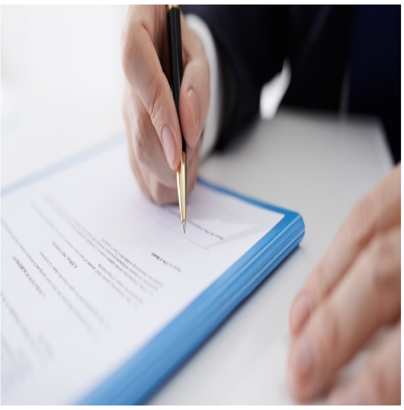

Property Payments: What Must Never Go Through Your Agent

Description

A property salesperson must not handle transaction money. Pay the contractual recipientâ??such as the owner, seller, law firm or relevant authorityâ??through a verified channel, and pay commission to the property agency rather than the individual salesperson.

A Singapore buyer, seller, landlord or tenant preparing to transfer money in a property transaction faces a narrower question than the headline suggests: identify the correct payee, verify the destination and preserve payment evidence before sending funds. The table separates the branches that change the answer before the practical checks and worked example.

Choose the branch before acting

Situation	Practical next step
Option or exercise fee	Pay the named seller or stakeholder exactly as the contract requires
Rental deposit or rent	Verify ownership and pay the landlord through the documented route
Stamp duty or legal fees	Use the lawyer or authority instructions you independently confirmed
Agent commission	Pay the estate agency and retain its invoice and receipt

Separate the money by purpose

CEA identifies option fees, exercise fees, downpayments, deposits, sale proceeds, rent, stamp duties and legal fees as examples of transaction money. A salesperson cannot receive or hold these sums on a clientâ??s behalf. CEA guide to engaging a property agent.

Valuation fees and the agencyâ??s commission are generally not transaction money, but the payment route still matters. Commission should go to the property agency, not to the salespersonâ??s personal account, and the payer should obtain an agency invoice. CEA guide to engaging a property agent.

Verify both the person and the payee

Check the salesperson on CEAâ??s public register and call the agency using contact details obtained independently. Registration proves the personâ??s status; it does not make a bank-account number in a message trustworthy. [CEA guide to engaging a property agent].

For a rental, view the property and verify that the person receiving the deposit or rent is the owner or properly authorised payee. CEA warns against paying before viewing and directs consumers to pay the property owner rather than an agent. [CEA rental-scam guidance].

Use a two-channel payment check

Read the payee name in the signed document, then confirm bank details through a second trusted channel. A fresh email changing the account shortly before completion should trigger a stop-and-call response, not a hurried transfer. [CEA guide to engaging a property agent].

For a large payment, use the bankâ??s payee-name display where available and consider a small test transfer only if the contractual timing and recipient permit it. Keep the signed instruction, confirmation call record, bank receipt and acknowledgement together. [CEA guide to engaging a property agent].

Know what to do when details conflict

Do not let an urgent completion message override a mismatch. Contact the law firm, agency or owner through a previously verified number and ask for written clarification. If a scam is suspected, notify the bank and police promptly. [CEA guide to engaging a property agent].

A legitimate agent can coordinate paperwork and explain the sequence; that does not authorise the agent to become the money conduit. The clean file shows who was due each payment, why, when and through which verified account. [CEA guide to engaging a property agent].

Put the numbers or sequence to work

A tenant is asked to send a S$4,000 deposit and first monthâ??s rent to a salespersonâ??s personal PayNow number. The tenant stops, checks the agentâ??s registration, confirms the owner from the tenancy documents and pays the verified owner instead. The amount is illustrative; the decisive point is the payee, not whether the transfer is small enough to feel routine.

The example is a planning model, not a quoted price, official calculator result, medical instruction or promised outcome. Replace its assumptions with the issued notice, live service, signed contract, current timetable or professional advice that controls the real decision.

Before you commit

1. Label each payment by contractual purpose

2. Read the named payee in the signed document
3. Verify the agent on CEAâ??s register
4. Confirm bank details through a second channel
5. Pay commission to the agency only
6. Save receipts and acknowledgements
7. Escalate any last-minute account change

A useful working note combines **a payment-purpose-to-payee map** with **a two-channel bank-detail verification protocol**. Enter only details that can be tied to a current document or live record.

Missteps that change the answer

- Sending deposits to a salesperson
- Trusting a bank detail pasted into chat
- Paying before viewing a rental
- Confusing registration with account verification
- Deleting the payment trail after completion

If one of these conditions appears, pause before payment, submission, travel or implementation and reconcile it through the relevant official service. Save the issued result or acknowledgement; a search snippet or forwarded screenshot cannot establish a current entitlement.

Use a payment instruction sheet

For every transfer, write the purpose, amount, contractual payee, verified account and person who completed the second-channel check. The sheet can be short, but it should be completed before the banking app opens. Where a lawyer controls completion money, follow the law firmâ??s verified instructions and ask about any discrepancy in writing.

Related next steps

Once this decision is settled, you may need to verify an agent on CEAâ??s public register. The next adjacent check is to check the land-title record before committing.

Common questions

Can my property agent collect the option fee?

No. CEA says salespersons must not handle transaction monies. CEA guide to engaging a property agent.

Who receives commission?

The property agency, not the individual salesperson. CEA rental-scam guidance.

Is viewing important for a rental?

Yes. CEA includes viewing and owner/payment verification in its scam controls. CEA guide to engaging a property agent.

Rules, service details and schedules can change. Reopen the linked official page before acting when the date, eligibility, payment destination, safety instruction or live availability is decisive.

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