

RCA Commercial Services Accreditation – Frequently Asked Questions

Why would a local association want to become accredited in commercial services?

Accreditation has major benefits for local associations including the following:

- Value added products, programs and services from the RCA.
- Recruitment tool for commercial non-members who perceive local association as providing residential services only.
- Public relations tool for real estate community at large.
- Recognition from NAR, RCA, and peer boards as an organization that runs viable commercial programming.

How do I know if the local association meets the criteria?

First, complete the application to determine what criteria your association currently meets. Contact RCA staff members for assistance with the application process. A local board visit (at NAR's expense) can be arranged where RCA staff members can audit your operation and work together to ensure that you meet the criteria.

Our association wants to become accredited but currently does not meet the criteria. Can RCA help the association get there?

Yes! RCA staff can partner you with another local board who can serve as a mentor to assist in implementing products, programs and services so that you can meet the criteria. The RCA criteria is a "minimal service standard" for running effective commercial programs. It is in RCA's best interests to get as many boards accredited as possible to grow commercial membership at a nationwide level. In other words, if your board is not "there" yet, RCA will assist to help you get there.

Does the RCA Commercial Services Accreditation program mean that "commercial overlay boards" (COBs) are no longer encouraged by RCA?

The RCA Commercial Services Accreditation program was designed to recognize various successful commercial group formats. The decision on whether to be a commercial overlay board (COB) or commercial structure (CS) is best left to the local association. RCA can and will assist wherever needed. It is anticipated that both overlay boards and structures will become accredited and the new "standard" for commercial won't be the *structure* of commercial organization, but rather whether it offers products, programs and services for commercial practitioner's unique needs.

Is RCA imposing new standards on local boards?

No. The RCA Commercial Services Accreditation program is entirely voluntary. Participation is at the discretion of the local organization and is not mandatory. The program is designed to set benchmarks and assist in developing products, programs, and services for commercial practitioners. It is not designed to impose standards.

How does the approval process work?

A workgroup established by RCA made up of staff and members has approved criteria for accreditation approval. RCA staff members have been trained in the accreditation process, but the final approval for RCA certification will come from the RCA Chair (an appointed member of NAR). In the event that your application is not approved, you may appeal the decision with the RCA Chair for review.

What fees are involved in becoming accredited?

There is no application fee. Staff may schedule, based on availability, a consultation with RCA staff to assist in the accreditation process.

How do I get started?

Contact an RCA staff member and work with them to fill out an application. The accreditation process will more than likely involve a visit from an RCA staff member, so getting started today is highly recommended.