

## **Policy on Household Splitting**

Under the existing housing policy, splitting of households is not normally allowed unless the family circumstances are so unique and extenuating that an exception should be granted. On 23 January 2001, the Rental Housing Committee of the Housing Authority reviewed and revised the policy on splitting of public rental housing households. The new arrangements are as follows :

### **Splitting requests from households living in shared accommodation arranged by the Housing Department**

2. For this category, shared accommodation was arranged by the Housing Department for single persons mainly affected by clearance. Splitting requests (such as on grounds of overcrowding or inconvenience to sharer(s) brought by addition of family members, disputes amongst the household members, etc.) will be considered and dealt with by the Housing Department with priority. Details are as follows :

- (a) Upon establishment of genuine need, the splinter household will not be required to undergo Comprehensive Means Test, but have to pass the Domestic Property Test <sup>(Note 1)</sup>;
- (b) If the splinter household passes the Domestic Property Test, a separate public rental housing flat will be allocated. Alternatively, the splinter household may apply for an Ordinary Green Form Certificate (valid for one year from the date of issue) to purchase a flat under any subsidized home ownership schemes in lieu of offer of a public rental housing flat.

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<sup>(Note 1)</sup> All family members should not possess any domestic property in Hong Kong during the period from 24 months prior to the date of application for splitting up to the date of signing Tenancy Agreement for the separate public rental housing flat allocated.

- (c) Both the main household and the splinter household will be subject to the Housing Subsidy Policy/the Policy on Safeguarding Rational Allocation of Public Housing Resources <sup>(Note 2)</sup> in normal turn.
- (d) Splinter household failing the Domestic Property Test will not be eligible for allocation of a separate public rental housing flat. However, it may apply for an Ordinary Green Form Certificate (valid for one year from the date of issue) for purchase of a flat under subsidized home ownership schemes.

### **Splitting requests from households sharing accommodation on a voluntary basis and family households**

3. Splitting requests from these households will only be considered on fully justified grounds. The main and the splinter households will separately be subject to :

- (a) Comprehensive Means Test with income and asset limits pitched at Waiting List levels; and
- (b) Domestic Property Test.

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<sup>(Note 2)</sup> Under the Housing Subsidy Policy -

- (a) households with income exceeding two times the Waiting List income limit will have to pay 1.5 times net rent plus rates; and
- (b) those households with income exceeding three times the Waiting List income limit or who choose not to declare income, have to pay double net rent plus rates.

Under the Policy on Safeguarding Rational Allocation of Public Housing Resources, double-rent paying households are required to declare their assets at the next cycle of declaration (two years from the last declaration). Those with assets exceeding the prescribed limits are required to move out. They may be allowed to stay in the public rental flat for one year if they have a temporary need for housing, subject to their payment of a licence fee equivalent to market rent.

4. If both households pass the above tests, a separate refurbished public rental housing unit in the New Territories will be allocated to the splinter household. Refurbished flat in urban area will only be allocated with the endorsement of Chief Manager/Management upon recommendation from the Social Welfare Department. Both the main and splinter households can also opt for an Ordinary Green Form Certificate (valid for one year from the date of issue) to purchase a flat under subsidized home ownership schemes in lieu of public rental housing flat allocation.

5. Upon allocation of a separate public rental housing unit, both the main and the splinter households are required to declare income and/or assets biennially, irrespective of their length of residence in public rental housing.  
(Note 3)

6. If the splinter household fails only the Comprehensive Means Test, a one-year temporary stay in Interim Housing in the New Territories may be granted upon application and fulfilment of the prevailing eligibility criteria. During this period, market licence fees will be charged and Second Priority Green Form status will be given if the income and asset limits for White Form applicants are met.

7. If any party who fails the Comprehensive Means Test and Domestic Property Test is adamant to split from the main household, it may approach the Social Welfare Department for consideration of compassionate rehousing.

8. If either or both parties fail the Comprehensive Means Test and Domestic Property Test, the households may withdraw their splitting applications and make own accommodation arrangement.

Housing Department  
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(Note 3) Irrespective of the length of residence in public rental housing, households paying normal or 1.5 rent will be required to declare their income biennially while double-rent payers will have to declare their assets every two years with review cycles same as those for Housing Subsidy Policy and the Policy on Safeguarding Rational Allocation of Public Housing Resources.