

If you
are
A FOREIGNER...



ACRA
ACCOUNTING AND CORPORATE
REGULATORY AUTHORITY

This brochure serves as a guide for foreigners who want to register a business in Singapore. This includes registering a sole-proprietorship/partnership; incorporating a local company; registering a foreign company as a branch; registering a limited liability partnership (LLP); and registering a limited partnership (LP).

Can I register a business?

You may register a business if you satisfy the following requirements:

- You must be at least 18 years old
- You must not be an undischarged bankrupt
- You must not be disqualified under sections 149, 149A, 154, 155 or 155A of the Companies Act or sections 34, 35, 36 or 37 of the LLP Act
- If you are an existing pass holder (e.g. Employment Pass, S-Pass, Dependant Pass etc), please check with the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) before you register any entity type
- You can apply for a SingPass once you obtain a valid pass from MOM (e.g. Employment Pass, EntrePass, S-Pass or Dependant Pass). However, if you are not eligible for SingPass or require further assistance, you may engage a professional firm (e.g. law firm, accounting firm or corporate service provider) or service bureau (DP Bureau) to file the online application

What information must I prepare before registering a business?

- ✓ SingPass (if you are filing the application yourself)
- ✓ Proposed business name
- ✓ Commencement date
- ✓ Principal activities (SSIC Code)
- ✓ Business address
- ✓ Approvals from other Government authorities (if required)
- ✓ Particulars of sole proprietor/partners/managers/directors/shareholders (as appropriate)
 - Name
 - Identification number (NRIC/FIN)
 - Nationality
 - Date of birth
 - Residential Address
 - Contact number/Email address

Which type of business should I register?

Foreigner Registering a Sole-Proprietor/Partnership

A sole-proprietorship has only one owner. A partnership must have at least two partners. Sole-proprietorships and partnerships are not separate entities from their respective owners and partners.

If you register a partnership, there must be at least one locally resident partner. If all partners reside outside Singapore, a local manager must be appointed.

Foreigner Incorporating a Local Company

A local company must have at least one director who is ordinarily resident in Singapore and at least one shareholder. A local company is a separate entity from its directors and shareholders.

If you wish to incorporate a local company with the intention to stay on in Singapore to manage its operations, you should first apply for an EntrePass from MOM.

For more information on EntrePass, please refer to the MOM website at www.mom.gov.sg.

Foreigner Registering a Foreign Company (Branch)

A branch of a foreign company is not a separate entity from its overseas parent company. A branch can be registered via BizFile upon approval of its name.

The Companies Act requires such foreign companies to appoint two local agents resident in Singapore to accept service of documents on behalf of the company.

Foreigner Registering a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP)

Every LLP needs at least two partners. An LLP is a separate entity from its partners and must also appoint a manager who is ordinarily resident in Singapore.

Foreigner Registering a Limited Partnership (LP)

An LP must have at least one general partner and at least one limited partner. An LP is not a separate entity from its partners.

If all general partners are ordinarily resident outside Singapore, a local manager must be appointed.

What is BizFile?

All applications to ACRA must be submitted via our online filing and information retrieval system, BizFile (www.bizfile.gov.sg). Only an individual with a SingPass can lodge a transaction via BizFile. You need to log in to BizFile using your identification number (NRIC/FIN) and SingPass.

You have to engage the services of a professional firm or service bureau to submit the online application on behalf of any person (e.g. company officer, shareholder or partner) who does not have a SingPass.

What is a SingPass?

A SingPass is a common password that allows the user to transact with different Government agencies online. Please visit the SingPass website at www.singpass.gov.sg for more information on SingPass and how to apply for one.

Frequently Asked Questions

- Q:** Does a foreigner need to top up his Medisave with the CPF Board before he can register a new business with ACRA?
- A:** No. Only Singapore citizens and Permanent Residents are required to top up their Medisave with the CPF Board.
- Q:** I am a foreigner who is registered as a sole-proprietor/partner. I reside outside of Singapore and my local manager wishes to withdraw from the firm. What should I do?
- A:** You must first appoint another locally resident person as manager to replace the withdrawing local manager.
- Q:** Can a local manager terminate the registration of a sole-proprietorship or partnership on behalf of the owner who is a foreigner?
- A:** No, only the owner can do so. If the foreign owner wants to terminate the registration of a sole-proprietorship or partnership, he can either file for termination using his SingPass or engage the services of a professional firm or service bureau if he does not hold a SingPass.

Related Brochures

- Registering a New Sole Proprietorship/Partnership
- Registering a New Company
- Registering a New Limited Liability Partnership
- Registering a New Limited Partnership

Disclaimer: This factsheet is for general information only and may not cover all the information on a particular issue. This factsheet does not constitute legal or other professional advice. If legal or other professional advice is required, please seek the services of a relevant professional