

BOLHOUSE, BAAR & LEFERE, P.C.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

LEGAL TIPS FOR FIRST-TIME HOME BUYERS

David S. Lefere

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Spring is starting to show itself here in Michigan, and that means more and more homes will start showing up on the real estate market. The purchase of a home is, for most people, their single greatest financial investment. That is why being a first-time home buyer can be intimidating. First-time home buyers often don't know where to begin or what questions to ask. Following are a few key tips that first-time homebuyers need to know in order to successfully navigate the purchase of their first home.

Read the Contract. The "offer to purchase" real estate, once accepted and signed by all parties, becomes a binding contract. It is very important to make sure you understand the consequences of the document you are signing. The insertion of contingency language is highly advisable and will protect you in some instances (i.e. the inspection comes back showing multiple issues with the home).

Home Inspection. You are about to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars in a house; spend \$350-\$500 on a professional home inspection. This really should be done without question.

No Verbal Agreements. All the details surrounding the sale of the real estate should be included in the purchase and sale agreement. Verbal agreements, no matter how seemingly trivial, between you and any party should always be avoided.

Seller's Disclosure Statement. Unless an exception applies, the seller must deliver to the buyer a written disclosure statement concerning the condition of the property. One of the leading causes of legal disputes between buyers and sellers is when the actual condition of the property differs from what the seller has disclosed to the buyer. Pay close attention to the seller's disclosure statement. Ask questions and document issues that need to be resolved before the closing.

If you are a first time homebuyer and have questions, feel free to contact me to discuss your questions and/or concerns. We can help make your purchase less intimidating and give you the necessary information so you can make an informed purchase.