CONSUMER HANDOUT

A Better Open House Visit

A short guide for New Jersey home shoppers: understand who is hosting, what to ask, and where to find more information.

An open house is a chance to experience the home and decide what you would like to learn next. You can look around, ask property questions, and take time to consider your next step.

Who is the hosting agent working for?

The New Jersey notice displayed at the open house explains that the host represents the seller for the event. Information you share with the host is not confidential and may be shared with the seller. You may choose to have your own buyer's agent represent you.

If you already have an exclusive buyer-representation agreement, tell the host and share your agent's contact information as requested so the host can coordinate through your agent. If you are not represented and want advice or help beyond attending the open house, ask the licensee to explain the available relationships before sharing confidential plans or financial details.

Before discussing your price limit, timing, motivation, or negotiation plans: make sure you understand who the licensee represents and how information you share may be used.

A simple visit plan

- **Before you go:** decide what matters most to you, bring your questions, and let your agent know if you plan to attend.
- **While touring:** look at the home carefully, ask what can be verified, and note anything you want to investigate further.
- **Before sharing personal details:** pause to clarify representation and confidentiality.
- **Afterward:** contact your own agent for advice, a second visit, or help deciding whether to make an offer.

Questions worth asking

- What information about the home can you verify, and what should I check independently?
- Are seller-provided disclosures or property records available for review?
- How do showings and offers work if I want to take the next step?
- Who would represent me, and what written agreement and compensation terms would apply?
- Can I arrange a second visit with my own agent?

You do not have to decide anything at the door. Viewing a home, choosing representation, and making an offer are separate steps.

Understand the Agency Choices

New Jersey's Consumer Information Statement (CIS) describes how a brokerage may work with buyers and sellers. Here is a brief overview of the relationships named in the state statement:

Relationship	What it generally means
Seller's agent	Represents the seller. Information you share with the agent may be disclosed to the seller.
Buyer's agent	Represents the buyer. The buyer's agent agreement is a separate written agreement; the CIS alone does not create it.
Disclosed dual agent	Represents both parties only with informed consent. The agent cannot favor one party over the other, and some advice and confidentiality are limited.
Designated agents	Different agents in one brokerage are designated to represent the buyer and seller separately. The brokerage firm acts as a disclosed dual agent.
Transaction broker	Facilitates the transaction without representing either party. Information received from one party may be disclosed to the other.

A few helpful points

- The state guidance says a signed CIS is not a precondition just to view a home at an open house. The required open-house agency notice is displayed separately.
- Read the CIS before discussing confidential motivation or price details with a licensee. It explains the duties and limits for each relationship.
- The CIS is an information statement, not a buyer-agency agreement. If you want representation, ask what written agreement applies, what services it covers, its term, and how compensation works.

Official New Jersey resources

Consumer Information Statement (PDF)
Open the current New Jersey CIS

Homebuyer guide and workbook
Everything You Wanted to Know About Buying a Home | Home Shopping Guide

Remember: This plain-language guide is a companion to the official state forms, not legal advice. For questions about your situation, speak with a licensed professional or attorney.

Sources: New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance, Bulletin 24-11 and Appendix A Consumer Information Statement; NJDOBI Real Estate Consumer Information and Real Estate Commission FAQs. Checked November 5, 2026.