



ASK FRED

F.S. section 475.24 - Branch Office and Fees

Question: I'm a real estate broker and am going to open up an office in a new community that is being built so that the real estate agents may meet with potential buyers. My agents will take turns working at that site until 80 percent of the houses are sold. Do I have to register the office as a branch office of my main office?

Answer: Any licensee conducting business at some other location, either in the same or a different municipality or county than that in which she or he is licensed must register the other location as a branch office pursuant to section 475.25, F.S.

Whether not the office is deemed a branch office depends upon if the name or **advertising** of a broker having a principal office located elsewhere is displayed in such a manner as to reasonably lead the public to believe that such office is owned or operated by that broker.

What you have described, however, seems to be an exception to the rules, which are enforced in Rules 61J2-10.023 and 61J2-1.011(3), FAC. If the office you're creating on site is "a mere temporary shelter, on a subdivision being sold by the broker, for the protection of salespersons and customers and at which transactions are not closed and salespersons are not permanently assigned," then under the rule it is not deemed to be a branch office, so you would not be required to register it.

The permanence, use, and character of activities customarily conducted at the office or shelter determine whether it must be registered.

Thanks for asking,

Fred R. Gray