

AUTHENTIC COURT ORDERS



An initiative by



Authentic Court Order (ACO)

An ACO is a court order **verified** to have been issued by a Singapore Court.

Previously, parties that need to show their Court Order to others may be asked to provide a Certified True Copy ("CTC"). They have to apply for the CTC and this can take several days and require more than one trip to the Court. A fee needs to be paid for every hardcopy CTC. The hardcopy CTC may also be inadvertently misplaced, or the party may not have sufficient CTCs and may need to obtain additional CTCs.

The ACO system simplifies this. From 2 Jan 2020, Court Orders that are included in the ACO system can be validated online. Parties can show a photocopy, email, or even a fax or a screenshot of an ACO to any relying party. The relying party (a bank, government agency etc) can verify the authenticity of the order by retrieving a validated copy of the same court order directly from the official ACO website. This service is free of charge.

A Court Order that is included in the ACO system will have special information printed on the Court Order. Currently, orders arising out of Civil cases in the State Courts and High Court are included. Other court orders may be added progressively. All ACO orders can be verified at <https://www.courtorders.gov.sg>.

Benefits of ACO



- **Secure**

Access court orders, secured by digital signature technology, directly from a trusted government website.



- **Convenient**

View verified court orders on your devices anytime, anywhere – no waiting time and no need to collect CTCs in person.



- **Free of charge**

No payment required.

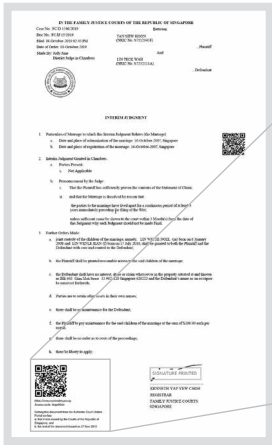
How are court orders verified?

Depending on the medium in which they are received, court orders may be verified by following the steps listed below.

Hard Copy

Step 1

Requestor obtains a hard copy ACO



Step 2

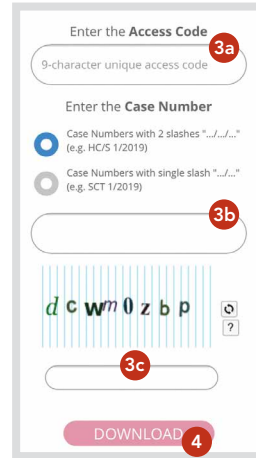
Requestor accesses ACO portal by scanning QR code or typing the URL (<https://www.courtorders.gov.sg>) into a web browser



Step 3

- a) Enter 9-character Access Code*
- b) Enter Case Number
- c) Complete Captcha

*Only if QR code was not used



Step 4

Download softcopy ACO and compare with hardcopy, which should be identical



Soft Copy

Step 1

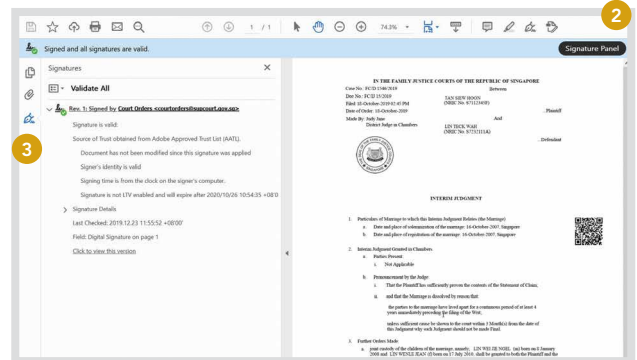
Requestor obtains a soft copy ACO (in PDF format)

Step 2

Requestor uses official Adobe Acrobat software to view softcopy of the ACO, and verifies ACO by checking the "Signature Panel"

Step 3

The Signature Panel will show whether the softcopy has been modified, and will also verify that the softcopy was digitally "signed" by the Judiciary



Recipients can trust the softcopy after verifying the Signature Panel, or the recipient can directly retrieve the ACO from the ACO Portal once more.



1// Will anyone be able to access any other person's court order?

In order to retrieve a document from the ACO portal, one will need (a) either the **QR Code** or the **Access Code**; and (b) the **Case Number**. In addition, CAPTCHA mechanism is used to detect Bot "attacks" on the ACO portal. It is very unlikely that a person who has not been given the Access Code and the Case Number can randomly "guess" the relevant information to obtain access to a Court order.

2// Can parties "opt out" of ACO?

No. The ACO Scheme will automatically add the relevant information on eligible Court Orders and parties are not able to opt out of ACO.

3// Will we know if a court order has been superseded?

Obtaining an order from the ACO portal verifies that the order was issued by the Singapore courts and the contents of the order when it was issued on the date stated on the order.

4// How do we verify the authenticity of the website?

Users should always ensure that the URL of the site they are using is <https://www.courtorders.gov.sg>. Users should not accept any other variations of the URL.

5// Can one still apply for a physical CTC?

CTCs will still be available upon application.

6// Why should a person go to the <https://www.courtorders.gov.sg> website if she already has a softcopy of a Court Order?

Retrieving the court order from the official Court repository can provide added confidence that the court order can be obtained from the Court repository, and was not authored by unauthorised persons.

7// Will Court Orders before 2 Jan 2020 be re-issued and added to the ACO?

No. The ACO portal will only have new Court orders issued after the start of the system.

8// If the Court Order I receive after 2 Jan 2020 does not have a QR Code and an Access Code, does it mean that it is a forgery?

It is possible that the Court Order in question has not been included in the ACO system. It may still be a valid Court Order. You may wish to make additional queries about the matter, or ask for a CTC in such a case.

9// Can I still require parties to produce a CTC, even if their court order is an ACO?

Yes, but you should be aware that a CTC is less secure than an ACO. It is possible for CTCs to be forged. Where an ACO is available, it can be a better guarantee of authenticity, as you can be sure you are obtaining it directly from the Court and that it has not been tampered with.

10// Must I be a party to a case in order to access the ACO system?

Anyone with a valid Access Code and corresponding Case Number can obtain an ACO from the ACO portal.