



Calendar

GREC Brokerage Course & Trust Accounts Class

Dates:

- December 14 & 15, 2011
GIRE
<http://www.learningrealestate.com>

Common Violations Class

Dates:

- December 8, 2011
GAMLS Training Institute
770-493-9000

GREC Annual Schools Meeting

- December 1 & 2, 2011
Athens, GA

[Click here to see GREC Disciplinary Sanctions](#)

Georgia Real Estate Commission

Suite 1000
International Tower
229 Peachtree Street NE
Atlanta, GA 30303-1605
Phone 404-656-3916

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Georgia's "Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011" Impacts Licenses

Following the 2011 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly, the Georgia "Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011" was signed into law. This legislation impacts both real estate licenses and appraiser classifications.

For license renewals after 12/31/2011, all individuals are required to provide the Commission with a secure and verifiable form of identification and a notarized copy of an affidavit. Brokers and

You must submit the necessary documents BEFORE you can renew your license Online. In order to allow time for processing, it is recommended you submit the documents well in advance of your renewal date.

Qualifying Brokers renewing firm licenses will be required to submit this information before the firm can be renewed. We must receive both of these items prior to your online renewal or attached to your paper application.

Please send these items to the Commission as soon as possible if your renewal is in the next few months! You can send them via fax at (404) 656-6650, e-mail verify@grec.state.ga.us,

U.S. mail, or by visiting our office. The staff will be diligently notating your license record so that you can renew online.

A list of the approved "secured and verifiable" identification documents and the notarized affidavit can be found on the Commission's website at www.grec.state.ga.us.

If you do not provide these items to the Commission, you will be unable to renew the license, the license will lapse, and you will not be able to practice real

estate until you provide the items and reinstate the license. A license lapse will also increase the fee paid to the Commission by a minimum of \$100.00.

Any license renewed prior to 12/31/2011 will not have to meet the new requirements at this time. Since licenses can be renewed up to 4 months in advance, consider renewing early.

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Enroll Now**Free GREC CE Courses Online**

1.
“Avoiding Trust Account Trouble”

2.
“Being a Broker & Staying Out of Trouble”

3.
“Practicing Real Estate & Staying Out of Trouble”

[Click Here](#)

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“Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011” ...

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Original license applications will also require this information to be submitted with the application. For example, a Broker applying to open a

new firm or a salesperson applying for a Broker license would be required to submit these items before obtaining the new license.

Virtual Offices and Phone Numbers

Virtual phone systems provide advanced features to improve communication between the Broker and his/her licensees and between the client and customers and the licensee. However, the efficiency of these systems needs to be implemented with the License Laws, Rules and Regulations in mind. For instance, some systems allow an assigned direct-dial extension, or allow the listing agent to have calls forwarded to a number of their choice, such as a cell phone.

However, any advertisement must have the main phone number of the brokerage firm stated on the advertisement; this includes internet postings. Anyone calling the number should be able to identify the firm he/she is calling and be able to contact the Broker from that main number. This is the same rule that applies to signs installed on properties listed for sale or lease.

Advanced phone systems can also be a useful tool for the Broker in managing licensees. For example, the ability of the Broker/Manager to access voice mails of staff or utilize caller ID tracking enables the Broker to follow up on transactions when a licensee is on vacation or otherwise. Various reports can be provided that detail activities of licensees and can serve to improve the efficiency of the office leading to more closed transactions.

As technology continues to evolve, the Broker needs to review and revise the management policies and procedures of the firm so that they comply with the License Laws, Rules and Regulations.



Focus on Terminology: “Virtual Office”

The term “Virtual Office” was developed through the use of technology to conduct business from virtually anywhere. In fact, a virtual office could have all the features of a permanent office, but does not have a specific location.

While technology allows real estate licensees to work independently, the License Laws, Rules and Regulations require that a licensee be supervised by the Broker holding his/her license. A virtual office allows flexibility and a Broker may encourage such a business model. However, that Broker must work diligently to maintain the level of communication needed to properly manage the licensees affiliated with his/her firm. For example, management responsibilities such as reviewing contracts can easily be done electronically. In fact, it assists the Broker in maintaining electronic records of documentation as well as an “electronic-paper” trail of the transaction.

Other issues such as the handling of trust funds must usually be done in person, and the Broker must make the necessary arrangements. The firm policies and procedures must be specifically designed to meet the virtual office model.