



TEXAS REAL ESTATE COMMISSION

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PRESS RELEASE

TEXAS REAL ESTATE COMMISSION TO MEET ON LEGISLATIVE ISSUES; INTERNET ADVERTISING; AND PROPOSED RULE CHANGES

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During its upcoming meeting scheduled for Monday, September 14, the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC) will discuss and consider proposed amendments to the Texas Real Estate License Act for introduction during the next session of the legislature in January, 1999. Items for consideration are based on the agency's Strategic Plan that was developed with the help and input of interested constituents and organizations earlier this year.

Eight items are planned for review to determine what should be included in TREC's legislative program. In the area of consumer protection, proposals have been offered to increase real estate inspection recovery fund limits; eliminate bankruptcy restrictions on payment from recovery funds; and establish a more timely and equitable assessment of fees that are allocated to the recovery funds for real estate and real estate inspection.

Education related initiatives include authorizing TREC to modify core course content; increase real estate inspectors' mandatory continuing education (MCE) requirements; modify salesperson education requirements; and increase transcript evaluation fees.

A suggested new enforcement provision is the eighth potential legislative item. It would allow TREC to initiate complaints against licensees if they fail to meet MCE requirements during a 60-day grace period following a renewal of their active real estate license.

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This enforcement proposal coincides with possible final action by the Commission on Monday to allow active licensees who have not completed their MCE hours to renew their licenses without interruption. Under the rule change, these licensees would be required to pay an additional \$200 fee and meet all MCE requirements by the end of a 60-day grace period.

Commissioners will be receiving a briefing on issues surrounding real estate advertising over the Internet. During their July meeting, TREC staff was directed to collect and review information concerning policy options for enforcement of regulations applicable to advertising over the Internet, through cable outlets, by e-mail, and by other alternative electronic means. A staff update concerning information received to date will be presented. TREC is also seeking public comments on this issue, and may consider specific policy recommendations during the Commission's next meeting in October.

A remaining agenda item pertains to TREC's ongoing rule review process. Possible action is planned to readopt, amend, or repeal rules governing practice and procedures relating primarily to contested cases or rule making proceedings. This is part of the comprehensive review process required by the Legislature for all state agencies to determine whether their current rules remain valid, are in need of revision, or are no longer warranted.

Discussion is also planned on rules slated for review and consideration in the near future regarding general administration, professional agreements, and standard contract forms.

The Commission meeting will begin at 9:00 AM on Monday, September 14th, in Conference Room #235 of the Texas Real Estate Commission Headquarters; 1101 Camino La Costa, in Austin.