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The following Act was passed by Parliament on 10th November 2016 and assented to by the President on 21st December 2016:—

**REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE**

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**No. 32 of 2016.**

I assent.

TONY TAN KENG YAM,  
*President.*  
*21st December 2016.*

(LS)

An Act to amend the National Registration Act (Chapter 201 of the 1992 Revised Edition) and to make related amendments to the Registration of Births and Deaths Act (Chapter 267 of the 1985 Revised Edition).

Be it enacted by the President with the advice and consent of the Parliament of Singapore, as follows:

**Short title and commencement**

1. This Act is the National Registration (Amendment) Act 2016 and comes into operation on a date that the Minister appoints by notification in the *Gazette*.

**Amendment of section 2**

2. Section 2 of the National Registration Act (called in this Act the principal Act) is amended —

(a) by inserting, immediately after the definition of “Commissioner”, the following definitions:

““document” means anything in which information of any description is recorded, whether in electronic or other form;

“false identity card” means —

(a) a document that is not an identity card but purports to be an identity card; or

(b) an identity card that has been altered by an unauthorised person;”;

(b) by deleting the definition of “registration officer” and substituting the following definitions:

““immigration officer” means an immigration officer appointed under section 3 of the Immigration Act (Cap. 133);

“personal identifier” means a personal identifier in any form (including digital form) that is specified in the Schedule;

“police officer” has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Police Force Act (Cap. 235);

“public authority” means a body established or constituted by or under a public Act to perform or discharge a public function;

“register” means the register specified in section 4;

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“registration officer”, in relation to any provision of this Act, means —

- (a) the Commissioner;
  - (b) the Deputy Commissioner of National Registration;
  - (c) an Assistant Commissioner of National Registration; or
  - (d) a person appointed as a registration officer under section 3(4) for the purposes of that provision.”; and
- (c) by renumbering the section as subsection (1) of that section, and by inserting immediately thereafter the following subsections:

“(2) Unless the context otherwise requires —

- (a) a reference to the registration of a person under this Act includes a reference to the re-registration of a person under this Act; and
  - (b) a reference to a person who is registered, or required to be registered, under this Act includes a reference to a person who is re-registered, or required to be re-registered, under this Act.
- (3) The Minister may, by order in the *Gazette*, amend the Schedule, except that any other personal identifier so prescribed in the order —
- (a) must be an image, a measurement or a recording of an external part of the human body, or a measurement or a recording of a person’s voice; and
  - (b) must not be an identifier the obtaining of which would involve the taking of an intimate sample from the human body

within the meaning of section 13A of the Registration of Criminals Act (Cap. 268).”.

### **Repeal and re-enactment of section 3 and new section 3A**

3. Section 3 of the principal Act is repealed and the following sections substituted therefor:

#### **“Appointment of officers**

3.—(1) The Minister may, from among public officers, appoint a Commissioner of National Registration, a Deputy Commissioner of National Registration and such number of Assistant Commissioners of National Registration as the Minister considers necessary for the purposes of this Act.

(2) The Commissioner is, subject to the general or special directions of the Minister, responsible for the administration of this Act.

(3) The Deputy Commissioner of National Registration and every Assistant Commissioner of National Registration may, subject to such conditions or restrictions as the Commissioner may impose, perform the functions and exercise the powers of the Commissioner under this Act.

(4) The Commissioner may, subject to subsection (5) and such conditions or restrictions as the Commissioner thinks fit, appoint, by name or office, any of the following persons to be a registration officer for the purposes of this Act or any particular provision of this Act:

- (a) a public officer;
- (b) an employee of a public authority;
- (c) an employee of a prescribed institution.

(5) Under subsection (4), only a public officer may be appointed as a registration officer for the purposes of section 15B, 16, 16B or 16C.

(6) The Commissioner may delegate any of the Commissioner’s functions or powers under this Act (except the power to appoint registration officers or the power to delegate

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conferred by this section), either generally or specially and subject to such conditions or restrictions as the Commissioner thinks fit, to a registration officer described in subsection (4)(a) or (b).

(7) Every appointment and every delegation under this section must be in writing, and the instrument of appointment or delegation must be given to the appointee or delegate, as the case may be.

(8) Where an officer specified in subsection (3) or a delegate of the Commissioner under subsection (6), in accordance with that subsection, performs (or is to perform) any function or exercises (or is to exercise) any power of the Commissioner under this Act, any reference to the Commissioner in this Act in respect of that function or power includes that officer or delegate, as the case may be.

### **Public servants and public officers, etc.**

**3A.** Every registration officer —

- (a) is deemed to be a public servant for the purposes of the Penal Code (Cap. 224); and
- (b) is, in relation to his administration, collection or enforcement of payment of any fee, charge or composition sum under this Act, deemed to be a public officer for the purposes of the Financial Procedure Act (Cap. 109); and section 20 of that Act applies to him even though he is not or was not in the employment of the Government.”.

### **Amendment of section 4**

**4.** Section 4 of the principal Act is amended by deleting subsections (1) and (2) and substituting the following subsections:

“(1) The Commissioner must cause to be kept and maintained a register of all persons in Singapore who are registered or required to be registered under this Act.

(2) The register is to be in such form as the Commissioner thinks fit, and must contain —

- (a) the name and gender of every person registered or required to be registered under this Act; and
- (b) such other particulars of that person as the Commissioner considers necessary.”.

### **New section 6A**

5. The principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after section 6, the following section:

#### **“Entry or alteration of names in register**

**6A.**—(1) The name of a person to be entered in the register and, where the person’s name in the register is to be altered, the person’s altered name to be entered in the register —

- (a) must be in a form expressed in characters in the modern English alphabet;
- (b) may include a permitted character; and
- (c) must not exceed the number of characters permitted in the electronic form of the register for the entry of a name.

(2) The Commissioner may refuse to enter or alter the name of a person in the register if the name (including the altered name) —

- (a) contains anything that represents or resembles a title, a rank or an award;
- (b) where the name adopts a patronymic or matronymic naming system to signify lineage, includes any expression or abbreviation (for the purpose of that naming system) that does not correspond to the person’s gender entered or to be entered in the register;
- (c) is obscene or offensive; or
- (d) is contrary to the public interest.

(3) In subsection (1)(b), “permitted character” has the same meaning as in section 9A(2) of the Registration of Births and Deaths Act (Cap. 267).”.

### **Amendment of section 13**

6. Section 13 of the principal Act is amended by deleting subsection (3).

### **Amendment of section 13A**

7. Section 13A of the principal Act is amended —

- (a) by deleting the words “or any regulations made thereunder” in subsection (1);
- (b) by deleting the words “or re-registration” in subsection (1); and
- (c) by deleting the words “within the meaning of the Immigration Act (Cap. 133)” in paragraph (b) of the definition of “law enforcement officer” in subsection (5).

### **New sections 15A and 15B**

8. The principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after section 15, the following sections:

#### **“False or invalid documents in connection with registration, etc.**

**15A.** A registration officer may take possession of any document produced to the registration officer in connection with the registration of a person, or the alteration of any particulars of the person entered in the register, under this Act if the registration officer reasonably suspects that the document is false or invalid.

#### **Demand for surrender of suspicious identity cards**

**15B.—**(1) A registration officer or a police officer may demand that a person having possession or control of an identity card (including a document purporting to be an identity card) to surrender the identity card to the registration

officer or police officer if there are reasonable grounds to suspect that —

- (a) the identity card has been obtained by means of any false or misleading information, document or statement;
- (b) the identity card has been used in the commission of an offence under this Act; or
- (c) the identity card is a false identity card.

(2) Any person who receives a demand from a registration officer or a police officer under subsection (1) must comply with the demand.

(3) Any person who contravenes subsection (2) shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both.”.

### **Amendment of section 16**

9. Section 16 of the principal Act is amended —

- (a) by deleting the words “or any regulations made thereunder” in subsection (1)(a); and
- (b) by deleting subsection (2) and substituting the following subsections:

“(2) If a registration officer or a police officer reasonably suspects that any evidence of the commission of an offence under this Act is likely to be found on any premises, or in any vehicle, train, vessel or aircraft, or on any person, the officer may, without warrant and with such assistance as the officer thinks necessary —

- (a) enter and search the premises;
- (b) stop, board and search the vehicle, train, vessel or aircraft (whether in a public or private place); or

(c) stop and search the person (whether in a public or private place),

as the case may be.

(2A) A registration officer or a police officer exercising any power under subsection (2) may, if the circumstances so warrant, with such assistance as the officer thinks necessary —

(a) break open any door, window, lock, fastener, compartment, box, container or other thing; or

(b) remove by force any obstruction to the exercise of that power.

(2B) A registration officer or a police officer carrying out a search under subsection (2) may take possession or make copies of any document found during the search that the officer reasonably believes to be connected to the commission of an offence under this Act.”.

### **New sections 16A to 16D**

**10.** The principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after section 16, the following sections:

#### **“How arrested person is to be dealt with**

**16A.**—(1) A registration officer or a police officer who makes an arrest under section 16(1) must comply with sections 67 and 68 of the Criminal Procedure Code (Cap. 68).

(2) For the purpose of subsection (1), a reference to a police officer in sections 67 and 68 of the Criminal Procedure Code includes a reference to a registration officer.

#### **Investigation powers**

**16B.**—(1) A registration officer may investigate an offence under this Act.

(2) In any case relating to the commission of an offence under this Act, a registration officer —

- (a) has all the powers of a police officer under the Criminal Procedure Code (Cap. 68) in relation to an investigation into a seizable offence; and
- (b) when exercising the powers of a police officer under the Criminal Procedure Code, is deemed to be an officer not below the rank of inspector of police.

### **Notice to attend court**

**16C.**—(1) Where a registration officer has reasonable grounds to believe that a person has committed an offence under this Act (called in this section the alleged offender), the registration officer may, instead of applying to a court for a summons under the Criminal Procedure Code (Cap. 68), immediately serve upon the alleged offender a prescribed notice, requiring the alleged offender to attend at the court and on the date and time specified in the notice.

(2) A duplicate of the notice must be prepared by the registration officer and, if so required by a court, produced to the court.

(3) The registration officer may serve the notice on the alleged offender in the same manner as the service of a summons under section 116 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

(4) Where the alleged offender appears before the court, the court is to take cognizance of the alleged offence and proceed as though the alleged offender were produced before the court under a summons issued under section 153 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

(5) If the alleged offender fails to appear before the court in person or by counsel on the date and time specified in the notice, the court may, if satisfied that the notice was duly served on the alleged offender, issue a warrant for the arrest of the alleged offender unless before that date —

(a) in the case of an offence which may be compounded, the alleged offender has been permitted to compound the offence; or

(b) the notice has been cancelled under subsection (7).

(6) Where the alleged offender is arrested under a warrant issued under subsection (5), the alleged offender must be produced before a court, and the court —

(a) is to proceed as though the alleged offender were produced before the court under a summons issued under section 153 of the Criminal Procedure Code;

(b) at the conclusion of the proceedings, is to call upon the alleged offender to show cause why the alleged offender should not be punished for failing to attend court in compliance with the notice; and

(c) if cause is not shown by the alleged offender, may order the alleged offender to pay a fine not exceeding \$2,000 or may commit the alleged offender to prison for a term not exceeding 2 months.

(7) A registration officer may cancel a notice issued under subsection (1) at any time before the date specified in that notice for the alleged offender named in that notice to attend court.

### **Registration officers and police officers to produce identification**

**16D.**—(1) When exercising any power under this Act, every registration officer and police officer must —

(a) if not in uniform, declare his office; and

(b) on demand by any person affected by the exercise of that power, produce to that person such identification card or other document as the Commissioner (in the case of registration officers) or the Commissioner of Police (in the case of police officers) may direct to be carried.

(2) Despite any provision of this Act, it shall not be an offence for a person to refuse to comply with any request, demand or order made or given by a registration officer or a police officer who does not comply with subsection (1).”.

### **New sections 17A and 17B**

**11.** The principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after section 17, the following sections:

#### **“Composition of offences**

**17A.**—(1) The Commissioner or a registration officer may compound any offence under this Act that is prescribed as a compoundable offence by collecting from a person reasonably suspected of having committed the offence a sum not exceeding \$500.

(2) On payment of such sum of money, no further proceedings are to be taken against that person in respect of the offence.

#### **Police officers’ functions and powers under Criminal Procedure Code**

**17B.** To avoid doubt, nothing in this Act affects a police officer’s functions or powers under the Criminal Procedure Code (Cap. 68) or any other written law.”.

### **New sections 18A and 18B**

**12.** The principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after section 18, the following sections:

#### **“Payments into Consolidated Fund**

**18A.** All fees, charges and composition sums collected under this Act are to be paid into the Consolidated Fund.

#### **Service of documents**

**18B.**—(1) A document permitted or required by this Act to be served on an individual may be served —

(a) by giving it to the individual personally;

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- (b) by sending it by prepaid registered post to the address specified by the individual for the service of documents or, if no address is so specified, the individual's residential address or business address;
  - (c) by leaving it at the individual's residential address with an adult apparently resident there, or at the individual's business address with an adult apparently employed there;
  - (d) by affixing a copy of the document in a conspicuous place at the individual's residential address or business address;
  - (e) by sending it by fax to the fax number given by the individual as the fax number for the service of documents; or
  - (f) by sending it by email to the individual's email address.
- (2) Service of a document under this section takes effect —
- (a) if the document is sent by fax and a notification of successful transmission is received, on the day of transmission;
  - (b) if the document is sent by email, at the time that the email becomes capable of being retrieved by the individual; and
  - (c) if the document is sent by prepaid registered post, 2 days after the day the document was posted (even if it is returned undelivered).
- (3) However, this section does not apply to documents to be served in proceedings in court.
- (4) In this section —
- “business address”, in relation to an individual, means the individual's usual or last known place of business in Singapore;

“email address”, in relation to an individual, means the last email address given by the individual to the person serving the document as the email address for the service of documents under this Act;

“residential address”, in relation to an individual, means the individual’s usual or last known place of residence in Singapore.”.

### **Amendment of section 19**

**13.** Section 19 of the principal Act is amended —

- (a) by deleting the words “or re-registration” in subsection (2)(a);
- (b) by deleting paragraphs (c) and (d) of subsection (2) and substituting the following paragraphs:
  - “(c) the obligation of a person to furnish information and documents for the purposes of the person’s registration, or the alteration of any particulars of the person entered in the register, under this Act;
  - (d) the taking and recording of personal identifiers of persons registered or required to be registered under this Act;”;
- (c) by inserting, immediately after the word “replacement” in subsection (2)(g), the words “and cancellation”;
- (d) by deleting paragraph (j) of subsection (2) and substituting the following paragraph:
  - “(j) the surrender or return of identity cards, whether by the holders of the identity cards or other persons;”;
- (e) by deleting the words “or any regulations made thereunder; and” in subsection (2)(o) and substituting a semi-colon;

(f) by deleting the full-stop at the end of paragraph (p) of subsection (2) and substituting a semi-colon, and by inserting immediately thereafter the following paragraphs:

“(q) subject to Part XIX of the Criminal Procedure Code (Cap. 68) and section 14D of the National Library Board Act (Cap. 197), the destruction of identity cards issued, and documents obtained by the Commissioner or registration officers, under this Act; and

(r) the prescribing of anything that is required or permitted to be prescribed under this Act.”; and

(g) by deleting subsection (3) and substituting the following subsection:

“(3) The regulations may provide that a contravention of any provision of the regulations shall be an offence punishable with a fine not exceeding \$3,000 or with imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or with both.”.

## **New Schedule**

**14.** The principal Act is amended by inserting, immediately after section 19, the following Schedule:

### “THE SCHEDULE

Section 2(1) and (3)

#### PERSONAL IDENTIFIERS

1. A person’s fingerprint or handprint (taken using paper and ink, digital scanning technologies or otherwise).
2. A photograph or other image of a person’s face and shoulders.
3. An image of a person’s iris (taken using iris scanning technologies).
4. A person’s signature.”.

**Miscellaneous amendments**

15. The principal Act is amended —

(a) by deleting the words “the provisions of” in the following provisions:

Sections 2 (definition of “identity card”), 5, 7, 8(1) and (2), 10(1), 11 and 12(3)(c);

(b) by deleting the words “and of any regulations made thereunder” in section 5;

(c) by deleting the words “and any regulations made thereunder” in sections 7 and 11;

(d) by deleting the words “statutory authority” wherever they appear in sections 8A(1) and (2) and 9(2) and substituting in each case the words “public authority”;

(e) by deleting the words “statutory authorities” in the section heading of section 8A and substituting the words “public authorities”; and

(f) by deleting the words “or any regulations made thereunder” in sections 17(1) and 18.

**Related amendments to Registration of Births and Deaths Act**

16. The Registration of Births and Deaths Act (Cap. 267) is amended —

(a) by inserting, immediately after section 9, the following section:

**“Name of child**

**9A.—**(1) The name of a child to be entered in a register of births in respect of the registration of the child’s birth and, where the child’s name in the register is to be altered, the child’s altered name to be entered in the register —

(a) must be in a form expressed in characters in the modern English alphabet;

(b) may include a permitted character; and

(c) must not exceed the number of characters permitted in the electronic form of the register for the entry of a name.

(2) In subsection (1)(b), “permitted character” means a character that the Registrar-General, by notification in the *Gazette*, specifies.”; and

(b) by inserting, immediately after section 12, the following section:

**“Registrar-General may refuse entry or alteration of name in register of births**

**12A.** The Registrar-General may refuse the entry or alteration of a child’s name in a register of births under this Act if the name (including the altered name) —

(a) contains anything that represents or resembles a title, a rank or an award;

(b) where the name adopts a patronymic or matronymic naming system to signify lineage, includes any expression or abbreviation (for the purpose of that naming system) that does not correspond to the child’s gender entered or to be entered in the register;

(c) is obscene or offensive; or

(d) is contrary to the public interest.”.

**Saving and transitional provisions**

**17.—(1)** Any person who, immediately before the commencement date, was the Commissioner of National Registration, the Deputy Commissioner of National Registration, or an Assistant Commissioner of National Registration, appointed under section 3(1) of the National Registration Act in force immediately before the commencement date is to be treated as the Commissioner of National Registration, the Deputy Commissioner of National Registration or an Assistant Commissioner of National Registration,

respectively, appointed by the Minister under that section (as amended by this Act) until —

- (a) his appointment is revoked by the Minister;
- (b) the term of his appointment expires; or
- (c) he vacates his office, for any reason, before the expiry of his term of appointment.

(2) Any person who, immediately before the commencement date, was a registration officer appointed under section 3(1A) of the National Registration Act in force immediately before the commencement date is to be treated as a registration officer appointed by the Commissioner under section 3(4) of the National Registration Act (as amended by this Act) until —

- (a) his appointment is revoked by the Commissioner;
- (b) the term of his appointment expires; or
- (c) he vacates his office, for any reason, before the expiry of his term of appointment.

(3) A registration officer mentioned in subsection (2) must not exercise any power of a registration officer under section 15B, 16, 16B or 16C of the National Registration Act (as amended by this Act) unless he is a public officer and is authorised by the Commissioner to exercise that power.

(4) The register that is kept and maintained by the Commissioner under section 4(1) of the National Registration Act in force immediately before the commencement date is to be treated as the register required to be kept and maintained by the Commissioner under that section (as amended by this Act).

(5) This section does not affect the operation of, or derogate from, section 16 of the Interpretation Act (Cap. 1).

(6) For a period of 2 years after the commencement date, the Minister may, by regulations, prescribe such additional provisions of a saving or transitional nature consequent on the enactment of this Act as the Minister may consider necessary or expedient.

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(7) In this section, “commencement date” means the date of commencement of this Act.

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