

How to Share a Government Affairs Director

Greater Lehigh Valley REALTORS®

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Ryan Conrad, Former CEO

Case Study Source: National Association of REALTORS®

The Greater Lehigh Valley REALTORS® and a neighboring association share a Government Affairs Director using a Shared GAD Program Cooperative Agreement (link to attached document). The agreement allows two neighboring associations to have one GAD representing both regions. The GAD is technically employed by one of the associations, and provides services to the other for a fee. Under this model, both associations retain their own separate Government Affairs and RPAC Committees, and the GAD serves as a liaison to both. From the GAD's perspective, he/she works for both associations. From a personnel management standpoint, he is employed by and on the payroll of only one of the associations.

Read the full case study: [Shared GAD Program, GLVR](#) (PDF: 101 KB)

Texas Association of REALTORS®

Austin, Texas

Travis Kessler, CEO

In January 2006, the Texas Association of REALTORS® hired six employees to be a part of its Field Representatives Program. The state association completely

funds these six field staff, whose primary directive is to educate Texas REALTORS® on association initiatives, priorities, benefits, and activities.

The field representatives are employees of the association's Governmental Affairs Department. While one of their primary focuses is developing grassroots engagement of Texas REALTORS®, they also serve as a conduit for the promotion of other state association products, programs, and services. In some cases, they may even act as the de facto Governmental Affairs Director for many local boards that are not able to hire a staff member to fill that role.

The Field Representative Program has improved communications and strengthened the relationships between TAR and all local associations that it serves, creating tremendous value. Members derive benefit not only from the constant flow of information from the field representatives, but also through the consultation and best-practices advice they offer. The representatives act as a clear channel through which Texas REALTORS® are able to be involved at a higher level, from learning how to take advantage of a particular member benefit to learning how to become a gubernatorial appointee.

Not only do the field representatives act as conduits to the membership, they also serve as critical two-way communication channels, giving Texas REALTORS® the opportunity to provide input back to the association. They save the local associations time and money through outreach efforts, new perspectives, and suggested best practices. Because each field rep works with numerous local associations, they are able to offer a wide range of proven solutions when an association turns to them for help.

Initiatives like the Field Representative Program can be very successful if the budget, goals, and tactics are sound. Any association considering a field representatives program should consult a state association that has had such a program in place to seek advice on best practices and other lessons learned through experience with the program.

The field reps spend a great deal of time working to identify issues at the local level that the state association can address to best serve the members and the association. Field members constantly work to engage Texas REALTORS® in grassroots efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the association’s political advocacy efforts at the local, state, and federal levels – and that strengthens the REALTOR® voice in Texas.

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