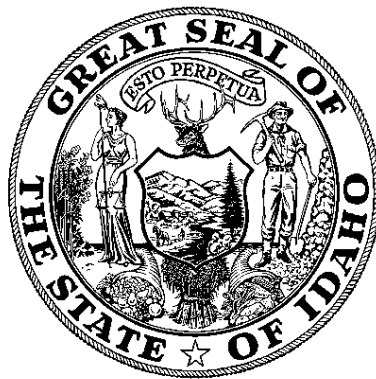


# Idaho Real Estate Commission



2011 Strategic Plan  
(July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2015)

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Idaho Real Estate Commission is to protect the public interest in regulated real estate transactions by the administration of the Idaho Real Estate License Law and Rules and the Idaho Subdivided Lands Disposition Act, including licensing and education of real estate brokers and sales associates, enforcement of license law violations, and registration of timeshare products.

## **VISION**

IREC strives to elevate the real estate industry to the highest standards possible and provide outstanding customer service to licensees and the public through quality education programs, strict adherence to statutory licensing requirements, fair and impartial discipline, and courteous and efficient communication.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Idaho Real Estate Commission was created in 1947 as a self-supporting unit of state government. The Commission is charged with administering and enforcing all provisions of the Idaho Real Estate License Law (Idaho Code 54-2001, *et seq.*) as well as the Subdivided Lands Disposition Act (Idaho Code 55-1801, *et seq.*)

The Commission consists of four Commissioners appointed by the Governor for terms lasting four years. The license law requires that Commissioners be actively licensed real estate brokers with at least five years of broker experience. Commissioners are appointed to represent four geographic districts in the State of Idaho.

The current Commission includes:

<b>Pam Trees, Chair (Lewiston)</b>	Term expires July 2011
<b>Marvis Brice, Vice Chair (Rupert)</b>	Term expires July 2012
<b>Andy Enrico, Member (Boise)</b>	Term expires July 2013
<b>Kelly Fisher, Member (Pocatello)</b>	Term expires July 2014

IREC has 16 full time staff positions based in the Boise office, including one inspector (auditor) who travels around the State to review brokerage trust account records and transaction files. Three clerical positions are presently vacant. IREC also has a 6-member Education Council which provides advice and review for Commission education matters.

## **EXTERNAL FACTORS (BEYOND AGENCY CONTROL)**

### **The Economy and Housing Market**

The real estate industry has made a paradigm shift from the rapid growth of the early 2000's to a market where approximately half of all transactions involve "short sales" or bank-owned properties. Another year of declining property values has placed considerable stress on the

industry. After several years of rapid growth in the licensee base, license numbers have experienced a steady decline from an all time high of 13,000 licensees in 2007 to approximately 9,800 licensees as of July 1, 2011. The wide swing in numbers of licensees over the past several years has made it challenging to plan for appropriate staffing levels and office costs, due to the time required to go through the state budget process.

The Enforcement Department has been exceptionally busy handling complaints and license law violations and staying on top of fast-paced changes in the real estate industry and marketplace. The Commission has also seen an uptick in more serious violations, such as forgery and embezzlement. Because of the difficult market conditions and reduced income streams, a higher percentage of licensees have been unwilling to stipulate to routine license law violations, resulting in increased workloads and expense for the Commission.

### **Recruitment and Retention of Employees**

Recognizing the budget constraints facing the State and the inability to provide pay increases for staff, IREC continues to search for creative ways to reward employee achievement and boost morale without spending money.

## **KEY AREAS OF SUCCESS**

### **Technology**

The Commission has taken a quantum leap forward in the area of technology. All Commission files, including licensee records, are now maintained electronically, providing a back-up for important documents and a significant savings in office and storage space. Applicant fingerprints are now scanned and transmitted electronically at the exam testing centers rather than by submitting paper fingerprint cards to the agency for transmittal by hand to Idaho State Police. The agency's online services were completely revamped and enhancements added to allow licensees to renew a license, view continuing education records, make changes to contact information, and add or remove associates from the office at any time of the day or night. In addition, course providers and instructors now renew certifications, submit course schedules, and record course completion information for licensees directly through the online services.

The Commission's on-site staff IT technician, together with a mutually beneficial, long-term relationship with the developer of its proprietary licensing system, allow the agency to identify and quickly implement improvements to its online licensing application. In addition, the agency maintains its own electronic document management system and an up-to-date, attractive website presence. The expertise of on-site IT staff has resulted in identification of efficiencies in processes, hardware, and software which otherwise would likely have gone unrecognized. The rest of the office staff receives prompt, personalized attention for troubleshooting and updates and is able to maintain a high level of productivity due to prompt resolution of equipment malfunctions or security issues.

### **Efficiency**

The increased use of the Commission's online services for license changes and renewals and the adoption of electronic fingerprinting have resulted in a tremendous savings in staff time,

allowing the Commission to leave three clerical positions unfilled (nearly 20% reduction in FTEs over the last 2 years). Further significant cost savings have been realized by eliminating the requirement for licensees to display paper license certificates, transitioning to postcards in lieu of first class letters for most Commission mailings, and utilizing centralized multi-function network printer/copiers rather than individual desk top printers. Commission staff is proud of the efficiencies that have been adopted over the past several years, and look forward to identifying additional ways to streamline operations in the future.

### **COMMISSION GOALS**

After identification of critical issues, licensee wants and needs, and agency constraints, IREC Staff have identified the following goals:

**GOAL 1: ENSURE THAT IDAHO REAL ESTATE LICENSE LAW AND RULES ARE CONSISTENT WITH INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICES AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST.**

**Objective A: Improve analysis of national industry and regulatory trends by actively participating in Association of Real Estate License Law Officials (ARELLO).**

**Objective B: Participate in work groups with Commissioners, Commission staff, Idaho Association of REALTORS®, and other relevant stakeholders to identify issues for possible license law changes.**

**Objective C: Investigate and determine need for and desirability of regulation of property managers or leasing activity.**

**Measurement:** Number of ARELLO conferences attended each year  
**Benchmark:** Two  
**How Established:** Commissioner direction

**Measurement:** Number of work group meetings between IREC and the IAR each year  
**Benchmark:** One  
**How Established:** Agency workload

**Measurement:** Gather statistics and report to Commissioners and industry on other states' licensing requirements and issues related to unregulated property management and leasing activity in Idaho  
**Benchmark:** July 2012  
**How Established:** Inquiries and complaints received from the public and real estate licensees

**GOAL 2: IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND RELEVANCE OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR NEW AND EXISTING LICENSEES.**

**Objective A: Implement a review process for courses and licensing exams.**

- 1. Conduct curriculum evaluations of all Commission-developed and continuing education courses on a rotating basis.**
- 2. Evaluate sales associate and broker prelicense examinations to ensure licensing exams correctly measure minimum competencies.**
- 3. Develop a process for monitoring certified instructors and course providers for quality and compliance with Idaho license law and rules.**

**Objective B: Identify a mechanism to ensure a pool of qualified instructors for all broker prelicense courses and to ensure the courses are taught throughout the state on a regular basis.**

**Measurement:** Number of sales associate and broker prelicense courses reviewed and updated each year for relevance and current laws

**Benchmark:** 25%

**How Established:** Agency workload

**Measurement:** Number of certified instructors and course providers monitored each year

**Benchmark:** 25%

**How Established:** Course and instructor evaluations; inquiries and complaints received from the public

**Measurement:** Number of exam review workshops conducted each year

**Benchmark:** One state exam and one national exam item writing workshop

**How Established:** Industry standard

**Measurement:** Number of job analysis surveys completed each year

**Benchmark:** One

**How Established:** Industry standard

**Measurement:** Gather information and report to Commissioners on the desirability of implementing a situational type broker exam

**Benchmark:** July 2013

**How Established:** Industry trends; agency workload

**Measurement:** Minimum number of “live” offerings of each broker prelicense course statewide each year

**Benchmark:** Two

**How Established:** Anecdotal information from broker candidates and IREC course providers

**GOAL 3: IMPROVE ADMINISTRATION OF LICENSING PROCESS TO PROMPTLY AND EFFICIENTLY PROCESS LICENSING PAPERWORK.**

**Objective A: Upgrade Commission website and online services to facilitate online license renewals and changes.**

**Objective B: Ensure all eligible licenses are issued timely and accurately.**

**Measurement:** Number of new license applications and notice of change forms processed and approved within ten (10) business days from receipt

**Benchmark:** 100%

**How Established:** Agency workload and staff goals

**Measurement:** Number of license renewals and license changes processed through the online system on an ongoing basis

**Benchmark:** 95%

**How Established:** Feedback from licensees; agency workload and goals

**GOAL 4: ASSURE CONSISTENT LICENSEE COMPLIANCE WITH REAL ESTATE LICENSE LAW.**

**Objective A: Review regulated business activities and practices on an ongoing basis.**

**Objective B: Process complaints against licensees in a thorough, fair and timely manner to maintain public and licensee confidence in our system.**

**Measurement:** Number of investigations completed within 6 months from opening of case

**Benchmark:** 100%

**How Established:** Agency workload

**Measurement:** Maintain bi-annual audit schedule for Idaho brokerages

**Benchmark:** 50% per year

**How Established:** Agency workload; ability to retain inspector

**GOAL 5: DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN TECHNOLOGY, PROCEDURES AND STAFF TRAINING TO ENSURE EFFICIENT OPERATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE.**

**Objective A: Improve office records management by implementing and maintaining an electronic document management system.**

**Objective B: Implement use of ARELLO time share registry for administration of Idaho Subdivided Lands Act.**

**Objective C: Provide outstanding customer service to licensees and the public.**

- 1. Promptly respond to phone call and e-mail inquiries**
- 2. Improve licensee and public self-service abilities (online information and transactions)**
- 3. Maintain and improve knowledge base of staff to assure that vacancies and absences do not disrupt effectiveness**

**Measurement:** Maintain IREC files electronically

**Benchmark:** 100%

**How Established:** Agency workload

**Measurement:** 80% of time share and subdivision registrations submitted through the ARELLO Time Share Registry

**Benchmark:** June 30, 2011

**How Established:** Industry trends

**Measurement:** Number of license and education histories obtained by licensees through the online services by June 30, 2012

**Benchmark:** 50%

**How Established:** Commissioner and staff goals

**Measurement:** Implement mechanism for licensee to pay civil penalty fines by logging in to the online services

**Benchmark:** June 30, 2012

**How Established:** Staff goals and feedback from licensees and staff

**Measurement:** Number of callers or e-mail inquiries who are able to make contact with a staff member within one business day of contacting the commission office

**Benchmark:** 100%

**How Established:** Feedback from consumers, licensees, commissioners, and staff

**Measurement:** Number of staff with up-to-date written procedures/desk manuals for job functions

**Benchmark:** 100%

**How Established:** Agency workload

**Measurement:** Develop an IREC Intranet with online policies and procedures

**Benchmark:** June 30, 2012

**How Established:** Agency workload; feedback from staff

**GOAL 6: IMPROVE QUALITY OF COMMUNICATION WITH LICENSEES, EDUCATORS AND THE PUBLIC REGARDING THE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION.**

**Objective A: Regularly publish and distribute information via regular mail and online.**

**Objective B: Conduct Commission meetings throughout the State of Idaho.**

**Objective C: Improve the IREC website to provide more useful information to licensees and the public.**

**Measurement:** Number of Real Estate newsletters published each year

**Benchmark:** Two

**How Established:** Agency workload

**Measurement:** Number of “broker bulletin” newsletters sent each year

**Benchmark:** Two

**How Established:** Commissioner direction; agency workload

**Measurement:** Number of e-mail newsletters to membership sent each year

**Benchmark:** 12

**How Established:** Agency workload

**Measurement:** Number of monthly Commission meetings held in other districts of the State outside Boise each year

**Benchmark:** Two

**How Established:** Feedback from licensees; Commissioner direction

**Measurement:** Frequency of review of agency website and social networking presence

**Benchmark:** 12

**How Established:** Agency workload