



Sunday Column

By Kim Bragman, 2020 Chairman

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Guide to House Hunting During COVID-19

Buying a home is a big decision and involves a lot of people from your REALTOR® to the lender as well as inspectors and other home professionals, not to mention any family or friends you want accompanying you on home tours. And even in the best circumstances, it can get a little daunting. During the current coronavirus pandemic, you may be wondering if home buying is even an option right now.

Fortunately, home buying is still on the table. In fact, the governor declared real estate an essential service meaning transactions are continuing to move forward and you can pursue that house you've had your eye on.

So what should you know when house hunting during a pandemic? Here's your essential guide.

1. **Work with a REALTOR®.** A REALTOR® is your expert guide. Even during the best of times, the home buying process can cause confusion and worry. Having a knowledgeable advocate who is there to walk you through each step and calm any anxieties is a must. They'll also be able to help you adhere to any sanitation and safety requirements you deem necessary, and make sure you can find the home that's right for you, even in the midst of a pandemic.
2. **Start your home search online.** You're likely already doing this, but in the age of social distancing, it is more important than ever to search for homes online before visiting them in person. This allows you the opportunity to figure out which property you're most interested in before going to visit in person. And the good news is, more homes are offering virtual tours so you can get a close-up and realistic view of the property without having to leave your couch. You can also scroll through online photos of the home, from different angles, to get a feel for it. And once you've landed on your favorite, ask your REALTOR® what your options are for visiting.
3. **Go digital with your transaction.** REALTORS® have access to electronic documents that allow buyers and sellers to sign paperwork remotely so they can minimize in-person contact. This includes disclosure forms, representation agreements, contracts and closing documents. And in Texas, it's allowable for a notary and signer to execute closing documents while in different locations.

Don't let concerns about COVID-19 deter you from your homeownership goals. There are still many homes available, and with interest rates so low, it's a great time to buy.

For more information on buying and selling your home, visit SABOR.com and work with a San Antonio area REALTOR®.

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