

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE GUIDE ON BEST PRACTICES FOR CONSUMER RATINGS OF PROPERTY AGENTS

1. What guidance does the Guide provide and who can use it?

The Guide can be adopted by any online or digital platform that invites and publishes the ratings of property agents, regardless of whether the platform is run by a property agency or any other third party, and regardless of the size and reach of the platform.

It provides recommended best practices in the areas of measurement, display, invitation to rate and management of ratings, as well as the safeguards for rating platforms. It does not cover the ranking of property agents and the display of rankings by platforms.

2. Do all rating platforms have to adopt the Guide?

All platforms are encouraged to follow the Guide to help them in designing rating platforms that users can trust for the comparison of the ratings of property agents across different rating platforms. It is not a mandatory requirement to adopt the Guide.

3. Does the Guide cover the display of property agents' and consumers' information by rating platforms? What information should be displayed?

The Guide covers best practices to promote standards that allow ease of comparison across platforms while ensuring fairness and consistency in ratings. It provides an industry standard for the rating of property agents, including the key categories of attributes, namely Service, Professionalism and Skills as well as recommended safeguards against false ratings and editorial control over ratings.

It does not prescribe the information to be displayed by rating platforms. At all times, rating platforms should comply with all prevailing rules and regulations of the Personal Data Protection Act 2012 (PDPA) which govern the collection, use, disclosure, and care of personal data by organisations.

4. If there are more than one property agent representing the same client in a property transaction, how should the rating be done?

For property transactions where property agents worked in teams to represent the same transacting party, the platform should only allow the client to rate the lead property agent for the transaction. The platform may decide how to determine which agent is the lead. Please refer to the Guide for more details.

5. If my property agent advertised my property on a listing portal, and both his property agency and the listing portal have rating platforms, how should I rate my agent?

You may wish to check the details in the invitation to rate to ensure that it is intended for you and your property transaction. For more information on the rating process, e.g. how to rate, please check directly with the rating platform for its instructions.

Where possible, only one invitation to rate should be sent to the client for every property transaction that has been closed, and the invitation should be issued as soon as reasonably practicable. The property agency and listing portal may work out their preferred arrangement on which platform to issue the invitation to rate. Both platforms can also arrange for your rating to be displayed on both platforms if they have implemented a data sharing arrangement.

6. Is CEA developing a centralised rating platform for the real estate agency industry?

No, CEA will not be developing any rating platform.

Some property agencies, such as RPAWG member organisations like ERA Realty Network (ERA), Huttons Asia, OrangeTee & Tie (OTT) and PropNex Realty already have platforms for clients to rate their property agents, and have adopted the Guide to finetune their existing platforms. Other RPAWG member organisations – the Singapore Estate Agents Association (SEAA) and property portal company PropertyGuru – have also committed to becoming early adopters of the Guide to build a new ratings platform. Together, they cover about 90% of the real estate agency industry.

Given that the Guide provides guidance to facilitate comparability of ratings across platforms, CEA would encourage more platforms to similarly adopt the Guide and consider sharing data with one another to enable the ratings of property agents to be displayed across different platforms.

Platforms may wish to refer to the [Trusted Data Sharing Framework](#) introduced by the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) and Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC) for guidance on data sharing.

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As at 5 July 2021.