

THE STATUTES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

INTERPRETATION ACT 1965

2020 REVISED EDITION

This revised edition incorporates all amendments up to and including 1 December 2021 and comes into operation on 31 December 2021.

Prepared and Published by

THE LAW REVISION COMMISSION
UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF
THE REVISED EDITION OF THE LAWS ACT 1983

Informal Consolidation – version in force from 1/3/2024

Interpretation Act 1965

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

Section

1. Short title

PART 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF INTERPRETATION

2. Interpretation of certain words and expressions
2A. Criteria for determining death

PART 2

GENERAL PROVISIONS REGARDING WRITTEN LAW

3. Acts to be public Acts
4. Acts to be divided into sections without introductory words
5. Schedules
6. Subdivisions of Acts
7. Forms
7A. Examples and illustrations
8. Mode of referring to written laws
9. Construction in an Act of references to sections, etc.
9A. Purposive interpretation of written law and use of extrinsic materials
9B. Changes to style not to affect meaning
10. Time of commencement of written law
11. Effect of repeal of Act on subsidiary legislation made thereunder
12. Repeal of repealing laws
13. Repeal of amended law to include amendments
14. Repeal and substitution
15. References to amended and re-enacted provisions
16. Effect of repeal
17. Construction of amending Act
18. Effect of expiration of written law

PART 3

SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION

Section

19. General provisions with respect to power given to any authority to make subsidiary legislation
20. Additional provisions as to subsidiary legislation
21. Use of defined terms in subsidiary legislation
22. Anticipatory exercise of powers
23. Commencement of subsidiary legislation
24. Judicial notice of subsidiary legislation
25. Construction of amending subsidiary legislation
26. Acts done under subsidiary legislation to be deemed to be done under Act
26A. Reference to Act to include subsidiary legislation

PART 4

POWERS AND APPOINTMENTS

27. Construction of provisions as to exercise of powers and duties
28. Power to appoint includes power to dismiss
29. Construction of enabling words
30. Appointment of officers by name or office
31. Official designation to include officer executing duties
32. Appointments having retrospective effect
32A. Power of majority, quorum, etc., of board, etc.
33. Powers of board, etc., not affected by vacancy, etc.
33A. Standard investment power of statutory bodies
34. Signification of orders, etc., of President
35. Signification of orders, etc., of Minister
35A. Subsidiary legislation by statutory body, etc.
36. Delegation of functions of Minister
37. Signing of documents

PART 5

PENAL PROVISIONS

38. Attempt to commit an offence to be deemed an offence
39. Imposition of penalty not a bar to civil action
40. Provisions as to offences under 2 or more laws
41. Penalties prescribed to be deemed maximum penalties

PART 5A

PROVISIONS RELATING TO COURT PROCEEDINGS

Section

41A. Process for making applications to Court in civil proceedings
41B. Renaming of prerogative orders or writs
41C. References to High Court before 2 January 2021
41D. References to writs, etc.
41E. References to originating claims, etc., in relation to Singapore International Commercial Court

PART 6

MISCELLANEOUS

42. Powers of President, Minister or other authority to appoint public officer to serve on board and to appoint chairperson
43. Prima facie evidence of signature
44. Public officers
45. Act for which payment is required need not be performed until payment is made
46. Fees or charges may be prescribed and may be reduced, varied, remitted or refunded
47. Proceedings not to abate on death, etc., of official
48. *Gazette* to be evidence of matters therein
48A. Service of documents
49. Measurement of distance
50. Computation of time
51. Standard time
52. Provision when no time prescribed
53. Construction of power of extending time
54. Saving of rights of Government
55. Act to bind Government

An Act to define certain terms and expressions used in written law and to make provision for the construction, interpretation and publication of written law and for matters connected therewith.

[28 December 1965]

Short title

1. This Act is the Interpretation Act 1965.

PART 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF INTERPRETATION

Interpretation of certain words and expressions

2.—(1) In this Act, and in every written law enacted before, on or after 28 December 1965 (but without affecting anything done before that date) —

"abet", with its grammatical variations and cognate expressions, has the meaning given by the Penal Code 1871;

"Accountant-General" means the Accountant-General of Singapore;

"act", in relation to an offence or civil wrong, includes a series of acts, and words which refer to acts done are to be construed as extending to illegal omissions;

"Act" or "Act of Parliament" means an Act of the Parliament of Singapore and includes any Ordinance or Act of Singapore or Malaysia having the force of law in Singapore; and "Act", when used in any subsidiary legislation, means the Act under the authority of which the subsidiary legislation was made;

"advocate" and "advocate and solicitor" mean an advocate and solicitor of the Supreme Court;

"animal" includes bird, reptile, fish and every kind of vertebrate animal and the young thereof;

"appoint" includes re-appoint;

"Attorney-General" means the Attorney-General of Singapore and in relation to any function, power or duty of the Attorney-General, includes a Deputy Attorney-General so assigned by the Attorney-General to perform that function, power or duty;

"Auditor-General" means the Auditor-General of Singapore;

"Cabinet" means the Cabinet constituted under the Constitution;

"Chief Justice" means the Chief Justice of Singapore;

"citizen of Singapore" means any person who, under the provisions of the Constitution, has the status of a citizen of Singapore;

"civil list" means the provision made under the Constitution for the maintenance of the President;

"commencement", in relation to an Act, means the time at which the Act comes into operation in Singapore;

"common law" means the common law insofar as it is in operation in Singapore and any custom or usage having the force of law in Singapore;

"Commonwealth" means collectively the Commonwealth countries and includes any colony, protectorate or protected state or any other territory administered by any Commonwealth country;

"Commonwealth country" means any country recognised by the President to be a Commonwealth country, and "part of the Commonwealth" means any Commonwealth country, any colony, protectorate or protected state or any other territory administered by the government of any Commonwealth country;

"Consolidated Fund" means the Consolidated Fund established by the Constitution;

"Constitution" means the Constitution of the Republic of Singapore;

"consular officer" means consul-general, consul, vice-consul, consular agent and any person for the time being authorised to discharge the duties of consul-general, consul, vice-consul or consular agent;

"contravene", in relation to a provision of a written law, includes a failure to comply with a requirement or condition in that provision;

"court" means any court of competent jurisdiction in Singapore;

"Criminal Procedure Rules" —

(*a*) means the Criminal Procedure Rules made under the Criminal Procedure Code 2010 and any other written law by the Criminal Procedure Rules Committee constituted under section 428A of that Code; and

(*b*) includes any subsidiary legislation deemed under section 428A(15) of that Code to be Criminal Procedure Rules;

"Crown Agents" means the persons for the time being acting as Crown Agents for Overseas Governments and Administrations in the United Kingdom;

"Deputy Attorney-General" means a Deputy Attorney-General appointed under Article 35A of the Constitution;

"Deputy Speaker" means the Deputy Speaker of Parliament elected under the Constitution;

"District Court" means any District Court constituted under any written law for the time being in force relating to the courts;

"District Judge" means a District Judge appointed as such under any written law for the time being in force relating to the courts;

"export", with its grammatical variations and cognate expressions, means to take or cause to be taken out of Singapore by land, sea or air;

"Family Court" means a Family Court constituted under section 5 of the Family Justice Act 2014;

"Family Justice Rules" means the Family Justice Rules made under the Family Justice Act 2014 and any other written law by the Family Justice Rules Committee constituted under section 46(1) of that Act;

"*Gazette*" or "Government *Gazette*" means the *Gazette* published in electronic or other form by order of the Government and includes any supplement thereto and any *Gazette* Extraordinary so published;

"Government" means the Government of Singapore;

"Government Printer" includes any printer purporting to be the printer authorised to print Acts and other documents of the Government;

"High Court" means the High Court established by the Constitution;

"immovable property" includes land, benefits to arise out of land and things attached to the earth or permanently fastened to anything attached to the earth;

"import", with its grammatical variations and cognate expressions, means to bring or cause to be brought into Singapore by land, sea or air;

"Judge" means a Supreme Court Judge, a Judicial Commissioner or a Senior Judge sitting in the General Division of the High Court or Appellate Division of the High Court, or the Court of Appeal, in accordance with the Constitution and the Supreme Court of Judicature Act 1969, or an International Judge sitting in the Singapore International Commercial Court, the Appellate Division of the High Court, or the Court of Appeal, in accordance with the Constitution and that Act;

"Judicial Service Commission" means the Judicial Service Commission constituted under the provisions of the Constitution;

[Act 33 of 2021 wef 14/01/2022]

"Judicial Service Officer" means an officer in the Singapore Judicial Service;

[Act 33 of 2021 wef 14/01/2022]

"Legal Service Commission" means the Legal Service Commission constituted under the provisions of the Constitution;

[Act 33 of 2021 wef 14/01/2022]

"Legal Service Officer" means an officer in the Singapore Legal Service;

[Act 33 of 2021 wef 14/01/2022]

"legislature", in relation to any part of the Commonwealth, means the authority competent to make laws for that part of the Commonwealth;

"Magistrate" means a Magistrate appointed under any written law for the time being in force relating to the courts;

"Malaya" means Singapore and the States of Malaya;

"Malaysia" means the Federation known as Malaysia;

"Malaysian citizen" or "Federal citizen" means any person who is a citizen of Malaysia by virtue of the provisions of any law for the time being in force, or any instrument for the time being having the force of law, in Malaysia;

"master", in relation to a ship, means any person, except a pilot or harbour master, having for the time being control or charge of the ship;

"military", in relation to Singapore's military, includes the digital and intelligence service of the Singapore Armed Forces;

[Act 24 of 2022 wef 28/10/2022]

"Minister" means the Minister for the time being charged with the responsibility for the department or subject to which the context refers;

"monogamous marriage" means a marriage which is recognised by the law of the place where it is contracted as a voluntary union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others during the continuance of the marriage;

"month" means calendar month;

"movable property" means property of every description except immovable property;

"national language" means the Malay language;

"oath" and "affidavit", in the case of persons for the time being allowed by law to affirm or declare instead of swearing, include affirmation and declaration, and "swear" in the like case includes affirm and declare;

"Ordinance" means any Ordinance of Singapore, and includes any Ordinance of the Colony of the Straits Settlements, any Ordinance of the Colony of Singapore or of the State of Singapore and any Proclamation having the force of law in Singapore; and "Ordinance" when used in any subsidiary legislation means the Ordinance under the authority of which the subsidiary legislation was made;

"Parliament" means the Parliament of Singapore;

"person" and "party" include any company or association or body of persons, corporate or unincorporate;

"police officer" means any member of the Singapore Police Force;

"prescribed" means prescribed by the Act in which the word occurs or by any subsidiary legislation made thereunder and, in relation to forms, includes being set out in electronic form on an electronically accessible server (such as an internet website) that is specified in the Act or subsidiary legislation in which the word occurs;

"President" means the President of Singapore and includes any person for the time being performing the functions of the President under the provisions of the Constitution;

"public holiday" means any day which is declared to be or proclaimed as a public holiday or which under any written law is to be observed as a public holiday in Singapore;

"public officer" means the holder of any office of emolument in the service of the Government;

"public seal" means the public seal of Singapore;

"public service" means service under the Government;

"Public Service Commission" means the Public Service Commission constituted under the provisions of the Constitution;

"registered", in relation to a document, means registered under the provisions of any written law for the time being applicable to the registration of such document;

"repeal" includes rescind, revoke, cancel, delete or replace;

[Act 31 of 2022 wef 01/11/2022]

"Rules of Court" means the Rules of Court made under the Supreme Court of Judicature Act 1969 and any other written law by the Rules Committee constituted under section 80(3) of that Act;

"Secretary to the Cabinet" means the Secretary to the Cabinet appointed in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution;

"ship" includes every description of vessel used in navigation not exclusively propelled by oars or paddles;

"sign", with its grammatical variations and cognate expressions, with reference to a person who is unable to write his or her name, includes "mark" with its grammatical variations and cognate expressions;

"Singapore" means the Republic of Singapore and is deemed to include the Island of Singapore and all islands and places which on 2 June 1959 were administered as part of Singapore and all territorial waters adjacent thereto;

"Solicitor-General" means the Solicitor-General of Singapore;

"Speaker" means the Speaker of Parliament elected in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution;

"States of Malaya" means —

(*a*) the States of Johore, Kedah, Kelantan, Malacca, Negri Sembilan, Pahang, Penang, Perak, Perlis, Selangor and Trengganu; and

(*b*) every Federal Territory which before its establishment was part of the territory of any State mentioned in paragraph (*a*),

which constitute part of Malaysia;

"statutory declaration", if made —

(*a*) in Singapore, means a declaration made under the Oaths and Declarations Act 2000;

(*b*) in the United Kingdom or any part of the Commonwealth other than in Singapore, means a declaration made before a justice of the peace, notary public or other person having authority therein under any law for the time being in force to take or receive a declaration;

(*c*) in any other place, means a declaration made before a consul or vice-consul or before any person having authority under any law for the time being in force to take or receive a declaration;

"subsidiary legislation" means any order in council, proclamation, rule, regulation, order, notification, by-law or other instrument made under any Act, Ordinance or other lawful authority and having legislative effect;

"Supreme Court" means the Supreme Court established by the Constitution;

"Supreme Court Judge" means the Chief Justice, a Justice of the Court of Appeal, a Judge of the Appellate Division or a Judge of the High Court;

"United Kingdom" means Great Britain and Northern Ireland;

"value", in relation to a suit, means the value of the subject matter of the suit;

"vessel" includes floating craft of every description;

"will" includes a codicil;

words importing the masculine gender include females;

words in the singular include the plural and words in the plural include the singular;

"writing" and expressions referring to writing include printing, lithography, typewriting, photography and other modes of representing or reproducing words or figures in visible form;

"written law" means the Constitution and all previous Constitutions having application to Singapore and all Acts, Ordinances and enactments by whatever name called and subsidiary legislation made thereunder for the time being in force in Singapore;

"Yang di-Pertuan Agong" means the Yang di-Pertuan Agong or Supreme Head of Malaysia and includes the Deputy Supreme Head of Malaysia or a Ruler of a Malay State, whenever he is lawfully exercising the functions of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong;

"year" means a year reckoned according to the Gregorian calendar;

"Youth Court" means a Youth Court constituted under section 5 of the Family Justice Act 2014.

[9/2003; 42/2005; 27/2014; 41/2014; 42/2014; 19/2018; 40/2019]

[Act 31 of 2022 wef 01/11/2022]

(2) Where a word or expression is defined in a written law, then, unless the contrary intention appears, other parts of speech and grammatical forms of that word or expression, and cognate expressions, have corresponding meanings in that law.

(2A) If a written law provides for a definition to apply, the definition applies unless the context otherwise requires.

[Act 31 of 2022 wef 01/11/2022]

(3) In every written law enacted before 28 December 1965 —

(*a*) references to the Colony of the Straits Settlements, the Settlement of Singapore, the Colony of Singapore, the Colony, the State of Singapore or the State, are to be construed as references to Singapore;

(*b*) references to the Federated Malay States are, unless the context otherwise requires, to be construed as references to the States of Malaya;

(*c*) references to the Governor of the Malayan Union are to be construed as references to the Yang di-Pertuan Agong;

(*d*) references to the Malayan Union are to be construed as references to Malaysia or the territories comprised therein, as the case may require;

(*e*) references to the Chief Justice or to any court, judge or magistrate of the Malayan Union or of the Federated Malay States or of any of the Malay States are to be construed as references to the Chief Justice or to the corresponding court, judge or magistrate of Malaysia or the territories comprised therein, as the case may require;

(*f*) references to any officer of, or authority or body constituted in or for, the Federated Malay States, any Malay State or the Malayan Union are to be construed as references to the corresponding officer of, or authority or body constituted in or for, Malaysia or the territories comprised therein, as the case may require;

(*g*) references to the Assembly or the Legislative Assembly are to be construed as references to the Parliament;

(*h*) references to the Yang di-Pertuan Negara are to be construed as references to the President;

(*i*) references to the Federal Minister are to be construed as references to the appropriate Minister of Singapore;

(*j*) references to the State Advocate-General are to be construed as references to the Attorney-General;

(*k*) references to the High Court in Singapore are to be construed as references to the High Court of Singapore; and

(*l*) references to a Judge of the High Court and the Registrar of the High Court are to be construed as references to a Judge

of the Supreme Court and the Registrar of the Supreme Court, respectively.

(4) [*Deleted by Act 5 of 2014*]

(5) Where an Act authorises or requires any document to be served by post, whether the word "serve", "give" or "send" or any other word is used, then, unless a contrary intention appears, the service is deemed to be effected by properly addressing, prepaying and posting a letter containing the document, and, unless the contrary is proved, is deemed to have been effected at the time at which the letter would be delivered in the ordinary course of post.

(6) Where a *Gazette* is published in more than one form, the date of publication of that *Gazette* is deemed to be the date on which that *Gazette* is first published in any form.

Criteria for determining death

2A.—(1) For all purposes, a person has died when there has occurred either —

(*a*) irreversible cessation of circulation of blood and respiration in the body of the person; or

(*b*) total and irreversible cessation of all functions of the brain of the person.

(2) The determination of the irreversible cessation of circulation of blood and respiration in the body of a person must, subject to subsection (5), be made in accordance with the ordinary standards of current medical practice.

(3) The determination of the total and irreversible cessation of all functions of the brain of a person must, subject to subsections (4) and (6), be made in accordance with the prescribed criteria.

(4) Except in the circumstances referred to in subsection (6), the determination of the total and irreversible cessation of all functions of the brain of a person must be certified in the prescribed form by 2 medical practitioners —

(*a*) at least one of whom has not been involved in the care or treatment of the person so certified; and

(*b*) who possess the prescribed postgraduate medical qualifications.

(5) If the death of a person from whose body an organ is to be removed after his or her death as authorised under the Human Organ Transplant Act 1987 or the Medical (Therapy, Education and Research) Act 1972 is determined by the irreversible cessation of circulation of blood and respiration in the body of that person, the person's death must be certified in the prescribed form by 2 medical practitioners —

(*a*) who have not been involved in the care or treatment of the person so certified;

(*b*) who do not belong to the team of medical practitioners that will effect the removal of the organ from the body;

(*c*) who have not been involved in the selection of the proposed recipient of the organ; and

(*d*) who will not be involved in the care or treatment of the proposed recipient of the organ during his or her hospitalisation for the purpose of the transplant.

(6) If the death of a person from whose body an organ is to be removed after his or her death as authorised under the Human Organ Transplant Act 1987 or the Medical (Therapy, Education and Research) Act 1972 is determined by the total and irreversible cessation of all functions of the brain of that person, the person's death must be certified in the prescribed form by 2 medical practitioners —

(*a*) who have not been involved in the care or treatment of the person so certified;

(*b*) who do not belong to the team of medical practitioners that will effect the removal of the organ from the body;

(*c*) who have not been involved in the selection of the proposed recipient of the organ;

(*d*) who will not be involved in the care or treatment of the proposed recipient of the organ during his or her hospitalisation for the purpose of the transplant; and

(*e*) who possess the prescribed postgraduate medical qualifications.

(7) The Minister may, for the purposes of all laws or any specified written law, by regulations prescribe —

(*a*) the criteria for determining the total and irreversible cessation of all functions of the brain of a person mentioned in subsections (1)(*b*) and (3); and

(*b*) the postgraduate medical qualifications and form of the death certificate for the purposes of subsection (4), (5) or (6).

(8) Nothing in this section —

(*a*) affects the operation of section 110 of the Evidence Act 1893 (burden of proving that a person is alive who has not been heard of for 7 years), section 100 of the Women's Charter 1961 (proceedings for interim judgment of presumption of death and divorce) or any other written law relating to the presumption of death;

(*b*) prevents the certification or determination of death in a case where the body of a person is not found or recovered.

[42/2005]

(9) In this section, "medical practitioner" means a person who is registered, or deemed to be registered, as a medical practitioner under the Medical Registration Act 1997.

PART 2

GENERAL PROVISIONS REGARDING WRITTEN LAW

Acts to be public Acts

3. Every Act is a public Act, and is to be judicially noticed as such unless the contrary is expressly provided by the Act.

Acts to be divided into sections without introductory words

4. All Acts are to be divided into sections, if there be more enactments than one, which sections are deemed to be substantive enactments without any introductory words.

Schedules

5. Every Schedule to an Act, together with any note thereto, is to be construed and has effect as part of the Act.

Subdivisions of Acts

6. When an Act is divided into Parts, Chapters, titles or other subdivisions, the fact and particulars of the division are, with or without express mention thereof in the Act, to be taken notice of in all courts and for all purposes.

Forms

7. Except as is otherwise expressly provided, whenever forms are prescribed, slight deviations therefrom, not affecting the substance or calculated to mislead, do not invalidate them.

Examples and illustrations

7A. Where an Act includes an example or illustration of the operation of a provision —

(*a*) the example or illustration is not to be taken as exhaustive; and

(*b*) if the example or illustration is inconsistent with the provision, the provision prevails.

Mode of referring to written laws

8.—(1) It is sufficient for all purposes to refer to a written law —

(*a*) in the case of an Act —

(i) by the year of its enactment and its number among the Acts enacted in that year;

(ii) where the Act, as enacted or revised, provides that it may be cited by a short title — by that short title; and

(iii) where the Act is a revised edition published before 1 March 2021 under any law providing for a revised edition — by its chapter number and the year of the revised edition; and

(*b*) in the case of a piece of subsidiary legislation that, as made or revised, provides for the manner of its citation — by that citation.

[4/2021]

(2) A reference for the purposes of subsection (1) may be made according to copies of written laws printed by the Government Printer.

[4/2021]

(3) Unless the contrary intention appears, a reference to a written law in accordance with subsection (1) is to be read as a reference to the written law as amended from time to time by any other written law.

[4/2021]

(4) Where —

(*a*) a written law is referred to by its short title or citation, whether in any other written law or in any document; and

(*b*) the short title or citation is subsequently changed,

the reference is to be read, unless the contrary intention appears, as a reference to the changed short title or citation.

[4/2021]

Construction in an Act of references to sections, etc.

9.—(1) Where in any Act there is a reference to a section, Part, Chapter or Schedule by number or letter only, and not in conjunction with the title or number of an Act, the reference is to be construed as a reference to the section, Part, Chapter or Schedule of that number or letter contained in the Act in which the reference occurs.

(2) Where in any section of an Act there is a reference to a subsection, paragraph or sub-paragraph by number or letter only, the reference is to be construed as a reference to the subsection, paragraph or sub-paragraph of that number or letter contained in the section in which the reference occurs.

(3) This section applies, with suitable modification, to subsidiary legislation.

Purposive interpretation of written law and use of extrinsic materials

9A.—(1) In the interpretation of a provision of a written law, an interpretation that would promote the purpose or object underlying the written law (whether that purpose or object is expressly stated in the written law or not) is to be preferred to an interpretation that would not promote that purpose or object.

(2) Subject to subsection (4), in the interpretation of a provision of a written law, if any material not forming part of the written law is capable of assisting in the ascertainment of the meaning of the provision, consideration may be given to that material —

(*a*) to confirm that the meaning of the provision is the ordinary meaning conveyed by the text of the provision taking into account its context in the written law and the purpose or object underlying the written law; or

(*b*) to ascertain the meaning of the provision when —

(i) the provision is ambiguous or obscure; or

(ii) the ordinary meaning conveyed by the text of the provision taking into account its context in the written law and the purpose or object underlying the written law leads to a result that is manifestly absurd or unreasonable.

(3) Without limiting subsection (2), the material that may be considered in accordance with that subsection in the interpretation of a provision of a written law includes —

(*a*) all matters not forming part of the written law that are set out in the document containing the text of the written law as printed by the Government Printer;

(*b*) any explanatory statement relating to the Bill containing the provision;

(*c*) the speech made in Parliament by a Minister on the occasion of the moving by that Minister of a motion that the Bill containing the provision be read a second time in Parliament;

(*d*) any relevant material in any official record of debates in Parliament;

(*e*) any treaty or other international agreement that is referred to in the written law; and

(*f*) any document that is declared by the written law to be a relevant document for the purposes of this section.

(4) In determining whether consideration should be given to any material in accordance with subsection (2), or in determining the weight to be given to any such material, regard must be had, in addition to any other relevant matters, to —

(*a*) the desirability of persons being able to rely on the ordinary meaning conveyed by the text of the provision taking into account its context in the written law and the purpose or object underlying the written law; and

(*b*) the need to avoid prolonging legal or other proceedings without compensating advantage.

Changes to style not to affect meaning

9B. Where —

(*a*) a provision of an Act has expressed an idea in a particular form of words; and

(*b*) a revised edition or a later provision of that Act, or a later Act, appears to have expressed the same idea in a different form of words for the purpose of using a clearer style,

the ideas are not to be taken to be different merely because different forms of words were used.

[4/2021]

Time of commencement of written law

10.—(1) A written law or a provision of a written law comes into operation —

(*a*) where a particular day for its coming into operation is specified by the written law or by a notification made

under the written law — on the expiration of the previous day; or

(*b*) where the day of its coming into operation is the date of its publication in the *Gazette* — on the expiration of the previous day.

(2) Where a written law is to come into operation on a day specified by a notification made under the written law, the notification may specify different days for different provisions of the written law to come into operation.

Effect of repeal of Act on subsidiary legislation made thereunder

11. Where any Act or part of an Act is repealed, subsidiary legislation issued under or made in virtue thereof remains in force so far as it is not inconsistent with the repealing Act and unless the contrary intention appears until it has been revoked or replaced by subsidiary legislation issued or made under the provisions of the repealing Act.

Repeal of repealing laws

12. Where any written law repealing in whole or in part any former written law is itself repealed, the last repeal does not revive the written law or the provisions previously repealed, unless words are added reviving that written law or those provisions.

Repeal of amended law to include amendments

13. Where any written law which has been amended by any other written law is itself repealed, the repeal is deemed to include the repeal of all written laws or parts of written laws by which the firstmentioned written law has been amended.

Repeal and substitution

14. Where a written law repeals wholly or in part any former written law and substitutes other provision therefor, the repealed written law remains in force until the substituted provision comes into operation.

References to amended and re-enacted provisions

15.—(1) Where in any written law a reference is made to another written law, the reference is, except where the context otherwise requires, deemed to include a reference to the last mentioned written law as the same may from time to time be amended.

(2) Where any written law repeals and re-enacts, with or without modification, any provision of a former written law, then, unless the contrary intention appears —

(*a*) any reference in any other written law to the provision so repealed is to be construed as a reference to the provision so re-enacted;

(*b*) insofar as any subsidiary legislation made or other thing done under the provision so repealed, or having effect as if so made or done, could have been made or done under the provision so re-enacted, it has effect as if made or done under that provision.

Effect of repeal

16.—(1) Where a written law repeals in whole or in part any other written law, then, unless the contrary intention appears, the repeal does not —

(*a*) revive anything not in force or existing at the time at which the repeal takes effect;

(*b*) affect the previous operation of any written law so repealed or anything duly done or suffered under any written law so repealed;

(*c*) affect any right, privilege, obligation or liability acquired, accrued or incurred under any written law so repealed;

(*d*) affect any penalty, forfeiture or punishment incurred in respect of any offence committed against any written law so repealed; or

(*e*) affect any investigation, legal proceeding or remedy in respect of any such right, privilege, obligation, liability, penalty, forfeiture or punishment as aforesaid; and any

such investigation, legal proceeding or remedy may be instituted, continued or enforced, and any such penalty, forfeiture or punishment may be imposed, as if the repealing law had not been passed.

(2) A reference in this section to the repeal of a written law in whole or in part includes a reference to —

(*a*) a repeal effected by implication;

(*b*) the abrogation or limitation of the effect of the written law or part; and

(*c*) the exclusion of the application of the written law or part to any person, subject matter or circumstance.

(3) Where a written law expires, lapses or otherwise ceases to have effect, this section applies as if the written law had been repealed by another written law.

(4) A reference in this section to a part of a written law includes a reference to any provision of, or words, figures, drawings or symbols in, the written law.

Construction of amending Act

17. Where an Act amends or adds to any Act, the amending Act is, so far as is consistent with the tenor thereof, and unless the contrary intention appears, to be construed as one with the amended Act and as part thereof.

Effect of expiration of written law

18. The expiration of a written law does not affect any civil or criminal proceeding previously commenced under the written law, but every such proceeding may be continued and everything in relation thereto may be done in all respects as if the written law continued in force.

PART 3

SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATION

General provisions with respect to power given to any authority to make subsidiary legislation

19. When any Act confers powers on any authority to make subsidiary legislation, the following provisions have effect with reference to the making and operation of the subsidiary legislation unless the contrary intention appears:

(*a*) subsidiary legislation may at any time be amended, varied, rescinded or revoked by the same authority and in the same manner by and in which it was made subject to the following provisions:

(i) where any Act is to come into operation on a date to be fixed by subsidiary legislation, the power to make the subsidiary legislation does not include the power of amending, revoking or suspending the same; and

(ii) where the authority has been replaced wholly or partially by another authority, the power conferred herein upon the original authority may be exercised by the replacing authority concerning all matters or things within its jurisdiction as if it were the original authority;

(*b*) when any Act confers powers on any authority to make subsidiary legislation for any general purpose, and also for any special purpose incidental thereto, the enumeration of the special purposes does not derogate from the generality of the powers conferred with reference to the general purpose; and

(*c*) subsidiary legislation made under an Act must not be inconsistent with the provisions of any Act.

Additional provisions as to subsidiary legislation

20. The following provisions also apply to subsidiary legislation:

(*a*) authority to make subsidiary legislation includes —

(i) authority to provide that a contravention thereof shall be punishable by a fine not exceeding $2,000 or with imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or both as may be specified in the subsidiary legislation;

(ii) authority to amend any forms prescribed by the written law under which the subsidiary legislation was made;

(iii) authority to prescribe new forms for the purpose thereof and for the purpose of the subsidiary legislation; and

(iv) authority to provide for the manner and method in which any document, record, application, permit, approval or licence may be submitted, issued or served by electronic means, or for the authentication thereof;

(*b*) authority to provide for fees and charges includes authority to provide for the determination of the manner and method of payment and the reduction, waiver or refund thereof, either generally or in any particular event or case or class of cases or in the discretion of any person; and

(*c*) a reference in a written law to another written law includes a reference to any subsidiary legislation made thereunder.

Use of defined terms in subsidiary legislation

21. Where any Act confers powers to make any subsidiary legislation, expressions used in the subsidiary legislation have the same meanings as in the Act conferring the power, unless the contrary intention appears.

Anticipatory exercise of powers

22. Where an Act or any part thereof does not come into operation immediately on its passing and the Act or that part confers power (or amends another Act to confer power) to make subsidiary legislation or to make appointments or to issue notifications or to prescribe forms or to do any other thing for the purposes of the Act or that part (or the Act being amended), then, unless the contrary intention appears, the power may be exercised and any subsidiary legislation, appointment, form or thing made, issued, prescribed or done under the power may be made, issued, prescribed or done so as to take effect at any time after the passing of the Act so far as may be necessary or expedient for the purpose of —

(*a*) bringing the Act or that part into operation; or

(*b*) giving full effect to the Act or that part (or the other Act as amended) on or after the day on which it comes into operation.

[4/2021]

Commencement of subsidiary legislation

23.—(1) Subsidiary legislation made under any Act or other lawful authority —

(*a*) unless it is otherwise expressly provided in any Act, must be published in the *Gazette*; and

(*b*) unless it is otherwise provided in the subsidiary legislation, takes effect and comes into operation on the date of its publication.

(2) Any such subsidiary legislation may be made to operate retrospectively to any date not being a date earlier than the commencement of the Act or the establishment of the authority by or under which the subsidiary legislation is made.

Judicial notice of subsidiary legislation

24. Judicial notice is to be taken of all subsidiary legislation made or purporting to be made under any Act or other lawful authority.

Construction of amending subsidiary legislation

25. Where subsidiary legislation amends other subsidiary legislation, the amending subsidiary legislation is, so far as is consistent with the tenor thereof and unless the contrary intention appears, to be construed as one with the amended subsidiary legislation.

Acts done under subsidiary legislation to be deemed to be done under Act

26. An act is deemed to be done under any Act or by virtue of the powers conferred by any Act or in pursuance or execution of the powers of, or under the authority of any Act, if it is done under, or by virtue of, or in pursuance of, subsidiary legislation made under any power contained in the Act.

Reference to Act to include subsidiary legislation

26A. Unless the contrary intention appears, a reference in any written law to an Act is to be construed so as to include a reference to any subsidiary legislation made under that Act.

PART 4

POWERS AND APPOINTMENTS

Construction of provisions as to exercise of powers and duties

27.—(1) Where a written law confers a power or imposes a duty, then, unless the contrary intention appears, the power may be exercised and the duty must be performed from time to time as occasion requires.

(2) Where a written law confers a power or imposes a duty on the holder of an office as such, then, unless the contrary intention appears, the power may be exercised and the duty must be performed by the holder of the office for the time being or by a person duly appointed to act for him or her.

(3) Where any Act confers a power to make subsidiary legislation, to issue any order or to do any act, the power is, unless the contrary intention appears, to be construed as including the power exercisable

in like manner and subject to the like consent and conditions (if any) to amend, vary, rescind, revoke or suspend the subsidiary legislation made or order issued or any part thereof or to abstain from doing the act.

Power to appoint includes power to dismiss

28.—(1) Where a written law confers upon any person or authority a power to make appointments to any office or place, the power is, unless the contrary intention appears, to be construed as including a power to dismiss or suspend any person appointed and to appoint another person temporarily in the place of any person so suspended or in place of any sick or absent holder of the office or place.

(2) Where the power of the person or authority to make appointments is only exercisable upon the recommendation or subject to the approval or consent of some other person or authority, the power of dismissal is, unless the contrary intention appears, only exercisable upon the recommendation or subject to the approval or consent of that other person or authority.

Construction of enabling words

29.—(1) Where a written law confers powers on any person to do or enforce the doing of any act or thing, such powers are to be understood to be also conferred as are reasonably necessary to enable the person to do or enforce the doing of the act or thing.

(2) Without limiting subsection (1) —

(*a*) a power to prohibit or to control or to regulate any matter includes power to provide for the same by the licensing thereof and power to prohibit acts whereby the prohibitions, control or regulations affecting the matter might be evaded;

(*b*) a power to grant a licence, permit, authority, approval or exemption includes power to impose reasonable conditions subject to which the licence, permit, authority, approval or exemption may be granted.

Appointment of officers by name or office

30.—(1) Where by or under any Act, the President, a Minister or any public officer or body is empowered to appoint or name a person to have and exercise any powers or perform any duties, the President, Minister, public officer or body may either appoint a person by name or direct the person for the time being holding the office designated by the President, Minister, public officer or body to have and exercise those powers and perform those duties.

(2) Thereupon, or from the date specified by the President, Minister, public officer or body, the person appointed by name or the person holding the office as mentioned in subsection (1) has and may exercise those powers or perform those duties accordingly.

(3) Any such appointment may be made with retrospective effect to any date not being a date earlier than the commencement of the Act under which the appointment is made.

Official designation to include officer executing duties

31. When reference is made in any written law, instrument, warrant or process of any kind made or issued by the President, a Minister, any public officer or body or person having authority under any written law to make or to issue the same to any public officer by the term designating his or her office, such public officer includes the officer for the time being executing the duties of that office or any portion of those duties.

Appointments having retrospective effect

32. Any appointment may be declared to have effect as from the date upon which the appointee commenced to exercise the powers and discharge the duties of his or her appointment, not being a date earlier than the date of the commencement of the written law under which the appointment is made.

Power of majority, quorum, etc., of board, etc.

32A.—(1) Where a written law confers a power or function or imposes a duty upon a statutory body consisting of 3 or more persons,

the power may be exercised, or the function or duty may be performed, by a majority of those persons.

(2) Where a statutory body consists of 3 or more persons —

(*a*) a quorum is constituted at a meeting of the body by a number of members of the body equal to —

(i) if the written law establishing the body fixes the number of members of the body — at least half of that number of members; and

(ii) if the number of persons is not so fixed but is within a range having a maximum or minimum — at least half of the number of members in office; and

(*b*) an act or thing done by a majority of the members of the body present at the meeting, if those members constitute a quorum, is to be regarded as having been done by the body.

(3) At a meeting of a statutory body, the chairperson or other member presiding has a casting as well as a deliberative vote in all matters in which a decision is taken by vote.

(4) This section is subject to any provision to the contrary in any written law.

(5) In this section, "statutory body" means a board, commission, committee or similar body, whether corporate or unincorporate, established under a written law.

Powers of board, etc., not affected by vacancy, etc.

33. Where by or under any Act, any board, commission, committee or similar body, whether corporate or unincorporate, is established, then, unless the contrary intention appears, the powers of such board, commission, committee or similar body are not affected by —

(*a*) any vacancy in the membership thereof;

(*b*) the fact that it is afterwards discovered that there was some defect in the appointment or qualification of a person purporting to be a member thereof; or

(*c*) the fact that there was any minor irregularity in the convening of any meeting thereof.

Standard investment power of statutory bodies

33A. Where any written law confers on a statutory body the power to invest any moneys in accordance with the standard investment power of statutory bodies, then, subject to any general or special directions as the Minister charged with responsibility for that statutory body may issue, that statutory body may —

(*a*) invest those moneys in the manner it thinks fit; and

(*b*) engage in any financial activity or participate in any financial arrangement for the purpose of managing or hedging against any financial risk that arises or is likely to arise from such investment.

[45/2004]

Signification of orders, etc., of President

34.—(1) Where any power is conferred upon the President to make any subsidiary legislation or appointment, give any direction, issue any order, authorise any thing or matter to be done, grant any exemption, remit any fee or penalty or exercise any other power under any written law, it is sufficient if the exercise of such power by the President is signified under the hand of any Minister or the Secretary to the Cabinet.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply to the power of the President to make or issue any warrants or proclamations which may be made or issued only under the hand of the President himself or herself.

Signification of orders, etc., of Minister

35. Where any written law confers upon a Minister power to make any subsidiary legislation or appointment, give any direction, issue any order, authorise any thing or matter to be done, grant any exemption, remit any fee or penalty or exercise any other power, it is sufficient, unless in the written law it is otherwise provided, if the exercise of such power by the Minister is signified under the hand of the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry for which the Minister is

responsible or of any public officer duly authorised in writing by the Minister.

Subsidiary legislation by statutory body, etc.

35A.—(1) Where a statutory body is permitted by any written law to delegate the performance of any of the statutory body's functions or the exercise of any of the statutory body's powers, that power to delegate does not extend to the power to make any subsidiary legislation.

[5/2018]

(2) Where any Act confers upon a statutory body power to make subsidiary legislation, it is sufficient, unless in such Act it is otherwise provided, if the exercise of that power by the statutory body is signified under the hand of —

(*a*) the chairperson of the statutory body; or

(*b*) a member of the statutory body duly authorised by that body to do so in place of the chairperson.

[5/2018]

Delegation of functions of Minister

36.—(1) Where an Act confers or imposes a function on a Minister (called in this section the responsible Minister), the Minister may delegate the function in accordance with this section.

(2) Unless any Act expressly provides otherwise, the function may, with the Prime Minister's approval, be delegated to any Minister, Minister of State or Parliamentary Secretary assigned by the Prime Minister to assist the responsible Minister.

(3) Unless the contrary intention appears in any Act, the function may be delegated to a public body or a public officer.

(4) Where a function is delegated under this section —

(*a*) the delegate may or must (as the case may be) exercise the function; and

(*b*) if the Act that created the function provides that the exercise of the function depends on the Minister's opinion, belief or state of mind, the delegate may exercise the

function based on the delegate's opinion, belief or state of mind.

(5) A delegation under this section —

(*a*) must be made by order in the *Gazette*;

(*b*) may be general or limited;

(*c*) may be subject to conditions that are consistent with the nature of the delegated function;

(*d*) may be to a named person or to the holder of an office;

(*e*) may be to 2 or more persons at the same time; and

(*f*) does not prevent the responsible Minister from personally exercising the delegated function.

(6) This section does not permit the delegation of —

(*a*) any power to make subsidiary legislation; and

(*b*) the power of delegation in this section.

(7) A function delegated under this section may not be further delegated by the delegate.

(8) This section does not affect the operation of any rule of law by which any function conferred or imposed on a Minister may be exercised by another person on behalf of the Minister.

(9) In this section —

(*a*) "function" includes power and duty, and the exercise of a function includes the performance of a duty;

(*b*) "public body" has the meaning given by section 2(1) of the Public Sector (Governance) Act 2018 (Act 5 of 2018), and "public officer" includes a person deemed to be a public officer by section 21(1) of that Act; and

(*c*) a reference to an Act does not include any subsidiary legislation made under the Act.

[Act 4 of 2021 wef 01/03/2024]

Signing of documents

37. Where in any written law any document is required to be under the hand of or countersigned by a Minister in exercise of any powers conferred thereby, it is sufficient for the document to be under the hand of or signed or countersigned by the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry for which the Minister is responsible or by any public officer duly authorised in writing by the Minister.

PART 5

PENAL PROVISIONS

Attempt to commit an offence to be deemed an offence

38. A provision which constitutes an offence is, unless the contrary intention appears, deemed to provide also that an attempt to commit that offence shall be an offence against the provision, punishable as if the offence itself had been committed.

Imposition of penalty not a bar to civil action

39. The imposition of a penalty by any written law, in the absence of express provision to the contrary, does not relieve any person from liability to answer for damages to a person injured.

Provisions as to offences under 2 or more laws

40. Where any act or omission constitutes an offence under 2 or more written laws, the offender shall, unless the contrary intention appears, be liable to be prosecuted and punished under any one of those written laws but shall not be liable to be punished twice for the same offence.

Penalties prescribed to be deemed maximum penalties

41. Whenever in any written law a penalty is provided for an offence, such provision implies that the offence shall be punishable upon conviction by a penalty not exceeding (except as may be otherwise expressly mentioned in the written law) the penalty provided.

PART 5A

PROVISIONS RELATING TO COURT PROCEEDINGS

Process for making applications to Court in civil proceedings

41A.—(1) Where any written law that provides for an application in any civil proceedings to be made to a Court —

(*a*) does not prescribe the process by which the application is to be made; or

(*b*) prescribes that the application is to be made by way of a petition, a motion, an originating motion or a summons in chambers,

that written law is, in relation to any such application that is made thereunder on or after the date of commencement of section 2 of the Courts (Civil and Criminal Justice) Reform Act 2021, deemed to require that the application must be made —

(*c*) by way of an originating application, if it commences the proceedings; or

[Act 25 of 2021 wef 01/04/2022]

(*d*) by way of a summons, if it is made in proceedings that are pending.

[42/2005]

[Act 25 of 2021 wef 01/04/2022]

(2) Where pursuant to subsection (1) an application is made to a Court under any written law by way of an originating application or a summons —

(*a*) the application must be made in accordance with the Rules of Court;

(*b*) the Court may give to the parties to the application any directions that the Court thinks just and expedient for the purpose of facilitating the progress of the application as an application made by originating application or summons, as the case may be; and

[Act 25 of 2021 wef 01/04/2022]

(*c*) any provision in that written law that relates to the practice and procedure for making such an application and which is

inconsistent with this section or with the Rules of Court has, to the extent of the inconsistency, no effect in relation to that application.

[42/2005]

[Act 25 of 2021 wef 01/04/2022]

(3) Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to —

(*a*) petitions of appeal; or

(*b*) such other class or classes of applications to or proceedings in the Court as may be prescribed under subsection (7).

[42/2005]

(4) Nothing in this section prevents any relief obtainable by way of an application to a Court under any written law from being included as one of the reliefs sought in an originating claim by which an action is commenced before the Court.

[42/2005]

[Act 25 of 2021 wef 01/04/2022]

(5) To avoid doubt, any application that —

(*a*) was made to a Court before the date of commencement of section 2 of the Courts (Civil and Criminal Justice) Reform Act 2021 under any written law to which subsection (1) applies; and

(*b*) is pending before the Court on or after that date,

continues, unless otherwise ordered by the Court, to proceed in accordance with the provisions of the relevant written law and the practice and procedure as were in force and applicable in relation to that application immediately before that date, until the application is finally disposed of by the Court.

[Act 25 of 2021 wef 01/04/2022]

(6) In this section, "Court" means —

(*a*) the Court of Appeal or a judge sitting in that Court;

(*b*) the Appellate Division of the High Court or a judge sitting in that Division;

(*ba*) the General Division of the High Court or a judge sitting in that Division;

(*c*) a District Court;

(*d*) a Magistrate's Court; and

(*e*) such other court as may be prescribed.

[42/2005; 42/2014; 40/2019]

(7) The Minister charged with the responsibility for law may, by order in the *Gazette*, prescribe —

(*a*) the class or classes of applications to or proceedings in the Court to which this section does not apply; and

(*b*) any other court in relation to which this section applies.

[42/2005]

Renaming of prerogative orders or writs

41B. As from 1 January 2006, the prerogative orders or writs issuable by the High Court as listed in the first column below are to be referred to by the corresponding expressions as set out in the second column and, in all written laws, the expressions as set out in the second column are to be construed accordingly:

First column	*Second column*
(*a*) mandamus	Mandatory Order
(*b*) certiorari	Quashing Order
(*c*) prohibition	Prohibiting Order
(*d*) writ of habeas corpus	Order for Review of Detention.

[42/2005]

References to High Court before 2 January 2021

41C. In any written law enacted or made before 2 January 2021 —

(*a*) a provision that confers any jurisdiction or power on the High Court is, on or after that date, to be read as conferring that jurisdiction or power on the General Division of the High Court;

(*b*) a reference to an appeal or other process to or from the High Court is, on or after that date, to be read as a reference

to an appeal to or from the General Division of the High Court; and

(*c*) a power to make subsidiary legislation in relation to proceedings in the High Court is, on or after that date, to be read as a power to make subsidiary legislation in relation to proceedings in both the General Division of the High Court and Appellate Division of the High Court.

[40/2019]

References to writs, etc.

41D.—(1) As from the date of commencement of section 3(1) of the Courts (Civil and Criminal Justice) Reform Act 2021, a reference in any written law to a matter mentioned in the first column is to be construed as a reference to the corresponding expression in the second column, subject to the exceptions in subsection (2) and section 41E:

	First column	*Second column*
	Old expression	*New expression*
(*a*)	Writ of summons	Originating claim
(*b*)	Originating summons	Originating application
(*c*)	Subpoena	Order to attend court
(*d*)	Writ of execution	Enforcement order
(*e*)	Writ of seizure and sale	Enforcement order for seizure and sale of property
(*f*)	Writ of possession	Enforcement order for possession of property
(*g*)	Garnishee order	Enforcement order for attachment of a debt
(*h*)	Memorandum of appearance	Notice of intention to contest or not contest
(*i*)	Entry of appearance in relation to a writ of summons	Filing and service of a notice of intention to contest or not contest

(*j*)	Leave of court	Permission of court
(*k*)	Plaintiff	Claimant
(*l*)	Ex parte application	Application without notice.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply in relation to any proceedings in the Family Division of the High Court, a Family Court or a Youth Court.

(3) A reference in any written law to a matter mentioned in the second column of the table in subsection (1) in relation to any proceedings in the Family Division of the High Court, a Family Court or a Youth Court is to be construed as a reference to the corresponding expression in the first column of that table.

[Act 25 of 2021 wef 01/04/2022]

References to originating claims, etc., in relation to Singapore International Commercial Court

41E. As from the date of commencement of section 3(1) of the Courts (Civil and Criminal Justice) Reform Act 2021, a reference in any written law to a matter mentioned in the first column in relation to any proceedings in the Singapore International Commercial Court is to be construed as a reference to the corresponding expression in the second column:

	First column	*Second column*
(*a*)	Originating claim	Originating application
(*b*)	Writ of summons	Originating application
(*c*)	Notice of intention to contest or not contest	Defendant's statement
(*d*)	Memorandum of appearance	Defendant's statement
(*e*)	Filing and service of a notice of intention to contest or not contest	Filing and service of a defendant's statement

(*f*) Entry of appearance in relation to a writ of summons	Filing and service of a defendant's statement.

[Act 25 of 2021 wef 01/04/2022]

PART 6

MISCELLANEOUS

Powers of President, Minister or other authority to appoint public officer to serve on board and to appoint chairperson

42.—(1) Where under the provisions of any Act power is given to the President, a Minister or any other authority to appoint any person to be a member of any board, commission, committee or similar body, it is lawful for the President, Minister or other authority, in the absence of any provision to the contrary, to appoint, by his or her official designation, any public officer.

(2) On such appointment and until the appointment is cancelled or otherwise determined, the person for the time being holding or carrying out the duties of the office in question is a member of that board, commission, committee or similar body.

(3) Where under the provisions of any Act power is given to the President, a Minister or any other authority to appoint any board, commission, committee or similar body, it is lawful for the President, Minister or other authority, in the absence of any provision to the contrary, to appoint a chairperson of that board, commission, committee or similar body.

Prima facie evidence of signature

43. Where the fiat, authorisation or sanction of the President, a Minister, the Attorney-General, a Deputy Attorney-General, the Solicitor-General, the Public Prosecutor, a Deputy Public Prosecutor or any public officer is necessary before any prosecution or action is commenced or for any purpose in connection with any proceeding, any document purporting to bear the fiat, authorisation or sanction of the President, Minister, Attorney-General, Deputy Attorney-General,

Solicitor-General, Public Prosecutor, Deputy Public Prosecutor or public officer (as the case may be) is to be received as prima facie evidence in any proceeding without proof being given that the signature to such fiat, authorisation or sanction is that of the President, Minister, Attorney-General, Deputy Attorney-General, Solicitor-General, Public Prosecutor, Deputy Public Prosecutor or public officer, as the case may be.

[41/2014]

Public officers

44. A reference in any written law to any public officer by the usual or common title of his or her office is, if there is such an office customarily in Singapore and unless the contrary intention appears, to be read and construed as referring to the person for the time being holding or carrying out the duties of that office in Singapore.

Act for which payment is required need not be performed until payment is made

45.—(1) Where any person, public officer, public department or statutory authority is required to do anything for which a fee is to be paid or a charge made under any written law, the person, public officer, public department or statutory authority may decline to do that thing —

(*a*) until the fee is paid or payment is made; and

(*b*) where the precise amount of the payment to be made cannot be ascertained until the thing is done, until there is paid an amount that may be estimated to be the correct amount by the person, public officer, public department or statutory authority required to do that thing.

(2) Where a thing has been done for which an estimated amount has been paid, the amount must be adjusted to the correct amount either by means of a further payment or by a refund of the amount overpaid.

Fees or charges may be prescribed and may be reduced, varied, remitted or refunded

46.—(1) Where any act requires to be done or a service performed by a public body, statutory authority or public officer under or in

connection with any written law, and no special provision is made thereby or thereunder for making a charge in respect of the act or service, the Minister may, by order in the *Gazette*, provide for the imposition of any fees or charges that the Minister considers proper.

(2) Any fee or charge under any written law made payable to the Government or to any public body, statutory authority or public officer, not being a fee or charge which is regulated by Rules of Court, may by order of the Minister be reduced, remitted or refunded, in whole or in part in the circumstances of any particular case.

Proceedings not to abate on death, etc., of official

47. Any civil or criminal proceedings taken by or against any person by virtue of his or her office are not discontinued or abated by his or her death, resignation, absence or removal from office, but may be carried on by or against (as the case may be) the person appointed to perform the duties of the office.

Gazette to be evidence of matters therein

48. All printed copies of the *Gazette*, purporting to be published by authority and to be printed by the Government Printer, are to be —

(*a*) admitted in evidence by all courts and in all legal proceedings without any proof being given that those copies were so published and printed; and

(*b*) taken and accepted as prima facie evidence of subsidiary legislation, appointments, notifications and other publications therein printed and of the matters and things contained in such subsidiary legislation, appointments, notifications and publications, respectively.

Service of documents

48A.—(1) Where a written law authorises or requires a document to be served on a person, whether the expression "serve", "give" or "send" or any other expression is used, then, unless the contrary intention appears, the document may be served —

(*a*) in the case of an individual —

(i) by delivering it to the individual personally; or

(ii) by leaving it at, or by sending it by prepaid post to, the usual or last known address of the place of residence or business of the individual;

(*b*) in the case of a partnership —

(i) by delivering it to the secretary or other like officer of the partnership; or

(ii) by leaving it at, or by sending it by prepaid post to, the principal or last known place of business of the partnership in Singapore;

(*c*) in the case of a body corporate —

(i) by delivering it to the secretary or other like officer of the body corporate; or

(ii) by leaving it at, or by sending it by prepaid post to, the registered office or a principal office of the body corporate in Singapore.

(2) Nothing in subsection (1) —

(*a*) affects the operation of any written law that authorises the service of a document otherwise than as provided in that subsection; or

(*b*) affects the power of a court to authorise service of a document otherwise than as provided in that subsection.

Measurement of distance

49. In the measurement of any distance for the purposes of any written law, that distance must, unless the contrary intention appears, be measured in a straight line on a horizontal plane.

Computation of time

50. In computing time for the purposes of any written law, unless the contrary intention appears —

(*a*) a period of days from the happening of an event or the doing of any act or thing is deemed to be exclusive of the day on which the event happens or the act or thing is done;

(*b*) if the last day of the period is a Sunday or a public holiday (which days are called in this section excluded days) the period includes the next following day not being an excluded day;

(*c*) when any act or proceeding is directed or allowed to be done or taken on a certain day, then, if that day happens to be an excluded day, the act or proceeding is considered as done or taken in due time if it is done or taken on the next day afterwards, not being an excluded day;

(*d*) when any act or proceeding is directed or allowed to be done or taken within any time not exceeding 6 days, excluded days must not be reckoned in the computation of the time.

Standard time

51.—(1) Where any expression of time occurs in any written law or in any instrument and whenever the doing or not doing anything at a certain time of the day or night or during a certain part of the day or night has an effect in law, that time is, unless it is otherwise specifically stated, held to be standard time as declared by this section.

(2) "Standard time" means standard time as used in Singapore, namely, 8 hours, or such other period as may from time to time be determined by the President by notification in the *Gazette*, in advance of Coordinated Universal Time.

Provision when no time prescribed

52. Where no time is prescribed or allowed within which anything is to be done, that thing is to be done with all convenient speed and as often as the prescribed occasion arises.

Construction of power of extending time

53. Where in any written law a time is prescribed for doing any act or taking any proceeding and power is given to a court or other authority to extend the time, unless the contrary intention appears, the power may be exercised by the court or other authority although the application for the extension is not made until after the expiration of the time prescribed.

Saving of rights of Government

54. No Act affects in any manner the rights of the Government unless it is therein expressly provided, or unless it appears by necessary implication, that the Government is bound thereby.

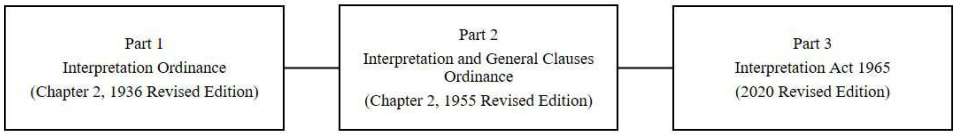
Act to bind Government

55. This Act binds the Government.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY
INTERPRETATION ACT 1965

This Legislative History is a service provided by the Law Revision Commission on a best-efforts basis. It is not part of the Act.

PICTORIAL OVERVIEW OF PREDECESSOR ACTS



LEGISLATIVE HISTORY DETAILS

PART 1
INTERPRETATION ORDINANCE
(CHAPTER 2, 1936 REVISED EDITION)

1. Act XIV of 1867 — Interpretation Act, 1867

Bill	:	Information not available
First and Second Readings	:	26 June 1867
Notice of Amendments	:	26 June 1867
Third Reading	:	1 July 1867
Commencement	:	1 July 1867 (passed)

2. Ordinance I of 1868 — Interpretation Amendment Ordinance, 1868

Bill	:	Information not available
First Reading	:	6 May 1868
Second Reading	:	18 May 1868
Third Reading	:	28 May 1868
Commencement	:	28 May 1868 (passed)

3. Ordinance I of 1888 — The General Clauses Ordinance 1888

Bill	:	G.N. No. 638/1887
First Reading	:	15 December 1887
Second Reading	:	21 December 1887
Notice of Amendments	:	26 January 1888
Third Reading	:	26 January 1888

Commencement	:	26 January 1888

4. Ordinance IX of 1888 — The General Clauses Amendment Ordinance, 1888

Bill	:	G.N. No. 553/1888
First Reading	:	4 October 1888
Second Reading	:	18 October 1888
Third Reading	:	26 October 1888
Commencement	:	26 October 1888

5. Ordinance XVIII of 1910 — The General Clauses Ordinance 1888 Amendment Ordinance 1910

Bill	:	G.N. No. 586/1910
First Reading	:	6 May 1910
Second Reading	:	27 May 1910
Notice of Amendments	:	24 June 1910
Third Reading	:	24 June 1910
Commencement	:	7 July 1910

6. Ordinance VI of 1912 — The Interpretation Ordinance 1912

Bill	:	G.N. No. 522/1912
First Reading	:	10 May 1912
Second Reading	:	17 May 1912
Notice of Amendments	:	9 August 1912
Third Reading	:	9 August 1912
Commencement	:	30 August 1912

7. Ordinance 27 of 1920 — Interpretation Ordinance, 1912 (Amendment) Ordinance, 1920

Bill	:	G.N. No. 1587/1920
First Reading	:	13 October 1920
Second Reading	:	25 October 1920
Third Reading	:	3 November 1920
Commencement	:	19 November 1920

8. 1920 Revised Edition — Ordinance No. 131 (Interpretation)

Operation	:	28 November 1921

9. Ordinance 26 of 1921 — Statute Laws (Revised Edition) Operation Ordinance, 1921

(Amendments made by section 3(*a*) read with Schedule *B* to the above Ordinance)

Bill	:	G.N. No. 1854/1921
First and Second Readings	:	22 November 1921
Notice of Amendments	:	22 November 1921
Third Reading	:	22 November 1921
Commencement	:	28 November 1921 (section 3(*a*) read with Schedule *B*)

10. 1926 Revised Edition — Ordinance No. 131 (Interpretation)

Operation	:	1 August 1926

11. Ordinance 29 of 1933 — Interpretation (Amendment) Ordinance, 1933

Bill	:	G.N. No. 1867/1933
First Reading	:	2 October 1933
Second Reading	:	25 October 1933
Notice of Amendments	:	25 October 1933
Third Reading	:	25 October 1933
Commencement	:	10 November 1933

12. Ordinance 29 of 1934 — The Interpretation (Amendment) Ordinance, 1934

Bill	:	G.N. No. 742/1934
First Reading	:	16 April 1934
Second Reading	:	28 May 1934
Notice of Amendments	:	28 May 1934
Third Reading	:	28 May 1934
Commencement	:	29 June 1934

13. Ordinance 37 of 1934 — Interpretation (Amendment No. 2) Ordinance, 1934

Bill	:	G.N. No. 2122/1934

First Reading	:	24 September 1934
Second and Third Readings	:	17 October 1934
Commencement	:	2 November 1934

14. Ordinance 63 of 1935 — Statute Law Revision Ordinance, 1935
(Amendments made by section 2 read with item (*o*) of the First Schedule to the above Ordinance)

Bill	:	G.N. No. 3043/1935
First Reading	:	20 November 1935
Second Reading	:	9 December 1935
Notice of Amendments	:	9 December 1935
Third Reading	:	9 December 1935
Commencement	:	31 December 1935 (section 2 read with item (*o*) of the First Schedule)

15. 1936 Revised Edition — Interpretation Ordinance (Chapter 2)

Operation	:	1 September 1936

PART 2
INTERPRETATION AND GENERAL CLAUSES ORDINANCE
(CHAPTER 2, 1955 REVISED EDITION)

16. M. Ordinance 7 of 1948 — Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance, 1948

Commencement	:	31 January 1948
Application	:	16 September 1963

Note: This Ordinance had effect in Singapore for the interpretation of the laws of the Federation specified in the First Schedule to the Modification of Laws (Internal Security and Public Order) (Singapore) Order, 1963 (L.N. 231/1963 (G.N. Sp. No. S 4/1963)), with effect from 16 September 1963.

17. Ordinance 4 of 1951 — Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance, 1951

Bill	:	G.N. No. S 30/1950
First Reading	:	22 February 1950
Second Reading	:	21 March 1950

Select Committee Report	:	Council Paper No. 88 of 1950
Third Reading	:	19 December 1950
Commencement	:	9 January 1951

18. Ordinance 18 of 1952 — Interpretation and General Clauses (Amendment) Ordinance, 1952

Bill	:	16/1952
First Reading	:	20 May 1952
Second and Third Readings	:	17 June 1952
Commencement	:	23 June 1952

19. G.N. No. S 93/1955 — Singapore Colony Order in Council, 1955 (Consequential Provisions) (Council of Ministers) Order, 1955

Commencement	:	4 April 1955

20. Ordinance 16 of 1955 — Interpretation and General Clauses (Amendment) Ordinance, 1955

Bill	:	2/1955
First Reading	:	25 May 1955
Second and Third Readings	:	29 June 1955
Commencement	:	1 July 1955

21. 1955 Revised Edition — Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance (Chapter 2)

Operation	:	1 July 1956

22. G.N. No. S 367/1957 (S.I. 2166/1957) — Christmas Island Order in Council, 1957

Commencement	:	1 January 1958

23. Ordinance 2 of 1958 — Federation of Malaya Independence (Consequential Provisions) Ordinance, 1958

(Amendments made by section 3 of the above Ordinance)

Bill	:	125/1957
First Reading	:	13 December 1957
Second Reading	:	8 January 1958
Notice of Amendments	:	8 January 1958
Third Reading	:	8 January 1958

Commencement : 20 January 1958 (section 3)

24. G.N. No. S 222/1959 — Singapore Constitution (Modification of Laws) (Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance) Order, 1959

Commencement : 3 June 1959

25. G.N. No. S (N.S.) 67/1959 — Singapore Constitution (Modification of Laws) (No. 2) Order, 1959

Commencement : 21 August 1959

26. G.N. No. S (N.S.) 178/1959 — Singapore Constitution (Modification of Laws) (No. 4) Order, 1959

Commencement : 20 November 1959

27. G.N. No. S (N.S.) 179/1959 — Singapore Constitution (Modification of Laws) (No. 5) Order, 1959

Commencement : 20 November 1959

28. Ordinance 71 of 1959 — Transfer of Powers Ordinance, 1959
(Amendments made by section 2 of the above Ordinance)

Bill : 30/1959

First Reading : 22 September 1959

Second and Third Readings : 11 November 1959

Commencement : 20 November 1959 (section 2)

29. Ordinance 2 of 1960 — Interpretation and General Clauses (Amendment) Ordinance, 1960

Bill : 43/1959

First Reading : 10 December 1959

Second and Third Readings : 13 January 1960

Commencement : 27 January 1960

30. Ordinance 52 of 1960 — Interpretation and General Clauses (Amendment No. 2) Ordinance, 1960

Bill : 92/1960

First Reading : 21 September 1960

Second and Third Readings : 20 October 1960

Commencement : 28 October 1960

31. G.N. Sp. No. S 45/1963 — State Laws (Modification) Order, 1963

Commencement	:	16 September 1963

32. L.N. 231/1963 (G.N. Sp. No. S 4/1963) — Modification of Laws (Internal Security and Public Order) (Singapore) Order, 1963

Commencement	:	16 September 1963

Note: This Order stated that the Malayan Union Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance (M. Ordinance 7 of 1948) shall have effect in Singapore for the interpretation of the laws of the Federation specified in the First Schedule to this Order.

33. L.N. 361/1964 (G.N. Sp. No. S 188/1964) — Modification of Laws (General Provisions) (Singapore) Order, 1964

Commencement	:	16 September 1963

PART 3
INTERPRETATION ACT 1965
(2020 REVISED EDITION)

34. Act 10 of 1965 — Interpretation Act, 1965

Bill	:	45/1965
First Reading	:	13 December 1965
Second and Third Readings	:	22 December 1965
Commencement	:	28 December 1965

35. Act 14 of 1969 — Statute Law Revision Act, 1969
(Amendments made by section 2 read with the First Schedule to the above Act)

Bill	:	22/1969
First Reading	:	15 October 1969
Second Reading	:	22 December 1969
Notice of Amendments	:	22 December 1969
Third Reading	:	22 December 1969
Commencement	:	2 January 1970 (section 2 read with the First Schedule)

36. 1970 Revised Edition — Interpretation Act (Chapter 3)

Operation	:	1 March 1971

37. 1985 Revised Edition — Interpretation Act (Chapter 1)

Operation	:	30 March 1987

38. Act 11 of 1991 — Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 1991
(Amendments made by section 2 read with item (1) of the Schedule to the above Act)

Bill	:	4/1991
First Reading	:	3 January 1991
Second Reading	:	14 January 1991
Notice of Amendments	:	14 January 1991
Third Reading	:	14 January 1991
Commencement	:	30 November 1991 (section 2 read with item (1) of the Schedule)

39. Act 11 of 1993 — Interpretation (Amendment) Act 1993

Bill	:	4/1993
First Reading	:	18 January 1993
Second and Third Readings	:	26 February 1993
Commencement	:	16 April 1993

40. Act 16 of 1993 — Supreme Court of Judicature (Amendment) Act 1993
(Amendments made by section 29(1) and section 29(5) read with item (1) of the Schedule to the above Act)

Bill	:	12/1993
First Reading	:	26 February 1993
Second Reading	:	12 April 1993
Notice of Amendments	:	12 April 1993
Third Reading	:	12 April 1993
Commencement	:	1 July 1993 (section 29(1) and section 29(5) read with item (1) of the Schedule)

41. Act 6 of 1994 — Revised Edition of the Laws (Amendment) Act 1994
(Amendments made by section 7(1) of the above Act)

Bill	:	7/1994
First Reading	:	16 March 1994
Second and Third Readings	:	23 May 1994

Commencement	:	1 July 1994 (section 7(1))

42. Act 4 of 1996 — Subordinate Courts (Amendment) Act 1995
(Amendments made by section 4 of the above Act)

Bill	:	37/1995
First Reading	:	1 November 1995
Second and Third Readings	:	5 December 1995
Commencement	:	26 January 1996 (section 4)

43. 1997 Revised Edition — Interpretation Act (Chapter 1)

Operation	:	30 May 1997

44. Act 7 of 1997 — Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 1997
(Amendments made by section 2 of the above Act)

Bill	:	6/1997
First Reading	:	11 July 1997
Second and Third Readings	:	25 August 1997
Commencement	:	1 October 1997 (section 2)

45. Act 25 of 1998 — Electronic Transactions Act 1998
(Amendments made by section 63 of the above Act)

Bill	:	23/1998
First Reading	:	1 June 1998
Second and Third Readings	:	29 June 1998
Commencement	:	10 July 1998 (section 63)

46. Act 22 of 1998 — Interpretation (Amendment) Act 1998

Bill	:	17/1997
First Reading	:	19 November 1997
Second Reading	:	14 January 1998
Select Committee Report	:	Parl. 3 of 1998
Third Reading	:	30 June 1998
Commencement	:	2 November 1998

47. 1999 Revised Edition — Interpretation Act (Chapter 1)

Operation	:	1 August 1999

48. Act 28 of 2000 — Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments and Repeal) Act 2000

(Amendments made by section 2 of the above Act)

Bill	:	22/2000
First Reading	:	25 August 2000
Second and Third Readings	:	9 October 2000
Commencement	:	1 November 2000 (section 2)

49. Act 26 of 2001 — Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments and Repeal) Act 2001

(Amendments made by section 2 of the above Act)

Bill	:	24/2001
First Reading	:	11 July 2001
Second and Third Readings	:	25 July 2001
Commencement	:	1 September 2001 (section 2)

50. 2002 Revised Edition — Interpretation Act (Chapter 1)

Operation	:	31 December 2002

51. Act 9 of 2003 — Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 2003

(Amendments made by section 2 of the above Act)

Bill	:	7/2003
First Reading	:	20 March 2003
Second and Third Readings	:	24 April 2003
Commencement	:	16 May 2003 (section 2)

52. Act 45 of 2004 — Trustees (Amendment) Act 2004

(Amendments made by section 25(1) of the above Act)

Bill	:	43/2004
First Reading	:	21 September 2004
Second and Third Readings	:	19 October 2004
Commencement	:	15 December 2004 (section 25(1))

53. Act 42 of 2005 — Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments) (No. 2) Act 2005

(Amendments made by section 2 of the above Act)

Bill	:	30/2005
First Reading	:	17 October 2005

Second and Third Readings	:	21 November 2005
Commencement	:	1 January 2006 (section 2)

54. Act 5 of 2014 — Subordinate Courts (Amendment) Act 2014
(Amendments made by section 11(9) read with item 1 of the Schedule to the above Act)

Bill	:	26/2013
First Reading	:	11 November 2013
Second and Third Readings	:	21 January 2014
Commencement	:	7 March 2014 (section 11(9) read with item (1) of the Schedule)

55. Act 27 of 2014 — Family Justice Act 2014
(Amendments made by section 48 of the above Act)

Bill	:	21/2014
First Reading	:	8 July 2014
Second Reading	:	4 August 2014
Notice of Amendments	:	4 August 2014
Third Reading	:	4 August 2014
Commencement	:	1 October 2014 (section 48(*a*) and (*c*)) 1 January 2015 (section 48(*b*))

56. Act 41 of 2014 — Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments — Deputy Attorney-General) Act 2014
(Amendments made by section 2 of the above Act)

Bill	:	37/2014
First Reading	:	7 October 2014
Second and Third Readings	:	4 November 2014
Commencement	:	1 January 2015 (section 2)

57. Act 42 of 2014 — Supreme Court of Judicature (Amendment) Act 2014
(Amendments made by section 16 read with item 1 of the Schedule to the above Act)

Bill	:	38/2014
First Reading	:	7 October 2014
Second and Third Readings	:	4 November 2014

Commencement	:	1 January 2015 (section 16 read with item 1 of the Schedule)

58. Act 5 of 2018 — Public Sector (Governance) Act 2018
(Amendments made by section 45 of the above Act)

Bill	:	45/2017
First Reading	:	6 November 2017
Second Reading	:	8 January 2018
Notice of Amendments	:	8 January 2018
Third Reading	:	8 January 2018
Commencement	:	1 April 2018 (section 45)

59. Act 19 of 2018 — Criminal Justice Reform Act 2018
(Amendments made by section 123 of the above Act)

Bill	:	14/2018
First Reading	:	28 February 2018
Second and Third Readings	:	19 March 2018
Commencement	:	17 September 2018 (section 123)

60. Act 40 of 2019 — Supreme Court of Judicature (Amendment) Act 2019
(Amendments made by section 25 of the above Act)

Bill	:	32/2019
First Reading	:	7 October 2019
Second Reading	:	5 November 2019
Notice of Amendments	:	5 November 2019
Third Reading	:	5 November 2019
Commencement	:	2 January 2021 (section 25)

61. Act 4 of 2021 — Statute Law Reform Act 2021
(Amendments made by sections 11 and 12 of the above Act)

Bill	:	45/2020
First Reading	:	3 November 2020
Second and Third Readings	:	5 January 2021
Commencement	:	1 March 2021 (section 11)

62. 2020 Revised Edition — Interpretation Act 1965

Operation	:	31 December 2021

63. Act 33 of 2021 — Judicial Service (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 2021

Bill	:	30/2021
First Reading	:	4 October 2021
Second and Third Readings	:	3 November 2021
Commencement	:	14 January 2022

64. Act 25 of 2021 — Courts (Civil and Criminal Justice) Reform Act 2021

Bill	:	18/2021
First Reading	:	26 July 2021
Second and Third Readings	:	14 September 2021
Commencement	:	1 April 2022

65. Act 24 of 2022 — Singapore Armed Forces and Other Matters Act 2022 (Amendments made by the above Act)

Bill	:	15/2022
First Reading	:	4 July 2022
Second and Third Readings	:	2 August 2022
Commencement	:	28 October 2022

66. Act 31 of 2022 — Statutes (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act 2022 (Amendments made by the above Act)

Bill	:	24/2022
First Reading	:	12 September 2022
Second and Third Readings	:	3 October 2022
Commencement	:	1 November 2022

67. Act 4 of 2021 — Statute Law Reform Act 2021

Bill	:	45/2020
First Reading	:	3 November 2020
Second and Third Readings	:	5 January 2021
Commencement	:	1 March 2024

Abbreviations

(updated on 29 August 2022)

G.N.	Gazette Notification
G.N. Sp.	Gazette Notification (Special Supplement)
L.A.	Legislative Assembly
L.N.	Legal Notification (Federal/Malaysian)
M.	Malaya/Malaysia (including Federated Malay States, Malayan Union, Federation of Malaya and Federation of Malaysia)
Parl.	Parliament
S	Subsidiary Legislation
S.I.	Statutory Instrument (United Kingdom)
S (N.S.)	Subsidiary Legislation (New Series)
S.S.G.G.	Straits Settlements Government Gazette
S.S.G.G. (E)	Straits Settlements Government Gazette (Extraordinary)