



# MEMBERSHIP DUES FAQ

**Q: How does a Franchisor's change in policy about REALTOR® membership impact an individual company's decision to join?**

**A:** We know of no company under a franchise agreement that prohibits their licensees from joining an association of REALTORS®. Therefore, any brokerage company and affiliated licensees may choose to join a local association of REALTORS®, which includes C.A.R. and NAR.

**Q: Some brokers or franchisors are no longer requiring their brokers and salespersons to join NAR. Can brokers and salespersons become members of only the state and/or local association?**

**A:** In most cases, no. Real estate licensees join at the local association level. State and national association memberships are not available directly unless there is no local association available to the applicant. The local association must pay both the state and national associations based on their membership size. Likewise, the brokers must pay membership dues based on the size of their brokerage but get a credit if the salesperson joins directly. Salespersons may not join directly without their designated broker joining.

**Q: Can licensees buy the member benefits they want without joining C.A.R.?**

**A:** Very few member benefits are available for sale to nonmembers. For example, the Legal Hotline is not available for purchase to nonmembers.

Nonmembers cannot purchase nor have access to the following member benefits: zipVault, ePubs, MLS Connect, Authentisign or Digital Ink (digital signatures), Record Connect (coming in 2024), OfferPlace, iMessage, zipMobile, multiple libraries such as Finance Helpline, or C.A.R. sample legal letters.

Nonmembers (licensees) can purchase the zipForm nonmember product for \$1,499, but it is just the basic zipForm product, which only includes zipTMS, desktop and C.A.R. forms.

For an additional fee, nonmembers can purchase a few add-on products, such as the distressed property library, foreclosure library and epub.

More information about zipForm member benefits can be found [here](#). A guide to additional member benefits is located [here](#).

**Q:** Since C.A.R. and REBS have agreements to fully license forms to some brokerages and vendors, does C.A.R./REBS license forms to Redfin, Anywhere franchisees, and/or RE/Max?

**A:** No. C.A.R. licenses its forms library to brokers and vendors for use by members only.

**Q:** Can California licensees become MLS-only members?

**A:** Yes. Since 1976, associations have sold MLS membership to both members and nonmember real estate licensees due to a California judicial ruling.

**Q:** If a brokerage leaves NAR, are they still subject to the MLS Clear Cooperation rule?

**A:** Clear Cooperation is an MLS rule that REALTOR®-owned MLSs adopted. Membership or nonmembership as a REALTOR® does not impact the enforcement of MLS rules, which apply to all MLS participants.

**Q:** Do licensees have to join C.A.R.?

**A:** Membership as a REALTOR® is voluntary. However, a real estate licensee must be a member of C.A.R. in order to get its member benefits, which include the C.A.R. Legal Hotline, zipForm and zipForm add-ons referenced above, standard forms, Q&As, sample legal Letters, 45 hours of CE and much more.

**Q:** How are dues collected and distributed?

**A:** Local associations collect the dues from the REALTOR® member. Those associations have an obligation to pay NAR and C.A.R. based on the number of licensees under any REALTOR® member.

C.A.R.'s bylaws require local associations of REALTORS® to send the state dues of its membership to C.A.R. based on the number of licensees directly or indirectly licensed to the REALTOR® member.

**Q:** How are dues determined?

**A:** The office size formula includes all licensees, whether or not they are REALTOR® members. While there are exceptions such as Limited Referral Only "LFRO" licenses, the Designated broker must account for all licensees and pay the obligation to the local association.

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**Q: Can a brokerage exclude a certain portion of dues owed to NAR from the dues pays to the local association?**

**A:** As a practical matter, this would mean the designated REALTOR® is paying only partial dues to the local association. The local associations must pay the full amount to NAR and C.A.R., and partial payment is not an option under both NAR and C.A.R.'s structure and per the bylaws.

To see the history and policy associated with dues, [click here](#).

**Q: Who should members call at C.A.R. to address their concerns and/or ask questions?**

**A:** \*For zipForm and 45-hour CE member benefit questions contact **Debra Ferrier** at [\*\*debraf@car.org\*\*](mailto:debraf@car.org).

\*The C.A.R. Customer Contact Center may be able to answer some of the other questions or direct you to someone who can. The Contact Center is open Monday-Friday and can be reached at **(213) 739-8227**.

\*Associations may contact **Emily Horn** at [\*\*emilyh@car.org\*\*](mailto:emilyh@car.org).