

## Andrew's Buyer Service Pledge

My buyer-clients and I are a *team*. We need to commit to a shared strategy to *maximize* our ability to accomplish the goal of finding you the **best** property that matches your “needs” and “wants”. This has worked for me time and again. This is a partnership so I welcome your input, thoughts and questions.

### Your Role

- 1) **get pre-qualified** with a reputable, local lender. I can offer recommendations. This serves two purposes. First, it *demonstrates* your financial ability to purchase a seller's property. Many sellers will not respond to an offer *unless* they know a buyer is financially qualified and able to complete a purchase. I encourage buyers to document the *highest* amount for which they are “qualified” so that a seller will know that the negotiation is serious. We should discuss this.

Second, once you know the costs related to mortgage financing, you can determine what you are *comfortable spending* both up-front in terms of **closing costs** (what you need “*out-of-pocket*”) and in the longer term as far as **monthly payments**. Some buyers may want or need to save more before investing too much time and effort looking for a house. Looking before you are ready to buy can be a waste of time and cause frustration if you find something you like *before* you are prepared to pursue it.

- 2) **hire me**. PA state law *requires* that I provide my prospective clients with a form called the **Consumer Notice**. The form defines the various relationships available for us and is a memorandum documenting our discussion: it clearly states that we have *no* formal business relationship *unless* and until we sign a formal contract. The **Buyer Agency Contract** *specifies* how long we will work together, my fee, *how* I am paid and what I commit to doing for you. A prospect who signs a contract is a “*client*”; otherwise, they are a “*customer*”. Our rules and regulations require that I treat them *differently* and a buyer must be a client.
- 3) “**the search**” involves three phases: *identifying* what you are looking for in a home or property (such as locations and features), *investigating* the possibilities (including showings) and *making an offer*. A good search *starts with* your *specifying* as clearly as possible what you “*need and want*” in a property. The “list” will most likely *evolve* and may require compromise if you do not find everything you want in a house that interests you so *separating* needs and wants as well as *prioritizing* your “wish list” will be important. Once I have an idea about what you are looking for, I will help you *identify* properties to consider. Most buyers will “shop” online and that is fine but it can be distracting, causing some to delay their preparation for making an offer. Please let me know if you change your search criteria so that we are searching for the same type of properties.

When properties “appear” to *match* what you have told me, I will ask you to *prioritize* them and *drive past* them, **time permitting of course**, before we schedule showings. This accomplishes two things. First, most buyers will eliminate some properties from further consideration once they see the neighborhood and the location of a house which allows us to focus on the best matches so we can get to them more quickly. I ask them not to be too critical of the exterior of any houses as that may be misleading. However, buyers are “*buying the neighborhood*” so they need to be comfortable with more than what they see online or on paper.

Second, driving into areas, especially those with which a buyer is not familiar, may expose them to different areas they may wish to consider as well as allow them to prioritize which areas they prefer. You may also see a “For Sale” sign on a property that has not been uploaded to the MLS and Internet. **The goal is to get inside the best houses as soon as possible to eliminate or minimize competition.** Taking the time to see inside houses for which the neighborhood or specific location is unacceptable to

you *delays* the overall process as does looking at houses without prioritizing them.

The final piece of the search is to objectively *evaluate* what we see to determine which *best* suits your needs and wants. Some buyers forget that they are not the only one who knows a house is “For Sale”. *Any* delay in taking action may allow other buyers (“the competition”) to make the first move. While I regret having buyers feel pressured, “time is of the essence” in Real Estate, especially in “hot” markets. If we have both done our job, we will be able to identify the **best** property, allowing you to be comfortable making an offer knowing that you are financially *qualified, comfortable* with “the numbers” and *satisfied* that you were able to consider all of the possibilities. Buyers who rush to make an offer without employing a strategy may have “buyer remorse”: the nagging feeling that something better was available!

- 4) **Making an offer and getting to settlement:** depending on the market, you may only get one chance to make an offer so you may want to make it your “*highest and best*” offer since there is no guarantee of a “counter-offer” and someone else may make an offer a seller cannot refuse. The goal is to put a property “under contract” and then make sure it is the *best* one for you. Buyers do not want to overspend *nor* do they want to lose a house they could have purchased. Once an offer is accepted, there are typically a number of *conditions* or *contingencies* that must be satisfied that will determine whether the sale moves forward to settlement/closing or not; my job is to advise buyers throughout the process. The possibilities include but are not limited to: property inspection(s), wood infestation/ termite inspection, radon test, municipal inspection, title report, mortgage appraisal, mortgage approval and final walk-through(s). An accepted offer typically ends the *marketing* process and starts the *closing* process: it is **NOT** the final step by any means. There are usually several opportunities for *both* parties to re-evaluate the offer and how the process has evolved: buying and selling Real Estate is fundamentally a business decision.

## My Role

- 1) **My *primary* role is to advise you.** While this may be your first time or your first time in years, I have done this many times before. My resume, experience, training, education, knowledge and ability, in addition to my website, blogs and podcasts, will show you my qualifications. I will explain the entire process, answer all of your questions, ensure that you are comfortable with each step and advise you regarding what needs to be done to maximize our chances for success. This starts with presenting and explaining the **Consumer Notice** and **Buyer Agency Contract**.
- 2) **Once hired, I have a *fiduciary* duty to you.** There are actually six specific “duties” revolving around a basic concept: to protect and promote your interests above all else. The details are listed and described in the **Consumer Notice** and the **Buyer Agency Contract** as well on my website so that you will have a clear understanding of my role in our relationship.
- 3) **We need to discuss your *needs and wants*** so that I can set up an automated search to *identify* properties for you to consider. My primary tool is the multiple listing service (MLS) since most sellers will hire a listing agent to market their properties to other agents. Most houses that are sold are listed on the MLS which, in turn, *syndicates* the information to third-party internet sites where most buyers will “*shop*” before *and* after hiring me. We may also learn about houses that are not advertised. However you become aware of a property, please let me know about it so that we can evaluate it to determine if you want me to show it to you. I can show you *any* property.

Buying a house is an exciting time so I appreciate that buyers will want to gather as much information as possible. I have provided a number of informative links on my website so that you can familiarize yourself with areas you may wish to consider including information regarding school districts. I only ask two things. First, *please* make sure that we are “looking for the same house”. Buyers often change

their search using different criteria than they provided me which ultimately means that we are getting *different* results. I trust my ability to search for listings but can only search the criteria you provide. The second thing is to remember that **I am representing you** so all communication should start with me to avoid any confusion. I know from experience that deviating from our strategy can do more harm than good.

- 4) **Once you tell me that you want to see inside any house(s)**, I need to review the property information and showing instructions to avoid any surprises. For example, some buyers ask to see bank foreclosures, “short sales” or properties needing substantial repair without understanding the possible issues they may face. A low price is *not* always a “value” and some houses will not qualify for a mortgage. There are other issues that may arise so I ask that you try to give me a day’s notice, if possible, to schedule our appointment so that a seller can respond to our request. A vacant house is easier to access.
- 5) **Once you find something you like**, we need to discuss if you would like to make an offer. Some buyers need to “*think about it*” and that is fine; others will be prepared to take action. I will do a market analysis to advise you about the local market and review the property’s history to see what it may tell me as far as what a seller might be thinking. I will write your offer, explain the agreement to you, answer your questions, negotiate with the seller’s agent and *represent your* interests each and every step of the way.

The home-buying process can get in the way of your “normal routine” but our success depends on our *mutual* commitment to your goal and to our strategy. I believe in teamwork and will gladly discuss why I do what I do. My experience tells me that this can be a frustrating process as well. Some buyers get anxious or concerned; some miss opportunities. The process itself is loaded with emotion so I encourage open communication and will often ask questions to assess how a client is feeling.

The process of buying Real Estate is clearly not a “retail transaction” and it is not “rocket science”. It is actually *very basic* but the emotion and number of tasks involved *often* make it appear more complicated than it really is or needs to be. It is truly an emotional decision justified with logic.

The Internet and other media have made accessing information and data very easy but they are often misleading, incomplete or wrong. My knowledge and insight will help you. Our agent-client relationship requires a common cause, mutual respect and a lot of effort and dedication on both parts.

**There is no time for inexperience, empty promises *or* false expectations!**

**HIRE WISELY: We are not “*all the same*”!**