

# Application fees for Lasting Power of Attorney waived for two more years for Singaporeans

Social and family development minister Tan Chuan-Jin urges people to think about preparing for the unexpected with the LPA. PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO

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SINGAPORE - For two more years, Singaporeans will enjoy lower costs in entrusting their health and finances to someone else if the unexpected happens, with an extension of the 2014 fee waiver for Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) applications.

Singaporeans have until Aug 31, 2018, to file LPA Form 1 applications for free, although they will still have to pay fees charged by professionals engaged to witness and certify the application, such as medical practitioners and lawyers.

The LPA is a legal document that allows a person aged at least 21 to appoint one or more people to take actions on his behalf should he lose the ability to make his own decisions.

Social and Family Development Minister Tan Chuan-Jin said on Monday (Aug 15) on the MSF Conversations blog: "We spend much of our lives planning for our future - from simple things like what to have for lunch, to more complex things like our career path or family planning.

"But what do we do when the unexpected happens? What if we are suddenly unable to make our own decisions or care for ourselves? It is a tough question that we all need to think about."

LPA applicants have two forms to choose from. Form 1 grants general powers and meets the needs of the vast majority of Singaporeans, said the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), while Form 2 allows for special requirements and customised powers.

The Form 1 application fee for Singaporeans will be revised from \$50 to \$75 from Sept 1, but it is waived until 2018. Meanwhile, the Form 1 fee for permanent residents and foreigners will be increased to \$100 and \$250 respectively from Sept 1.

The \$200 Form 2 fee for Singaporeans will remain unchanged, while those for permanent residents and foreigners will be increased to \$250 and \$300 respectively from Sept 1. The MSF cited operating costs as a reason for the fee hikes.

Besides the fee waiver, the LPA application process has been simplified. The Office of the Public Guardian, which administers the applications, has simplified the language and reduced the number of pages in the forms.

MSF said that the fee waiver and simpler procedure have boosted the total number of LPA Form 1 and Form 2 applications by Singaporeans from 4,119 in 2014 to 8,478 in 2015.

Mr Tan said: "There's no harm in planning ahead for a rainy day. I encourage everyone to make a Lasting Power of Attorney early to give ourselves and our loved ones peace of mind in the event that the worst does happen."