Offer to Closing Checklist

Zintora Tip: Real estate closing procedures vary by state. In some states, a real estate attorney handles the closing, while in others a title or escrow company coordinates the transaction. Throughout this guide, we'll note where the process may differ. Regardless of your state's requirements, Zintora strongly recommends working with a qualified real estate attorney to help protect your interests.

When You Receive an Offer:

- Review the offer thoroughly, including all terms and contingencies.
- Compare the offer to your priorities (price, closing date, contingencies, etc.).
- Consult with your real estate attorney to ensure all legal aspects are covered.
- Respond to the offer with acceptance, counteroffer, or rejection in writing. Be clear about all the details, including any personal items that will be staying with the property.
- Negotiate terms if needed, keeping communication professional and clear.

After Accepting an Offer:

- Have your attorney create a contract for you and your buyer to sign. Even if your state doesn't require an attorney, since you don't have a real estate agent helping you through this process, you'll want to have an attorney you trust to help you with this contract.
- Talk to your buyer about who will be representing them. They may choose to use the same closing attorney (where permitted) or hire their own attorney. In many states, buyers are not required to hire an attorney, but each party should have independent legal representation whenever possible.

- If there is any Earnest Money or Due Diligence due, make sure it is paid. Earnest money is typically held in an attorney or title company's escrow account until closing. Request a receipt confirming it has been deposited.
  If your state uses a Due Diligence Fee, make sure it is paid directly to you according to the contract. Once you receive it, you should provide a copy to the buyer to pass along to their attorney and their lender.
- Provide the buyer with all necessary disclosures for your area (lead-based paint, property condition, etc.).
- An appraisal will be scheduled. The buyer or their lender will usually schedule this. You'll need to stay informed of the date and allow access.
- Your buyer may also schedule a home inspection. Once again, you need to allow access. After the inspection, the buyer may request repairs, credits, or other concessions. Negotiate an agreement that works for both parties and put everything in writing. Complete any agreed-upon repairs or negotiate alternatives if needed.
- Gather any documents your buyer may need after closing (HOA information, names of utility companies, appliance manuals, warranties, etc.).
- Keep your real estate attorney informed of any new documents or developments.

Prepare for the Closing Process:

- Review the buyer's financing timeline (ensure their mortgage approval is on track).
- Confirm with your closing attorney (or title company, depending on your state) that all documents are ready.
- Communicate with your attorney and your buyer to ensure deadlines are being met.

- Make sure the title is clear (resolve any liens or title issues). The closing attorney or title company will perform a title search. If any issues arise, you may need to provide additional documentation.
- Schedule the closing date. This is usually coordinated between you, your buyer, your attorneys, and the lender.

Reminders for the Buyer:

- Obtain homeowner’s insurance and provide proof before closing.
- Schedule utility transfers for the closing date.
- Complete any lender requirements for final loan approval.
- Arrange for the final walk-through (usually 24-48 hours before closing).

Final Preparations:

- Complete all required repairs and provide receipts and documentation if needed.
- Clean the home thoroughly, ensuring all agreed-upon items remain.
- Collect all keys, garage door openers, manuals, and warranties to hand over to the buyer.

On Closing Day:

- You’ll usually close at your attorney’s office. They’re busy, so please arrive on time.
- Bring a government-issued ID for verification.
- Review all closing documents thoroughly before signing. Your attorney will walk you through them.
- Hand over the keys and any relevant information to the buyer. You may not be closing at the same time, or even in the same office, so this handoff may take place after your buyer closes. You may want to provide a key and leave all of the other information accessible inside the home.

- Collect any proceeds from the sale. This is usually handled by the buyer's attorney or title company.

After Closing:

- Keep copies of all closing documents for your records and tax purposes.
- Cancel your homeowner's insurance (effective the day after closing).
- Verify that utilities are no longer in your name.
- Notify your lender (if applicable) that the property has been sold.