated as independent contractors with the disciplined Member shall suspend or terminate during the period of suspension of the disciplined Member with the firm, partnership, or corporation is severed, or unless the REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member (non-principal) elects to sever his connection with the REALTOR<sup>®</sup> and affiliated with another REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member in good standing in the Association, whichever may apply. If a REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member who is other than a principal in a

firm, partnership, or corporation is suspended or expelled, the use of the terms REALTOR® or REALTORS® by the firm, partnership, or corporation shall not be affected.

(b) In any action taken against a REALTOR® Member for suspension or expulsion under Section 6 (a) hereof, notice of such action shall be given to all REALTORS® employed by or affiliated as independent contractors with such REALTOR® Member and they shall be advised that the provision in Article VI, Section 6 (a) shall apply.

**Section 7. Institute Affiliate Members.** Institute Affiliated Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

**NOTE:** Local associations establish the rights and privileges to be conferred on Institute Affiliate Members except that no Institute Affiliate Member may be granted the right to use the term REALTOR®, REALTOR-ASSOCIATE®, or the REALTOR® logo; to serve as Chairman of the Board of the local association; or to be a participant in the local association's Multiple Listing Service.

**Section 8. Affiliate Members.** Affiliate Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 9. Public Service Members.** Public Service Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 10. Honorary Members.** Honorary Membership shall confer only the right to attend meetings and participate in discussions.

**Section 11. Student Members.** Student Members shall have rights and privileges and be subject to obligations prescribed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 12. Certification by REALTOR®.** Designated REALTOR® Members of the Association shall certify to the Association during the months of January on a form provided by the Association, a complete listing of all individuals licensed or certified in the REALTOR®'s office(s) and shall designate a primary Association for each individual who holds membership. Designated REALTORS® shall also identify any non-member licensees in the REALTOR®'s office (s) and if Designated REALTOR® dues have been paid to another Association based on said non-member licensees; the Designated REALTOR® shall identify the Association to which dues have been remitted. These declarations shall be used for purposes of calculating dues under Article X, Section 2 (a) of the Bylaws. Designated REALTOR® Members shall also notify the Association of any additional individual(s) licensed or certified with the firm(s) within thirty (30) days of the date of affiliation or severance of the individual.

**Section 13. Harassment.** 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 means

any verbal or physical conduct including threatening or obscene language, unwelcome sexual advances, stalking, actions including strikes, shoves, kicks, or other similar physical contact, or threats to do the same, or any other conduct with the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating a hostile, intimidating or offensive work environment. The decision of the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken shall be made by the investigatory team comprised of two (2) REALTOR<sup>®</sup> members and one (1) member of the Board of Directors selected by the highest ranking officer not named in the complaint, upon consultation with legal counsel for the association. If the complaint names the Chairman of the Board, he/she may not participate in the proceedings and shall be replaced by the Immediate Past Chairman of the Board or, alternatively, by another member of the Board of Directors selected by the highest ranking officer not named in the complaint.

## **ARTICLE VII - PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND ARBITRATION**

**Section 1.** The responsibility of the Association and of Association Members relating to the enforcement of the Code of Ethics, the disciplining of Members, and the arbitration of disputes, and the organization and procedures incident thereto, shall be governed by the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the Association, which shall be the same as the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, as from time to time amended, which by this reference is made a part of these Bylaws, provided, however, that any provision deemed inconsistent with state law shall be deleted or amended to comply with state law.

**Section 2.** It shall be the duty and responsibility of every REALTOR<sup>®</sup> and Nonresident Member of this Association to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws and the Rules and Regulations of this Association, the Constitution and Bylaws of the State Association, the Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, and to abide by the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, including the duty to arbitrate controversies arising out of real estate transactions as specified by Article 17 of the Code of Ethics, and as further defined and in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual of this Association as from time to time amended.

## **ARTICLE VIII - USE OF THE TERMS REALTOR<sup>®</sup> AND REALTORS<sup>®</sup>**

**Section 1.** Use of the terms REALTOR<sup>®</sup> and REALTORS<sup>®</sup> by Members shall, at all times, be subject to the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> and to the Rules and Regulations prescribed by its Board of Directors. The Association shall have the authority to control, jointly and in full cooperation with the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, use of the terms within its jurisdiction. Any misuse of the terms by members is a violation of a membership duty and may subject members to disciplinary action by the Board of Directors after a hearing as provided for in the association's Code of Ethics and Arbitration Manual. (Amended 06/2006)

**Section 2.** REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members of the Association shall have the privilege of using the terms REALTOR<sup>®</sup> and REALTORS<sup>®</sup> in connection with their places of business within the state or a state contiguous thereto so long as they remain REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members in good standing. No other class of Members shall have this privilege.

**Section 3.** A REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member who is a principal of a real estate firm, partnership or corporation may use the terms REALTOR<sup>®</sup> and REALTORS<sup>®</sup> only if all the principals of such firm, partnership or corporation who are actively engaged in the real estate profession are REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members of an Association within the state or a state contiguous thereto or Institute Affiliate Members as described in Section 1 (b) of Article IV.

(a) In the case of a REALTOR<sup>®</sup> member who is a principal of a real estate firm, partnership, or corporation whose business activity is substantially all commercial, the right to use the term REALTOR<sup>®</sup> or REALTORS<sup>®</sup> shall be limited to office locations in which a principal, partner, corporate officer, or branch office manager of the firm, partnership, or corporation holds REALTOR<sup>®</sup> membership. If a firm, partnership, or corporation operates additional places of business in which no principal, partner, corporate officer, or branch office manager holds REALTOR<sup>®</sup> membership, the term REALTOR<sup>®</sup> or REALTORS<sup>®</sup> may not be used in any reference to those additional places of business.

**Section 4.** Institute Affiliate Members shall not use the terms REALTOR<sup>®</sup> or REALTORS<sup>®</sup> or the imprint of the emblem seal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>.

## **ARTICLE IX - STATE AND NATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

**Section 1.** The Western Upstate Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> shall be a Member of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> and the South Carolina Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup>. By reason of the Association's Membership, each REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member of the Member Association shall be entitled to membership in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> and the South Carolina Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> without further payment of dues. The Association shall continue as a Member of the State and National Associations, unless by a majority vote of all of its REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members, decision is made to withdraw, in which case the State and National Associations shall be notified at least one month in advance of the date designated for the termination of such membership.

**Section 2.** The Association recognizes the exclusive property rights of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> in the terms REALTOR<sup>®</sup> and REALTORS<sup>®</sup>. The Association shall discontinue use of the terms in any form in its name, upon ceasing to be a Member of the National Association, or upon a determination by the Board of Directors of the National Association that it has violated the conditions imposed upon the terms.

**Section 3.** The Association adopts the Code of Ethics of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> and agrees to enforce the Code among its REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members. The Association and all of its Members agree to abide by the Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, and policies of the National Association and the South Carolina Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup>.

## **ARTICLE X - DUES AND ASSESSMENTS**

**Section 1. Application Fee.** The Board of Directors may adopt an application fee for REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Membership in a reasonable amount, not exceeding three (3) times the amount of the annual dues for REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Membership, which shall be required to accompany each application for REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Membership, and which shall become the property of the Association upon final approval of the application. This application fee shall also be required to accompany each application for reinstatement of membership.

**Section 2. Dues.** The annual dues of Members shall be as follows:

(a) REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members. The annual dues of each Designated REALTOR<sup>®</sup> shall be (determined each year) plus and additional amount to be established annually by the Board of Directors times the number of real estate salespersons and licensed or certified appraisers who (1) are employed by or affiliated as independent contractors, or who are otherwise directly or indirectly licensed with such REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member, and (2) are not REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members of any Association in the State or a State contiguous thereto or Institute Affiliate Members of an Association. In calculating the dues payable to the Association by a Designated REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member, non-member licensees as defined in Section 2 (a)(1) of this Article shall not be included in the computation of dues if the Designated REALTOR<sup>®</sup> has paid dues based on said non-member licensees in another Association in the State or a State Contiguous thereto, provided the Designated REALTOR<sup>®</sup> notifies the Association in writing of the identity of the Association to which dues have been remitted. In the case of a Designated REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member in a firm, partnership, or corporation whose business activity is substantially all commercial, any assessments for non-member licensees shall be limited to licensees affiliated with the Designated REALTOR<sup>®</sup> (as defined in (11) and (2) of this paragraph) in the office where the Designated REALTOR<sup>®</sup> holds membership, and any other offices of the firm located within the jurisdiction of this board.

(1) For the purpose of this Section, a REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member of a Member Association shall be held to be any Member who has a place or places of business within the State or a State Contiguous thereto and who, as a principal, partner, or corporate officer of a real estate firm, partnership or corporation, is actively engaged in the real estate profession as defined in Article III, Section 1, of the Constitution of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>. An individual shall be deemed to be licensed with a REALTOR<sup>®</sup> if the license of the individual is held by the REALTOR<sup>®</sup>, or by any broker who is licensed with the REALTOR<sup>®</sup>, or by any entity in which the REALTOR<sup>®</sup> has a direct or indirect ownership interest which is engaged in other aspects of the real estate business (except as provided for in Section 2 (a) (1) hereof) provided that such licensee is not otherwise included in the computation of dues payable by the principal, partner, or corporate officer, or branch office manager of the entity.

A REALTOR<sup>®</sup>, or BIC, with a direct or indirect ownership interest in an entity engaged exclusively in soliciting and/or referring clients and customers to the REALTOR<sup>®</sup> for consideration on a substantially exclusive basis shall annually file with the association on a form approved by the association a list of the licensees affiliated with that entity and shall certify that all of the licensees affiliated with the entity are solely engaged in referring clients and customers

and are not engaged in listing, selling, leasing, managing, counseling or appraising real property. The individuals disclosed on such form shall not be deemed to be licensed with the REALTOR® filing the form for purposes of this Section and shall not be included in calculating the annual dues of the Designated REALTOR®.

Membership dues shall be prorated for any licensee included on a certification form submitted to the association who during the same calendar year applies for REALTOR® or REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® membership in the association. However, membership dues shall not be prorated if the licensee held REALTOR® or REALTOR-ASSOCIATE® membership during the preceding calendar year.

(b) The annual dues of each REALTOR® Member other than the Designated REALTOR® shall be such amount as established annually by the Board of Directors.

(c) Institute Affiliate Members. The annual dues of each Institute Affiliate Member shall be as established in Article II of the Bylaws of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

**Section 3. Dues Payable.** Dues for all Members shall be payable annually in advance on the first day of January. Dues shall be computed from the first day of the quarter in which a Member is notified of election and shall be prorated for the remainder of the year and shall be payable immediately upon notification of election to Membership. In the event a sales licensee or licensed or certified appraiser who holds REALTOR® Membership is dropped for nonpayment of Association dues, and the licensee or licensed or certified appraiser remains with the Designated REALTORS® firm, the dues obligation of the Designated REALTOR® (as set forth in Article X, Section 2 (a)) will be increased to reflect the addition of a non-member licensee. Dues shall be calculated from the first day of the current fiscal year and are payable within thirty (30) days of the notice of termination.

**Section 4. Nonpayment of Financial Obligations.** If dues, fees, fines, or other assessments, including amounts owed to the Association or the Association's Multiple Listing Service, are not paid within fifteen (15) days after the due date, the nonpaying Member is subject to suspension and/or a late penalty as may be determined by the Board of Directors from time to time, at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Thirty (30) days after due date, membership of the nonpaying Member shall automatically terminate unless within that time the amount due is paid. However, no action shall 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 of Directors. A former Member who has had his membership terminated for nonpayment of dues, fees, fines, or other assessments duly levied in accordance with provisions of these Bylaws or the provisions of other Rules and Regulations of the Association or any of its services, departments, divisions, or subsidiaries may apply for reinstatement in the manner prescribed for new applicants for membership, after making payment in full of all accounts due as of the date of termination.

**Section 5. Deposit.** Deposits and expenditures of funds shall be in accordance with policies established by the Board of Directors.

**Section 6. Expenditures.** The Board of Directors shall administer the day-to-day finances of the Association. The Association shall not incur any obligation in excess of Two Hundred Fifty

Dollars (\$250.00) over the available cash on hand without authorization by majority vote of REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members present at a meeting duly announced.

**Section 7.** Notice of Dues, Fees, Fines, Assessments, or Other Financial Obligations of Members. All dues, fees, fines, assessments, or other financial obligations to the Association or Association Multiple Listing Service shall be noticed to the delinquent Association Member in writing setting forth the amount owed and due date.

**Section 8.** The dues of REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members who are REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Emeriti (as recognized by the National Association), past Presidents of the National Association or recipients of the Distinguished Service Award shall be as determined by the Board of Directors.

## **ARTICLE XI - OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

### **Section 1. Officers.**

(a) The elected officers of the Association shall be a Board of Directors consisting of seven (7) REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members.

(b) The newly elected Association shall meet immediately after the annual meeting of the membership, for the purposes of organization or otherwise, and no notice of such meeting shall be necessary to the newly elected Directors in order legally to constitute the meeting; provided, a majority of the whole Association shall be present; or they meet at such place and time as shall be fixed by consent in writing of all the Directors. The Chairman of the Board will be elected by the Directors at this meeting.

**Section 2. Duties of Officers.** The duties of officers shall be such as their titles by general usage, would indicate and such as may be assigned to them by the Board of Directors from time to time.

**Section 3. Board of Directors/Term.** The governing body of the Association is the Board of Directors consisting of REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members of the Association. Directors shall be elected to serve for terms of one, two and three years respectfully, etc., except that at organization, one-third (1/3) of the elected Directors shall be elected for the terms of three years, or for such lesser terms as may be necessary to complete the first fiscal year. Therefore, as many Directors shall be elected each year as are required to fill vacancies. The immediate past Chairman of the Board shall also serve as an active Member of the Board of Directors for the year following his term as Chairman of the Board. At least five (5) different companies must be represented on the Board of Directors and no more than two (2) individuals from any one firm. A quorum of at least four (4) Members must be present at a Board of Directors meeting in order to conduct business.

### **Section 4. Election of Officers and Directors.**

(a) At least two months before the annual election, a Nominating Committee of five (5) REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Board with the approval of the Board of Directors, said Committee to be made up of the Immediate Past Chairman of the Board and four (4) REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members. The Nominating Committee shall select one candidate for

each place to be filled on the Board of Directors. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be mailed, telefaxed, or emailed to each REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member eligible to vote at least three (3) weeks preceding the election. Additional candidates for the positions to be filled may be placed in nomination by written nomination signed by two (2) REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members and delivered to the President, CEO of the Association at least two (2) weeks preceding the election. In the event such additional nominations are submitted, a report of the additional nominations shall be mailed to each REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Member eligible to vote at least one (1) week preceding the election.

(b) The election of Officers and Directors shall take place at the annual meeting. Election shall be by ballot and all votes shall be cast in person. The ballots shall contain the names of all candidates and the offices for which they are nominated.

(c) The Chairman of the Board, with the approval of the Board of Directors, shall appoint an Election Committee of three (3) REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members to conduct the election. In case of a tie vote, the issue shall be determined by lot.

**Section 5. Vacancies.** Vacancies among the Officers and Board of Directors shall be filled by a simple majority vote of the Board of Directors until the next annual election.

**Section 6. Removal of Officers or Directors.** In the event that an Officer or Director is deemed to be incapable of fulfilling the duties for which elected, but will not resign from office voluntarily, the Officer or Director may be removed from office under the following procedure:

(a) A petition requiring the removal of an Officer or Director and signed by not less than one-third (1/3) of the voting membership or a majority of all Directors shall be filed with the Chairman of the Board, or if the Chairman of the Board is the subject of the petition, with the next-ranking officer, and shall specifically set forth the reasons the individual is deemed disqualified from further service.

(b) Upon receipt of the petition, and not less than twenty (20) days or more than forty-five (45) days thereafter, a special meeting of the voting membership of the Association shall be held, and the sole business of the meeting shall be to consider the charge against the Officer or Director and to render a decision on such petition.

(c) The special meeting shall be noticed to all voting Members at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting and shall be conducted by the Chairman of the Board of the Association, unless the Chairman of the Board's continued service in office is being considered at the meeting. In such case, the next-ranking officer will conduct the meeting of the hearing by the Members. Provided a quorum is present, a three-fourths (3/4) vote of Members present and voting shall be required for removal from the office.

**Section 7. President, CEO.** The President, CEO shall keep a record of proceedings of all meetings of the Association, as well as of the Board of Directors, and all of the committee meetings; shall notify applicants for Membership of their election or rejection; keep roll of members; notify members when their dues are payable; issue notices of all meetings of the Association and shall perform all of the duties as prescribed by the Bylaws or by the offices and

keep all records and shall be responsible to the Board of Directors for them. The President, CEO shall advise the Board of Directors of all personnel changes.

## **ARTICLE XII - MEETINGS**

**Section 1. Annual Meetings.** The annual meeting of the Association shall be held during the fourth quarter of each year, the date, place and hour to be designated by the Board of Directors.

**Section 2. Meetings of Directors.** The Board of Directors shall designate a regular time and place of meetings. Absence from three consecutive regular meetings without an excuse deemed valid by the Board of Directors shall be construed as resignation.

**Section 3. Other Meetings.** Meetings of the Members or Board of Directors may be held at such other times as the Chairman of the Board, or in his absence or inability, the President, or the Board of Directors may determine, or upon the written request of at least ten percent (10%) of the Members eligible to vote.

**Section 4. Notice of Meetings.** Written notice shall be given by mail, telefax, or email to every Member entitled to participate in the meeting at least one week preceding all meetings. If a special meeting is called, it shall be accompanied by a statement of the purpose of the meeting.

**Section 5. Quorum.** The REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members of the Association in good standing present at a meeting duly announced shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

**Section 6. Electronic Transaction of Business.** To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Board of Directors or membership may conduct business by electronic means. (Adopted 1/05)

## **ARTICLE XIII - COMMITTEES**

**Section 1. Standing Committees.** The Chairman of the Board shall appoint from among the REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors, the following standing committees:

Equal Opportunity	Community Service
Grievance	Professional Standards
Legislative	

**Section 2. Special Committees.** The Chairman of the Board shall appoint, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors, special committees as deemed necessary.

**Section 3. Organization.** All Committees shall be of such size and shall have duties, functions and powers as assigned by the Chairman of the Board or the Board of Directors, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws.

**Section 4. Chairman of the Board.** The Chairman of the Board shall be an ex officio member of all standing committees and shall be notified of their meetings.

**Section 5.** Attendance by Telephone. Members of a committee may participate in any meeting through the use of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. Such participation shall be at the discretion of the Chairman of the Board and shall constitute presence at the meeting (Adopted 1/05)

#### **ARTICLE XIV - FISCAL AND ELECTIVE YEAR**

**Section 1.** The fiscal and elective year of the Association shall be from November 1 through October 31 of the following year.

#### **ARTICLE XV - RULES OF ORDER**

**Section 1.** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall be recognized as the authority governing the meetings of the Association, its Board of Directors, and committees, in all instances wherein its provisions do not conflict with these Bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE XVI - AMENDMENTS**

**Section 1.** These Bylaws may be amended by majority vote of the REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members present and qualified to vote at any meeting at which a quorum is present, provided the substance of such proposed amendment or amendments shall be plainly stated in the call for the meeting.

**Section 2.** Notice of all meetings at which amendments are to be considered shall be delivered by mail, telefax, or e-mail to REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Members eligible to vote at least one week prior to the meeting.

**Section 3.** Amendments to these Bylaws affecting the admission or qualification of the REALTOR<sup>®</sup> and Institute Affiliate Members, the use of the terms REALTOR<sup>®</sup> and REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, or any alteration in the territorial jurisdiction of the Association shall become effective upon their approval as authorized by the Board of Directors of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup>.

#### **ARTICLE XVII - DISSOLUTION**

**Section 1.** Upon the dissolution or winding up of the affairs of this Association, the Board of Directors, after providing for the payment of all obligations, shall distribute any remaining assets to the South Carolina Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, or, within its discretion, to any other non-profit, tax-exempt organization.

#### **ARTICLE XVIII - WESTERN UPSTATE MULTIPLE LISTING SERVICE**

**Section 1. Authority.** The Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> shall maintain for the use of its Members a Multiple Listing Service which shall be lawful corporation of the state of South Carolina, all the stock of which shall be owned by the Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup>.

**Section 2. Purpose.** A Multiple Listing Service is a means by which authorized Participants make blanket unilateral offers of compensation to other Participants (acting as subagents, buyer agents; by which cooperation among participants is enhanced; by which information is accumulated and disseminated to enable authorized Participants to prepare appraisals, analyses, and other valuations of real property for bona fide clients and customers; by which Participants engaging in real estate appraisal contribute to common databases; and is a facility for the orderly correlation and dissemination of listing information so participants may better serve their clients and the public. Entitlement to compensation is determined by the cooperating broker's performance as a procuring cause of the sale or lease.

**Section 3. Governing Documents.** The Board of Directors shall cause any Multiple Listing Service established by it pursuant to this Article to conform its Corporate Charter, Constitution, Bylaws, Rules, Regulations, and Policies, Practices, and Procedures at all times to the Constitution, Bylaws, Rules, Regulations, and Policies of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

**Section 4. Participation Defined.** Any REALTOR® of this or any other Association who is a principal, partner, corporate officer, or branch manager acting on behalf of a principal, without further qualification, except as otherwise stipulated in these bylaws, shall be eligible to participate in Multiple Listing upon agreeing in writing to conform to the rules and regulations thereof and to pay the costs incidental thereto. However, under no circumstances is any individual or firm, regardless of membership status, entitled to Multiple Listing Service "membership" or "participation" unless they hold a current, valid real estate broker's license and offer or accept compensation to and from other Participants or are licensed or certified by an appropriate state regulatory agency to engage in the appraisal of real property. Use of information developed by or published by an Association Multiple Listing Service is strictly limited to the activities authorized under a Participant's licensure(s) or certification and unauthorized uses are prohibited. Further, none of the foregoing is intended to convey "participation" or "membership" or any right of access to information developed or published by an Association Multiple Listing Service where access to such information is prohibited by law. (Amended 11/08)

Note: Mere possession of a broker's license is not sufficient to qualify for MLS participation. Rather, the requirement that an individual or firm 'offers or accepts cooperation and compensation' means that the Participant actively endeavors during the operation of its real estate business to list real property of the type listed on the MLS and/or to accept offers of cooperation and compensation made by listing brokers or agents in the MLS. "Actively" means on a continual and on-going basis during the operation of the Participant's real estate business. The "actively" requirement is not intended to preclude MLS participation by a Participant or potential Participant that operates a real estate business on a part time, seasonal, or similarly time-limited basis or that has its business interrupted by periods of relative inactivity occasioned by market conditions. Similarly, the requirement is not intended to deny MLS participation to a Participant or potential Participant who has not achieved a minimum number of transactions despite good faith efforts. Nor is it intended to permit an MLS to deny participation based on the level of service provided by the Participant as long as the level of service satisfies state law.

The key is that the Participant or potential Participant actively endeavors to make or accept offers of cooperation and compensation with respect to properties of the type that are listed on the MLS in which participation is sought. This requirement does not permit an MLS to deny participation to a Participant or potential Participant that operates a Virtual Office Website (“VOW”) (including a VOW that the Participant uses to refer customers to other Participant) if the Participant or potential Participant actively endeavors to make or accept offers of cooperation and compensation. An MLS may evaluate whether a Participant or potential Participant “actively endeavors during the operation of its real estate business” to “offer or accept cooperation and compensation” only if the MLS has a reasonable basis to believe that the participant or potential Participant is in fact not doing so. The membership requirement shall be applied on a nondiscriminatory manner to all Participants and potential Participants. (Adopted 11/08)

**Section 5. Subscribers.** Subscribers (or users) of the Multiple Listing Service include non-principal brokers, sales associates, and licensed and certified appraisers affiliated with participants.