

# LCQ18: Estate offices of public rental housing

Following is a question by the Hon Wilson Or and a written reply by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, in the Legislative Council today (February 24):

Question:

Some residents of public rental housing (PRH) have relayed that the estate office of the estate in which they live has adopted improper practices. For example, in respect of the work on vetting and approval of the publicity materials to be posted by mutual aid committees and enforcing the Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement, the judgements made and the way of handling by the estate offices concerned are inappropriate and are different from those by other estate offices. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether the Housing Department (HD) has issued practice guidelines to its estate offices; if so, (i) whether HD has regularly updated such guidelines, and (ii) whether PRH residents may have access to such guidelines; if so, whether HD received complaints in the past three years about the violation of such guidelines by estate offices; if so, of the number of complaints, with a breakdown by year and subject of complaint; and

(2) whether HD has regularly deployed staff to inspect its estate offices (especially those against which relatively more complaints have been lodged); if so, of the details; if not, the measures put in place to monitor the work of the estate offices and ensure that they act strictly in accordance with HD's directions and guidelines?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the question raised by the Hon Wilson Or is as follows:

(1) Each public rental housing (PRH) estate under the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) has an estate management office (EMO). Some of the EMOs are directly managed by the Housing Department (HD), some are managed by staff of outsourced management companies. HA has promulgated guidelines on various management work (including handling of applications for display of publicity materials (PMs) and execution of the Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement (the Marking Scheme) in PRH estates) for implementation by staff of the EMOs. The relevant vetting principles on the display of PMs (including poster, banner, etc.) in PRH estates and information about the Marking Scheme can be browsed at HA's website (note).

Regarding the display of PMs, applications are generally handled by EMOs in accordance with the relevant guidelines. PMs should be informative, the content of which should be welfare- or service-providing and non-profit-making in nature. They should not carry messages that are unlawful, obscene, defamatory, insinuating, criticising or denouncing individual persons or parties. To ensure consistency among EMOs on the principles of handling PMs, EMOs should refer applications for PMs with controversial content to the HD Headquarters for handling. Applicants may lodge an appeal if they are not satisfied with the way the applications are handled. In addition, notice boards (NBs) are provided in some PRH estates for the exclusive use of district council members/legislative councillors and local residents' groups (including mutual aid committees, residents' associations, etc.), or non-governmental organisations. Contents of the PMs displayed on these NBs should also comply with the aforementioned principles. EMO staff will inspect these NBs regularly and, depending on the actual situation, take necessary follow-up actions.

We do not have a central record of the number of complaints against EMOs of non-compliance with the guidelines for handling PMs and the Marking Scheme. Individual complaints will be followed up and handled in accordance with the HD's prevailing mechanism. HA will review the estate management policies from time to time in the light of changing social circumstances.

(2) Each EMO is supervised by their respective HD Regional Management Offices. If HD is aware that individual EMO does not comply with the various estate management guidelines promulgated by HD, HD will assign staff to follow up and increase the frequency of supervisory checks on the relevant EMO.

Note:

Arrangements on Display of PMs and Arrangements on Electioneering Activities during Election Period

[www.housingauthority.gov.hk/en/common/pdf/about-us/policy-focus/policies-on-public-housing/B27/B27.pdf](http://www.housingauthority.gov.hk/en/common/pdf/about-us/policy-focus/policies-on-public-housing/B27/B27.pdf)

Marking Scheme for Estate Management Enforcement

[www.housingauthority.gov.hk/en/public-housing/estate-management/markingscheme-for-estate-management-enforcement/index.html](http://www.housingauthority.gov.hk/en/public-housing/estate-management/markingscheme-for-estate-management-enforcement/index.html)