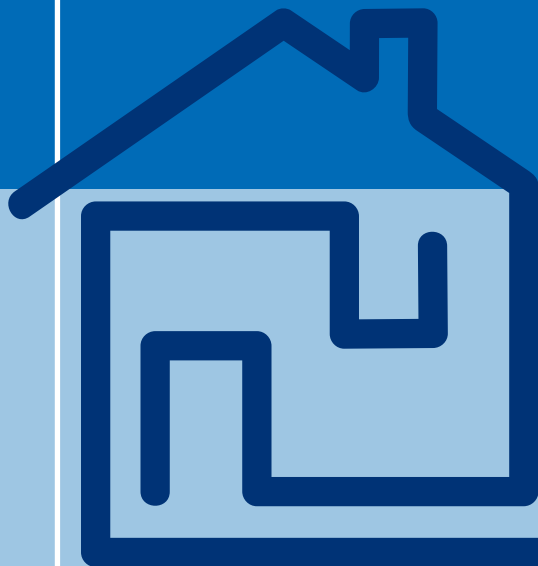


SAFETY GUIDE

A REALTOR® SAFETY KIT

*This Safety Guide is mirrored after NAR's REALTOR® Safety Program.
The purpose of this guide is to educate members about the potential dangers
faced on the job, so you are not only aware but also prepared to keep yourself
safe and reduce risks.*



IN MEMORIAM
OF
BEVERLY CARTER

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DEDICATION

When the committee started meeting, we knew the impact on REALTOR® Safety was previously set in motion by what happened to Beverly Carter. As such, we aim to continue keeping her memory and name alive through continuous conversations regarding the safety of all REALTORS® within the state of Arkansas.

The monumental aftermath with the passing of Beverly Carter jump started a renewed emphasis in REALTOR® Safety in Arkansas and across the United States.

What was challenging and compelling at times to comprehend were some of the experiences we learned from other agents across the state of Arkansas.

=

All from different backgrounds and demographics shared their encounters where safety met reality, as we worked on this guide, some of which are shared within this Safety Guide as REALTOR® testimonies on page 16.

=

Our hope with this Guide is for REALTORS® and their Brokers to always have a resource that they use as a guidebook for Safe Practices in all areas of their work.

The 2022 Arkansas REALTORS® Association Safety Committee would like to dedicate this document to the memory of Beverly Carter, as well as all the other agents, friends and families that have been impacted by situations that can and unfortunately do occur in the Real Estate business.

THINK SAFETY. ACT SAFELY

Dennis Burks
2022 ARA Safety Chair



ARKANSAS REALTORS® ASSOCIATION SAFETY PLEDGE

A commitment to keeping the ARA Safety Strategy, formally known as the *Beverly Carter Safety Best Practices*, in the forefront of our safety practices and thoughts.

SAFETY PLEDGE



I pledge to always keep the ARA Safety Strategy Pledge in forefront of my thoughts and practices and that safety will be my top priority each day.

I am aware that I am responsible for my own safety and partially for my clients' and the general public's safety.

I will not compromise this for money, time, or other reasons; my health and safety are priceless.

SAFETY GOALS

Our goal with this guide is to keep Safety Best Practices in the forefront of our minds as it is a topic that must be discussed regularly.

The hope behind this guide is to continuously encourage REALTORS® and their teams to educate each other by sharing this information on the importance of REALTOR® Safety.

HELPFUL GUIDELINES



1 The ARA Safety Pledge is located in this document titled as Safety Pledge. For your office to meet this requirement we ask that you share this with all of your agents and support staff on a periodic basis and encourage your staff to take the ARA Safety Pledge. There are no minimum requirements for the number of people who take the pledge. You, as a Broker - Owner, are encouraging agents to review and take the pledge.

2 The intent of this requirement is to have some type of safety awareness tip or discussion every time you have a meeting or get-together. This can be a two-sentence tip of the week or hand out one of the ARA Safety Checklists. This is not meant to be a long discussion of safety, albeit, we encourage safety discussions to help protect our REALTOR® members.

- Statistics tell us ongoing but short discussions of safety awareness keep overall safety in the forefront of our thoughts.

- In this guide you will find NAR Safety Tips. You can also find these tips and links to safety tips on NAR's website. This is a great resource to use as an ongoing basis.

3 This is a great guide to share with your staff for ongoing reference and reinforcement. This guide can be used to point out a safety awareness topic at your weekly/periodic sales meeting.

HELPFUL GUIDELINES



4 The ARA NAR Safety Videos cover all aspects of safety and safety awareness for REALTORS®, Buyers, Sellers and the general public. The videos can be found on NAR's Safety page, or as a link on this guides NAR Resource page. This requirement requires you to show all of the videos at least once per year over the next twelve months to your REALTORS®.

5 We strongly encourage your agents to have both a virtual and live Buddy. This requirement for the program also instructs your office to implement and practice an office distress signal process. For additional information please contact one of the ARA Safety Task Force Members.

6 The ARA Safety Quiz is to be utilized once per year with your REALTORS®. There are no minimum test scores and the results are not monitored by the Safety Task Force.

- For your convenience, this quiz can be found within this guide, on the NAR REALTOR® Safety Quiz page, or as a link on this guide's NAR Resource page.

7 The ARA and NAR websites and social media platforms have a tremendous amount of Safety and Safety Awareness information. We encourage you to visit their page often.

8 The ARA Safety Task Force asks for the contact information of the Office Safety Leader from each office. The goal is to have a point person to receive updated safety information from the Safety Task Force.

NAR Safety Quiz Answers

1. A 5. B 9. D 13. C
2. D 6. B 10. C
3. C 7. A 11. D
4. B 8. D 12. C

*In Memoriam of Beverly Carter | 2022
Arkansas REALTORS® Association*

ARA SAFETY QUIZ



- 1. When you're showing a client around a property, how should you proceed?**
 - a) Encourage the client to walk in front of you as you move through the property.
 - b) Lead the client into each room.
 - c) Stay put and send the client on a self-guided tour.
 - d) None of the above.

- 2. What is the best way to meet a new client for the first time?**
 - a) At the property you're showing. You've checked it out and know it's safe.
 - b) At their residence. This way, you know where they live.
 - c) At your residence. Your home is a safe place!
 - d) In your office, where you can introduce them to your colleagues.

- 3. What is a distress code?**
 - a) An alarm button you can use to send a signal to your local police department.
 - b) A personal identification number you dial into your cell phone.
 - c) A word or phrase you can say that indicates you need help, but does not tip off the person you are with.
 - d) A word or phrase you say to the person who is threatening you.

- 4. What time during an open house should you be most on guard?**
 - a) At the beginning, when people start arriving.
 - b) At the end, when one or two people may linger in the house.
 - c) The times when you are alone.
 - d) Around midday, when most people are busy with lunch.

- 5. Where should you park your car when showing a property?**
 - a) In the driveway, if possible, so it is close to the exit.
 - b) At the curb, so you can't get blocked in.
 - c) At least a half a block away, so no one can identify which car is yours.
 - d) You shouldn't drive your own car to a showing. Ride with the client!

*In Memoriam of Beverly Carter | 2022
Arkansas REALTORS® Association*

ARA SAFETY QUIZ



6. What should you do when you're working in the office alone?

- a) Stay in the back, out of sight.
- b) Ensure that all outside doors and windows are locked.
- c) Call the police and ask them to have a squad car drive by.
- d) You should never work in the office alone.

7. What should you carry with you at all times when you're alone in the office?

- a) Your cell phone.
- b) Your wallet.
- c) A piece of identification.
- d) All of the above.

8. How can you protect your office from an electrical fire?

- a) Don't overload an outlet with too many plugs.
- b) Replace or dispose of frayed electrical cords.
- c) Have a fire inspector examine your office.
- d) Both a and b.

9. Which of the following can protect you from identity theft?

- a) When shopping online, check the site for a URL that begins with https://
- b) When shopping online, check the bottom of the browser window for a closed padlock symbol.
- c) Create computer passwords that are at least 8 characters long and include letters, numbers, and special characters.
- d) All of the above.

10. How can you protect against theft during a home showing?

- a) Treat every potential buyer like an escaped convict.
- b) Be especially wary of men who come to view the home alone.
- c) Remind sellers to put all valuables in a safe place.
- d) All of the above.

*In Memoriam of Beverly Carter | 2022
Arkansas REALTORS® Association*

ARA SAFETY QUIZ



11. What should you do when holding an open house?

- a) Inform a neighbor that I'll be showing the house and ask if he or she would keep an eye and ear open for anything out of the ordinary.
- b) Check all rooms before anyone arrives and determine several "escape" routes. Make sure deadbolt locks are unlocked to facilitate a faster escape.
- c) Don't assume that everyone has left the premises at the end of the day. Check all rooms and the backyard prior to locking the doors, and be prepared to defend myself.
- d) All of the above.

12. The 10-second rule is a smart and quick way to keep safety at the forefront throughout the day. How does it work?

- a) Take 10 seconds to review self-defense strategies right before getting out of the car.
- b) Breathe deeply and count backwards from 10 to gain composure before meeting new people.
- c) Upon arriving at each destination, take 10 seconds to evaluate your surroundings and check for anything that's out of the ordinary.
- d) All of the above.

13. Which of the following is NOT one of the Federal Trade Commission's five key principles to a sound data security program?

- a) Take Stock: Know what personal information you have in your files and on your computers.
- b) Scale Down: Keep only what you need for your business.
- c) Lock It: Protect the information that you keep.
- d) Copy It: Keep electronic records of all files.
- e) Pitch It: Properly dispose of what you no longer need.
- f) Plan Ahead: Create a plan to respond to security incidents.

*In Memoriam of Beverly Carter | 2022
Arkansas REALTORS® Association*

BECOMING CERTIFIED



In memory of our colleague Beverly Carter, the Arkansas REALTORS® Association Safety Task Force and the Carter Family challenge each office to keep safety in the forefront of Real Estate business at all times.

We encourage every real estate company and office to become a Certified ARA Safety Strategist.

To **certify** as an ARA Safety Strategist each Broker, Owner, Office must do the following:

- Encourage their entire office to take the ARA Safety Strategy Pledge.
- Discuss some type of safety/safety awareness topic at every sales meeting.
- Utilize the ARA Safety Best Practice Guidelines (i.e. client intake form and photo id).
- View all of the ARA NAR Safety Videos once per year.
- Implement your Office Buddy System and Distress Signal/Code Name process.
- Entire office take ARA Annual Safety Quiz.
- Encourage Agents to visit the ARA Safety Webpage.
- Identify an Office Safety Leader.
- Submit Certification Application to ARA Safety Committee per year.

Broker Signature _____

Office Name _____ Date: _____

By submitting this application, I **certify** my office as an ARA Safety Strategy Office.

BECOMING RE-CERTIFIED



In memory of our colleague Beverly Carter, the Arkansas REALTORS® Association Safety Task Force and the Carter Family challenge each office to keep safety in the forefront of Real Estate business at all times.

We encourage every real estate company and office to become a Certified ARA Safety Strategist.

To **re-certify** as an ARA Safety Strategist each Broker, Owner, Office must do the following:

-
-
- Encourage their entire office to take the ARA Safety Strategy Pledge.
 - Discuss some type of safety/safety awareness topic at every sales meeting.
 - Utilize the ARA Safety Best Practice Guidelines (i.e. client intake form and photo id).
 - View all of the ARA NAR Safety Videos once per year.
 - Implement your Office Buddy System and Distress Signal/Code Name process.
 - Entire office take ARA Annual Safety Quiz.
 - Encourage Agents to visit the ARA Safety webpage.
 - Identify an Office Safety Leader.
 - Submit Re-Certification Application to ARA Safety Committee per year.

Broker Signature _____

Office Name _____ Date: _____

By submitting this application, I **re-certify** my office as an ARA Safety Strategy Office.



SAFETY FIRST

AS REALTORS® YOUR PROFESSION IS VIGOROUS, SO, BY STAYING ALERT AND MAKING YOURSELF AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS, YOU ARE PUTTING YOUR SAFETY FIRST!



BUDDY SYSTEM

- Create and share a distress code with your family, friends, colleagues and office.
- Know who to call if the time comes.
- Call when you feel uneasy or need help at an open house.
- Have someone else with you or don't show the property.
- Keep track of colleagues. Consider an agent check-out board at your office, listing your name, destination, customer name, date and expected return time.



GUT FEELING

- Be on guard at all times during a showing. Do not text or web-surf during open houses.
- Call when you feel uneasy or need help at an open house.
- Don't assume everyone has left the premises. Check all the rooms and backyard prior to locking doors.
- Never walk in an unfamiliar area while texting or looking down.



HAVE A PLAN

- Drive through the neighborhood prior to a private showing or open house and be on the lookout for safety concerns.
- When showing a home, do not become blocked in.
- Always have your phone on you and fully charged. Carry a portable charger on the go.
- Prepare your vehicle for emergencies, especially when traveling long distances.
- Make sure to add an office safe word to share with colleagues and those you trust.

SAFETY FORUMS



PHONE

- Always have your phone on and with you, and make sure the battery is fully charged.
- Have emergency phone numbers programmed on speed dial.
- Don't click links from unknown numbers.
- Share your location with those you trust before a showing or meeting a new client.



EMAIL

- Be aware of suspicious links in emails from people you do not know. Never click on them.
- Never purchase gift cards or other products requested through email without confirming with that person first.
- If personal information falls into the wrong hands, it can lead to fraud, or similar harm.
- Always create smart passwords.
- Have a written data security program in place and a policy that addresses what to do in the event of a security breach.



SOCIAL MEDIA

- Social platforms are great marketing tools when used properly. However this usage has an impact on your safety. Carefully consider each item you share and be aware that old posts, even if they've been deleted, may be copied or saved.
- Consider having two accounts, one business and one personal to better control access to your personal information.



PHOTOS

- Always remember photos online are out there forever, regardless of deleting.
- When listing a house, be sure to not have any photos of the family in your marketing.

SAFE OPEN HOUSE PROTOCOLS

The 10-Second Rule



SAFETY IN 10 SECONDS

- 2** Seconds when you arrive at your destination. Is there any questionable activity in the area? Are you parked in a well-lit, visible location? Can you be blocked in the driveway by a prospect's vehicle?
- 2** Seconds after you step out of your car. Are there suspicious people around? Do you know exactly where you're going?
- 2** Seconds as you walk towards your destination. Are people coming and going or is the area unusually quiet? Look for obstacles or hiding places in the parking lot or along the street. Is anyone loitering nearby?
- 2** Seconds at the door. Do you have an uneasy feeling as you're walking in? Is someone following you?
- 2** Seconds as soon as you enter your destination. Does anything seem out of place? Is anyone present who shouldn't be there or who isn't expected?

10 Tips for Holding a Safe Open House in Arkansas

- 1** Always try to have at least one other person working with you at the open house.
- 2** Check your cell phone's strength and signal prior to the open house. Have emergency numbers programmed on speed dial.
- 3** Upon entering a house for the first time, check all rooms and determine several "escape" routes. Make sure all deadbolt locks are unlocked to facilitate a faster escape.
- 4** Make sure that if you were to escape by the back door, you could escape from the backyard. Frequently, high fences surround yards that contain swimming pools or hot tubs.
- 5** Have all open house visitors sign in. Take down full name, address, phone number, email and take a picture of the individual.
- 6** When showing the house, always walk behind the prospect. Do not lead them, but direct and gesture for them to go ahead of you.
- 7** Avoid attics, basements, and getting trapped in small rooms.
- 8** Notify someone in your office, your answering service, a friend or a relative that you will be calling in every hour on the hour.
- 9** Inform a neighbor that you will be showing the house and ask if he or she would keep an eye or ear open for anything out of the ordinary.
- 10** Don't assume that everyone has left the premises at the end of an open house. Check all of the rooms and the backyard prior to locking the doors.

**Share knowledge, awareness,
and empowerment with your
members year-round**



THINK
SAFETY
ACT
SAFELY

Keep a strong focus on REALTOR® Safety throughout the year when you share these safety tips with your members every week.

You can post them on your website, add them to your newsletters, or e-mail them directly to your members.

Feel free to re-arrange the tips if you like. Regardless of when you send them, these weekly tips will help remind our members of the tenets of REALTOR® Safety: knowledge, awareness, and empowerment.

All tips are taken from the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS'® REALTOR® Safety Resource Kit. Direct our members to your own Association website or to NAR's safety web pages at www.REALTOR.org/Safety for more information on the important topic of REALTOR® safety.

Tip #1
Keep it light

Show properties before dark. If you are going to be working after hours, advise your associate or first-line supervisor of your schedule. If you must show a property after dark, turn on all lights as you go through, and don't lower any shades or draw curtains or blinds.

Tip #2
Checking in

When you have a new client, ask him/her to stop by your office and complete a Prospect Identification Form (Find a copy online at www.REALTOR.org/Safety). Also, photocopy their driver's license and retain this information at your office. Be certain to properly discard this personal information when you no longer need it.

Tip #3
Don't be too public

Limit the amount of personal information you share.
-Consider advertising without using your photograph, home phone number and/or home address in the newspaper or on business cards.
-Don't use your full name with middle name or initial.
-Use your office address or list no address at all. Giving out too much of the wrong information can make you a target.

Tip #4
Touch base

Always let someone know where you are going and when you will be back; leave the name and phone number of the client you are meeting and schedule a time for your office to call you to check in.

Tip #5
Open house: it ain't over till it's over

Don't assume that everyone has left the premises at the end of an open house. Check all of the rooms and the backyard prior to locking the doors.
-Be prepared to defend yourself, if necessary.

TIPS

Share knowledge, awareness,
and empowerment with your
members year-round

THINK
SAFETY
ACT
SAFELY

Tip #6 **Stranger danger**

Tell your clients not to show their home by themselves. Alert them that not all agents, buyers and sellers are who they say they are. Predators come in all shapes and sizes. We tell our children not to talk to strangers. So, tell your sellers not to talk to other agents or buyers, and to refer all inquiries to you.

Tip #7 **Sturdy doors are key to home safety**

Make sure that all your home's doors to the outside are metal or solid, 1 3/4" hardwood, and have good, sturdy locks.

Tip #8 **Block identity theft**

Contact the fraud department of any of the three consumer reporting companies— Equifax®, ExperianSM and Trans Union®—to place a fraud alert on your credit report.

-The fraud alert automatically lets credit card companies and other creditors know they must contact you before opening any new accounts or making any changes to your existing accounts.

Tip #9 **Keep track of colleagues**

Have a check-out employee board at your office, listing your name, destination, customer name, date and expected return time.

Tip #10 **Wear your REALTOR® ID**

Always wear visible company identification such as a badge. It is also best to drive a vehicle clearly marked with your company name. These will be invaluable for identification if you need to get assistance.

For more Safety Tips, visit our NAR Resource page located on page 17 of this guide.

Behind every name is a shared survivor experience that exists with REALTORS® and their safety across the state of Arkansas.

We encourage all REALTORS® to share their testimonies with one another to ensure the continued safety of REALTORS®.



SPEAKING OUT

If something deep inside of you says something is not right about a person or situation, trust it.

Explore here to learn more about REALTORS® and their experiences in REALTOR® Safety.

To learn more about these testimonies visit the ARA website.

*"I walked into a vacant listing, to show my clients, when I noticed that there were squatters in the back of the house. I got my clients out of the house quickly and called the listing agent to inform them that squatters were in the house."
-Beverly Palmer*

*"I've no doubt that I was targeted. This wasn't someone with a criminal history. Doing a background isn't a "one and done" box to check. Go with your gut."
-Rachel Mundy*

*"I met with an older man for a listing appointment, everything was going well as we walked through the house. When we sat down to discuss listing details on the house the man tried to kiss me. I quickly left, and called the police who said they were glad I called and to always report it!"
- Nancy Burks*

*"I was walking through my listing when my sellers family member and his friends cornered me in the back of the house and threatened me physically if I did not lower the commission on the listing that was under contract. Fortunately, another agent was outside in the car waiting on me and I was able to get out of there."
- Mark Russell Williams*

*"There were no words to express, at the time, what it was like to be Beverly Carter's Broker and best friend."
-Brenda Rhodes*

Below are links to NAR safety tips and best practices for REALTORS® to keep you safe on the job.



NAR
HELPFUL
RESOURCES

Safety Presentations:

NAR makes it easy for you to share the message of REALTOR® Safety with members.
<https://www.nar.realtor/safety/safety-presentations>

Pivot in Place:

Breanne Gingerich, NAR Marketing Manager and Staff Executive to the Real Estate Safety Advisory Committee, shares lifesaving tips for REALTORS®.
<https://www.nar.realtor/videos/pivot-in-place/realtor-safety>

Safety Tips (pdf):

Share knowledge, awareness, and empowerment with your members year-round
<https://cdn.nar.realtor/sites/default/files/documents/Safety-Program-56-Tips-English.pdf>

REALTOR® Safety Tips From NAR

<https://www.nar.realtor/safety/56-safety-tips-for-realtors>

REALTOR® Safety Quiz NAR

<https://www.nar.realtor/quizzes/realtor-safety-quiz>

REALTOR® Safety Videos From NAR

<https://www.nar.realtor/safety/safety-videos>

REALTOR® Safety Pledge From NAR

<https://www.nar.realtor/safety/pledge>

For more on-the-go daily tips, check out ARA's Facebook page and NAR's Instagram or Facebook page.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT



The *2022 Arkansas REALTORS® Association Safety Committee* would like to thank all of the REALTORS® who had a part in the creation of the initial REALTORS® Safety Guide and the newest 2022 Safety Guide:
A REALTORS® Safety Kit.

With a SPECIAL thanks to ARA Director of Communications - Megan Anthony, REALTOR® Safety Chair - Dennis Burks, and subcommittee members: Cindi Golden-Moore, Jessie Johnson and Rachel Mundy without whom this new guide would not have been possible.