

SAR Office Policy for Handling Ethics/Arbitration Inquiries

1. When an inquiry comes to the office from a member of the public regarding a complaint against a member, explain that there is a process through the Association for handling ethics complaints and certain monetary disputes involving our members.
2. Explain that not all real estate professionals are REALTORS® and if the people involved are not members of the local Association, the complaint needs to be filed at the association where the parties are members. If they are not REALTORS® at all, then SAR has no jurisdiction over them.
3. Explain the difference between Arbitration and Ethics.
 - (a) Arbitration normally involves a situation between two REALTORS®, usually a dispute over a commission.
 - (b) Ethics is for a non-monetary complaint for violations of the Code of Ethics.
 - (c) If the matter involves both ethics and arbitration complaints, then those have to be handled separately. Arbitration is done first.
4. Give the complaining party, whether the public or a member of our Association, the appropriate packet(s) containing the Guidelines for Filing, the Code of Ethics, and the relevant Complaint form.
5. There is no filing fee for ethics complaints; arbitration requests are \$200 (unless in the rare circumstance of an arbitration request by a member of the public – they are not charged anything to file).
6. If an ethics complaint or request for arbitration is sent to the office, immediately date stamp it as “received” and turn it over to the Executive Director for handling. All ethics and arbitration matters will be kept in a locked file cabinet.
7. Any information or documentation concerning a potential or ongoing ethics complaint or arbitration matter is strictly CONFIDENTIAL. Disclosure of anything to anyone at all, including but not limited to your friends or family, other members, the parties involved, or even the Board of Directors, may result in termination of employment.