

Virus not a holiday from promises

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C OVID-19 has made a lot of realtors work on their front lawn or, as a last resort, even to clean up the garage. For those still trying to make real estate happen, here are some thoughts:

First, the showing of occupied houses may stop. Not slow down. Stop. That observation is not just for property on the market for sale, but even for lease. Even though every lease requires a tenant to allow rental property to be shown to others during the final weeks of a tenant's occupancy, I have advised realtors not to even think about going into a unit without a tenant's invitation during our COVID-19 holiday. Even with that invitation, I would be prepared to make the same rules I would make to a cat burglar. Act like you don't belong, and by all

means, don't stay long.

For those attempting to sell a home you live in, encourage a virtual tour. You certainly have a right to let someone tour your home if you want to, and you probably won't get a contract unless you do. But you have no legal duty to open your home during COVID-19 even if you signed a listing agreement that requires you to allow the home to be shown.

Every rental manager is allowing a tenant to leave, then cleaning the unit, and then making inspections only of a vacant unit.

Second, for realtors, don't embarrass yourself on your own contract. Most offers are structured to give the offeree only a short period of time to accept, to make inspection, and to close. In this market, requiring action of others in a short period of time will cause those requirements to either be ignored, or the contract to be breached.

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