

# Public housing residents convicted by court for neglecting to furnish particulars as specified in requisition

A spokesman for the Housing Department (HD) today (June 29) reminded residents of public rental housing (PRH) estates to declare truthfully their income and assets.

A PRH tenant living at Wan Hon Estate in Kwun Tong declared on a 2019 Income and Asset Declaration Form that he had 50 per cent ownership of a ground floor shop located at Yee Kuk Street, Sham Shui Po, with a rental income of approximately \$30,000. He also declared his total household net asset value did not exceed by 100 times the Public Rental Housing Income Limit (i.e. \$2,930,000). Subsequent investigation revealed that the market value of the shop concerned was approximately \$10,000,000. The net asset value of the property for 50 per cent ownership held by the tenant, after deducting the unpaid mortgage repayment, should be around \$4,200,000, which had exceeded the prescribed asset limit as mentioned above. He was therefore ineligible for living in the PRH unit and was prosecuted by the HD 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 at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today. Having considered the gravity of the offence, the defendant was sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment (suspended for 12 months) and a fine of \$20,000 by the presiding magistrate.

Together with this case, there have already been six PRH applicants or PRH residents prosecuted by the HD this month for the offences of making a false statement knowingly or neglecting to furnish information as specified in a declaration form and sentenced to suspended imprisonment by the court.

The spokesman said that households living in PRH should complete their Income and Asset Declaration Forms accurately, as doing so forms the foundation for the assessment of rent and their eligibility for continuing residence. Before making the declarations, households should read the content 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 being 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). Notwithstanding the above, the HD will take action to recover the undercharged rent incurred due to the inaccurate information or even recover their PRH units.

