Q. What types of consumer complaints should be reported to the Real Estate Commission?
A. Buyers, sellers, landlords, tenants and other persons involved in real estate transactions who believe that they have been defrauded or victimized by the improper or incompetent acts of a real estate broker or a person acting as a real estate broker should report their complaints to the Commission’s Regulatory Affairs Division.

Q. What happens when a complaint is filed with the Real Estate Commission?
A. Persons who wish to file complaints against real estate brokers (including those associated with time share projects) may file a complaint at the Commission’s website, www.ncrec.gov.

Complaints are reviewed by the Commission’s regulatory staff and, if appropriate, an investigation or other inquiry is conducted.

If following an investigation or other inquiry, it is determined that there appears to be sufficient proof ("probable cause") that the broker has violated the Real Estate License Law or the Commission’s rules, and that discipline may be warranted, a hearing is ordered. The Commission’s hearings are conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, NCGBS Chapter 150B. During the hearing, the Commission receives the sworn testimony of witnesses and affords the broker the opportunity to answer the charges and present evidence in his or her defense. The broker may be represented by an attorney; and a staff attorney represents the Commission.

If, based upon the evidence, the Commission finds that the broker has violated the Real Estate License Law or Commission rules and that discipline is warranted, it can either (a) reprimand the broker; (b) suspend the broker’s real estate license for a definite period of time; (c) revoke the broker’s license; or (d) in the case of time share transactions, fine the time share project’s developer. [Note: Decisions of the Commission may be appealed by licensees through the court system.]

Q. Can the Real Estate Commission assist persons whose funds have been fraudulently taken by a real estate broker?
A. Persons who give down payments, earnest money deposits and other trust monies to licensed real estate brokers to fulfill promises, reimburse money, or perform other acts. Persons who feel that money is owed to them in real estate transactions, including sales and rental management.

The Commission also registers and regulates sales activities of time share projects, where ownership in a single living unit (usually a resort condominium) is shared by many persons, and regulates brokers who act as time share agents.

In addition, the Commission disseminates information of interest to brokers and consumers about residential and commercial real estate transactions, including sales and rental management.

The Commission should not be confused with NC REALTORS®, including its local and regional boards and associations, a private trade organization whose members are known as “REALTORS.”

Q. Can the Real Estate Commission give consumers legal advice or help them settle disputes with real estate brokers?
A. No. The Commission cannot enforce contracts or require real estate brokers to fulfill promises, reimburse money, or perform other acts. Persons who feel that money is owed to them in a real estate transaction or that a sales contract, lease, or other real estate contract has been breached should consult their private attorney for advice and assistance.
EDUCATION AND LICENSING DIVISION

Function:
1. Administering and monitoring precertification and postlicensure education and continuing education programs.
2. Processing applications for real estate licenses.
3. Administering real estate license exam administration program.
5. Overseeing annual license renewal.
6. Teaching Broker-in-Charge courses.

REGULATORY AFFAIRS

Function:
1. Conducting inquiries and investigations of consumer and other complaints against real estate brokers and time share projects.
2. Examining trust accounts of real estate brokers.
3. Prosecuting charges against licensees at hearings before the Real Estate Commission.
4. Providing legal counsel to the Real Estate Commission.
5. Coordinating the rulemaking process.
6. Registering time share projects and regulating time share sales.
7. Teaching Trust Account and Issues and Answers courses.
8. Providing information to licensees and consumers concerning the Real Estate License Law and Commission rules.

WEBSITE

The Commission website, www.ncrec.gov, provides information for real estate brokers, consumers and applicants for licensure. It includes the following sections:

- Home: provides links to those areas of the site most frequently accessed: License Law/rules, broker login pages, and firm search.
- Licensing: FAQs, broker and firm login, apply for a license, request application booklet, reissue a license, certification, broker searches.
- Education: FAQs, schools, course registration, continuing education, precertification, postlicensure.
- Publications: Real Estate Bulletin archives, publication order forms, broker education topics, property management resources.

- Resources: annual report, blog, FAQs, License Law/Rules, military resources, trust accounts, video library.
- Consumers: FAQs, complaint form, License Law/Rules, publications, video library, broker search.
- Forms: application, consumer, licensee, education, school, dispute, trust account monies, time share registration, publications, program presenter.
- About Us: Commission members, mission and goals, meeting schedule and news, and employment opportunities, accessibility, contact info.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Main: 919/719-9180 • Regulatory Affairs: 919/719-9880
You will receive more immediate service if you use this directory when calling the Commission. If the automated telephone attendant answers your call, you may access the section or division shown in the “Access Code” column by entering the number shown parenthetically ( ).

Subject Access Codes
- Broker license application, qualifications, examination, reinstatement...License Services (1)
- Firm licensing and limited nonresident commercial licenses...License Services (2)
- License status, renewal, education requirements, or to update your record...License Services (3)
- Complaints and legal matters...
- Consumer complaints/inquiries, pending cases/hearings, audits/investigations...Regulatory Affairs (4)
- Real Estate Instructors, School/Sponsors...Education and Licensing (5)
- Accounting...Executive Division (6)
- Administration and personnel matters...Administration (7)
- Other matters...

Email Addresses – Divisions/Sections
- Executive...exec@ncrec.gov
- Administration...admin@ncrec.gov
- Education & Licensing...edc@ncrec.gov
- Regulatory Affairs...RA@ncrec.gov
- License Services...license@ncrec.gov
- Publications...publications@ncrec.gov
- Website...www.ncrec.gov

* The Real Estate Commission is not authorized to give legal advice or answer questions on legal subjects other than the North Carolina Real Estate License Law or rules promulgated by the Real Estate Commission.