

Public housing resident sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment for neglecting to declare property ownership

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

A PRH resident living at Ping Shek Estate declared on a 2020 Income and Asset Declaration Form that he did not have ownership of land and landed property, and that his total household net asset value did not exceed 100 times the prevailing PRH income limit of \$3,100,000. A subsequent investigation revealed that the resident owned land at Tai Po and was granted a Building Licence in 2018 and a Certificate of Compliance in 2020 by the Lands Department, and that the value of the land and landed property was \$16,000,000. His family was therefore ineligible for living in the PRH unit. He was prosecuted by the Housing Department for neglecting to furnish information specified in the Income and Asset Declaration Form, contrary to Section 27(a) of the Housing Ordinance.

The defendant was convicted by the presiding magistrate in Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today and was sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment after considering the gravity of the offence.

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The spokesman said that households living in PRH should accurately complete the income and asset declaration forms, which are used for laying the foundation for the assessment of rent and residents' eligibilities for continuing residence. Before making the declarations, households should read the contents and completion guidelines of the income and asset declaration form 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).