

GUIDE TO THE
**THE LASTING POWER
OF ATTORNEY**

OFFICE OF THE
**PUBLIC
GUARDIAN**

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FOREWORD

This booklet provides an overview of what the Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) is and what you should do if you decide to make one.

The scenarios and examples in this guide are for illustration only and use fictitious characters and situations. They are not a substitute for professional advice in appropriate cases and are not in any way to be taken as precedents for decisions that need to be made in similar situations. They are also not indicative of how a court would decide any particular case, as that would depend on the actual facts of each case before the court, which may include relevant facts that are not considered in the examples.

PART A

WHAT IS THE MENTAL CAPACITY ACT AND WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT IT?

A1. *WHAT IS MENTAL CAPACITY?*



Mental capacity is the ability of the person to make a specific decision at a particular time.



Mental capacity is assessed on a case-by-case basis and cannot be assumed based only on the person suffering a particular medical condition. Furthermore, a person's lack of mental capacity cannot be based only on age, how a person looks, his condition or any aspect of behaviour.



A person may have the capacity to make some decisions at a particular time, but not others. For example, a person may be able to go to the market and buy food but not able to handle large sums of money or make investment decisions. Mental capacity may improve or degrade over time.

A2. WHAT IS THE MENTAL CAPACITY ACT AND WHY DO WE NEED THIS ACT?

The Mental Capacity Act enables people to plan ahead and gives them the power to make choices for their future before they lose their mental capacity. It addresses the need to make decisions for persons who are 21 years or older when they lack mental capacity to make those decisions for themselves. The Act also:

- a. Allows people to voluntarily make a Lasting Power of Attorney to appoint one or more persons (donees) to act and make decisions on their behalf if and when they lack mental capacity in the future.
- b. Allows the court to appoint a deputy to act and make decisions on behalf of a person who lacks mental capacity where a decision is required but the person does not have a proxy decision-maker.
- c. Allows parents of children with intellectual disabilities to apply to the court to appoint a deputy for their child.
- d. Gives legal protection for acts done by anyone in connection with the care and treatment of a person who lacks mental capacity if certain conditions are met, including the requirement that the act is done in the best interests of that person.
- e. Provides safeguards to protect persons who lack mental capacity.

A3. WHAT DOES THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC GUARDIAN DO?

The Public Guardian

The Public Guardian works towards protecting the dignity and interests of individuals who lack mental capacity and are vulnerable. He is the head of the Office of the Public Guardian.

The functions of the Public Guardian

The Public Guardian carries out various functions towards enabling and protecting persons who lack capacity. These functions include:

- a. Maintaining a register of Lasting Powers of Attorney and a register of court orders that appoint deputies,
- b. Supervising deputies,
- c. Receiving reports from donees and deputies,
- d. Investigating any alleged violation of any provision in the Mental Capacity Act, including complaints about the way in which donees and deputies are exercising their powers.

The Office of the Public Guardian

- The Office of the Public Guardian ("OPG") supports the Public Guardian in carrying out his functions.
- The OPG is a division of the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports.

The role of Board of Visitors

The roles of the Board of Visitors are to:

- visit persons who lack capacity, donees or deputies as may be requested by the Public Guardian or the Court, and
- check on the well-being of the person who lacks capacity.



There are 2 types of visitors:

- a. Special Visitors – who are registered medical practitioners or persons who have the relevant expertise about impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain.
- b. General Visitors – who need not be medically qualified.

PART B

THE LASTING POWER OF ATTORNEY

B1. WHAT IS THE LASTING POWER OF ATTORNEY?

A Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) is a legal document that allows a person who is 21 years of age or older (known as donor), and who has mental capacity, to voluntarily appoint one or more persons (known as donee(s)), to act and make decisions on his behalf about his personal welfare matters, property & affairs matters or both matters when he lacks mental capacity to make those decisions in the future.

Unlike a Power of Attorney that generally ceases to have effect when the donor loses his mental capacity, an LPA takes effect when the donor loses capacity. The LPA allows you to plan for such a possible occurrence.

The authority granted under the LPA to a donee will not be effective until the time the donor loses mental capacity.

There are 2 prescribed forms of the LPA to cater to different needs:

- OPG Form 1 is a form of LPA that you can use if you wish to give your donee or donees powers to make decisions about all matters for you. You may select to give your donee(s) powers to decide matters about:
 - your personal welfare (including health care), or
 - your property & affairs (including financial matters), or
 - both your personal welfare and property & affairs.
- OPG Form 2 is to be used if you have more requirements to be included in your LPA, for example you wish to give specific powers to your donee. You will need to engage a lawyer to make the LPA.

You may fill up Form OPG Form 1 yourself but you should consult a lawyer if you do not know what it means to give such wide powers to your donee(s) or if you are uncertain how to fill up the form. The forms can be downloaded from www.publicguardian.gov.sg.

B2. WHO CAN BE MY DONEE?

- Your donee should be someone trustworthy, reliable and competent to make decisions for you.*
- _____

A donee must be at least 21 years old.

A donee appointed to make decisions about personal welfare must be an individual.

A donee appointed to make decisions about property & affairs may be:

- an individual (but he/she must not be a bankrupt), or
- a licensed trust company as defined in the Trust Companies Act.

B3. HOW MANY DONEES CAN I HAVE?

You may appoint one or more donees. There is no maximum number of donees that you can appoint.

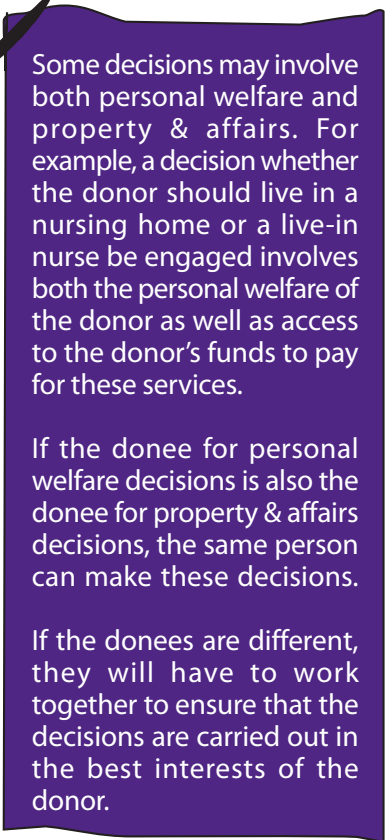
However, you should not appoint too many donees because it may be difficult for them to agree on decisions. People who deal with the donees may become confused about which donee to deal with and to take decisions from. You should choose donees that are willing to work together so differences in opinions may be resolved amicably, thereby avoiding any deadlock.

B4. IF I HAVE MORE THAN ONE DONEE, HOW SHOULD THEY DECIDE ON MATTERS ON MY BEHALF?

If you appoint two or more donees to make decisions about the same matters, you can appoint them to act in any of the following ways:

- **Jointly:** The donees have to act together and cannot act separately.
- **Jointly and severally:** The donees can take the decisions together or separately. Both types of decisions are valid.
- **Jointly on some matters and jointly and severally on others:** The donees have to act jointly on some matters; e.g. sale of residential property, but may act separately on other matters; e.g. paying household bills.

If you appoint more than two donees and do not specify how they are to act, the law assumes they are to act jointly.



Some decisions may involve both personal welfare and property & affairs. For example, a decision whether the donor should live in a nursing home or a live-in nurse be engaged involves both the personal welfare of the donor as well as access to the donor's funds to pay for these services.

If the donee for personal welfare decisions is also the donee for property & affairs decisions, the same person can make these decisions.

If the donees are different, they will have to work together to ensure that the decisions are carried out in the best interests of the donor.

B5. WHAT TYPES OF DECISIONS CAN DONEES MAKE?

The decisions your donee will be able to make will depend on the powers you give him/her in your LPA.

You may authorise your donee to make decisions regarding:

- a. your personal welfare (including health care matters), or
- b. your property & affairs (including financial matters), or
- c. both your personal welfare and your property & affairs.



Personal welfare donee

Some examples of the decisions a personal welfare donee may be authorised to make include:

- where the donor should live,
- who the donor should live with,
- day to day care decisions (e.g. what to wear and eat),
- what social activities to take part in,
- handling the donor's personal correspondence, and
- who the donor may have contact with.

The personal welfare donee's appointment is cancelled if the:

- donee dies,
- marriage between the donor and donee is dissolved (i.e. divorce) or annulled unless the LPA specifically provides that it will not,
- donee formally refuses the appointment as donee, or
- donee lacks mental capacity.



However, the LPA is not cancelled and remains valid if there is a replacement donee appointed under it or there is one or more surviving donees appointed to act jointly and severally on any matter.

The power conferred by the LPA will be cancelled if the LPA appoints two or more donees to act jointly and the power to one of those donees is cancelled.



Property & affairs donee

Some examples of the decisions a property & affairs donee may be authorised to make include:

- dealing with the donor's property – buying, selling, renting and mortgaging property,
- opening, closing and operating the donor's bank accounts,
- receiving dividends, income, inheritance benefits or other financial entitlements on behalf of the donor,
- handling the donor's tax matters,
- paying the rent, mortgage repayments and household expenses of the donor,
- investing the donor's moneys, and
- purchasing a vehicle or other equipment the donor needs.

The property & affairs donee's appointment is cancelled if the:

- donor becomes a bankrupt or dies,
- the donee (an individual) dies or becomes a bankrupt,
- the donee is a licensed trust company and its licence has lapsed or been revoked
- the donee (a licensed trust company) is liquidated, wound-up, dissolved or under judicial management,
- the marriage between the donor and donee is dissolved (i.e. divorced) or annulled unless the LPA specifically provides that it will not,
- the donee formally refuses the appointment,
- the donee lacks mental capacity.



However, the power conferred by the LPA is not cancelled and remains valid if there is a replacement donee appointed under the LPA or there is one or more surviving donees appointed to act jointly and severally on any matter.

The power conferred by the LPA will be cancelled if the LPA appoints two or more donees to act jointly and the power to one of those donees is cancelled.

You may restrict the scope or exclude the types of decisions that a donee may make; e.g. the donor appointing a donee for property & affairs matters may state in the LPA that the donee cannot make decisions about investments.

If you choose not to restrict the decisions your donee may make, an LPA in OPG Form 1, whether for personal welfare and/or property & affairs, gives him authority to make wide-ranging decisions on your behalf.



If your donee has been appointed to make decisions about personal welfare, he cannot make decisions about your finances unless he is also authorised to make decisions about your property & affairs.

If your donee has been appointed to make decisions about property & affairs, he cannot make decisions about the donor's welfare unless he is also authorised to make decisions about your personal welfare.

There are some restrictions on what donees can do and some excluded decisions which donees cannot make.

B6. RESTRICTIONS

General Restrictions

Your donee must not make a decision on your behalf if he/she knows or have reasonable grounds to believe that you have capacity to make that decision.

Specific Restrictions

Your donee may not:

- a. consent or refuse the carrying out or continuation of health care treatment for you (including the conduct of clinical trials) unless he expressly authorise him/her to do so in your LPA.
- b. consent or refuse life-sustaining treatment or any other treatment that is necessary to prevent a serious deterioration in your condition.
- c. execute a will for you.
- d. make any Central Provident Fund (CPF) or insurance nomination or revoke such nomination for you.
- e. make a gift of any of your property unless you expressly authorise him/her to do so in your LPA.
- f. do any act to restrain you unless:
 - the donee believes or has reasonable grounds to believe that you lack capacity and the restraint is necessary to do in order to prevent harm to you; and
 - the restraining act is a proportionate response to the likelihood of your suffering harm and the seriousness of the harm.

B7. EXCLUDED DECISIONS

There are certain decisions that your donee is not allowed by law to make on your behalf. These decisions are:

a.	Consenting to marriage.
b.	Consenting to touching of a sexual nature.
c.	Consenting to divorce on the basis of 3 years' separation.
d.	Consenting to a making of an adoption order.
e.	Adopting or renouncing a religion.
f.	Receiving treatment for change of gender.
g.	Consenting or revoking consent to treatment for sexual sterilisation.
h.	Consenting or revoking consent to abortion.
i.	Registering or withdrawing an objection regarding the removal of an organ from any person upon death.
j.	Making or revoking an advance medical directive.
k.	Making or revoking a gift of a body or any part of a body.

PART C

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I DECIDE THAT I WANT TO MAKE A LASTING POWER OF ATTORNEY?

C1. HOW DO I MAKE MY LASTING POWER OF ATTORNEY?

Step 1:

Complete your LPA form.

[Please refer to the guidebook, "Guide to Filling Up the Lasting Power of Attorney".]

Step 2:

Inform the person(s) you named in your LPA of your intention to register an LPA (see paragraph C4).

Step 3:

You must register your LPA with OPG.

You will need to do the following:

- a. Complete the Application Form to register an LPA
- b. Bring the following documents to OPG:
 - completed LPA application form
 - completed LPA form
 - original NRIC of donor
 - original NRIC of donee(s)
 - photograph of each donee (passport size)

If you are asking someone else to submit the Application and accompanying documents to OPG for you, you must give that person an authorisation letter addressed to OPG.

- c. Pay the LPA registration fee.

Step 4:

If there are no objections in the 6-week waiting period, your LPA will be registered. The stamp of OPG will be impressed on the registered LPA. Each donee will be issued with a Donee ID card with a unique ID No. If a donee's appointment is cancelled, that donee's unique ID No. will be cancelled.

Both the LPA forms and the Application form are available from the Office of the Public Guardian, and from www.publicguardian.gov.sg.

An LPA can be registered by the:

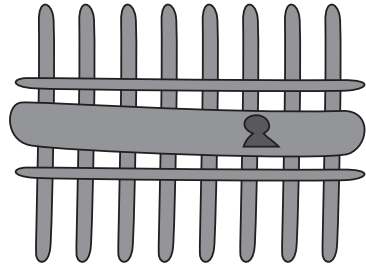
- donor,
- donee or donees (if the LPA appoints them to act jointly), or
- any of the donees if the LPA appoints the donees to act jointly and severally.

Please note that:

- You must be at least 21 years old and have mental capacity to make a valid LPA.
- You must not be a bankrupt if you are appointing a donee to decide on property & affairs.



It is a criminal offence for a person who applies to register an LPA to knowingly make a false statement on a material matter. A person convicted of this offence can be fined up to \$10,000 or jailed for up to 2 years.



C2. HOW LONG WILL THE PROCESS TAKE?

There is a mandatory waiting period of 6 weeks from the date notice is given by OPG of the application to register the LPA. During this period, objections may be raised by the donees or the person(s) you named to be notified of the application.

Your LPA will be registered after 6 weeks if the LPA is made in accordance to the Act and no objection is received by OPG.

C3. THINGS TO DO AFTER THE LPA IS REGISTERED

Your LPA is an important document your donee(s) will need to use if you lose mental capacity and they have to make decisions for you.

You should keep the original LPA in a safe place and ensure that your donee(s) will have access to it if they need to make decisions for you.

You should inform the people and institutions your donee(s) will have to deal with if you lose capacity that you have made an LPA. These include:

- your doctor and other health care providers
- your bank, the CPF Board and other institutions with whom you have accounts (such as Central Depository (Pte) Limited, insurance companies, stockbrokers).

Different people have different requirements. You should check with them if they have any requirements that you have to comply with for them to accept authority of your donee(s) to act for you if you lose capacity.

If you cancel your LPA, the people you have informed about your LPA should be notified of the cancellation to prevent your donee(s) from using the LPA in the event you lose capacity. You would also have to deliver the original LPA and any copies of it to OPG to be cancelled.

C4. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF HAVING A NAMED PERSON IN MY LPA?

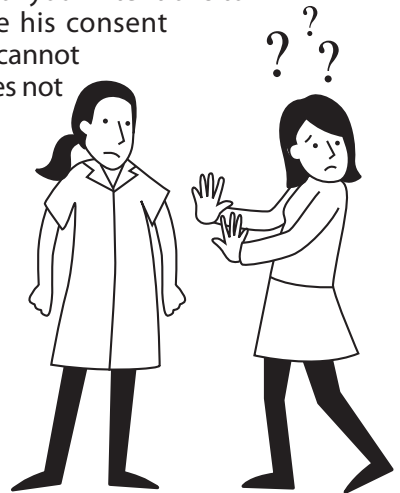
You can name a person in your LPA to be notified of your application to register your LPA (known as the “Named Person”). The person(s) should be people who are concerned about your well-being and understand your circumstances well.

You do not have to name a named person but it is advisable to do so because the named person acts as a safeguard for your benefit. The named person(s) may raise objections to the registration of your LPA if they have reasons to believe it was not properly made.

Such objections can be raised to the OPG within the 6-week mandatory waiting period to register LPA.

C5. CAN SOMEONE DECLINE TO BE MY DONEE?

Yes. A donee must be informed of your intentions to appoint him and he must give his consent by signing on the LPA. A person cannot be named as donee if he/she does not consent.



C6. WHAT HAPPENS IF I CHANGE MY MIND AFTER I REGISTER A LASTING POWER OF ATTORNEY?

- a. You may cancel your LPA if you have the mental capacity to do so.
- b. You must notify the donee(s) and anyone else, whom you may have earlier informed about the LPA of the cancellation.
- c. You must notify the Public Guardian of the cancellation of the LPA.
- d. Court's power to revoke LPA
 - The Court may revoke an LPA if it is satisfied that fraud or undue pressure was used to induce you to make the LPA.

If you cancel your LPA, you must bring the original LPA and any copy to OPG to be cancelled.

C7. WHAT ARE THE FEES INVOLVED IN MAKING AN LPA?

The fees for making the LPA include:

- a. Charge payable to the certificate issuer for making the LPA certificate. The amount of the charge varies with the certificate issuer.
- b. Application fee payable to OPG to register your LPA. Please refer to the fee table at www.publicguardian.gov.sg.

PART D

WHAT ARE THE 5 PRINCIPLES UNDER THE MENTAL CAPACITY ACT AND HOW DO I APPLY THEM?

The statutory principles help a person to take part in the decision-making process as far as possible, and protect him when he lacks capacity to do so.

When acting or taking decisions on behalf of a person who lacks mental capacity, these principles should be read alongside the provisions in the Act to ensure that the appropriate action or decision is taken in each case.

Principle 1: Presumption of Capacity

- *It must be assumed that a person has capacity to make a decision for himself*
- *unless there is proof that he lacks capacity to make the decision at the time it needs to be made.*

The assessment of a lack of capacity cannot be based simply on the person's appearance, age, condition or behaviour. So, people should be allowed to make their own decisions where they can.

Scenario

Shanti Sandhu is a 66-year-old divorcee who lives alone in a walk-up apartment. Her children were tragically killed in a road traffic accident six months ago.

Shanti used to be active in the community, taking part in local activities and volunteering at Resident Committee activities. Since the accident, she does not speak to anyone.

The apartment block committee is organising a health talk and free health screening activity. The committee is considering excluding Shanti as they feel she does not have capacity to contribute to organising the activities.

The organising committee should not assume that, just because Shanti lives alone and does not talk with anyone, it means that she lacks mental capacity. A person is presumed to have capacity unless it is proven otherwise. The organising committee should consider inviting Shanti. Whether she chooses to be involved is her choice.

Principle 2: Giving All Practicable Help

- *Caregivers, family members, donees, deputies and professionals who care for or treat a person who may have difficulty in making a particular decision should take all practicable steps to help the person to make his own decision.*

They should not exert pressure or impose their views on the person they are supporting when helping him to make a decision.

- *The type of support the person should receive depends on the type of decision he has to make and the circumstances.*

The individual should not make a decision on behalf of a person simply because that person has difficulty communicating. Instead, the individual should provide support, for example, by providing information in more accessible formats such as large font and drawings, and using different forms of communication such as sign-language, Braille, etc.

Scenario

Several police officers find a middle-aged man living underneath a bridge on the Pan Island Expressway. He is very dirty and has a big cut on his leg, which looks infected. They take him to the hospital.

The hospital staff asks for his personal details and relatives they could contact. To help the man to communicate, these enquiries are made in several languages. The man remains silent and does not want to cooperate with the doctor who wants to examine his injury.

The doctor tells him that if the injury is not treated, he may lose his leg and makes a sawing motion over his leg in an attempt to explain the situation to him. The man appears to pay more attention after that and starts pointing at his mouth and ears while shaking his head.

A nurse realises that he may be a deaf mute, so she gives him a paper and pen, and calls in a person who knows sign language. The man calms down and starts communicating to the hospital staff in writing.

The man may not have been able to communicate orally, but that does not mean he cannot make a decision about his treatment. The medical team should not conclude that he does not have the capacity to decide about treatment before giving him all the practicable help to make and communicate his decision.

In emergency situations, for example, serious injury from an accident, it may not be practicable to take as many steps to support a person to make his own decisions. All that can be done may be to keep the person informed of what is going on and why procedures are being done.

Principle 3: Unwise Decision

- *A person is free to make his own decisions even if those decisions are unwise in the view of others. This recognises the right of a person to make his own choices if he has mental capacity to do so.*
- *Just because a decision is unwise does not mean that the person has lost mental capacity.*

However, there is a difference between a person making an unwise decision (which the person who decides may make) and his making a decision when he lacks the ability to understand, remember or use the information necessary to make the decision.

If a person makes several decisions which are unusual bearing in mind his usual behaviour, or makes decisions which makes it easy for him to be exploited or harmed, then further investigation into that person's capacity should be conducted.

Scenario

Ah Huat is 73 years old. He is a widower and lives alone.

Last week, a window installer named Paul visited Ah Huat at his home. Paul convinces Ah Huat to change the window in his bathroom because it is rusty. The next day, Paul returns and advises Ah Huat to change the windows in his bedroom. Paul charges Ah Huat \$500.

Ah Huat's son, Ah Seng, is concerned about his father. Ah Huat is normally careful with his finances because he is retired.

Paul returns for a third time and Ah Huat agrees to change the remaining windows in his flat for \$1500. Ah Seng, who examined the windows earlier, noticed that they are still in good condition and did not need to be changed. He believes that Paul has taken advantage of his father and wonders whether Ah Huat is capable of making similar purchasing decisions.

Ah Huat explains that he prefers to get the windows replaced all at once because he gets a better bargain. He believes that all the windows will need to be replaced in one or two years' time.

Ah Seng cannot just assume that because his father, Ah Huat, is 73 years old and has made a decision that Ah Seng thinks is unwise, he lacks mental capacity. If Ah Huat's usual pattern of behaviour continues to change and causes concern, then Ah Seng should consider getting his mental capacity assessed by a doctor.

Principle 4: Best Interests

- *Every act or decision made on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must be made in his best interests.*
- *Whether a decision is in the person's best interests will depend on the circumstances of the case.*

Scenario

Kevin Khoo and his wife, Rishima Rajah, have three children. Their eldest, Ron, who is 23 years old, has an intellectual disability and has been working at a sheltered workshop operated by a charity.

The charity also has a programme which offers temporary residence to persons like Ron to acquire basic life skills for more independent living. With some support, they are also taught how to take public transport. These life skills help them to be better suited for open employment.

A place in the residential programme becomes available and the social workers at the charity recommend that Ron take up the offer.

Kevin and Rishima know that Ron will like to become more independent. However, they are worried that if Ron takes up the offer, they won't be able to look out for him and he will spend less time with them.

If Ron has the mental capacity to make the decision on the residential programme, then Kevin and Rishima should not decide for him. If Ron lacks the capacity to make this decision, Kevin and Rishima must remember that they should be acting in Ron's best interests and not their own.



Principle 5: Less Restrictive

- When acting or making a decision on behalf of a person who lacks capacity, the action or decision taken should be one which is less restrictive on that person's right and freedom to act.

The less restrictive option is usually also the option that is in the best interests of the person.

- All actions taken or decisions made must be taken in the person's best interests.

Scenario

Ah Mei lives with her 80-year-old mother, Madam Kwong Siew Moi, who has dementia.

When Ah Mei goes to work, she locks her mother in her room to prevent her from injuring herself or wandering off. She leaves food and water in the room. Madam Kwong wears adult diapers.

When Ah Mei returns home in the evening, she bathes and feeds her mother. Even though Ah Mei is acting out of concern for the safety of her mother, and is a filial daughter, this form of care is not the less restrictive option. She must make some other more suitable care arrangement such as placing Madam Kwong in a dementia day-care centre.

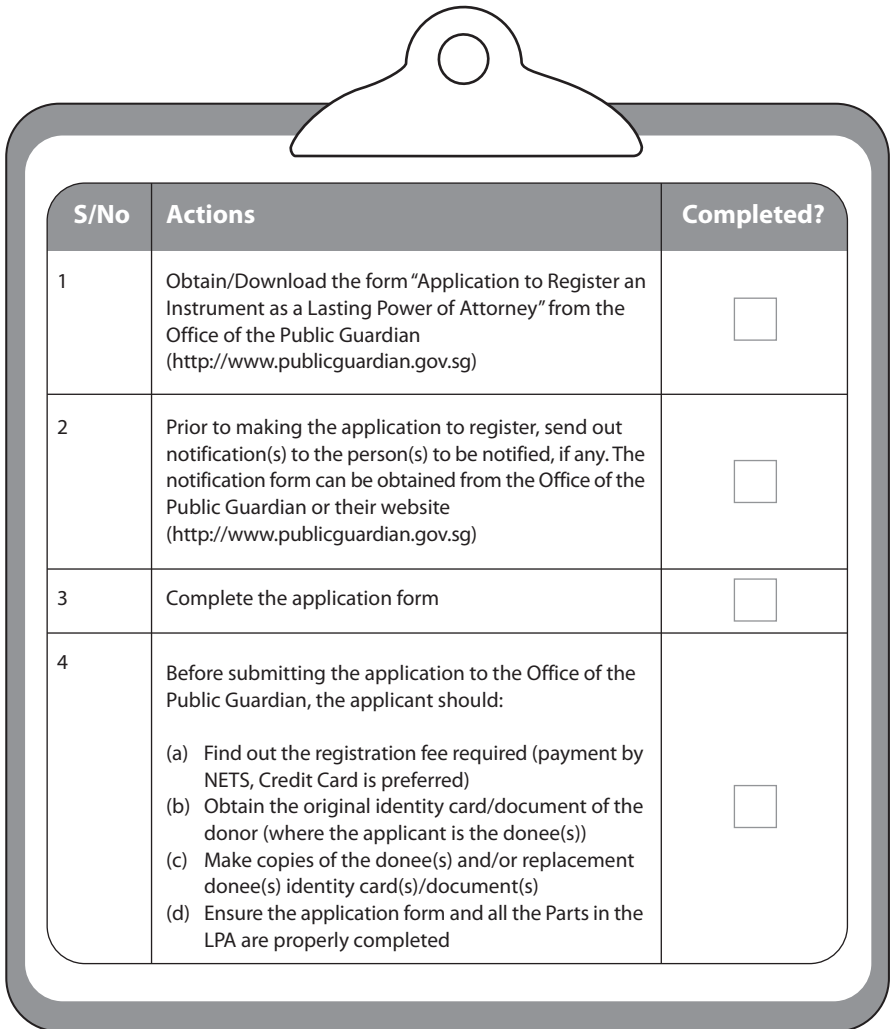


If there is more than one option available, then the options must be weighed up and the decision taken must be determined by both the best interests and less restrictive option principles.

PART E

SAMPLE CHECKLIST TO REGISTER AN LPA

After you have prepared the LPA, you or your donee(s) can make an application to OPG to register the LPA. In doing so, the applicant(s) will need to carry out actions listed in the checklist below:



S/No	Actions	Completed?
1	Obtain/Download the form "Application to Register an Instrument as a Lasting Power of Attorney" from the Office of the Public Guardian (http://www.publicguardian.gov.sg)	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Prior to making the application to register, send out notification(s) to the person(s) to be notified, if any. The notification form can be obtained from the Office of the Public Guardian or their website (http://www.publicguardian.gov.sg)	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Complete the application form	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Before submitting the application to the Office of the Public Guardian, the applicant should: (a) Find out the registration fee required (payment by NETS, Credit Card is preferred) (b) Obtain the original identity card/document of the donor (where the applicant is the donee(s)) (c) Make copies of the donee(s) and/or replacement donee(s) identity card(s)/document(s) (d) Ensure the application form and all the Parts in the LPA are properly completed	<input type="checkbox"/>

GLOSSARY

Acts in connection with care or treatment

These are tasks carried out by care-givers (paid or unpaid), healthcare staff and family members that involve personal care, healthcare or medical treatment for a person who lacks the capacity to consent to those acts.

Best interests

Decision-makers have a duty to consider many factors that focus on what is best for the person lacking capacity before making a decision on his behalf. Refer to chapter 6 of the Code of Practice for more information.

Code of Practice

The Code supports the Act and provides further explanation on how the Act should be applied in practice.

Committee of the person or committee of the estate

The Court appointed these Committees, under the *Mental Disorders and Treatment Act* (now repealed), to make certain decisions on behalf of a person suffering from a mental disorder. Persons serving on existing Committees automatically become deputies as if they had been appointed by the Court under the *Mental Capacity Act*, under the Mental Capacity Act, and they have the same powers and functions, as they were given as committee of the persons and/or the estates.

Decision-maker

The decision-maker is the individual or person who makes decisions on behalf of persons who lack capacity. They include caregivers, nurses, doctors, donees of a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) and court-appointed deputies.

Deputy

A deputy is appointed by the Court to make certain decisions on behalf of a person who lacks mental capacity when the person has not made a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) or has no donee to decide on his behalf in respect of those decisions. A deputy can be an individual, a licensed trust company or an exempt person under the *Trust Companies Act* (Cap. 336), as prescribed by the Mental Capacity Regulations.

Donee

Donees are appointed by individuals to act and make decisions about their personal welfare and/or property & affairs matters, on their behalf, when they lack mental capacity.

Donor

The person who is making the LPA, appointing donee(s) to take care of his matters in the event he loses mental capacity one day.

Jointly

The donees or deputies must act together and not alone.

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)

A legal document that allows a donor to voluntarily appoint another person, the donee, and gives him powers or authority to take action or make decisions on behalf of the donor when the donor loses capacity to make decisions.

Mental capacity

Mental capacity is the ability of a person to make a specific decision at a particular time.

Mental Capacity Act

Provides safeguards to protect persons lacking capacity. The Act gives the Public Guardian supervisory and investigative powers and makes ill treatment of persons who lack capacity by their caregivers and decision-makers a criminal offence. The Act also prohibits certain decisions from being made on behalf of the person who lacks capacity.

Office of the Public Guardian (OPG)

The OPG has a wide range of responsibilities within the framework of the Mental Capacity Act. These include keeping a register of Lasting Powers of Attorney, supervising deputies and investigating allegations of ill treatment.

Statutory principles

There are 5 statutory principles that everyone must follow when dealing with persons who lack or may lack capacity. Refer to part D for more information.

Unwise decision

This refers to one of the statutory principles. A person who has mental capacity has the right to make a decision that is unwise in the view of others. Just because a decision is unwise does not mean that the person has lost mental capacity. Refer to part D for more information.

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