

C. Designated Agency:

In some real estate transactions, the real estate agent representing the buyer and the real estate agent representing the seller both work for the same broker or brokerage firm. In such a transaction, the broker may allow each agent to exclusively represent their respective clients. This type of brokerage relationship is known as designated agency.

In a designated agency transaction, the designated agent for the buyer owes the same duties to the buyer as if the agent was acting only as a buyer's agent. Similarly, the designated agent for the seller owes the same duties to the seller as if the agent was acting only as the seller's agent. With designated agency, each designated agent is prohibited from disclosing to anyone other than his or her broker any information requested to be kept confidential by the client unless the information is otherwise required to be disclosed by law. Therefore, designated agents may not disclose such confidential information to other agents in the company. The broker is also prohibited from revealing any confidential information he or she has received from one designated agent to the other designated agent, unless the information is otherwise required to be disclosed by law. Confidential information is defined as any information that could harm the client's negotiating position which information the client has not consented to be disclosed. In Georgia, designated agency is defined by state statute not to be dual agency.

D. Dual Agency:

Georgia law allows both parties to agree to have one agent or broker represent them in a real estate transaction at the same time. In other words, the agent or broker has a client relationship with all parties to the transaction without acting in a designated agency capacity. In these situations, neither party is exclusively represented by a designated real estate agent. This type of brokerage relationship is called "dual agency".

Georgia law allows real estate brokers to act as dual agents if they first get the written consent of both parties. The written consent must contain the following:

1. a description of the types of transactions in which the licensee will serve as a dual agent;
2. a statement that as a dual agent, the licensee represents two clients whose interests could be different or even adverse;
3. a statement that the dual agent will disclose all adverse material facts regarding the transaction known to the dual agent to all parties to the transaction except for information that is made confidential by request of another client and that is not allowed or required by law to be disclosed;
4. a statement that the licensee will disclose to each client in the transaction the nature of any material relationship the licensee or his or her broker have with other clients in the transaction other than incidental to the transaction;
5. a statement that the client does not have to consent to the dual agency; and
6. a statement that the client's consent has been given voluntarily and that the client has read and understood the brokerage engagement agreement;

This special consent is required because of the potential for conflicts of interest in dual agency transactions.

E. Subagency:

Subagency occurs when one real estate broker is appointed by another real estate broker as a subagent to assist the broker in performing its duties. In a typical subagency transaction, a listing broker practicing subagency might appoint the broker working with the buyer as his or her subagent. The broker acting as the subagent would work with the buyer but would represent the seller. The buyer then was the customer of the broker acting as a subagent, but the seller would be his or her client. Subagency relationships between real estate brokers in Georgia, while once the norm, are much less common today.

V. Broker-Customer Relationships:

A. Transaction Brokerage:

A transaction brokerage relationship is one in which a real estate broker or brokers assists both parties in a real estate transaction but does not enter into a client relationship with, nor represents, either party. In a transaction brokerage relationship, the broker treats both parties as customers and can only perform ministerial acts for either party, including the following:

1. identifying property;
2. providing real estate statistics and information of property;
3. providing preprinted real estate form contracts;
4. acting as a scribe in the preparation of form contracts;
5. locating relevant professionals, such as architects, engineers, surveyors, inspectors, lenders, insurance agents, and attorneys; and
6. identifying facilities such as schools, shopping centers, and places of worship.

B. Brokers May Help Parties Other Than Their Clients:

Brokers who represent one party in a real estate transaction as a client can still help the other party in the transaction by performing ministerial duties for the other party (of the type described under transaction brokerage section). When a real estate broker works with a party as a customer or client, the broker may not knowingly give the party false information.

VI. Always Choose a REALTOR®:

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