

Public housing resident convicted by court for making false statement

A spokesman for the Housing Department (HD) today (July 24) reminded residents of public rental housing (PRH) estates to declare truthfully their income and assets.

A PRH resident living at Choi Ming Court in Tseung Kwan O declared in a 2022 Income and Assets Declaration Form that he did not own any land. Subsequent investigation revealed that this resident owned a piece of land in the New Territories with estimated market value of \$2,000,000 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 convicted by the presiding magistrate in the Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today. Given the gravity of the offence, the defendant was sentenced to two months' imprisonment (suspended for 12 months). This resident has moved out and been deleted from the tenancy of the PRH unit.

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.