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Frequently Asked Questions on Digital Signature Certificate

1. What is a Digital Signature Certificate?

Digital Signature Certificates (DSC) are the digital equivalent (that is electronic format) of physical or paper certificates. Examples of physical certificates are drivers' licenses, passports or membership cards.

Certificates serve as a proof of identity of an individual for a certain purpose; for example, a driver's license identifies someone who can legally drive in a particular country. Likewise, a digital certificate can be presented electronically to prove your identity, to access information or services on the Internet or to sign certain documents digitally.

2. Why is Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) required?

Like physical documents are signed manually, electronic documents, for example e-forms are required to be signed digitally using a Digital Signature Certificate. Transactions that are done using Internet if signed using a Digital Signature certificate becomes legally valid.

3. Who issues the Digital Signature Certificate?

A licensed Certifying Authority (CA) issues the digital signature. Certifying Authority (CA) means a person who has been granted a license to issue a digital signature certificate under Section 24 of the Indian IT-Act 2000.

4. What type of Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) is to be obtained for eSigning and Authentication on the eTendering Portal?

DSC of Class 3 category issued by a licensed Certifying Authority (CA) needs to be obtained for eFiling on the eTendering Portal. Class 3 DSC is the highest level where the person needs to present himself or herself in front of a Registration Authority (RA) and prove his/ her identity.

5. What is the cost of obtaining a Digital Signature Certificate?

The cost of obtaining a digital signature certificate may vary as there are many entities issuing DSCs and their charges may differ. The approximate cost could vary between ₹ 2000 to ₹ 3000 depending on the number of years for which it is issued.

6. How to obtain DSC for dept users?

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The Department Officers shall get the DSCs or e-Tokens from any of the authorized vendors of CA, India. For convenience, the vendor addresses are given here : To View [click here](#)

The Vendor list is not exhaustive. The Department users may ensure that they get two pairs of Keys (One for Signing and One for Encryption).

7. How to obtain DSC for contractors/bidders

Bidders can obtain the e Tokens from the following address To View [click here](#)

8. How much time do CAs take to issue a DSC?

The time taken by Certifying Authorities to issue a DSC may vary from three to seven days.

9. What is the validity period of a Digital Signature Certificate?

The Certifying Authorities are authorized to issue a Digital Signature Certificate with a validity of one or two years. The maximum period for which the DSC is issued is only two years. On the expiry of the term, the Digital Signature Certificate can be revalidated by paying the fees again.

10. What is the legal status of a Digital Signature?

Digital Signatures are legally admissible in a Court of Law, as provided under the provisions of IT.

11. Is a company required to obtain a Digital Signature Certificate in its own name for eTendering

Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) is not required by Companies but by individuals. For example the Director or the Authorized signatory signing on behalf of the Company requires a DSC.

12. Can I do e-filing of documents if I do not possess a DSC?

No. It is mandatory to have a valid digital signature certificate for e-filing the forms on eTendering portal.

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