

Public housing applicant convicted by court for false statement

A spokesman for the Housing Department (HD) today (July 9) said that the HD spares no effort in combating false declaration made during application for public housing. A public rental housing (PRH) applicant and her husband, who concealed the net asset value of their bank deposits and investments over \$700,000, were convicted by the court yesterday (July 8) with the offence of making false statement knowingly.

In this case, the applicant submitted a PRH application form to the HD around March 2018 on which she declared the net asset value of her bank deposits was \$20,000 and that of her investments was about \$1,900, and her husband declared that he did not have any assets. In the subsequent investigation in May 2018, the HD unveiled that, at the material time, the applicant had bank deposits of around \$680,000 and several insurance policies with a cash value of about \$58,000, and her husband intentionally concealed the asset value of his bank deposits and investments of about \$10,000.

Both defendants were previously convicted by the presiding magistrate in Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts, who considered a fine as punishment could not reflect gravity of the offence. After considering their probation reports by the Court, the first defendant was ordered to pay a total fine of \$8,000, and the second defendant was sentenced to 90 hours of community service order yesterday.

The spokesman reminded that all PRH applicants making false statement to the Hong Kong Housing Authority during PRH application shall be guilty of an offence, contrary to section 26(1)(c) of the Housing Ordinance. The maximum penalty is a \$50,000 fine and imprisonment for six months while the PRH application will also be cancelled.