Two moments when control changes hands

Dr Alexander Ressos, TEP
Of Counsel, KGP Legal LLC
Attorney-at-Law (Switzerland and Germany), Solicitor (England & Wales and Hong Kong)

Digital assets pass to other people at two predictable moments: divorce and death. Both expose the same structural feature of the asset class. Title follows the private key, so a spouse or an heir who does not have the key has a legal right without a practical means of exercising it. The Singapore law of matrimonial property and of succession was written for bank accounts, land and shares, where a court order or a grant of probate can be served on an intermediary who then transfers the asset. For self-custodied tokens there is no intermediary. This chapter sets out how the Women's Charter 1961, the Probate and Administration Act 1934, the Intestate Succession Act 1967 and the Wills Act 1838 apply to digital assets, where the gaps are, and how a Singapore practitioner closes them. It ends with the cross-border estate that has Swiss elements, which is the pattern this book's readers most often present.

Copyright © 2026 Dr Alexander Ressos, TEP – Of Counsel, KGP Legal LLC. SingaporeIQ is an information website and gives no legal advice. For Singapore law advice through KGP Legal LLC, please write to alexander.ressos@kgplegal.com.sg