

Public housing resident convicted by court for making false statement

A public rental housing (PRH) tenant was sentenced to imprisonment today (November 28) for making a false statement that he did not own any land. The PRH flat concerned has been recovered. A spokesman for the Housing Department (HD) reminded residents of public rental housing estates to declare truthfully their income and assets.

A PRH resident living at Ching Ho Estate in Sheung Shui declared in a 2023 Income and Assets Declaration Form that he did not own any land. A subsequent investigation revealed that this resident solely owned a piece of land in Hang Hau, Sai Kung, New Territories, at the material time.

This resident was prosecuted for neglecting to furnish information specified in the declaration form, contrary to Section 27(a) of the Housing Ordinance. He was previously convicted in Fanling Magistrates' Courts. Given the gravity of the offence and with reference to the community service orders suitability report, the defendant was sentenced to two weeks' imprisonment. The PRH unit has been recovered by the HD.

The spokesman said that households living in PRH should complete their Income and Assets Declaration Forms accurately, as doing so provides the foundation for the assessment of rent and their eligibilities for continuing residence. Before furnishing particulars specified in the requisition required by the Hong Kong Housing Authority, households should read the content and completion guidelines of the Income and Assets Declaration Forms carefully and compute their income and assets in accordance with the methods specified. Otherwise, they may be prosecuted for making a false statement knowingly, contrary to Section 26(1)(a) of the Housing Ordinance (if convicted, the maximum penalty is a \$50,000 fine and imprisonment for six months), or be prosecuted for neglecting to furnish information as specified in a declaration form, contrary to Section 27(a) of the Housing Ordinance (if convicted, the maximum penalty is a \$25,000 fine and imprisonment for three months). The HD will take action to recover the undercharged rent incurred due to the inaccurate information, or even recover their PRH units.