

Greater Northwoods MLS Guidelines

05/2022

The following is a compilation of policies and rules often encountered by brokers and agents interfacing with the MLS system. Refer to the actual governing documents for the most current rules. If further clarification is required please contact the MLS Coordinator at the Board offices: (715)356-3400 or northwoodsrealtors@gmail.com

- **Listing completeness**

- Listings need to be entered into MLS with complete information to the extent it is available. *A listing agreement, when filed with the Greater Northwoods Multiple Listing Service by the listing broker, shall be complete in every detail which is ascertainable as specified on the property data online form.* (R&R Sec. 1.2)
- Entered listing data becomes property of GNMLS and may not be removed except as needed for corrections. (R&R Sec. 11, P&P Sec. 4.E)
- Lot sizes must be listed for the sale of real property, not for personal property only such as a mobile home in a park. (P&P Sec. 6.T)
- The actual address / fire number is required for all improved properties unless written instruction is provided from the seller to withhold the address. (P&P Sec. 6.G If confidential use: "ON" Hwy 51 or if it is one house on Dove Ln, use Off CTH A for example. The listing address must specify the actual taxing municipality where the property is located as to Town, County, State.
- Display City field may be used to designate the zip code city or other nearby community for portal search purposes.
- The property description is to contain a minimum of 200 characters describing the property for sale. (P&P Sec. 6.A)
- All information, including photos, copy, documents and other information submitted to the MLS must represent a true picture. (NAR Ethics Article 12)
- Property Type must accurately depict the real estate offered for sale or lease. Single Family Detached denotes a single living unit not attached to another living unit or sharing any structural components and must include the land beneath the living unit. SFD may be any construction type if permanently connected to the land on a foundation or basement. Unless off-grid utilities are provided a SFD should be permanently connected to water/sewer/electric utilities. Personal property, such as a travel trailer as defined by the Wisconsin DOT, does not qualify as a SFD. A manufactured home as defined by HUD and including a HUD manufacturing tag may if the sale includes land it is affixed to.
 - All Condominium properties MUST have the Title field include Condo, Condo fees and docs must be disclosed, and the first line of Remarks should include the name of the registered Condo association. Legal description includes the condo development name as registered.
- Bathrooms are either Half (toilet and sink) or Full (toilet, sink, tub and/or shower).
- Bedrooms guide (unless local code/assessor overrules). Minimum 70 sq ft, no less than 7 ft horizontally in any direction. Must include a door to exterior or window with minimum clear exit space of 20x24 inches and a sill no more than 44 inches from the floor. Must be able to open window from the inside, including screens or security bars. Cannot be accessed solely by walking through another bedroom. Must be finished comparably with other finished areas. Septic system must be sized to accommodate the advertised number of bedrooms unless the discrepancy

is clearly disclosed. For ventilation and light the glazed (glass) area should equal at least 8% of the net floor area (UDC-SPS 321.05)

- Vacant land may have improvements such as utilities, grading, garages or other non-living units but should not have un-condemned living quarters on the property. The local assessor may determine if the property is taxed with improvements as living quarters or as vacant land and personal property.
 - Room matrix is to be completed. If dimensions are unknown use a “x” in dimensions to designate the location on the appropriate level. Actual dimensions are very important to buyers and the completeness of data.
- **Late listings**
 - Listings need to be entered into MLS within 5 business days of the contract becoming effective (either the last signature is applied or a future effective date. If late, please file a [Waiver form](#) with explanation and possible documentation. **NAR Policy 8.0 requires listings be entered sooner if marketed. GNMLS requires entry PRIOR to any public marketing such as posting a yard sign or contacting an agent outside your firm, social media, or more than one-on-one contact with your own customers. No exceptions can be made. An office exclusive listing requires a listing addendum be signed by sellers and provided to the MLS promptly with other documentation and waiver.(P&P Sec. 3.A, B)
 - **Photos**
 - A minimum of 1 photo of the property needs to be included in the MLS listing. The photo must be a current, accurate representation of the property. For condos and single family units at least one included photo must be a clear view of the exterior of the primary structure. Generic/stock photos of trees, land or shoreline is not representative of that property, nor is a 3-year old photo. Photos of lots should be unique to that specific lot. Photos may not be used from a previous listing without permission. Photos and written copy are automatically the copyrighted property of the creator. Rights can only be legally transferred in writing. Photos can only be of the property offered for sale, not nearby attractions, views, etc. Photos may not contain For Sale signs or any other broker identification or branding. Good photos sell property, so submit quality images. When the season changes, it is advisable to update your photos to keep your property looking "fresh". It is helpful if you caption your photos. (P&P, R&R)
 - **Plagiarizing / Copyrights**
 - Photos or subjective narrative may not be transferred from another broker’s listing without permission from the photo/copy owners. (P&P Sec. 3.C)
 - **Status changes**
 - All status changes need to be entered within 72 hours. The statuses are Active, Active O/C, Pending, Hold, Sold, Expired, or Cancelled.
 - Only property with a valid, active contract may be marketed in the MLS.
 - HOLD status is used if an amendment is signed to remove the property from the MLS for a time or if pre-entered to obtain a listing number.
 - Amendments or other requests to withhold offers are strictly prohibited and a violation of GNMLS rules. If the seller does not want the status to be communicated through the MLS, the listing must be removed from MLS and a [MLS listing waiver](#) and copy of the amendment sent to the MLS office.

- The Pending date is to be entered when the contingencies have been removed, not days or weeks into the future nor upon closing.
 - Bump clause exception: A listing with a pending offer that has a bump clause may remain in Active status with a notice as such entered into the REALTOR® Remarks section.
 - The Closing date is entered upon final closing. (P&P Sec. 3.F, Sec. 4.A)
- **Single listing per address**
 - A property listing may be represented in the MLS by only one broker because only Exclusive Right and Exclusive Agency contracted properties may be marketed. Offers of compensation to potential procuring-cause brokers must be communicated in the MLS and only one broker has the authority to offer compensation. (R&R Sec. 1)
 - A property may be marketed as both residential and commercial as long as both are accurate representations. If a listing is entered in the MLS Database in both the residential and commercial categories, only one of the listings may be claimed as sold, (The other listing is then cancelled) unless the Participant chooses to divide the sales price between both listings. (P&P Sec. 4.B)
 - Residential property offered in multiple acreage configurations may be represented in the MLS by up to a maximum of three (3) listing numbers. Other configuration possibilities may be described in the property description remarks or supporting documents section. If the street address is the same use the “Unit” field to distinguish listings ie. Unit = “House”, Unit = “w 2.4 AC” (P&P Sec. 4.C)
 - Only one entry per address / property is acceptable with the exception of the previously allowed listings for divisible properties. Property may not be entered under multiple residential property types. (P&P Sec. 4.D)
 - Properties co-listed between members may be entered only once in the MLS. (P&P Sec. 5.D)
 - Properties co-listed with any non-fee paying licensees may not be entered in the MLS. (P&P Sec 5.C)
 - **One Party Listings**
 - The listing must be filed promptly with the MLS office including first and last pages of listing contract plus Office Exclusive Addendum with a late listing waiver. Following closing the listing may be entered into the MLS system. After the sale is closed (and the other broker has canceled their listing if there is one), enter as a new listing and mark it as sold to receive MLS credit for the sale. All required listing information, including at least one photo must be included. Use remarks to mark Sold before entry and mark as non-arms-length sale as it is not an open market comparable. (P&P Sec 5.B)
 - **Protected Buyer**
 - After the sale is closed and the other broker has canceled their listing, Reopen your original listing and mark it as sold to receive MLS credit for the sale.
 - **Co-list – out of area**
 - A listing co-listed with an out-of-area broker is NOT eligible for entry in the GNMLS. (P&P Sec. 5.C)

- **Non-member listings**
 - At the time of sale enter the listing as you normally would showing yourself as the listing agent/office and close the sale with information as normal, then call the board office to change the listing agent to non-member.
 - The selling agent will get credit for the sale even though the listing was outside of GNMLS.
 - If the property is sold by a non-member, enter the selling agent as non-member when you close. (P&P Sec 5.A)

- **Branding**
 - No broker or agent branding may appear in MLS listings. P&P Sec. 6.A, B, C, D).
 - Description (Remarks) field is reserved for describing the property for sale and may not contain the broker or agent name, phone number, license number, website address or any other information that identifies the broker or leads to another identifying source or third party.
 - No references such as “call ABC Realty or Listing Agent for details” are allowed.
 - No instructions to contact a third party, bank, HUD, homeowner, etc.
 - Virtual tours or other URL links must comply with same restrictions as Description field and photos. No links to YouTube or other sites containing extraneous information in addition to the property data or providing contact info. No voice-over audio giving contact information or agent name.
 - For Sale signs in photos are prohibited.
 - NOTE: Xposure does make some allowance for branded videos and brochures which are not shared when another REALTOR® shares your listing. See Media section of Autoload to add a Video Tour or Marketing Features > Design Center and Custom Link
 - See the end of this document for more details on branding

- **Directions field**
 - Only road directions to the property may be entered in this field. Verbiage such as "Call LO/Listing Agent" etc. is not allowed in this field. No reference can be made to the listing broker/agent or office in this field. (P&P Sec. 6.C)
 - Directions are required to be provided unless the seller requests in writing that they not be displayed.

- **Streets and Lakes**
 - Must be taken from tax bill or plat map.
 - Must be within our current counties - [shown in yellow here](#).
 - Must be recognized by the local municipality. (P&P Sec. 6.F,G)
 - Streets must be named according to GNMLS standards - [click here to view](#). Note that we do not segregate small sections that may run together like Hwy 13/77 or Hwy 51/70, etc. Choose whichever is the most prominent Hwy.
 - Lakes must be on the [DNR PUB-800 recognized lake book](#). All others must be left blank and will be auto-populated as “unnamed”. (P&P Sec. 6.H)
 - Major rivers in our jurisdiction may be added. Creeks and small rivers not in the system should be entered by choosing “Named Creek – See Remarks” and then entering the creek name in the remarks field.
 - Only lakes with frontage or deeded access may be named.

- Deeded Access – the REALTOR® may include the Lake name in the lake field if there is actual deeded lake access, provided the REALTOR® also includes deeded access in the site influence and property description. Shared frontage must be noted in the remarks. (P&P Sec. 6.I)
- **Counties and Townships**
 - No new counties or townships will be added to GNMLS; list as OT-Other.
- **Limited Service Listings**
 - Limited Service listings must be clearly designated by checking the LSL box under Agent Information in data entry and a notation in the REALTOR® Remarks/SPAL field. (P&P Sec. 6.N)
- **Exclusive Agency Listings**
 - Exclusive Agency Listings must be clearly designated by checking the EA box in Broker load and a notation in REALTOR® Remarks/SPAL. (P&P Sec. 6.O)
- **Listing withdrawn from MLS**
 - Broker or seller must provide proof of an agreement to withdraw (cancel) the listing. The seller does not have a unilateral right to demand cancelation without consent of the listing broker. (R&R Sec. 1.5)
- **Expiration**
 - A listing will automatically expire at midnight of the contract expiration date.
 - If the listing has auto expired and you have an extension, changing the expiration date to the new future date will make the listing active.
- **Extensions and renewals**
 - Must be signed by sellers before the original expires.
- **Jurisdiction**
 - Only listings of the designated types of property located within the service area of the GNMLS (Oneida, Iron, Forest, Vilas, Lincoln, Langlade and Price Counties) are required to be submitted to the Service. Listings of property located outside the GNMLS’s service area will be accepted if submitted voluntarily by a Participant, but cannot be required by the Service. (R&R Sec. 1.11)
 - Exempted Listings: If the seller refuses to permit the listing to be disseminated by the Service, the Participant may then take the listing (“office exclusive”) but not disseminate the listing to the Participants. A [listing waiver form](#) must then be filed with the GNMLS board office; the waiver shall be accompanied by signed documentation from the seller. (R&R Sec. 1.3)
- **Broker-owned properties**
 - Must be disclosed in either the general remarks field or in the CSPAL. Since you need to make the disclosure it is best to do this in the general remarks that are displayed on numerous portal websites.
 - If a Participant or any licensee affiliated with a Participant has any ownership interest in a property, that person shall disclose that interest when the listing is filed with the GNMLS. (R&R Sec. 5.1; P&P Sec 6.P)
- **Broker purchase**

- Must be disclosed to the listing broker at first contact exchanging information regarding the seller or transaction.
 - If a Participant or any licensee affiliated with a Participant wishes to acquire an interest in property listed with another Participant, such contemplated interest shall be disclosed, in writing, to the listing broker not later than the time an offer to purchase is submitted to the listing broker. (R&R Sec. 5.2)
- **Compensation**
 - Is an issue to be decided between brokers.
 - MLS listings **MUST** include an offer of compensation as either a percentage of gross sales or a definite dollar amount. NAR recognizes only these two forms of compensation – not variable schemes.
 - This should not be confused with the acceptable “variable commission rate” which must be disclosed and is a case where one rate is paid if the listing broker procures the buyer and a different rate if the buyer comes through a cooperating broker or the seller or to named parties.
 - Policy Letters may be used to communicate differing rates, but must offer a rate (percent of gross sale price or fixed dollar amount).
- **Subscribers**
 - Subscribers must adhere to all rules, the same as Broker/Participants
 - Subscribers transferring to a new firm will be given a new log in id and cannot take listings or PCS contact data with them without a release from the Broker. (P&P Sec. 1.D)
 - Subscribers transferring to a new firm will be issued a new lock box access credentials if the firm participates in the lock box program. Security deposits may also apply. (See P&P appendix A for full lock box program rules.)
 - Brokers are responsible for monthly MLS fees for ALL licensed agents working for them unless under a valid waiver.
- **Electronic Lockboxes**
 - Cards and App codes may never be shared with another person.
 - Boxes are for use only on active residential homes. (P&P appendix A)
- **IDX**
 - See R&R Sec. 18 for IDX/RETS rules. These are for personal websites **ONLY**.
 - IDX data may only be displayed with other Exclusive Right/Agency listings and may not be comingled with FSBO, or other listings not of the same type that GNMLS provides or with other MLS listings where the broker does not have participatory rights.
 - Data may be licensed for non-IDX qualified use.

P&P – Policies and Procedures

R&R – Rules and Regulations

<http://northwoodsrealtors.org/gnmls-members/bylaws-policies/>

MLS Guidelines

http://www.northwoodsrealtors.org/Greater_Northwoods_MLS_Guidelines.pdf

Branding in GNMLS

In general, NO branding is allowed in GNMLS. Nothing that can be shared by another REALTOR should promote yourself to their customer or client.

Examples where branding is NOT permitted:

The use of names, phone numbers, images, logos, instructions to “call me”, “call listing agent (or office)”, “contact LA (or LO)”, URLs, or anything that directs consumers to your firm or other info besides details of the property for sale is not allowed.

NO branding is permitted in the following:

- Autoload step 3 – photos
- Autoload step 4 – media (except the actual video file loaded there)
 - No floorplans or 3D tour links
- Autoload step 5 – documents (no logos, etc. unless access is restricted to your office) The required documents may not be branded for REALTOR office or anyone else
- Autoload step 8 – Data Entry (no virtual tour, remarks, directions, etc. **except special REALTOR to REALTOR remarks)
- No links to Youtube, Vimeo, etc. hosts that include content other than the listing video
 - You may post an UNBRANDED video URL hosted anonymously on sites such as Dropbox, OneDrive, Google Drive, Box, or a custom URL for the property, but not an identifiable (branded) server with your firm or affiliated entities
 - ** Be careful that your link does not identify yourself or firm. With some services you may need to create an anonymous account to put your videos in
- No office Favicon logos may appear in URL addresses in the browser
- No images of signs in a video that identify a REALTOR or firm
- No mention of non-government entities or URLs. MLS does not advertise for builders, auction firms, banks, or others

Exceptions where branding IS permitted:

There are three exceptions in Xposure where sharing restrictions make it OK to brand:

- 1) An actual video (NOT a link) uploaded in Media (step 4) of Autoload.
- 2) A Web Brochure created in the Marketing Features for the listing
- 3) A Custom Link URL may be placed in the Marketing Features for the listing, but do not use hosts (eg: Youtube, Vimeo) that display other content and/or ads with your video. Videos on the GNMLS website should be hosted by a cloud storage service (eg: Dropbox, Google Drive, OneDrive)

For the above exceptions, the PUBLIC will see these videos when viewing your Xposure page or finding the listing on our UpNorthMLS.com website. They will also see them if you send your own listing to someone, but they will not be visible if your listing is shared by other REALTORS.