

Enhanced tenancy arrangement for public rental housing elderly residents joining Portable Social Security Schemes

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Housing Authority :

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA)'s Subsidised Housing Committee endorsed today (February 18) the extension of the response period for all public rental housing (PRH) elderly residents joining the Portable Social Security Schemes (PSSS) (i.e. the Portable Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme, Guangdong Scheme and Fujian Scheme) who opt to retire on the Mainland from the current three months to six months for the surrender of PRH flats or deletion of their names from PRH tenancies.

To cater for the needs of PRH elderly residents choosing to reside in Residential Care Homes for the Elderly (RCHEs) (including both RCHEs in Hong Kong and the Mainland) or return to the Mainland for good, and to maximise the utilisation of housing resources, the HA has established an arrangement to issue a Letter of Assurance (LA) or Letter of Reinstatement (LR) to PRH elderly residents admitted to RCHEs or joining the PSSS upon the surrender of their PRH flats or deletion of their names from the PRH tenancies. Currently, PRH elderly residents admitted to RCHEs under the Residential Care Services Scheme are allowed to retain their PRH flats/tenancies for six months to facilitate them to sort out their family arrangements and adaptation to the new environment, while the response period for those joining the PSSS is three months. Upon implementation of the new arrangement, the response period for both will be aligned to six months.

"The Government has been implementing various strategies and policies to address the issue of an ageing population. The HA is willing to support the Government's policy to actively facilitate the retirement of Hong Kong elderly persons on the Mainland and help those PRH elderly residents who opt to retire there," a spokesman for the HA said.

"It is believed that the extension of the response period for the surrender of PRH flats or deletion of names from PRH tenancies could ease and address the PRH elderly residents' worries and concerns about the adaptation to living when they choose to retire on the Mainland. If they decide to retire on the Mainland and return the PRH flats, the HA may recover more PRH flats for allocation to those in housing need," the spokesman added.

The enhanced measures will take effect in the first quarter of 2025. The HA will collaborate with the Social Welfare Department for the implementation arrangements.