

# CONSUMER GUIDE TO AGENCY RELATIONSHIPS

## Auction.com, Inc.

We are pleased you have selected Auction.com, Inc. to help you with your real estate needs. Whether you are selling, buying or leasing real estate, Auction.com, Inc. can provide you with expertise and assistance. Because this may be the largest financial transaction you will enter into, it is important to understand the role of the agents and brokers with whom you are working. Below is some information that explains the various services agents can offer and their options for working with you.

For more information on agency law in Ohio you can also contact the Ohio Division of Real Estate & Professional Licensing at (614) 466-4100, or on their website [www.com.state.oh.us](http://www.com.state.oh.us).

### Representing Sellers

Most sellers of real estate choose to list their home for sale with a real estate brokerage. When they do so, they sign a listing agreement that authorizes the brokerage and the listing agent to represent their interests. As the seller's agent, the brokerage and listing agent must: follow the seller's lawful instructions, be loyal to the seller, promote the seller's best interests, disclose material facts to the seller, maintain confidential information, act with reasonable skill and care and, account for any money they handle in the transaction. In rare circumstances, a listing broker may offer "subagency" to other brokerages which would also represent the seller's interests and owe the seller these same duties.

### Representing Buyers

When purchasing real estate, buyers usually choose to work with a real estate agent as well. Often the buyers want to be represented in the transaction. This is referred to as buyer's agency. A brokerage and agent that agree to represent a buyer's interest in a transaction must: follow the buyer's lawful instructions, be loyal to the buyer, promote the buyer's best interests, disclose material facts to the buyer, maintain confidential information and, account for any money they handle in the transaction.

### Dual Agency

Occasionally the same agent and brokerage who represents the seller also represents the buyer. This is referred to as dual agency. When a brokerage and its agents become "dual agents," they must maintain a neutral position between the buyer and the seller. They may not advocate the position of one client over the best interests of the other client, or disclose any personal or confidential information to the other party without written consent.

### Representing Both the Buyer & Seller

On occasion, the buyer and seller will each be represented by two different agents from the same brokerage. In this case the agents may each represent the best interest of their respective clients. Or, depending on company policy, the agents may both act as dual agents and remain neutral in the transaction. When either of the above occurs, the brokerage will be considered a dual agent. As a dual agent the brokerage and its managers will maintain a neutral position and cannot advocate for the position of one client over another. The brokerage will also protect the confidential information of both parties.

### Working With Auction.com, Inc.

Auction.com, Inc. only represents sellers. It does not represent buyers of real estate. Therefore, Auction.com, Inc. will never act as a dual agent representing both parties in a transaction. Instead it will only act as the seller's agent in the sale of real estate. Even though Auction.com, Inc. only lists properties for sellers, it can still work with buyers as customers. Auction.com, Inc. can provide such buyers with non-confidential information and write offers at the buyer's direction, but will not act as the agent of these buyers. Instead such buyers will represent their own best interests. It is also important for buyers to understand that because the listing agent has a duty of full disclosure to the seller, buyers should not share any information with the listing agent that they would not want the seller to know.

**Working With Other Brokerages**

When Auction.com, Inc. lists property for sale it also cooperates with, and offers compensation to, other brokerages that represent buyers. Auction.com, Inc. does reserve the right, in some instances, to vary the compensation it offers to other brokerages. As a seller, you should understand that just because Auction.com, Inc. shares a fee with a brokerage representing the buyer, it does not mean that you will be represented by that buyer’s brokerage. Instead that company will be looking out for the buyer and Auction.com, Inc. will be representing your interests.

**Fair Housing Statement**

It is illegal, pursuant to the Ohio Fair Housing Law, division (H) of Section 4112.02 of the Revised Code and the Federal Fair Housing Law, 42 U.S.C.A. 3601, as amended, to refuse to sell, transfer, assign, rent, lease, sublease or finance housing accommodations, refuse to negotiate for the sale or rental of housing accommodations, or otherwise deny or make unavailable housing accommodations because of race, color, religion, sex, familial status as defined in Section 4112.01 of the Revised Code, ancestry, military status as defined in that section, disability as defined in that section, or national origin or to so discriminate in advertising the sale or rental of housing, in the financing of housing, or in the provision of real estate brokerage services. It is also illegal, for profit, to induce or attempt to induce a person to sell or rent a dwelling b representations regarding the entry into the neighborhood of a person or persons belonging to one of the protected classes.

We hope you find this information to be helpful to you as you begin your real estate transaction. When you are ready to enter into a transaction, you will be given an Agency Disclosure Statement that specifically identifies the role of the agents and brokerages. Please ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.

Because it is important that you have this information, Ohio law requires that we ask you to sign below, acknowledging receipt of this Consumer Guide. Doing so will not obligate you to work with our company if you do not choose to do so.

**SELLER:**

**BUYER(S):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
SELLER PRINTED NAME

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINTED NAME

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINTED NAME

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## AGENCY DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The real estate agent who is providing you with this form is required to do so by Ohio law. You will not be bound to pay the agent or the agent's brokerage by merely signing this form. Instead, the purpose of this form is to confirm that you have been advised of the role of the agent(s) in the transaction proposed below. (For purposes of this form, the term "seller" includes a landlord and the term "buyer" includes a tenant.)

### I. TRANSACTION INVOLVING TWO AGENTS IN TWO DIFFERENT BROKERAGES

The buyer will be represented by \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.  
AGENT(S) BROKERAGE

The seller will be represented by Lee Leslie, and Auction.com, Inc.  
AGENT(S) BROKERAGE

### II. TRANSACTION INVOLVING TWO AGENTS IN THE SAME BROKERAGE

If two agents in the real estate brokerage represent both the buyer and the seller, check the following relationship that will apply:

- Agent(s) \_\_\_\_\_ work(s) for the buyer and Agent(s) \_\_\_\_\_ work(s) for the seller. Unless personally involved in the transaction, the broker and managers will be "dual agents", which is further explained on the back of this form.  
As dual agents they will maintain a neutral position in the transaction and they will protect all parties' confidential information.
- Every agent in the brokerage represents every "client" of the brokerage. Therefore, agents \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ will be working for both the buyer and seller as "dual agents". Dual agency is explained on the back of this form. As dual agents they will maintain a neutral position in the transaction and they will protect all parties' confidential information. Unless indicated below, neither the agent(s) nor the brokerage acting as a dual agent in this transaction has a personal, family or business relationship with either the buyer or seller. *If such a relationship does exist, explain:* \_\_\_\_\_

### III. TRANSACTION INVOLVING ONLY ONE REAL ESTATE AGENT

Agent(s) Lee Leslie, Broker will

- be "dual agents" representing both parties in this transaction in a neutral capacity. Dual agency is further explained on the back of this form. As dual agents they will maintain a neutral position in the transaction and they will protect all parties' confidential information. Unless indicated below, neither the agent(s) nor the brokerage acting as a dual agent in this transaction has a personal, family or business relationship with either the buyer or seller. *If such a relationship does exist, explain:* \_\_\_\_\_
- represent only the (check one)  seller or  buyer in this transaction as a client. The other party either (i) is not represented and agrees to represent his/her own best interest or (ii) is represented by its own, separate agent and has obtained from its agent a separate Agency Disclosure Form containing any disclosures required to be made by its agent. Any information provided the agent may be disclosed to the agent's client.

### CONSENT

I (we) consent to the above relationships as we enter into this real estate transaction. If there is a dual agency in this transaction, I (we) acknowledge reading the information regarding dual agency explained following this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SELLER SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
BUYER SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
BUYER SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

## DUAL AGENCY

Ohio law permits a real estate agent and brokerage to represent both the seller and buyer in a real estate transaction as long as this is disclosed to both parties and they both agree. This is known as dual agency. As a dual agent, a real estate agent and brokerage represent two clients whose interests are, or at times could be, different or adverse. For this reason, the dual agent(s) may not be able to advocate on behalf of the client to the same extent the agent may have if the agent represented only one client.

**As a dual agent, the agent(s) and brokerage shall:**

- Treat both clients honestly;
- Disclose latent (not readily observable) material defects to the purchaser, if known by the agent(s) or brokerage;
- Provide information regarding lenders, inspectors and other professionals, if requested;
- Provide market information available from a property listing service or public records, if requested;
- Prepare and present all offers and counteroffers at the direction of the parties;
- Assist both parties in completing the steps necessary to fulfill the terms of any contract, if requested.

**As a dual agent, the agent(s) and brokerage shall not:**

- Disclose information that is confidential, or that would have an adverse effect on one party's position in the transaction, unless such disclosure is authorized by the client or required by law;
- Advocate or negotiate on behalf of either the buyer or seller;
- Suggest or recommend specific terms, including price, or disclose the terms or price a buyer is willing to offer or that a seller is willing to accept;
- Engage in conduct that is contrary to the instructions of either party and may not act in a biased manner on behalf of one party.

**Compensation:** Unless agreed otherwise, the brokerage will be compensated per the agency agreement.

**Management Level Licensees:** Generally the broker and managers in a brokerage also represent the interests of any buyer or seller represented by an agent affiliated with that brokerage. Therefore, if both buyer and seller are represented by agents in the same brokerage, the broker and manager are dual agents. There are two exceptions to this. The first is where the broker or manager is personally representing one of the parties. The second is where the broker or manager is selling or buying his own real estate. These exceptions only apply if there is another broker or manager to supervise the other agent involved in the transaction.

**Responsibilities of the Parties:** The duties of the agent and brokerage in a real estate transaction do not relieve the buyer and seller from the responsibility to protect their own interests. The buyer and seller are advised to carefully read all agreements to assure that they adequately express their understanding of the transaction. The agent and brokerage are qualified to advise on real estate matters.

IF LEGAL OR TAX ADVICE IS DESIRED, YOU SHOULD CONSULT THE APPROPRIATE PROFESSIONAL.

**Consent:** By signing on the reverse side, you acknowledge that you have read and understand this form and are giving your voluntary, informed consent to the agency relationship disclosed. If you do not agree to the agent(s) and/or brokerage acting as a dual agent, you are not required to consent to this agreement and you may either request a separate agent in the brokerage to be appointed to represent your interests or you may terminate your agency relationship and obtain representation from another brokerage.

Any questions regarding the role or responsibilities of the brokerage or its agents should be directed to an attorney or to:

Ohio Department of Commerce  
Division of Real Estate & Professional Licensing  
77 S. High Street, 20<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215-6133  
(614) 466-4100