



BE A SAVVY CONSUMER!

Quick Tips on Maximising the Value
of Engaging a Property Agent



Council for Estate Agencies (CEA)

■ A statutory board under Ministry of National Development

■ To raise professionalism of real estate agency industry and safeguard consumer interest



What is Estate Agents Act?

The Act was established to provide an enhanced framework for the regulation of property agencies and property agents, and to form the Council for Estate Agencies.

Functions of CEA

- License property agencies and register property agents
- Regulate and control practice of property agencies and property agents
- Conduct investigations and disciplinary proceedings
- Promote integrity and competence among property agencies and property agents
- Administer examinations and a professional development framework
- Educate consumers to make informed decisions

Coverage of the Act

- All estate agency work for local and foreign properties marketed, sold or leased in Singapore
- Residential, commercial and industrial properties

Definitions

- **“Property Agency”** – estate agency businesses (sole-proprietors, partnerships and companies)
- **“Property Agent”** – individuals who perform estate agency work

For more information about CEA, call **1800-643 2555**, or visit **www.cea.gov.sg**

Appoint Registered Property Agents

The Estate Agents Act requires property agencies to be licensed and property agents to be registered with CEA when conducting estate agency work.

The Public Register allows consumers to search the particulars of a registered property agent or a licensed property agency.



Consumer Tips

- Check Public Register
- Ask property agent to show Estate Agent Card
- Verify information on Card against Public Register
- Do not respond to flyer/leaflet/advertisement without a property agent's details and registration number
- Report to CEA when you encounter any unregistered property agent

How to search?

Use the Public Register at www.cea.gov.sg or download the free "CEA@SG" app from Apple store or Google Play store



Search Property Agent by

- Name or Registration number or Mobile number

Search Property Agency by

- Name or Licence number

What information will be displayed?

Property Agent's particulars

- Property agent's name, Registration number, Registration period
- Award conferred by CEA, Disciplinary actions taken by CEA
- Property agency that he or she is working for, Property agency's Licence number
- Photograph of the property agent

Property Agency's particulars

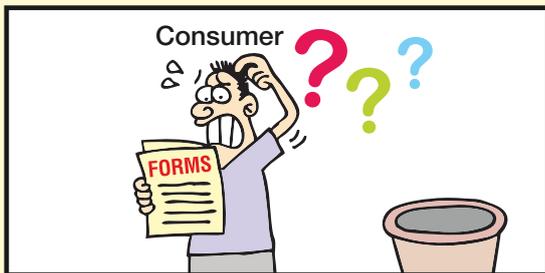
- Property agency's name, Licence number, Licence period
- Award conferred by CEA, Disciplinary actions taken by CEA

Understand Your Property Agent's Responsibilities (I)

Property agents are bound by the CEA's Code of Ethics and Professional Client Care when conducting their work. They are responsible for promoting and safeguarding consumer interests in property transactions.

Property agents are required to do the following:

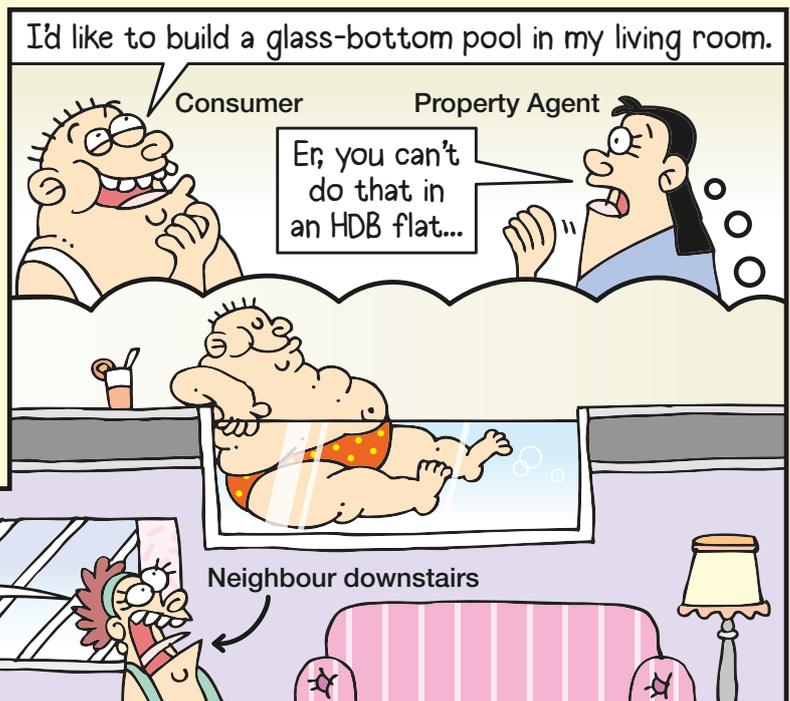
- Offer you professional advice
- Represent you in negotiation and promptly update you on all offers and proposals



- Assist you to enter into a contractual agreement and reasonably explain to you all relevant documents
- Seek your prior consent before advertising your property
- Declare to you any conflicts of interest and related income/referral fees
- Explain clearly to you the advantages of co-broking (Co-broking refers to the involvement of two or more property agents in a property transaction)

For HDB property transactions,

- Advise you on eligibility to buy, sell or lease
- Go through Resale Checklist with you
- Check with Seller whether renovations are authorised
- Assist you to submit documents/information to HDB



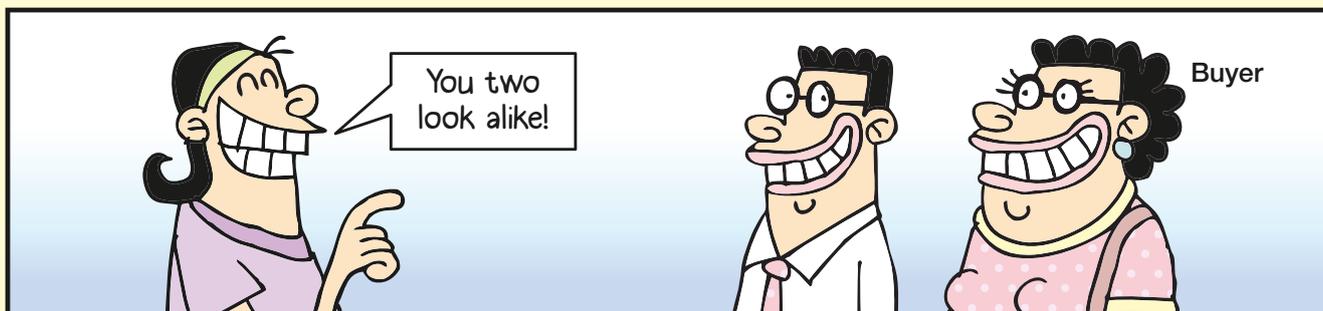
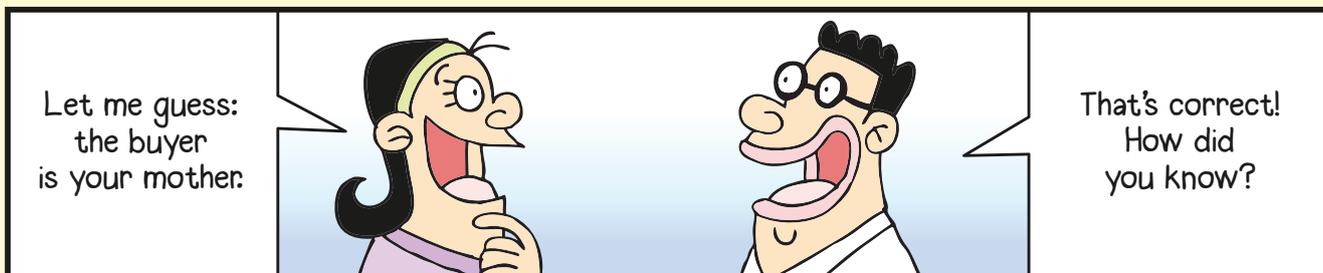
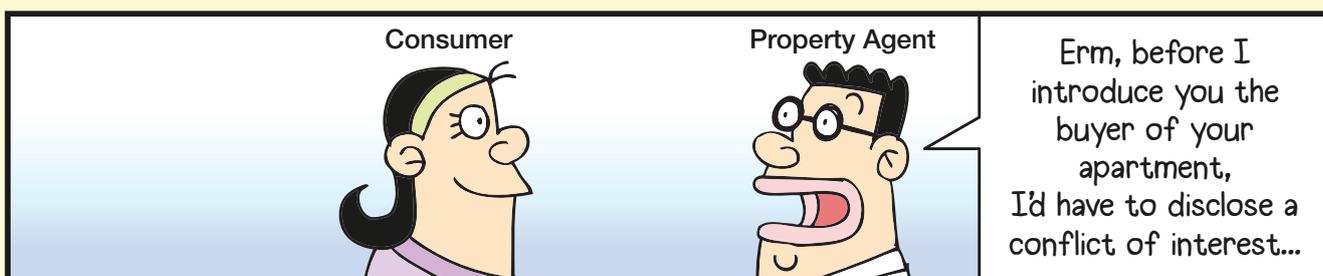
**ARGHHH!
My eyes!!!**

Understand Your Property Agent's Responsibilities (II)

Property agents are bound by the CEA's Code of Ethics and Professional Client Care when conducting their work. They are responsible for promoting and safeguarding consumer interests in property transactions.

Property agents are not allowed to do the following:

- Insist that you engage a property agent
(note: you can choose to handle the transaction yourself)
- Introduce or recommend you to licensed or illegal moneylenders
- Represent both the buyer/tenant and seller/landlord in the same property transaction
- Fail to declare any conflict of interest to you (i.e. situations which may benefit your property agent and run against your interest)



- Fail to convey any offer to you
- Handle transaction monies, such as option fee, downpayment, stamp duties, deposits and sales proceeds, in the sale or purchase of your property (note: valuation fees and commissions are not regarded as transaction monies)

Use Prescribed Estate Agency Agreements

What is an Estate Agency Agreement?

- A contract between you and the property agency to protect interests of both parties
- Use for sale, purchase and lease of residential properties in Singapore
- Download from CEA website www.cea.gov.sg

Your property agent must:

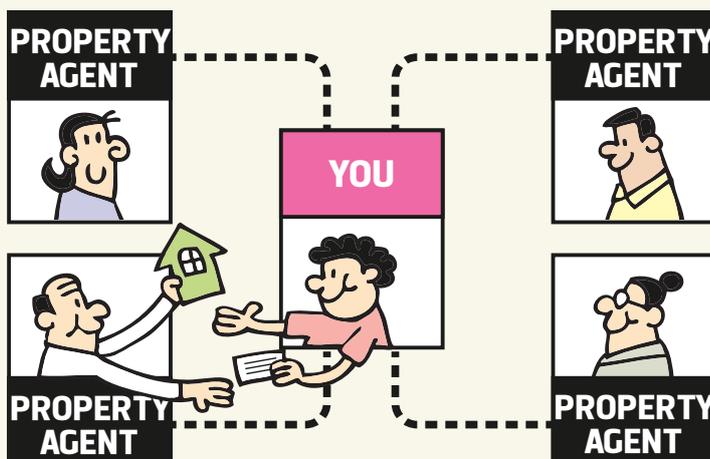
- Prepare the Agreement based on discussion with you
- Explain the Agreement to you
- Give you sufficient time to read the Agreement before signing it
- Give you a copy of the signed Agreement

Exclusive Agreement



- Appoint one property agent for up to three months and pay commission when the transaction is closed
- Your property agent can devote resources and time to your property when engaged on exclusive basis
- You are liable to pay commission to the appointed property agent if property is transacted by you or through another property agent during the validity period

Non-exclusive Agreement



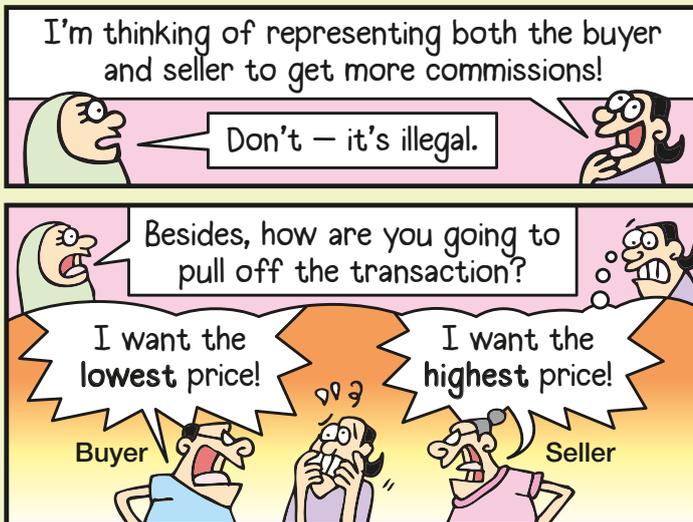
- Appoint a few property agents to buy, sell or rent the property
- Inform the property agents in advance so that their efforts do not overlap
- You are liable to pay commission to the property agent who helps you complete your transaction successfully
- Clarify which property agent will claim commission from you if more than one property agent had tried to introduce the other party to you

The choice of type of agreement will depend on your needs and preferences.

Safeguard Your Interest

Under the Estate Agents Act, property agents cannot engage in dual representation, handle transaction monies, or be involved in moneylending-related activities.

1) No dual representation



A property agent:

- Cannot be appointed by both seller/landlord and buyer/tenant for same transaction
- May not collect commission from his client and collect a co-broke fee from other party's property agent
- May help the other party do paperwork with consent of his client but cannot collect a fee for the paperwork rendered

Applies to all property transactions, including residential, commercial and industrial properties

2) No handling of transaction monies



A property agent cannot handle transaction monies for or on behalf of any party in:

- Sale or purchase of any property situated in Singapore
- Lease of HDB properties

Examples of transaction monies:

- Sale and purchase transaction - option fee, downpayment, deposits, stamp duties and sales proceeds
- Lease transaction - rental deposits and monthly rentals
- Valuation fees and commissions are not transaction monies

3) No referral to moneylenders

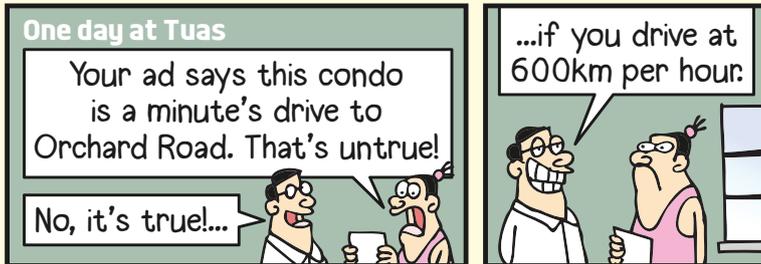


A property agent cannot:

- Refer clients to moneylenders
- Accept any referral from moneylenders to sell debtors' properties
- Divulge client's personal data to unauthorised persons, including moneylenders

Resolve Your Dispute Effectively

Common Complaints



- Unprofessional or poor services rendered by property agents
- Advertisements with misleading information or posted without prior consent from property owners
- Misconduct by property agent

Have a dispute with your property agent?

To resolve a contractual dispute with your property agent on the commission payable or services rendered, you can go for mediation and/or arbitration.



Complaints Management by CEA

CEA looks into complaints against:

- Licensed property agencies and registered property agents in their conduct of estate agency work
- Entities and individuals suspected of conducting unlicensed estate agency work

CEA will investigate and take action if the complaint is substantiated.

To report cases, use our CEA online complaint form on our website at www.cea.gov.sg.

* CEA is unable to handle disputes between landlord and tenant, or buyer and seller.

*CEA will refer allegations of criminal wrongdoing, such as fraud and cheating, to the Police.