

# PRO & HCAR Plan of Merger Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## **How will this merger benefit the membership of both the Pinellas Realtor® Organization (PRO) and Hernando County Association of Realtors® (HCAR)?**

*The merger will benefit both organizations by securing our futures and offering the best customer service to the combined membership. It will enable us to offer more programs, products and services to our growing and diverse membership. In addition, HCAR will retain its identity, building, staff and local feel.*

## **Will my Association membership dues change?**

*Yes. The membership fee will remain the same for REALTOR® members in 2019. All members of PRO, CPAR and HCAR will pay equal dues starting in 2020, currently at \$178 (**HCAR savings \$68.00 annually**). Affiliate Business Partner Member dues are currently \$260 for Primary Members and \$60 for Secondary. Membership dues will be evaluated annually by the Combined PRO Board of Directors and could be raised (or lowered) in the future.*

**Total existing HCAR per REALTOR® member savings is approximately \$227.60 (Membership, MLS & eKEY)**

## **Will the merger affect my MLS?**

*Yes. HCAR members will become subscribers and participants of the regional My Florida Regional MLS (MFRMLS) and will gain all the powerful tools and benefits. There is massive market overlap between Hernando County and the MFRMLS service area, so any members who currently belong to the HCAR MLS and join MFR to get access to the South will now only join MFRMLS and enter listings in one MLS.*

*MFRMLS has approximately 57,000 subscribers and is the largest MLS in Florida and one of the largest in the country. They have a full-time professional staff focused on MLS. The service area covers most of central Florida from the entire West coast to almost entire East coast; as far North as Pasco, Lake, Sumter and West Volusia Counties; South to Punta Gorda-Port Charlotte and Okeechobee; including Puerto Rico.*

*This partnership will also add to our voice at MFRMLS as PRO is a shareholder with several key positions held by a PRO member (President & Treasurer).*

## **Will we still be on FLEX or will our MLS be Matrix with MFRMLS?**

*The HCAR MLS is on FLEX and MFRMLS is on the Matrix platform. You would change from using FLEX to Matrix.*

## **What is the time frame for the MLS transition from FLEX to MFRMLS, and what happens to our access in the meantime?**

*The process should take 4-5 months. As we transition to the MFRMLS Matrix system, it will be necessary to stay on FLEX while MFRMLS processes the listing data and member records. During the transition, HCAR members will be given access to the MFRMLS data through REALTORS Property Resource (RPR), so they can view active listings. HCAR members will be billed quarterly dues February 14 and possibly one more cycle prior to getting in the regular MFRMLS annual dues billing cycle in June/July 2019.*

## **Will my MLS fees change?**

*Yes, starting in mid-2019 the MLS fee for MFRMLS will be invoiced to all members at \$396 annually (**HCAR savings \$114 annually**). Currently HCAR bills for MLS on a quarterly basis. This fee is evaluated each year by the MFRMLS Board of Directors and the Combined PRO Board of Directors and could be raised (or lowered) in the future).*

## **Will I get trained on the Matrix system and MFRMLS tools?**

*Yes, MFRMLS will provide lots of training to ensure HCAR members feel comfortable using the new system. In addition, they have a trainer assigned to our region, and that trainer will come to the HCAR office and do in person training every month. There is also the MFRMLS University, which is a suite of online classes and "How To" resources you can access for free, on demand.*

## **Will there be a sinkhole field in MFRMLS for Hernando County?**

*Yes, MFRMLS has already agreed to add a sinkhole field that can be used for property in Hernando County (or any other Counties in the MFRMLS service area).*

## **Currently we can see Citrus County data. Will we still have access to that if we join MFRMLS?**

*Not through MFRMLS. We have a datashare agreement between HCAR and the Citrus Association that allows this information exchange. MFRMLS does not allow datashare agreements. MFRMLS only gives subscribers access to the data in their regional footprint.*

*The REALTORS® Association of Citrus County turned their feed to the Florida Realtors product called MLS Advantage back on as of February 12, 2019 (though they could decide to remove their feed again). Every other MLS in the state also sends a feed of listings to MLS Advantage, so you can look at listings but not enter them through this free resource. You can also use REALTORS® Property Resource, another free tool, to look at listings, but not to enter them.*

**Currently we can see the Hernando County Property Appraiser's data and the GIS map created for HCAR's MLS. Will we still have access to that?**

*No. MFRMLS has its own tool, which the HCAR MLS currently has as well, called IMAPP. You can get physical addresses and look up Appraiser data, but you cannot report sinkholes to the Hernando County Property Appraiser via IMAPP. The partnership between the Hernando County Property Appraiser and HCAR would end. However, MFRMLS will grant the Appraiser access to currently listed properties, but not solds, which they currently have access to.*

**Will I still be able to set up a RETS feed from the MLS to my own website?**

*Yes. MFRMLS offers the same seamless interface for RETS feeds that our current MLS does, at no cost.*

**How will changes to the MLS be made moving forward, like adding fields, tools, or the way something is set up in the way the system is programmed?**

*Any changes will go through the MFRMLS governance structure, which includes an MLS Advisory Committee, other committees aligned with specific functions (budget and finance, operations), and the MFRMLS Board of Directors. HCAR will have one seat on the MFRMLS Board of Directors, along with representatives from the 14 other shareholder Associations. We will not be able to make changes to the way the MLS is programmed, functions or fields at the local level.*

**Does MFRMLS impose fines for MLS violations, and how are those reported?**

*Yes. MFRMLS has a method for reporting possible MLS violations within Matrix, just like HCAR does in FLEX MLS. MFRMLS has a process for handling violations and levies penalties for infractions automatically. Unlike here at HCAR, these fines can be large (\$500), and if you have violated the MLS rules and regulations, it is difficult to get out of fines. Though no one enjoys getting or paying fines, if you violated the rules, there are ramifications, and that ultimately leads to a more professional, competent and ethical REALTOR® community and cleaner MLS. Many members are frustrated when others are violating rules and nothing is being done about it.*

**Will I have access to more education and training?**

*Yes. The combined organizations will offer more continuing education, certifications and designations. The new plan will also allow members of PRO and HCAR to access all the NAR Designations and Certifications at extremely reduced rates. In addition, equipment will be installed at the PRO and HCAR buildings that will allow us to live stream courses and make education very accessible.*

## Current PRO education certifications/designations and their costs

Designation and Certification Course					
**as of April 24, 2018					
Course	Retail Cost	PRO/CPAR Member Discounted Cost	Course	Retail Cost	PRO/CPAR Member Discounted Cost
CIPS Course Royalty (Individual) (CIPS)	\$ 147.00	\$ 50.00	Certification Fees (one time application)		
CIPS Institute Royalty (5 consecutive days) (CIPS)	\$ 445.00	\$ 150.00	Short Sales & Foreclosure Resource (SFR)	\$ 130.00	\$ 20.00
Accredited Buyer's Representative (ABR)	\$ 295.00	\$ 60.00	Resort & Second Home Property Specialist (RSPS)	\$ 125.00	\$ 30.00
aCertified Real Estate Team Specialist	\$ 145.00	\$ 60.00	Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA)	\$ 130.00	\$ 30.00
Discovering Commercial Course (Separate License Fee)	\$ 49.00	-	Military Relocation Professional (MRP)	\$ 130.00	\$ 30.00
Generating Buyer and Seller Leads	\$ 115.00	\$ 20.00	At Home with Diversity (AHWD)	\$ 99.00	\$ 30.00
Generation Buy	\$ 115.00	\$ 20.00	Real Estate Neotiation Expert (RENE)	\$ 295.00	\$ 60.00
Investing in Real Estate: Becoming an Investor	\$ 115.00	\$ 20.00	e-PRO Day 1	\$ 129.00	\$ 30.00
NAR Green Designation - Day 1	\$ 149.00	\$ 30.00	e-PRO 2 Day	\$ 219.00	\$ 60.00
NAR Green Designation - Day 2	\$ 149.00	\$ 30.00			
NAR Safety Course 3 hour	-	\$ -	Florida Realtors		
New Home Construction	\$ 115.00	\$ 20.00	GRI (100 Series)	\$ 301.00	\$ 120.00
Real Estate Marketing Reboot	\$ 115.00	\$ 20.00	GRI (200 Series)	\$ 258.00	\$ 120.00
Seller Representative Specialist (SRS)	\$ 295.00	\$ 60.00	GRI (300 Series)	\$ 258.00	\$ 120.00
Seniors Real Estate Specialist (SRES)	\$ 295.00	\$ 60.00			
Successful Relocation Representation	\$ 115.00	\$ 20.00			
CRS Courses (one day)	\$ 180.00	\$ 89.00			

### Will the merger affect my Supra eKEY and Lockbox?

*Only slightly. The existing contracts will be combined so the eKEY will cover all the expanded geographical areas of the combined organizations. Plus any existing key code will be included in all members eKEY programming.*

*Current PRO Supra ekey coverage areas include: Pinellas, Hillsborough, Pasco, Sarasota, Manatee, Venice, Punta Gorda-Port Charlotte, Hernando and West Volusia Counties.*

***Supra has confirmed that the existing HCAR lockbox inventory will become part of the PRO agreement and the existing boxes will be grandfathered in. This means that any lockboxes HCAR currently has in our inventory will remain ours at no additional cost aside from the monthly key fees you have been paying. We will need to determine how lockboxes will be allocated and divided amongst the membership.***

***In addition, you will be allowed a one-for-one exchange when new technology is released and when the next lockbox exchange takes place. Any new members who join after the merge will purchase their lockboxes at the PRO rate of \$123 per brand new box including tax, or \$112.35 for a refurbished box including tax.***

## **Will my Supra eKEY fees change?**

*Yes, the eKEY fees will adjust according to the PRO Supra contract terms. Due to the increased membership of the combined organizations, there will be a slight drop in the monthly key fee for HCAR members. The eKEY fee will be \$16.86 per month with a \$50 activation fee for new keys (**HCAR savings \$45.60 annually**). The annual Active Key fee will be \$236.88 (**HCAR Savings \$11.95 annually**). Key fees will be evaluated annually by the Combined PRO Board of Directors and could be raised (or lowered) in the future.*

## **Will HCAR continue as its own Association?**

*No. The Plan of Merger calls for HCAR to become a chapter of the Pinellas Realtor<sup>®</sup> Organization, but the name will still be used for the Chapter.*

## **If HCAR decides it no longer wants to be a Chapter of PRO, can we get out if the relationship down the road?**

*No. A change to the Pinellas Realtor<sup>®</sup> Organization charter with the National Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> will place HCAR underneath PRO as a Chapter. NAR is the only one who can change that moving forward, and the likelihood of them doing so is marginal.*

## **What will happen to the HCAR building?**

*The current HCAR office location and building will remain the same. It can be re-evaluated in the future to make sure it meets the needs of the Hernando County Chapter and member traffic to this location for classes, meetings and events. Any future decisions relating to the sale or lease of the HCAR building or land must be approved by a committee seeded with half HCAR members. The building will become part of the combined Association's assets (Pinellas Realtor<sup>®</sup> Organization). Potentially the building could be sold, space rented out to a third party, or downsized in the future.*

## **How will the HCAR Chapter be governed?**

*HCAR will have a Chapter Counsel similar to our current Board of Directors. In fact, for the remainder of 2019, the current Board of Directors will remain intact as-is. Moving forward the HCAR Chapter Counsel will consist of 5 total members instead of the 9 on our current Board of Directors. HCAR will have two Director Positions on the combined PRO Board of Directors – the Chapter Counsel Chair and one of the Chapter Counsel Directors.*

*We are working on exactly how the Chapter Counsel Chair and Directors will be chosen, but the membership of the Combined Pinellas Realtor Organization will vote for all HCAR Chapter Counsel representatives. The positions are not appointed, but based on a member vote. We are working to ensure that the members representing Hernando County are working primarily in Hernando County or*

*another way to ensure that Hernando County is being represented by the members who are invested in this community.*

**Will both PRO and HCAR have Florida Realtors® and NAR Directors?**

*Yes, the number of Florida Realtors® Directors will increase with the combined membership, along with the NAR Directors. Both PRO and HCAR memberships will be eligible for selection by the combined PRO Board of Directors for these Director positions at the State and National level.*

**Will the HCAR Chapter office hours change?**

*No, the HCAR Chapter office will be open from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Some of the holiday closures will change to align with PRO and CPAR’s holiday schedule.*

**Will all members be able to use the services at all locations?**

*Yes. All PRO, CPAR and HCAR members will have access to all REALTOR® member services at all three locations, as we will be one organization.*

**Who will be the CEO of the combined organizations?**

*David B. Bennett, CMLX1, RCE, CAE will be the President & CEO of the combined organizations. David is the current PRO CEO and has been serving there for 20 years.*

**Will the professional staff still be in place?**

*Yes. HCAR staff positions are protected for one year in the Plan of Merger. Those positions can be reevaluated by the Combined Association CEO at any time after the first year. The combined staff will remain in place at each existing location to serve the membership. Listed below is the current staff and their contact information.*

**Central Pasco Association of Realtors (CPAR) Staff Team**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Job Title</u>
Cheryl Gundry	Member Liaison
Sandy Ingram	Member Liaison
Angie Newman	Member Liaison

## Hernando County Association of Realtors (HCAR) Staff Team

Name	Job Title
Linda Vilar	Director of Member Services
Madelyn Hermetet	Director of Finance
Cindy Litwinsky	Administrative Assistant/Supra

## Pinellas Realtor Organization (PRO) Staff Team

Name	Job Title	E-Mail
Cote, Daniel	PROSites Web Designer / Webmaster	<a href="mailto:dcote@tampabayrealtor.com">dcote@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
Darroch, Cherie	Director of Member Services	<a href="mailto:cdarroch@tampabayrealtor.com">cdarroch@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
Davalos, Deanna	Member Liaison / Affiliates	<a href="mailto:dodom@tampabayrealtor.com">dodom@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
Derrick, Linda	Manager Prof Development / Prof Standards	<a href="mailto:lderrick@tampabayrealtor.com">lderrick@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
Emerson, Angela	Director Prof Development / Prof Standards	<a href="mailto:aemerson@tampabayrealtor.com">aemerson@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
Farrell, Joe	Director of Public Affairs	<a href="mailto:jfarrell@tampabayrealtor.com">jfarrell@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
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Jacobson, Stella	Member Liaison/NMW	<a href="mailto:sjacobson@tampabayrealtor.com">sjacobson@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
Katz, Diana	Member Liaison / Rentals / Events Coor	<a href="mailto:dkatz@tampabayrealtor.com">dkatz@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
Marvin, Dylan	PROSites Web Designer	<a href="mailto:dmarvin@tampabayrealtor.com">dmarvin@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
Matos, Elaine	Member Concierge / Store	<a href="mailto:ematos@tampabayrealtor.com">ematos@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
Norton, Travis	Communications & Advocacy Manager	<a href="mailto:tnorton@tampabayrealtor.com">tnorton@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
Olmstead, Robert	Director of Finance	<a href="mailto:rolmstead@tampabayrealtor.com">rolmstead@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
Simmons, Kim	Communications & Affiliate Relations Dir	<a href="mailto:ksimmons@tampabayrealtor.com">ksimmons@tampabayrealtor.com</a>
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Yinger, Sandy	Executive Assistant	<a href="mailto:syinger@tampabayrealtor.com">syinger@tampabayrealtor.com</a>