



## Virtual Office Website (VOW) Basics

- Potential VOW operators must inform MLSListings whenever a VOW is to be established, so that the MLS can insure that proper guidelines are followed.
- In order to operate a VOW website, a Participant Broker must have a bulk data license or use the services of an Authorized VOW Provider (AVP) to supply the VOW with MLS data. (A list of pre-approved AVPs will be available from MLSListings.)
- Public access to a VOW can only come after a two-step authentication process. First the potential client must register their information with the VOW site (including a user name, password and a current email address). The VOW site then will send a confirmation email to the submitted email address which confirms that the client has agreed to the VOW “Terms of Service) such as located in Section 12.20.3.d of the MLS Rules and Regulations. Passwords must expire within 120 days, although they may be renewed by the VOW operator.
- Sellers will be able to opt out their individual listings and keep them from appearing on VOW sites. However, the Seller will must realize that their listing will be excluded from any and all publically accessible Internet sites that the MLS provides listing data to (e.g.: REALTOR.com, etc.)

## What are the key differences between VOW websites and IDX websites?

IDX	VOW
no login required; public access	login required (with strict requirements); creates broker-client relationship
active, pending and sold listings	off-market listings also available (for one-on-one communications only)
contains most property information	contains all property information (school info, List Date/DOM; more financials)
allows general statistics and AVMs	also allows "blogging" by third parties
specific design/layout rules; logos	more flexible page design
allows for blanket broker opt-out	allows for seller opt-out by listing (requires opt-out from ALL Internet advertising)
requires listing agent/office identification	requires listing agent/office identification

## Other Key Policy Changes:

- The definition of a broker participant has changed. Previously, the MLS Rules stated that a broker participant must be “capable of offering and accepting compensation in the capacity of a real estate broker.” This requirement has been changed to state that a real estate broker participant must act for an individual or corporation who “actively endeavors to make or accept offers of cooperation and compensation with respect to properties of the type that are listed on the MLS.”

**For more information about VOWs:**

- All official NAR documents can be found at:  
[http://www.realtor.org/law\\_and\\_policy/doj/nar\\_doj](http://www.realtor.org/law_and_policy/doj/nar_doj)
- View additional documents in the MLSListings Pro Reference Library, particularly the [Internet Display Guidelines](#)
- Call MLSListings Compliance Department at 408-874-0200, Option 5
- Write to [data@mlslistings.com](mailto:data@mlslistings.com) for VOW datafeed questions