

Squatter Occupants Voluntary Registration Scheme extended

The Lands Department (LandsD) announced today (September 16) the extension of the application deadline for the Squatter Occupants Voluntary Registration Scheme for a year, from October 31, 2019, to October 31, 2020.

Launched on November 1, 2018, the Squatter Occupants Voluntary Registration Scheme is a one-off exercise to complement the Government initiative announced on May 10, 2018, to revise the ex-gratia compensation and rehousing arrangements for domestic households in squatter structures affected by the Government's development clearance exercises. One of the major measures of the revised arrangements is to allow eligible domestic occupants residing in licenced non-domestic structures or in squatter structures recorded for non-domestic uses in the 1982 Squatter Control Survey (SCS) to benefit from non-means tested rehousing and ex-gratia compensation, subject to registration with the LandsD and meeting all relevant eligibility requirements.

A spokesperson for the LandsD said that, to be eligible under the Scheme, domestic occupants should have been residing in licenced non-domestic structures or in squatter structures recorded for non-domestic uses in the 1982 SCS since May 10, 2016, or earlier.

The spokesperson added, "The households concerned are advised to apply for the Scheme as soon as possible. If the relevant squatter structures are affected by government development clearance in the future, only those occupants who have registered under the Scheme will be able to apply for the compensation and rehousing arrangements.

"For those who have applied for the Scheme and satisfied its registration criteria, the change of use of the squatter structures for domestic purposes itself will not trigger enforcement actions leading to cancellation of survey records of their squatter structures or demolition of these squatter structures. However, the squatter structures concerned are still expected to comply with the requirements governing all surveyed squatter structures under the prevailing squatter control policy, including the requirement that prohibits any extension or addition, as well as unauthorised alteration."

Guidance notes on the Scheme and application forms are available at District Lands Offices, Clearance Offices and Squatter Control Offices of the LandsD, and at Home Affairs Enquiry Centres of the Home Affairs Department, or downloadable from the LandsD's website (www.landsd.gov.hk/en/vrs/vrs.htm). For enquiries, please call 2231 3392 or email vrs-cu@landsd.gov.hk.