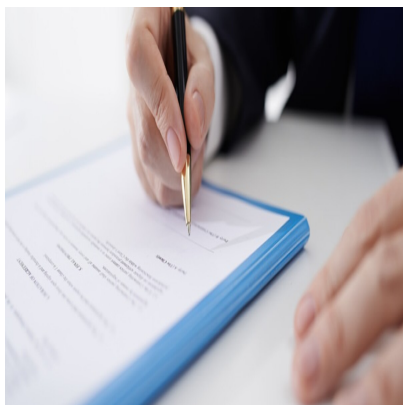




Private Property OTP: Check These Before the Option Fee

Description

Do not treat the option fee as a reservation payment with no consequences. Before paying, verify the seller and title, approved use and alterations, property-tax and MCST positions, financing and CPF cash flow, then have the proposed OTP terms reviewed for the actual deal.

A buyer considering a completed private residential property without relying fully on an agent needs one outcome: complete the evidence checks that should happen before paying for an Option to Purchase.

Stop before the option fee

Situation	Practical next step
Completed private home	Use CEA's completed-property buyer checklist
Uncompleted development	Use the separate uncompleted-property route and developer controls
Restricted residential property may apply	Resolve Land Dealings Approval Unit requirements before commitment
Any title or alteration fact is unclear	Pause payment and obtain the underlying record or professional check

Completed private home: Use CEA's completed-property buyer checklist. **Uncompleted development:** Use the separate uncompleted-property route and developer controls.

Put each pre-fee fact on record

[CEA private-property transaction hub](#): The self-directed transaction stages, buyer checklist and official contract templates. [CEA buyer checklist](#): Seller, title, approved-use, alterations, tax, financing and transaction checks before contract.

Verify the person who can grant the option

CEA's checklist starts with seller names and identity, and asks for company registration details when the seller is an entity. Match those details to title information and the person receiving funds. A persuasive viewing, message thread or bank-account name is not a substitute for the ownership record. [CEA private-property transaction hub](#).

Check what is legally being bought

Review address, tenure, area, caveats, approved property use and unauthorised additions or alterations. For strata homes, add MCST service charges and maintenance information. Where physical conditions need testing against approved plans, CEA recommends considering a competent professional rather than relying on appearance. [CEA buyer checklist](#).

Freeze the financing before the fee

Record the loan amount and tenure, CPF savings intended for the purchase, cash needed, stamp duty and transaction costs. Include valuation risk and the possibility that a lender's final offer differs from an approval-in-principle. The option timeline should not force a buyer to invent missing financing. [CEA buyer checklist](#).

Read every blank in the OTP

CEA provides a standard template, but a template does not choose the option period, exercise mechanism, stakeholder, completion date, special condition or foreign-purchaser clause for the parties. Mark each blank, deletion and annex, and ask who bears the risk if a stated condition fails. [CEA private-property OTP template](#).

Build a payment-control record

Before transfer, verify the payee, payment purpose and written receipt instructions through a trusted channel. Keep the draft and signed OTP, title and identity checks, bank advice, lawyer correspondence and transfer confirmation together. This is evidence of the decision path, not a guarantee against fraud. [CEA private-property transaction hub](#).

Foreign buyers must resolve restricted-property approval first

CEA's buyer checklist tells a foreign buyer to obtain approval-in-principle before agreeing to buy restricted residential property. That protects against signing an agreement and later failing to secure approval from the Land Dealings Approval Unit. Record the buyer's citizenship, the property type and the authority's written outcome in the pre-fee file; do not infer eligibility from a marketing label or another buyer's case. This test is distinct from stamp duty, financing and title checks, all of which still need their own confirmation. [CEA buyer checklist](#).

Compare the physical unit with approved plans

CEA recommends obtaining approved property plans from BCA and checking the as-built condition against them. If the comparison is not straightforward, a competent person such as an architect, engineer or building surveyor can inspect for unauthorised structures or alterations. Record each mismatch by room and feature, ask who will regularise or remove it, and have the lawyer address the consequence before the fee moves. A renovated unit can look finished while still leaving an approval question that photographs and sales descriptions do not resolve. [CEA buyer checklist](#).

A pre-fee stoplight

A buyer makes a 12-line pre-fee sheet: seller identity, title, tenure, caveats, approved use, alterations, property tax, MCST costs, bankruptcy, loan, CPF/cash and OTP terms. Any line marked "unknown" stops payment. The sheet is a practical safeguard; the buyer's lawyer and official records control.

Restricted residential property may apply: Resolve Land Dealings Approval Unit requirements before commitment. **Any title or alteration fact is unclear:** Pause payment and obtain the underlying record or professional check.

Complete the pre-option checks

1. Sight seller and ownership evidence
2. Check title, tenure and caveats
3. Confirm approved use and alterations
4. Check tax and MCST liabilities
5. Freeze loan, CPF and cash figures
6. Review every OTP term before transfer

Reasons to stop payment

- Paying before confirming the seller
- Treating a standard OTP as risk-free
- Ignoring unauthorised works
- Assuming approval-in-principle is final finance
- Sending money from chat instructions alone

Before the wider purchase

After Private Property OTP: Check These Before the Option Fee, [verify the agent in CEA's public register](#). Then [choose the land-title search for the property](#). Both resolve a different task from private property option to purchase checklist Singapore.

Questions readers ask about private property option to purchase checklist Singapore

Is the CEA checklist only for agent-led purchases?

No; CEA publishes it for consumers, including those transacting on their own. [CEA private-property transaction hub](#).

Does the standard template replace a lawyer?

No. CEA says buyers should consider professional help when specific issues require it. [CEA buyer checklist](#).

What if the property has altered structures?

Check against approved plans and engage a competent person where needed. [CEA private-property transaction hub](#).

Reviewed 1 August 2026: CEA private-property transaction hub.

Date Created

01/08/2026

Author

rachelng