

PREFACE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BY ALLEN SOLOMON

If someone handed me this book 25 years ago, I would have kissed it. Literally.

As a founder and the national managing director of Linear Title & Closing, an ambitious national title agency in Rhode Island, it was my charge to ensure that our operations teams remained compliant and informed as we became licensed in new states.

Beginning with Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York, I painstakingly researched and compiled all the laws, regulations and customs that were pertinent to the real estate transaction process and operations in these new jurisdictions.

As we continued to expand across the country, I began compiling everything into a document that was notoriously known as Solomon's Cheat Sheet. There was a burning need for an encyclopedic, up to date and practical state-by-state compliance manual, but none existed. Nobody seemed to want to write it. So out of necessity, I began creating it myself.

By the time I retired in 2010, Solomon's Cheat Sheet had become comprehensive — a guide to all the laws and customs in all the 51 jurisdictions of the United States. There was nothing else like it in existence, no book a compliance officer or multi-state real estate professional could quickly reference to find a straightforward answer to complex questions.

I realized that my cheat sheet was a piece of intellectual property that needed to be shared with the real estate industry at large. For the next 8 years, I expanded it into the manual you are holding today.

Because courts can declare a statute invalid or amended, and the meaning of a statute can be changed by a slight word change, our team of compliance specialists carefully cite-checked thousands of statutes and regulations to ensure the manual was up to date before publication. I am deeply indebted to this team for their enthusiasm for the subject matter and diligence in conducting this vital research. With their help this manual became everything I hoped it would be.

The first acknowledgement is to Judge Steven R. Plotkin, my greatest mentor. Judge Plotkin received a Master of Laws degree from the University of Virginia, was an award winning trial lawyer, an assistant district attorney, and an appellate court judge. After my father passed at a young age, "the Judge," as he was known to me, took me under his wing and taught me about law, life and how to be an ethical human being.

I would like to thank Marc Shaw, President of World Wide Land Transfer, Inc., for contributing the thoughtful foreword to this manual. Marc is a consummate professional, a visionary and has deep domain experience in the national real estate transaction process. It's our honor to have him lend to this manual his keen and forward-looking vision of where this industry is heading.

Thank you to my friend Steve Daigle Sr., Chairman and Founder of Punctual Abstract, for co-authoring the manual. Steve has been in this business for over 30 years and knows more about real estate transactions and the laws associated therewith than anyone I am acquainted with. His contributions were paramount. By adding in little-known customs and regulations that only he would know for each state, Steve proved to be the manual's missing link.

I would like to thank Roberto Abreu, Chief Compliance Officer at System 2 Thinking and co-author of this manual, for all the tireless days and nights he pored over every syllable in this manual. His critical thinking and perseverance are exceptional and I am proud to call him a friend and colleague.

I am also grateful to Howard Turk, CEO of Prosperitas Forward, who I have such great admiration for on so many levels. Through the years, Howard has imparted great wisdom to me with regard to the real estate services industry, but also with regard to the bigger questions. Thank you for all your tips on "life," Howard.

Thank you to Fred Jones and David Scott. I met these fine gentleman about 17 years ago when Linear Title & Closing was searching for an underwriting partner. Not only have they been instrumental in advancing my career, they have provided uplifting and bona fide friendship, collegiality and support. Thank you for everything Fred and David.

Many many thanks go to Jeff and Ryan Stone. I met them 20 years ago when we needed a buttoned up high volume national closing company. Closing 5000 transactions a month takes precision, strong work ethic and a magnificent process. It always astounded me the volume that these gentlemen could handle without missing a beat. Over the years we have created a bona fide strong bond, grounded in friendship and mutual respect.

Thank you to Nick Liuzza, former CEO and President of Linear Title & Closing, for bringing me on the Linear journey. On so many levels, Nick was instrumental in advancing my career and I am indebted to him for that.

Walton Tate is worthy of mention as he introduced me to the real estate services business. Walt, I will never forget all those nights decades ago poring over files until we could no more.

To the wonderful creatives at The Rebel Unicorn, thank you for your hard work! And special thanks to Patrick Sugrue, Director of Content & Branding, who found the right words (as he always does) to introduce this manual to the market. Ziqiang He, Senior Visual Designer, did exemplary design and layout work on the website; the final product looks better than I could have imagined. Thank you to Sam Bernstein, who held down the fort over at The Rebel Unicorn while our teams poured over the manual. Last, great appreciation for Vanessa Reitz, who showed great skill in providing the manual's design and layout.

Last, but most important, I would like to thank my children, Jeremy, Alexandra and Bette as well as my sister, Mollie. In their own way, each has taught me about the many and varied aspects of life. I wish them all great luck in the future, health and happiness in this great journey we call life.

Allen Solomon

Chief Executive Officer

System 2 Thinking