

For Chicago Realtor

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THE WORD "REALTOR"
by C. N. Chedbourn, Minneapolis
Chairman Realtor Committee
National Association of Real Estate Boards

Realtor

"Realtor" is the title or designation of a real estate broker, operator or salesman who is a member of a local real estate board which in turn is a member of the National Association of Real Estate Boards. The National Association is made up of 408 real estate boards of the United States and Canada. The word is the exclusive property of the National Association.

The word was coined by me to establish a title to distinguish real estate men who, in a definite way, recognize certain high obligations to the public and who have agreed to and in fact do conduct their affairs in conformity to the code of business ethics adopted by the National Association, and which, in effect has been adopted by all the member real estate boards. The National Association of Real Estate Boards in 1916 officially adopted the word. The Association through its member boards licenses the use of the title to the individual board members.

"Realtor" is frequently seen on the window signs, the letter heads and other advertising matter of those real estate men who have the right to use this proud title. The general public has become familiar, not only with the word, but the high ideals and standards of practice for which it stands. It is an asset to real estate men which increases in value with the frequency with which it is used and seen.

It is established as an English word of good usage and is so recognized in the recent edition of Websters International Dictionary. On page 88 of the addenda is found the following definition: "A real estate broker who is a member of a local real estate board having membership in the National Association of Real Estate Boards, an organization incorporated

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1908 for the advancement of the interests of Real Estate Brokers and the protection of the public from unprincipled agents or brokers."

Others, not entitled to use the word, have appreciated the great advantage of calling themselves Realtors and have attempted to use the word without assuming the responsibilities and complying with the obligations which the use of the word implies. The National Association has been compelled to defend these invasions of its rights and in doing so has clearly and undeniably established in the courts its legal and exclusive right to the word.

It was established by judicial decision in 1921 in the district court of Hennepin County, Minnesota. The National Association and the Minneapolis Real Estate Board joined in a suit applying for an injunction against the Northwest Telephone Exchange Company and twenty three other defendants. The telephone company had previously been requested to not to list as a "Realtor" any individual or firm who was not a member of the Minneapolis Real Estate Board. The company stated it could not accede to this request for various reasons. The court found, "That the plaintiffs are entitled to grant to their associate members the exclusive right to the use of the word "Realtor" and that no other persons, firms or corporations are entitled to use the said term, save only, such as may be authorized so to do by the plaintiff National Association of Real Estate Boards and its associate members."

The word Realtor signifies more than merely board and National Association membership. The true Realtor is a man of high ideals. He has made the code of ethics of the National Association a part of his personal code of honor. He would rather lose a record breaking commission than violate his own conscience. He appreciates the heavy obligations which he owes his

Community, his clients, his profession and himself. He realizes as few laymen do, the intimate nature of the confidential relationship which exists between the Realtor and his client, who may be obliged at times to reveal to his Realtor embarrassing details of family differences and financial distress.

In a recent editorial the Saturday Evening Post called attention to the fact that there is nation wide movement in full swing for the betterment of American business and for the framing and enforcing of an ethical code that will insure correct standards of fair dealing. "The Real Estate Men", the Post said, "have hit upon an exceedingly clever and ingenious device to assist them in the achievement of their aims."