Richmond Association of REALTORS®

CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

Frequently Asked Questions

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

What is the Circle of Excellence?
The Circle of Excellence is a cohort of Realtor members who are dedicated to professional growth and community engagement. Realtors qualify for the Circle of Excellence through measurable means including course completion, leadership roles and activities with local nonprofits.

What is the purpose of the Circle of Excellence?
As part of the Richmond Association of REALTORS® ongoing efforts to increase professionalism, we strive to offer opportunities to recognize those who exemplify excellence amongst their peers.

QUALIFICATIONS & CRITERIA

What are the qualifications for the Circle of Excellence?
Applicants must earn 100 points in three categories: *Professional Development*, *Leadership & Contribution* and *Community Engagement*. Applicants may not have an NAR Code of Ethics violation or VREB violation during the calendar year.

How do I earn points?
Points are used to assign value to certain activities, education and leadership roles. You are able to tabulate your points prior to applying to ensure you have met the criteria.

Does RAR track my points?
RAR will verify points upon receipt of application. RAR will verify class attendance, committee and Board participation. Information must be provided on your application to demonstrate community engagement activities such as volunteering and nonprofit board service.

Where can I find a breakdown of points?
A full list of point-earning activities can be found on our website at RARealtors.com/ProfessionalDevelopment.

How can I verify my points before I apply?
If you are unsure that you have met the criteria, email Programs@RARealtors.com and RAR staff will assist you with your application.

I am a current Circle of Excellence honoree. Do I still need to earn points, and do I need to apply again?
Yes, current honorees must submit an updated application to requalify. They must also earn at least 50 points to requalify, but are not required to attend mandatory courses that were completed in their qualifying year.
Current honorees must complete any new mandatory coursework in order to requalify; however, honorees who completed the original Fairhaven in their qualifying year will not be required to complete the newest version, Fairhaven 2.0.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Can I take the mandatory courses online rather than at RAR?
Fairhaven training is available online at fairhaven.realtor. The NAR Ethics class may be taken with NAR online or in-person at RAR. We will not recognize completion of an ethics course that is not taken with a Realtor association.

The contract courses must be taken in-person or virtually with RAR. The contract courses required for the Circle of Excellence specifically deal with CVR MLS forms – these forms are not a part of the curriculum of any other online real estate school.

When registering for classes, is there anything I need to do to ensure that I can earn points for the Circle of Excellence?
No, you do not. You will register for courses online and will attend the class as usual. After you apply for the Circle of Excellence, RAR will verify your attendance in the class during the calendar year.

If I take courses at RAR for points, will I receive CE/PLE/BCE credit?
Absolutely. Your credits will be reported to DPOR as with any other credited course at RAR.

Are you able to verify if I have completed the C2EX program with NAR?

Yes. RAR staff will be able to verify your completion with NAR. Please note that you must complete all C2EX competencies and receive the official endorsement in order to earn points towards the Circle of Excellence.

Will the mandatory ethics course fulfill my NAR Triennial Ethics requirement?
Yes – as an ethics course from a Realtor association, our onsite and virtual courses will complete this requirement and fulfill your ethics CE/PLE requirement with DPOR. The online NAR course will fulfill your NAR requirement but may not fulfill your CE/PLE requirements.

I completed the original Fairhaven. Does that count?
No, new Circle of Excellence applicants must complete the most updated version, Fairhaven 2.0, to qualify.

What verification do I need to provide with course completion?
We have the records unless you took it elsewhere – if you took it elsewhere, send us a certificate to Programs@RARealtors.com.

Will any RAR/CVR MLS course offer points in the Professional Development category? Can classes I have taken at other real estate schools/offices/ conferences count as points in the Professional Development category?
No – the course must be listed on RARealtors.com/ProfessionalDevelopment to earn points towards the Circle of Excellence.

LEADERSHIP & CONTRIBUTION

I do not remember my committee history with RAR. How can I verify that information?
Go to RARealtors.com/account to access your Member Hub. Login and view your Lists/Committees on the My Info tab for a full list of your committee participation.

I do not know if I have given my $99 Fair Share contribution to RPAC or a REAP contribution this calendar year. How can I verify that information?
Go to RARealtors.com/account to access your Member Hub. Login and view Billing on the My Info tab for a full list of all payments you have made to RPAC or REAP.

I have never been in the Leadership Development Academy, on a committee or on the board. It's too late to apply for these opportunities this year. What should I do?

That's okay! There is no point minimum in the Leadership & Contribution category. If you are able to earn a combined 100 points in the other categories, you will still be considered for the Circle of Excellence.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

What nonprofit boards can I serve on that qualify?
501c(3) organizations such as religious, educational, charitable, scientific, literary, testing for public safety, to foster national or international amateur sports competition, or prevention of cruelty to children or animal organizations.

What is considered a volunteer activity? How many hours of volunteer service does it require?
We are not seeking a minimum number of hours of service per year. Since there are many ways that our members volunteer their time, include a full history of your volunteerism over the year and from there you can assign points based off of what you include in your application.

I coach little league/serve as a Room Parent at a school/volunteer with my church. Are these activities considered volunteer activities for the Circle of Excellence?
Absolutely. If you are unsure if any of your volunteer time would not be considered within our criteria, please email Programs@RARealtors.com and we will verify it.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

What are the benefits I earn as an honoree in the Circle of Excellence?
Honorees will receive a free headshot, recognition in the RAR lobby, an electronic badge for online display, recognition on RAR social media, recognition at the Spring Fling reception, and complimentary registration for certain RAR events.

How can I market myself using my Circle of Excellence honor?
Realtors can advance not only their proficiency but their marketability through the Circle of Excellence. Honorees will be able to identify themselves to the public through the Circle of Excellence to promote themselves as a well-rounded real estate professional.

APPLICATIONS

How do I apply?
Applications are available each Fall. An online form will be available on RARealtors.com/ProfessionalDevelopment.

How much does it cost to apply?
There is no cost for application. Costs will only incur from class registrations or RPAC/REAP contributions.

When do applications open?
Applications open each Fall.

I have more than the maximum amount of points in a category. Should I continue to list all applicable qualifications?
That is up to you. We recommend listing all relevant criteria.

What sale volume or leasing production criteria must be met?
Applicants for the Circle of Excellence are not required to meet a certain criterion regarding sales or leasing production. The Circle of Excellence focuses on members who are committed to their professional growth.

Can I apply if I have had an MLS rules and regulations violation or participated in an arbitration dispute during the calendar year?
MLS violations and arbitrations do not affect the Circle of Excellence application process.