

Shared Accommodation in Public Rental Housing

Purpose

This paper informs Members of the policies and arrangements for public housing tenants living in shared accommodation in public housing estates.

Background

2. Historically, public rental housing (PRH) flats were constructed to meet the need of those households with more than one member. Single person households were required to share accommodation with other families or single persons. With effect from 1984, single person households can apply for single-person PRH flats (self-contained or non-self-contained).

3. There are basically two categories of households living in shared accommodation:

(a) **Sharing arranged by the Housing Department**

Sharing was arranged by the Housing Department for singletons mainly affected by clearance who *submitted individual applications for PRH*. This arrangement was made at a time when there was an acute shortage of one-person flats.

(b) **Sharing with prior consent**

This refers to households in a non-nucleus or partially nucleus family setting (e.g. siblings, married couples with one or more related or unrelated members, or two or more elderly singletons) who are willing to live together under one roof for mutual care and support. Since they apply for PRH under one application form, they are allocated one PRH flat.

4. Statistics on shared tenancies with unrelated members are shown at **Appendix**.

Housing Policies on Shared Accommodation

Addition Policy

5. For households under the “sharing arranged by the Housing Department” category, addition of spouse, dependent children under the age of 18 and dependent parents are allowed upon marriage or family reunion, *irrespective of whether they are tenants or sharers.*

6. Households under the “sharing with prior consent” category are treated as ordinary households, i.e., only the *tenant’s* spouse, dependent parents or dependent children under the age of 18 whose parents are authorized occupants can be added into the tenancy.

Temporary stay for adult children aged 18 or above

7. Requests for temporary stay of adult children aged 18 or above may be considered on individual merits.

Overcrowding Relief

8. All household members added into a tenancy will be taken into account in the calculation of living density. Those households with living density less than 5.5m² per person possessing no domestic property may apply for larger new/vacated flats in estates in the New Territories. Those households living in urban/extended urban estates with living density less than 4.5m² per person may apply for larger flats in urban/extended urban districts.

Request for splitting and subsequent rehousing

9. Splitting involves additional public housing resources. Under the existing policy, no splitting of tenancy is normally allowed. As public housing resources are scarce in relation to demand, priority to PRH should be given to applicants on the Waiting List rather than to existing PRH

tenants requesting splitting of tenancy. Members of a PRH household may however apply for allocation of separate flats through the Waiting List.

10. In case of disputes among household members living in shared accommodation, staff of the Housing Department will mediate and assist to resolve the differences, and where necessary, the Social Welfare Department will be requested to provide counselling service. Only in exceptional cases will requests for splitting be considered on individual merits.

11. The number of approved requests for splitting from sharers on grounds of unresolved disputes in 1997, 1998 and 1999 (up to 31 August 1999) were 28, 32 and 57 respectively.

Application for other subsidised housing

12. Those tenants or sharers who had submitted individual applications for PRH but were subsequently allocated shared accommodation under the arrangement of the Housing Department may separately apply for various forms of subsidised housing like Home Ownership Scheme and Home Purchase Loan Scheme using Green Form.

Housing Department
March 2000

**Shared Tenancies with Unrelated Members
(Position as at 22.2.2000)**

	<u>No. of Tenancies</u>	<u>No. of Persons</u>
(i) Elderly Households (Note 1)	1376	3035
(ii) Non-elderly Households (Note 2)	771	3095
Total :	2147	6130

Note:

Note (1) Elderly households refer to those with all family members aged 60 or above.

Note (2) Non-elderly households refer to those other than stated in Note (1).