FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Digital Signature Certificate

What is a Digital Signature?

A digital signature is an electronic form of a signature that can be used to authenticate the identity of the sender of a message or the signer of a document, and also ensure that the original content of the message or document that has been sent is unchanged. Digital signatures are easily transportable and cannot be imitated by someone else. The ability to ensure that the original signed message arrived means that the sender cannot easily disclaim it later.

What is a Digital Signature Certificate?

Digital Signature Certificates (DSC) is the electronic format of physical or paper certificate like a driving License, passport etc. Certificates serve as proof of identity of an individual for a certain purpose; for example, a Passport identifies someone as a citizen of that country; who can legally travel to any country. Likewise, a Digital Signature Certificate can be presented electronically to prove your identity, to access information or services on the Internet or to sign certain documents digitally.

Why do I need Digital Signature Certificate?

A Digital Signature Certificate authenticates your identity electronically. It also provides you with a high level of security for your online transactions by ensuring absolute privacy of the information exchanged using a Digital Signature Certificate. You can use certificates to encrypt information such that only the intended recipient can read it. You can digitally sign information to assure the recipient that it has not been changed in transit, and also verify your identity as the sender of the message.

Where can I purchase a Digital Signature Certificate?

Legally valid Digital Signature Certificates are issued only through a Controller of Certifying Authorities (CCA), Govt. of India, licensed Certifying Authorities (CA).

Where can I use Digital Signature Certificate?

You can use Digital Signature Certificates for the following:

- *For sending and receiving digitally signed and encrypted emails.*
- *For carrying out secure web-based transactions, or to identify other participants of web-based transactions.*
- *In eTendering, eProcurement, MCA [for Registrar of Companies efiling], Income Tax [for efiling income tax returns] Applications and also in many other applications.*
- *For signing documents like MSWord, MSExcel and PDFs.*
- *Plays a pivotal role in creating a paperless office.*

How does a Digital Signature Certificate Work?

A Digital Signature Certificate explicitly associates the identity of an individual/device with a pair of electronic keys - public and private keys - and this association is endorsed by the CA. The certificate contains information about a user's identity (for example, their name, pin code, country, email address, the date the certificate was issued and the name of the Certifying Authority that issued it). These keys complement each other in that one does not function in the absence of the other. They are used by browsers and servers to encrypt and decrypt information regarding the identity of the certificate user during information exchange processes. The private key is stored on the user's computer hard disk

or in external device such as a token. The user retains control of the private key; it can only be used with the issued password. The public key is disseminated with the encrypted information. The authentication process fails if either one of these keys in not available or do not match. This means that the encrypted data cannot be decrypted and therefore, is inaccessible to unauthorized parties.

Can Digital Signature Certificates can be used in wireless networks?

Yes, digital signature certificates can be employed in wireless networks.

How long will it take for the application to be processed?

DSC issuance would require 5 business days from the date of applying/application.

I'm trying to apply for a new Digital Signature Certificate. What user type should I select?

You can select the 'User Type' based on your requirement of Digital Signature Certificate. It can be for personal, company or government use. If you choose user type as 'Company' or 'Government', you need to submit company or government organization related documents for verification as part of the Digital Signature Certificate issue process.

I'm trying to apply for a new Digital Signature Certificate. What Certificate Class should I select?

Selection of certificate class depends completely on your usage and security requirements. A rough guideline is provided below on the applicability of various levels of certification: class.
Class 3 Platinum *- for transactions that require a high degree of security and privacy due to exchange of extremely sensitive information that requires unequivocal authentication of the subscriber's identity. Some of the common transactions requiring Class 3 certificates are e-commerce, electronic data interchange by banks, etc.*

I'm trying to apply for a new Digital Signature Certificate. What Certificate type should I select?

Selection of a certificate type depends completely on your requirement. The options available to you are:

- *Signature - Certificate with this key usage, can be used for only digitally signing documents, emails and online transactions.*
- *Encryption – Certificate with this key usage, can be used for only encrypting documents, emails and online transactions.*

I'm trying to apply for a new Digital Signature Certificate. What type of token should I select?

Selection of a token type depends completely on your requirement. The options available to you are:

- *Soft Token - If you would like to download the Digital Signature Certificate to your local machine and use it from that specific machine only.*
- *USB Token - If you would like to download the Digital Signature Certificate to a USB Token or a Smart card and use it from multiple machines.*

What are the documents I need to submit to get a Digital Signature Certificate?

The following documents are required for all class 3 and Server Certificates For an individual

- *Attested copy of any one of the following as identity proof (attestation may be by any Gazetted Officer/Bank Manager)*

  - *Passport*
  - *Driving License*
  - *PAN card*
  - *Post Office ID Card*
  - *Bank Account Passbook containing the Photograph and signed by an individual with attestation by the concerned Bank official*
  - *Any Government issued photo ID Card bearing the signature of the individual*
  - *Photo ID Card issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs of Centre/State Government*

- *Attested copy of any one of the following as Address Proof (attestation may be by any Gazetted Officer/Bank Manager)*

  - *Telephone Bill*
  - *Electricity Bill*
  - *Water Bill*
  - *Gas Connection*
  - *Bank Statements signed by the Bank*
  - *Service Tax /VAT/Sales Tax registration certificate*
  - *Property Tax/Corporation/Municipal corporation receipt*
  - *Driving Licence*
  - *Voter ID Card*
  - *Passport*
  - *Certificate of Registration for owned Vehicle*

For an Organization

Attested copy of any one of the following as Identity Proof (attestation may be by any Gazetted Officer/Bank Manager)

  - *Passport*
  - *Driving License*
  - *PAN card*
  - *Post Office ID Card*
  - *Bank Account Passbook containing the Photograph and signed by an individual with attestation by the concerned Bank official*
  - *Any Government issued photo ID Card bearing the signature of the individual*
  - *Photo ID Card issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs of Centre/State Government.*

- *True copy of any one (from the Company Secretary/Director/Partner of the organization)*
  - *Certificate of Incorporation*
  - *Memorandum of Association/Articles of Association*
  - *Partnership Deed*
  - *Post Office ID Card*
  - *Valid Business License*

- *True copy of anyone (attested by Company Secretary/Director/Partner of the organization)*
  - *Annual Report*
  - *Latest Income Tax Return*
  - *Latest Bank Details of the organization from the Bank*
  - *Statement of Income issued by Chartered Accountant*

- *Authorization letter in favour of the certificate applicant from the organization*
- *Domain Name registration proof from the registrar of Domains (if applying for Server Certificate)*

Some of the details in my Digital Signature Certificate are incorrect. Can these be corrected?

No, details cannot be changed. You need to revoke the current certificate and apply for a new one by following the same process as the one you used for the earlier certificate.

What is Certificate Revocation?

A Digital Signature Certificate can be revoked under circumstances such as the following

- *Users suspect compromise of certificate private key.*
- *Change of personal data.*
- *Change of relationship with the organization*

I have forgotten my private key password. Can someone change it for me?

No. If you have forgotten your private key password, you will have to apply for a new Digital Signature Certificate

I have lost the Smart Card / USB Token containing my certificate and cryptographic keys. What do I do?

Please contact your nearest RA Administrator immediately to get your certificate suspended to avoid unauthorized access to it.

I accidentally deleted my Digital Signature Certificate from my PC hard disk drive. What should I do now?

Once your Digital Signature Certificate and key files have been deleted, damaged or overwritten, there is no way to reactivate your Digital Signature Certificate. You need to revoke your Digital Signature Certificate and then enrol for a new one.