

# Consumers: Buying and Selling During COVID-19

Modified REALTOR® services have been permitted throughout the pandemic with restrictions reflecting the Government of Alberta public health directives. It is crucial to maintain open lines of communication with your REALTOR® and your lawyer. As professionals, they understand the rapidly changing nature of the pandemic and are equipped to assist you with the flexibility you need.

By working together, we can take the precautions needed to continue protecting our fellow Albertans.

## Suggested Safety Precautions to Implement

- Social Distancing
  - REALTOR® services, in line with other professional services, have had the social distancing restrictions relaxed in Stage 3 by the Government of Alberta's [Open for Summer](#) plan. It remains crucial to maintain open lines of communication with your REALTOR® and your lawyer to ensure your comfort level is expressed and the appropriate precautions are taken.
- Electronic Documents
  - You can continue to request that the signing of all documents be entirely paperless, however, in-person meetings can also now resume if you and your REALTOR® are comfortable with that.
- Buyers and Sellers
  - Based on the seller's comfort level, the seller may choose to continue to limit the number of people entering their home. The buyer's REALTOR® should make reasonable efforts to confirm any special requirements of the seller prior to showing a property or holding an open house.
  - Digital photos and video tours will continue to be a great way to reduce the number of locations visited.
  - With your REALTOR®, you may use the [Practice Tips Guide](#) to ask the other party and their representatives COVID-19 health and travel questions if this is important information for your decision process. This will help you make an informed decision about viewing a property or accepting a showing request.
- Well-being
  - All appointments (including staging, inspections, showings, etc.) must be rescheduled if you have travelled in the past 14 days or if you are displaying any symptoms of the coronavirus.

## Showings for Sellers

Stay up to date on [government recommendations](#) for COVID-19 and use AREA's [Practice Tips Guide](#) with your REALTOR® to ask the buyer and their representative COVID-19 questions so you can make an informed decision about accepting their showing request.

Outlined below are suggested guidelines for preparing your home before property showing, how a showing should be run and preparing the home after the property showing.

### Preparing the Home Before Property Showing (your REALTOR® can assist with these tasks)

1. Disinfect common spaces, including door handles, closet and cupboard knobs, sink handles, surfaces, light switches and counters with antibacterial/germ-killing cleaners.
2. Turn on all lights, open all closet doors, all bathroom/bedroom and other doors to minimize the necessity for any agents/buyers to touch any surfaces.
3. Provide hand sanitizers or sanitizing wipes at the door.
4. Post a note in a highly visible location that states what you would like the agent/buyers to do while entering and viewing your home
5. Communicate with your REALTOR® to ensure everyone attending the property has provided their responses to questions in the [Practice Tip Guide](#) mentioned above and that you are comfortable with their responses before approving the showing.

### Protocol for Property Showing

1. You may choose not to be home during a showing which helps reduce the number of cohorts in the property but also allows the buyers to feel comfortable as well.
2. Before confirming the property showing, you may ask your REALTOR® to verify all viewing parties are symptom-free and have not been in contact with anyone with a COVID-19 diagnosis.
3. Showing numbers are not limited at this time, however, you may still decide to limit the number of individuals in a showing or the number of cohorts at a time.
4. Conversations between the buyer and their agent may be conducted outside of the home and off the property.

## Showings for Buyers

Stay up to date on [government recommendations](#) and use AREA's [Practice Tips guide](#) with your REALTOR® to ask the seller and their representative COVID-19 health questions so you can make an informed decision about viewing their home.

Outlined below is the protocol for buyers when they are attending a property showing.

### Protocol for Property Showing

1. Before scheduling a property showing, use online tools which allow you to explore the listing from the comfort of your home.
2. Before confirming the property showing, you may request your REALTOR® verify the occupants of the home you are viewing are symptom-free and have not been in contact with anyone with a COVID-19 diagnosis.
3. Sellers may decide to limit showings to a certain number of people allowed on the property at one time. Your REALTOR® will make reasonable efforts to determine that prior to booking the showing and inform you of any seller's instructions
4. Conversations with your agent should be conducted outside of the home and off the seller's property.
5. Before entering, practice safe hygiene by disinfecting hands with sanitizers.
6. If required by municipal bylaw or the seller's instruction you may be required to wear a mask the entire time you are viewing a property.