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## **Facility to operate bank account by old/sick/incapacitated customers**

The Reserve Bank of India has prescribed a procedure which banks can follow to enable the old/sick/incapacitated account holders to operate their bank accounts. In a circular issued recently, the Reserve Bank has identified two categories of sick/old/incapacitated customers. One, who is too ill to sign a cheque/cannot be physically present in the bank to withdraw money from his bank account but can put his/her thumb impression on the cheque/withdrawal form; and the other who is not only unable to be physically present in the bank but is also unable to put his/her thumb impression on the cheque/withdrawal form due to certain physical defect/incapacity.

The Reserve Bank has, in such cases, asked the banks to get the thumb/toe impression of the sick/old/incapacitated account holders identified by two independent witnesses known to the bank, one of the witnesses being a responsible bank official.

The Reserve Bank has further stated that in case the customer cannot put his/her thumb impression and is also unable to be physically present in the bank, the bank should obtain a mark on the cheque/withdrawal form. This mark should be identified by two independent witnesses, one of whom should be a responsible bank official. Further, the customer may be asked to indicate to the bank as to who would withdraw the amount from the bank. This person should also be identified by two independent witnesses. The person who would actually be drawing the money from the bank should be asked to furnish his signature to the bank.

The question of extending suitable facility to old/sick/incapacitated bank customers for operation of their bank accounts had been engaging the attention of the Reserve Bank for quite some time. In consultation with the Indian Banks' Association, the Reserve Bank has decided to offer the above facility to old/sick/incapacitated persons and who are not willing to open a joint account. Similar facility is already available to pension account holders.

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