

April 30, 2020

REALTOR® RESILIENCY REPORT

This communication from NAR to all Members describes the many ways NAR is working to guide and support REALTORS® and the real estate industry during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Every week, you'll find up-to-date, relevant information on how to ensure your health and safety, the virus' impact on the economy and your business, its impact on NAR activities, and what NAR is doing to help.

Executive Summary

- NAR's latest [Economic Pulse Flash Survey](#) finds that more than 3 in 4 REALTORS® currently working with sellers this week—76%—reported their clients haven't reduced listing prices to attract buyers, according to a new survey from NAR. That's up from 74% who said the same a week ago. The survey also concludes that 3 in 10 REALTORS® said they were able to complete nearly all aspects of real estate transactions while complying with social distancing. See the [survey](#) for more results.
- NAR also today released its [2020 REALTORS® and Sustainability Report](#). It finds that 7 in 10 REALTORS® said energy efficiency promotion in listings was very or somewhat valuable, and a majority of REALTORS®—61%—found clients were at least somewhat interested in sustainability. See the [report](#) for more results.
- NAR also released its [Pending Home Sales Index](#) (PHSI), showing that pending home sales fell in March, seeing expected declines as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. The PHSI decreased 20.8% to 88.2 in March. Year-over-year, contract signings declined 16.3%. An index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001.
- As Congressional leadership debate future economic relief legislation, NAR continues to advocate for priorities for REALTORS® in the bill, including future funding and small-business assistance, tax and regulatory changes, and new technology like remote online notarization (RON). The Senate is scheduled to be in session next week, while the House is scheduled to return to session May 12.
- NAR is one of the leading industry voices in support of a bill allowing for RON. Many states have already acted on this front, but the nation needs a uniform federal standard. Using RON would allow Americans to complete loan transactions without jeopardizing their health. A recent CNBC article showed the average American can save \$277 a month with a refinancing.

- The REALTOR® Party has released a new resource for members to help homeowners who are struggling to meet their loan obligations. The “Protect Your Investment” brochure encourages homeowners to work with REALTORS® and housing counselors and offer guidance on options provided by lenders. For more info, go [here](#).
- Join the Urban Roundtable to hear speakers discuss how communities may change in response to COVID-19 and into the future. Speakers include representatives from the American Planning Association and Toole Design Group. To register, visit [here](#). Questions? Contact [Hugh Morris](#) at 202-383-1278.
- New Resources are available to REALTORS® as part of our [Right Tools, Right Now initiative](#), which provides free and discounted services to our members to enhance your professional development while stay-at-home orders impact the market. New tools and resources that have been recently added include new webinars, offers from REACH companies, and discounts on social media plans.
- Registration is **OPEN** for NAR’s first-ever Virtual REALTORS® Legislative Meetings. Join us May 12-14 for nine free conference sessions focused on education and forums that put members first and provide support to you and your business during uncertain times. In addition, some governance meetings now through May 15 will be streamed for observance on our virtual platform. Register for free [here](#).
- As part of the Legislative Meetings, this year’s Legislative & Political Forum (May 12) features Rahm Emanuel, former mayor of Chicago and White House Chief of Staff for President Obama, and Chris Christie, former governor of New Jersey. Together they’ll discuss the current political climate and take stock of the current administration and the upcoming election.
- Other highlights of the Legislative Meetings include this year’s Regulatory Issues Forum (May 12) will focus on legislative and regulatory responses to the COVID-19 public health crisis with remarks from key administration officials including Labor Secretary Eugene Scalia and Small Business Administrator Jovita Carranza. They’ll each provide relevant and timely updates about resources and support for REALTORS®.
- NAR is releasing the next wave of social messages from our Consumer Ad Campaign (CAC), sharing REALTORS® commitment to providing expertise and guidance to consumers in today’s challenging environment. These optimistic messages, to be posted on Monday, May 4, tell consumers that business is

open, interest rates are low, and REALTORS® have the resources and expertise to help right now. Find the assets [here](#).

- NAR Immediate Past President John Smaby recorded a [video](#) for our “Pivot in Place” series where he highlights REALTORS® who are serving their communities in impactful ways during the COVID-19 crisis, and reflect on the importance of sharing your story.
- The CDC recently released a new fact sheet with guidance for your health and safety during this pandemic. It provides life-saving information in six areas: 1) Know about COVID-19; 2) Know how COVID-19 is spread; 3) Protect yourself and others from COVID-19; 4) Practice social distancing; 5) Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick, and 6) Know your risk for severe illness. See [here](#) for more information.
- REALTORS® have a special responsibility to take all necessary health and safety precautions, including those ordered by your state or locality, whichever are more strict. Even if real estate is deemed essential in your area, we strongly encourage you to use virtual showings and limit in-person activity in all other aspects of the real estate transaction to get us through this crisis. For a list of states that have implemented stay-at-home orders, visit [here](#).
- In keeping with our Core Value of “Members First,” NAR has released “Coronavirus: A Guide for REALTORS®” online to provide guidance to members on some common transactional issues due to COVID-19, including open house guidance. The guide is updated frequently, please find it [here](#).
- A new Member Hotline is available. Please call our new hotline at **1-800-874-6500** to be connected to a Member Support Representative who can assist with your questions and concerns related to COVID-19. See below for more information.
- In addition to our hotline, stay in touch with the latest on our advocacy efforts on the pandemic by texting **COVID19** to **30644**. You’ll get information on how we’re fighting for members, and how recently passed legislation affects you. The response you’ll receive will send you to visit [NAR.Realtor/coronavirus](#) for the latest information.

1. Ensuring your health and safety

NAR continues to closely monitor this evolving public health crisis, and is providing updates and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and others as quickly as possible.

The CDC recently released a new fact sheet; please share it with you members and colleagues. It provides life-saving information in six areas:

- 1) Know about COVID-19;
- 2) Know how COVID-19 is spread;
- 3) Protect yourself and others from COVID-19;
- 4) Practice social distancing;
- 5) Prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick, and
- 6) Know your risk for severe illness.

To view and access the new CDC fact sheet, please click [here](#). For more details from the CDC on the use of cloth face coverings to help slow the spread of COVID-19, please go [here](#). For the latest information on all matters COVID-19, please go to the CDC's website, cdc.gov/coronavirus.

REALTORS® also have a special responsibility to take all necessary health and safety precautions, including those ordered by your state or locality, whichever are more strict.

Even if real estate is deemed essential in your area, we strongly encourage you to use virtual showings and limit in-person activity in all other aspects of the real estate transaction to get us through this crisis. For a list of states that have implemented stay-at-home orders, please visit [here](#).

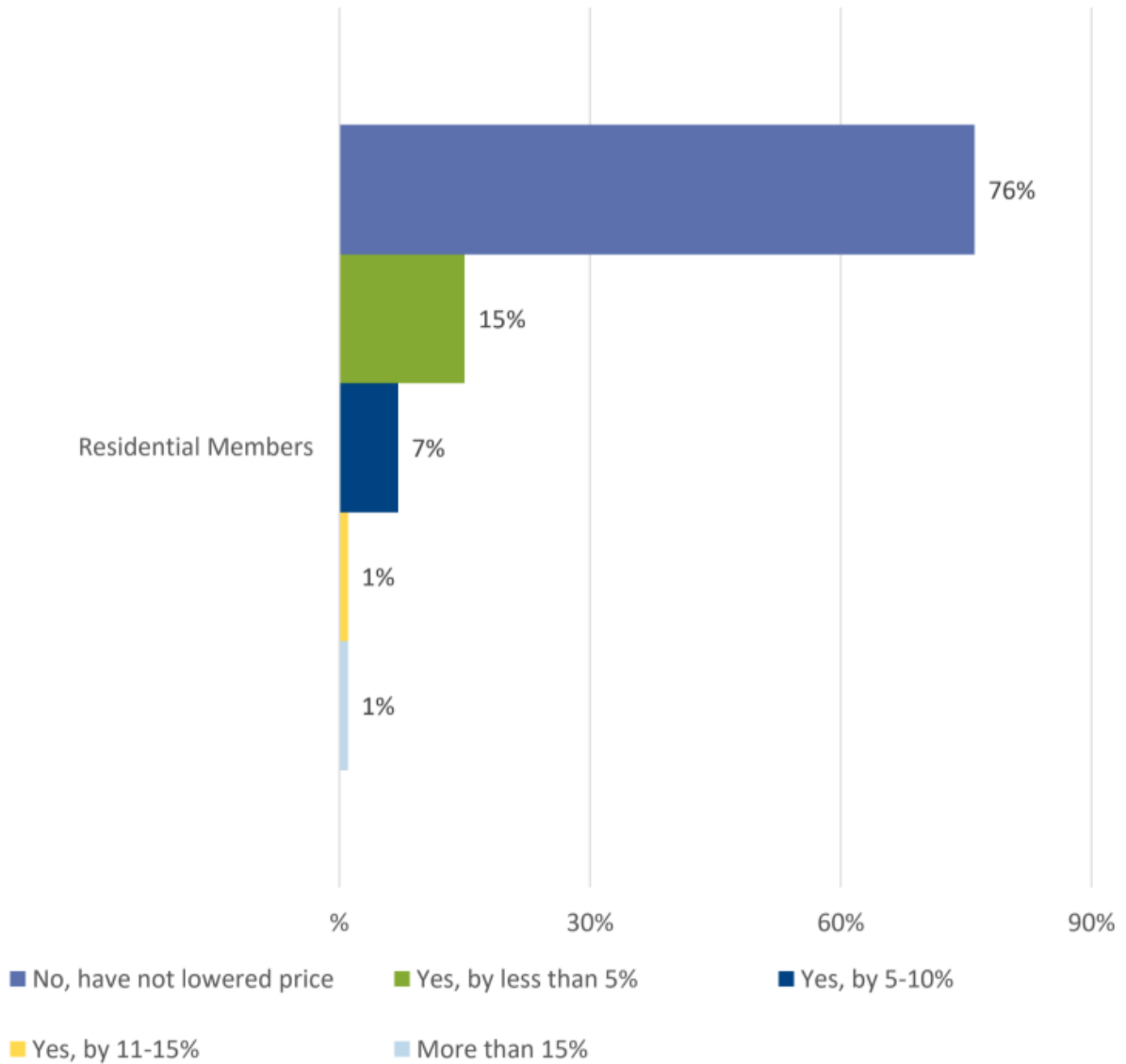
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2. Impact on the economy and members' businesses

Majority of REALTORS® Continue to Report Sellers Haven't Lowered Listing Prices to Attract Buyers

More than three in four REALTORS® currently working with sellers this week—76%—reported their clients haven't reduced listing prices to attract buyers, according to a new survey from NAR (see chart below). That's up from 74% who said the same a week ago.

IN GENERAL, HAVE ANY OF YOUR HOME SELLERS RECENTLY REDUCED PRICE TO ATTRACT BUYERS?



“Nearly 70% of Americans have secure employment and those interested in purchasing homes are looking at the enticing mortgage rates,” said NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun. “One in five potential buyers have dropped out of the market due to job loss concerns; hopes are the massive financial stimulus package can help replace a good portion of lost income until the economy steadily reopens. More home sellers are needed to relieve the acute inventory shortage.”

NAR's latest [Economic Pulse Flash Survey](#)—conducted April 26-27—asked members how the coronavirus outbreak has impacted the residential and commercial real estate markets. Highlights include:

- Three in 10 REALTORS® said they were able to complete nearly all aspects of real estate transactions while complying with social distance directives.
- A majority of REALTORS®—64%—reported buyers are looking for some discounts in home prices.

NAR also today released its [2020 REALTORS® and Sustainability Report](#), which surveyed REALTORS® about sustainability issues facing the real estate industry. Highlights include:

- Seven in 10 REALTORS® said energy efficiency promotion in listings was very or somewhat valuable.
- A majority of REALTORS®—61%—found clients were at least somewhat interested in sustainability.
- Forty-one percent of homes with green certifications spent neither more nor less time on the market.
- The home features clients listed as very important to their agent or broker included a comfortable living space; proximity to frequently visited places; and windows, doors, and siding.

“As many families are currently spending more time at home, some are taking on improvement projects involving sustainable features,” said Jessica Lautz, NAR vice president of demographics and behavioral insights. “Some buyers are also deciding to purchase homes with environmentally friendly components. In both instances, these households look to either reduce utility costs or increase personal comfort within their home.”

NAR Calls Housing Market Slump Temporary as Pending Home Sales Fall in March

Pending home sales fell in March, seeing expected declines as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, according to NAR. Each of the four major regions saw drops in month-over-month contract activity and year-over-year pending home sales transactions.

The [Pending Home Sales Index](#) (PHSI) a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, decreased 20.8% to 88.2 in March. Year-over-year, contract signings declined

16.3%. An index of 100 is equal to the level of contract activity in 2001. For more detail, see the accompanying news release [here](#).

“The housing market is temporarily grappling with the coronavirus-induced shutdown, which pulled down new listings and new contracts,” said Lawrence Yun, NAR’s chief economist. “As consumers become more accustomed to social distancing protocols, and with the economy slowly and safely reopening, listings and buying activity will resume, especially given the record low mortgage rates.”

“The usual Spring buying season will be missed, however, so a bounce-back later in the year will be insufficient to make up for the loss of sales in the second quarter,” he said. “Overall, home sales are projected to have declined 14% for the year.”

Citing results from NAR’s April 19-20 Flash Survey, Yun says technology tools such as virtual tours and e-signings are helping connect buyers and sellers. Fifty-eight percent of REALTORS® reported that buyers are using virtual tours, and 43% said buyers have taken advantage of e-closings.

“Although the pandemic continues to be a major disruption in regards to the timing of home sales, home prices have been holding up well,” Yun said. “In fact, due to the ongoing housing shortage, home prices are likely to squeeze out a gain in 2020 to a new record high. I project the national median home price to increase 1.3% for the year, though there will be local market variations and the upper-end market will likely experience a reduction in home price.”

Legislative Update: NAR Continues to Advocate for Relief for REALTORS® as Congress Debates Further Economic Stimulus Legislation

As U.S. Senate and House leadership negotiate a “phase four” COVID-19 economic relief package, NAR continues to work alongside Congress to help secure priorities for REALTORS® in the upcoming bill, including future funding and small-business assistance, tax and regulatory changes, and new technology like remote online notarization (RON).

NAR’s Advocacy team will continue to fight for small businesses, the self-employed, and independent contractors. Specifically, we remain to be one of the leading voices in support of a bill allowing for RON.

Many states have already acted on this front, but the nation needs a uniform federal solution. RON laws allow a notary and signer in different physical locations to safely and securely execute electronic documents using two-way audiovisual communication.

Given this time of crisis and uncertainty, Congress has the opportunity to immediately allow loan transactions to be completed using RON, allowing Americans to complete loan transactions without having to jeopardize their health by gathering at a closing

table. Every loan closed puts money directly in Americans' pockets—a recent CNBC article showed that the average American can save \$277 a month with a refinancing.

In addition, last week NAR wrote the FHA in response to comments that it was considering raising premiums on FHA borrowers.

“FHA’s capital resources...have grown to \$58 billion in FY 2019,” NAR’s letter states. “These funds will play an invaluable role in keeping FHA operating at no expense to the taxpayer...NAR urges FHA to maintain the current premium levels...when [American families] are facing the most far-reaching health crisis in many generations.”

In the letter, NAR acknowledges its concerns that access to mortgage credit could become “severely restricted” should FHA premiums increase, which “could potentially damage the Mutual Mortgage Insurance Fund more so than simply riding out the brief period of turmoil we see this spring.”

The U.S. Senate is scheduled to be in session next week. The House of Representatives is scheduled to return to session May 12.

REALTOR® Party News: “Protect Your Investment” Brochure Available for Members to Offer Help to Homeowners

The REALTOR® Party has released a new resource for members to help homeowners who are struggling to meet their loan obligations. The “Protect Your Investment” brochure encourages homeowners to work with REALTORS® and housing counselors and offers guidance on options provided by lenders. Associations and REALTORS® may add their logo to the cover for a customized look. For more info, go [here](#).

Urban Roundtable to Feature Speakers on Changing Communities

Join the Urban Roundtable to hear speakers discuss how communities may change in response to COVID-19 and into the future. Speakers include representatives from the American Planning Association, an organization with over 48,000 community planning professionals, and Toole Design Group, a company involved in designing and building community spaces where people can move freely and intuitively. This session, moderated by Teresa King Kinney, CEO of Miami REALTORS®, will be held on Monday, May 4, from 2 PM-3 PM CDT. To register, visit [here](#). To attend the session, find broadcast details [here](#). Questions? Contact [Hugh Morris](#) at 202-383-1278.

3. Impact on NAR activities and what NAR is doing to help

New Resources Available to REALTORS® as Part of Right Tools, Right Now

Our [Right Tools, Right Now initiative](#) is providing free and discounted services to our members to enhance your professional development while stay-at-home orders impact

the market. New tools and resources that have been recently added to the Right Tools, Right Now initiative include:

- Logo Branded Face Masks from REALTOR Benefits® Program Partner REALTOR Team Store®
- New offers from 6 NAR REACH companies, including BrownieBox, Biprox Update, Curbio, RealX and ActivePipe
- New “Digital Strategies for Success in Uncertain Times” Webinar from REALTOR Benefits® Program Partner Adwerx
- New “How to Protect Your Real Estate Business from Cyber Attack” Webinar from REALTOR Benefits® Program Partner CyberPolicy
- \$100 off all social media plans from REALTOR Benefits® Program Partner Back at You

Registration OPEN for NAR’s First-Ever Virtual REALTORS® Legislative Meetings

Register today for the first-ever virtual REALTORS® Legislative Meetings. Join us May 12-14 for nine free conference sessions focused on education and forums that put members first and provide support to you and your business during these turbulent and uncertain times. In addition, some governance meetings now through May 15 will be streamed, allowing attendees to observe the proceedings on our virtual platform. Register for free at <https://2020.legislative.realtor>.

2020 Legislative & Political Forum

This year’s Legislative & Political Forum at NAR’s Virtual REALTORS® Legislative Meetings features the powerhouse duo of Rahm Emanuel, 55th mayor of the City of Chicago and former White House Chief of Staff for President Obama; and Chris Christie, the 55th governor of New Jersey to discuss the current political climate. With decades of political experience, Emanuel and Christie both know the mindset and vision of in-the-moment White House policies, and what we can expect from the campaign trail in the months to come. They bring their executive experience and engaging speaking styles to the stage, taking stock of the current administration, the upcoming election, and the most pressing issues of today and tomorrow. Tuesday, May 12, 2020, 11 AM-noon CDT.

2020 Regulatory Issues Forum

As part of the 2020 Virtual REALTORS® Legislative Meetings, the Regulatory Issues Forum will focus on legislative and regulatory responses to the COVID-19 public health crisis with remarks from key administration officials, including U.S. Labor Secretary Eugene Scalia and Small Business Administrator Jovita Carranza*. Each official will provide relevant and timely updates from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) respectively, including information about resources and support for REALTORS®. This session will be streamed to our virtual platform and broadcast to Facebook Live and YouTube. Registration is complimentary

but required in the virtual platform. Please see the [registration page](#) for more information. Tuesday, May 12, 2020, noon-1 PM CDT.

**Administrator Carranza's remarks will be provided via a pre-recorded video exclusively for the REALTOR® audience.*

New Community CAC Social Assets

NAR is releasing the next wave of social messages from our Consumer Ad Campaign (CAC), sharing REALTORS® commitment to providing expertise and guidance to consumers in today's challenging environment. These optimistic messages tell consumers that business is open, interest rates are low, and REALTORS® have the resources and expertise to help right now. These messages will be shared from the NAR and REALTOR® social channels and be made available to members. Some messages will have the option to be personalized. These assets will be posted Monday, May 4 and can be found [here](#).

Special Message from Immediate Past President John Smaby

This week's "Pivot in Place" video is by 2020 Immediate Past President John Smaby. Titled "Sharing the REALTOR® Story," in this video John highlights REALTORS® who are serving their communities in impactful ways during the COVID-19 crisis, and reflects on the importance of sharing your story. Watch his video [here](#).

NAR's Pivot in Place series features videos from NAR leadership and industry experts charting a path forward for the real estate industry at this unprecedented time. Next week's video features 2020 NAR First Vice President Leslie Rouda Smith on the Committee Chairs process. For more Pivot in Place videos, please visit [here](#).

New Member Benefit: Hotline for Coronavirus (COVID-19) Questions

In keeping with our core value of "Members First," NAR is dedicated to providing members with the latest information on the coronavirus, its impact on the real estate industry, and what programs and services we've developed to help. Please call our new hotline at **1-800-874-6500** to be connected to a Member Support Representative who can assist with your questions and concerns. Team members are available to speak with you between 8:00am and 6:00pm Central, Monday through Friday.

Subscribe to REALTOR® Party Mobile Alerts

In addition to our hotline, there's another easy way to stay in touch with all of our ongoing advocacy efforts concerning COVID-19: REALTORS® can now text **COVID19** to **30644** to get information on how we're fighting for them and how recently passed legislation affects them. The response you receive will send you to visit nar.realtor/coronavirus for the latest information.

Final Thoughts from Vince and Bob

REALTORS® have always been community leaders. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought hardship and heartache to many—but we have also been gratified to see so many stories of REALTORS® showing leadership by helping their fellow agents, their customers and clients, and their communities. A recent *REALTOR® Magazine* [article](#) highlighted some of these REALTOR® heroes.

One REALTOR® from New York has brought his team of more than 100 agents and 20 staff together using FaceTime and other videoconferencing platforms. To facilitate better engagement, the company put together a guide for working from home that includes not only best practices, but also information about mental health, motivation, and creating a routine.

Another REALTOR® from North Carolina partnered with other real estate pros in her area to support local businesses while at the same time giving back to teachers. They're asking folks to contribute donations to go toward the purchase of gift cards for local retailers, and they'll donate those gift cards to area teachers.

These stories and more remind us of the thousands of acts of kindness that happen every day across America. When we fall, we help each other up—and REALTORS® are among the first to reach out their hands. As trying as these times have been, we are also honored to be part of an industry as compassionate and as generous as the REALTOR® family. And we are honored to work in support of you, your family, your business, and your future.

Be well and stay safe,



Vince Malta
PRESIDENT



Bob Goldberg
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER