Power of Attorney in Singapore: What It Is and How to Sign

POA General · https://help.law.com.sg/faq/what-is-a-power-of-attorney/

A Power of Attorney (POA) is a legal document that gives someone else the authority to act on your behalf. The person who creates the POA is referred to as the "donor" or "principal", and the person who is given the authority is referred to as the "donee" or "attorney". The authority granted by a POA can be very broad or very limited, depending on the terms specified in the document.

A POA is a serious responsibility and should only be given to someone whom you trust completely. It is also a good idea to consult a lawyer before creating a POA to ensure that it complies with the law and properly reflects your wishes. In making a POA, consider the validity period, usually a period of months or years, and whether it can be revoked within that stipulated period.

What are the types of Power of Attorney in Singapore?

There are three main types of POA:

General Power of Attorney (all affairs)

This gives the attorney broad powers to handle the donor's financial affairs, including the ability to buy and sell property, manage bank accounts and make investments.

Specific Power of Attorney

This gives the attorney powers to handle the donor's specific affairs only, in limited areas as defined within the document. Types of specific POA include immovable property, eg. private properties in Singapore such as landed houses or private apartments, and motor vehicles, such as cars.

A specific POA in this sense excludes HDB flats, which use HDB's own formats. See our guide on the Power of Attorney for HDB flats.

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)

This remains in effect even if the donor becomes mentally incapacitated, ie. lacks mental capacity, allowing the donee to continue to act on the donor's behalf. The LPA is a different instrument from the ordinary POA covered on this page. See our Lasting Power of Attorney guide.

How do I sign my Power of Attorney in Singapore?

After completing your online submission, you must sign the POA properly for it to be valid. To sign in Singapore:

1. Book an appointment with our office at book.law.com.sg/power-of-attorney/ (for HDB flats, book.law.com.sg/power-of-attorney-hdb/).
2. Bring your NRIC or Passport.
3. Sign before our lawyer, who will witness and certify your signature.

Who needs to attend at your office?

Only you, the donor (the person giving the powers), need to attend and sign. Your proposed attorney need not sign any document nor attend at our Singapore office.

Does my attorney or donee need to sign the Power of Attorney?

No. When the POA is ready for signature, only you (the principal or donor) need to sign it. Your attorney or donee need not sign the POA and does not need to attend at our office.

Even though there is nothing that your attorney needs to do at the documentation stage, you should obtain your proposed attorney's consent to act for you in respect of the matters stated in the POA.

What if I am signing overseas?

If you are outside Singapore, the prepared POA will be emailed to you. Print it on A4 white paper with a good-quality printer, sign before a Singapore Consular Officer (mandatory if CPF funds are involved) or a recognised Notary Public, and return the original signed POA to our Singapore office by courier or

registered post so it can be lodged at the High Court. See the full guide on signing your Power of Attorney overseas, including the position where one donor signs in Singapore and another overseas.

What are the common issues when submitting the POA online?

Our online submission forms are at law.com.sg/power-of-attorney-online/ for a specific POA and law.com.sg/power-of-attorney-hdb-online/ for HDB flats. Please take note of the following steps and possible issues in the POA online form:

1. Donor(s) must have mental capacity. The fields Donor 1 Mental Capacity and Donor 2 Mental Capacity (if applicable) must be "Yes" for the Submit button to appear.
2. After completing the form, click the Next button or the Save and Continue Later button, as the case may be.
3. If you click Save and Continue Later, the form is saved and an email with a unique link will be sent to you to complete your form at a later time.
4. If you click Next, you will be brought to a Summary page. To continue with your submission, click Review & Submit to go to a final Review page. To go back and edit your particulars, click Previous.
5. On the Review page, click Submit to submit your application.
6. Once you have successfully submitted the form, you should receive an email from LAW.com.sg on your submission and with our further instructions.

How much does a Power of Attorney cost?

Our fees depend on the type of POA and where it is signed. See how to engage us for a Power of Attorney for HDB flats, or request a quote directly:

- HDB flats: quote at law.com.sg/power-of-attorney-hdb-quote/, online application at law.com.sg/power-of-attorney-hdb-online/, signing appointment at book.law.com.sg/power-of-attorney-hdb/
- Other (specific) POAs: quote at law.com.sg/power-of-attorney-quote/, online application at law.com.sg/power-of-attorney-online/, signing appointment at book.law.com.sg/power-of-attorney/

If you later wish to cancel your POA, see how to revoke an existing Power of Attorney in Singapore.

Ready to proceed? Request a quote first, then submit your online application, and book your signing appointment if you are signing in Singapore, using the links above.

In short, an ordinary Power of Attorney lets a trusted person act for you while you retain mental capacity, most commonly for an HDB or private property transaction while you are overseas. It must be signed before a lawyer, deposited in the High Court, and revoked by deed when no longer needed. If you are unsure whether an ordinary Power of Attorney or a Lasting Power of Attorney suits your situation, contact us before proceeding.