

## Calendar

### GREC Brokerage Course & Trust Accounts Class

#### Dates:

- January 18 & 19, 2012  
GIRE  
[savannahboardofrealtors.com](http://savannahboardofrealtors.com)
- February 1 & 2, 2012  
[www.gamls.com](http://www.gamls.com)
- February 15 & 16, 2012  
[www.augustarealtors.com](http://www.augustarealtors.com)

**Happy  
Holidays  
from the  
Georgia Real  
Estate  
Commission!**

**[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



#### This Issue:

License Renewals	P.1 -2
Social Media Reminders	P.1-2
Focus on Terminology	P.2

## Important News

### About Renewing Your License

- **BEFORE you can renew your license (individual or firm), you must first submit some documents that were not required in the past.**
- **[Click Here](#) to obtain the affidavit form and instructions.**

Each licensee must submit a verification of identity and legal presence in Georgia. You can send the documents via fax at (404) 656-6650, e-mail [verify@grec.state.ga.us](mailto:verify@grec.state.ga.us), U.S. mail, or by visiting our office. Since this becomes effective January 1, 2012, the GREC staff is quite busy, so you should plan ahead to make sure your information is processed BEFORE you try to renew.

The online renewal system will not allow renewal without the information already processed and on file. If you do not submit the information in advance to allow time for processing, and therefore cannot renew, your license will LAPSE.

If you do not renew, not only will you not be able to practice real estate, but you will incur an additional charge of at least \$100 to reinstate the license. Plan Ahead!

The Georgia "Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011" was signed into law during the 2011 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly. Review [the November issue of the GREC RENews](#) or the [GREC Home Page](#) for more details.

## Social Media Reminders...

Social Media can be a great tool for Real Estate professionals. Its popularity is indicated by the many training courses currently being offered touting the marketing benefits of blogs, Facebook® and other social media-type sites, and the fact that it provides great exposure at little or no cost.

However, the instructors of these courses may not be familiar with requirements of the License Laws, Rules, and Regulations of the Georgia Real Estate Commission. Any marketing must be done in compliance with the License Laws, Rules, and Regulations.

...continued on page 2



[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”

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## Social Media Reminders...

...continued from page 1

The following lists a few reminders of what NOT to do when using social media either personally or in your professional real estate activities

- Don't give advice concerning real estate matters to friends and contacts without establishing a client agency relationship first. You may inadvertently establish an agency relationship.
- Don't blog by giving your opinion about specific real estate situations, transactions, or properties.
- Don't advertise a listed property without meeting all advertising Rules and Regulations, such as failing to include the firm name and phone number as it is licensed with the Commission in the same or larger size print as your name. When telling your friends on Facebook© about a listed property you have for sale, you must still include the firm name and phone number information as you would in any other advertisement or marketing piece.
- Don't criticize other real estate licenses or other real estate firms.
- Don't advise a friend how to handle the sale of their property or how to handle a situation with their listing agent.
- Don't give misleading or inaccurate information in a blog, a fan page, a conversation page, or any other similar media.
- Don't give a price opinion on any real estate unless you have met all the requirements of the License Laws, Rules, and Regulations in doing so.

Remember, when you post comments, opinions or information on blogs, social media sites, Twitter©, or other Internet sites, it can end up on a multitude of sites. To a large extent, social media is information that can be copied, stored, obtained, and even searched later. It can be misconstrued or even taken out of context.

If you contract with someone to design and manage your blog and social media accounts, be sure to review the content, as you (and your Broker) are responsible for ensuring that that everything you publish is in compliance with the License Laws, Rules, and Regulations.



### Focus on Terminology: “Sphere of Influence”

Ideally, your **Sphere of Influence** is all those people in your personal and professional life that you know on some level. Each person's sphere of influence list is unique and reflects one's life experiences.

Anyone using social media and other features of the Internet has no doubt expanded his/her sphere of influence dramatically. Newly licensed salespersons are often taught to identify that pool of contacts as potential clients and customers. Therefore email broadcasts, personal web sites, and various social media tools have helped the new agent introduce themselves to the market. It is human nature to want to do business with people you know and trust.

Clearly, technology makes it easier to communicate and manage contacts and information. The key is that licensees must be aware that basically everything regarding real estate activities that he/she does or puts in writing must be in compliance with the License Laws, Rules, and Regulations. The Broker must develop and implement policies and procedures that will ensure compliance by the licensees affiliated with his/her firm.