



April 2, 2020

Priorities and Perspective

Last night we learned from NYSAR that the New York State Empire State Development Office, or ESD, has now determined that residential and commercial real estate showings are essential. **It's very important to understand that this does not mean that it's business as usual.** This is a very limited carve out and agents must adhere to all of the safety and social distancing protocols as dictated by the CDC and New York State which are still in full force and effect.

This determination achieves what many members have been requesting, which is that certain limited services that Realtors perform are truly essential. This is NOT a blanket allowance to resume all normal activities, but rather those activities that are truly essential at this time.

The most important thing during this very chaotic period is that we maintain perspective. Individual firms and agents can and must make informed decisions as to whether it's prudent to show properties or perform other allowable licensed activities. Sellers need to make personal decisions on whether to allow showings if they have any health concerns; same for buyers, landlords and tenants. Everyone needs to use their own best judgement and common sense to make decisions for themselves and their families concerning these matters.

Our understanding is that this change does not preclude agents from benefiting under the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program, including full or partial benefits as determined under the program.

There will be more guidance and FAQ's coming from NYSAR and HGAR concerning the ESD's decision. However, we firmly believe that our number one priority remains containing and ultimately defeating COVID-19. We need to be unwavering in that commitment and do everything within our power to help that effort. The economy and the real estate market will not find sound footing until that priority is achieved.

We will be holding a live remote call for all HGAR members to provide more information and answer questions. We will have Duncan McKenzie, CEO NYSAR, Libby Rentz, VP Finance & Chief of Staff, NYSAR and Kim Jacobs, Executive Director, Community Capital New York participating with us to cover specific topics including the PUA as well as small business loan opportunities. Below is the information to login tomorrow, **Friday, April 3rd, at 10:00 AM.**

<https://www.facebook.com/HGAR.NY/>

We look forward to communicating more with you as information becomes available. In the meantime, please stay safe and be well during these trying times.

Sincerely,

Richard Haggerty, HGAR CEO

Gail Fattizzi, HGAR President