

Income and asset limits for public rental housing for 2025/26

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

The Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA)'s Subsidised Housing Committee (SHC) today (March 21) discussed the outcome of the review of income and asset limits for public rental housing (PRH) for 2025/26, and endorsed the proposed income and asset limits for applicants of different household sizes. The adjusted limits will take effect from April 1, 2025 (as detailed in Annex).

"The PRH income and asset limits are reviewed annually according to the established mechanism. In accordance with the established formula, the SHC endorsed adjusting the PRH income and asset limits for 2025/26 upwards for all household sizes, both increasing by an average of 1.7 per cent overall," a spokesman for the HA said.

PRH income limits are derived using a household expenditure approach, which consists of housing costs and non-housing costs, plus a 5 per cent contingency provision. Housing costs, which measure the costs of renting a private flat comparable to PRH, depend on the unit rents of private accommodation per square metre and reference flat sizes (i.e. average space of flats allocated to PRH applicants in the past three years). Non-housing costs are determined with reference to the results of the latest Household Expenditure Survey conducted by the Census and Statistics Department, and adjusted in the intervening years by the latest movement in the Consumer Price Index (CPI)(A) (excluding housing costs), or the change in the nominal wage index as the income factor, whichever is higher. As regards the PRH asset limits, they are adjusted with reference to movements in CPI(A) over the year.

Hong Kong's air quality continues to improve, bringing over 50 per cent reduction in long-term health risks

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) announced today (March 21) an overview of Hong Kong's air quality in 2024.

Hong Kong's overall air quality in 2024 remained good and broadly complied with Hong Kong's Air Quality Objectives. Owing to the efforts of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government over the years, Hong Kong's air quality has continued to improve over the past 20 years, resulting in over a 50 per cent reduction in long-term health risks.

From 2004 to 2024, the annual average concentrations of respirable suspended particulates (PM10), fine suspended particulates (PM2.5), nitrogen dioxide (NO2) and sulphur dioxide (SO2) in the ambient air have reduced by 45 per cent to 88 per cent, whereas the annual average concentrations of these pollutants at the roadside have reduced by 36 per cent to 88 per cent. The annual average concentration of ozone (O3) has also gradually turned steady in the past few years (see Annex 1 for details). The number of hours of reduced visibility has greatly reduced by 82 per cent from its level in 2004 (Annex 2).

The EPD launched the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) in 2014 to provide the public with daily updates on short-term health risks of air pollution, enabling the individuals to take necessary precautions to safeguard their health. In 2024, the percentage of hourly AQHI readings below 7 (i.e. within the "low" or "moderate" health risk categories) recorded by general and roadside monitoring stations improved from 96.1 per cent and 92.1 per cent when the index was first launched in 2014 to 98.7 per cent and 98.9 per cent, respectively.

Despite the increase in regional ozone levels, the significant improvement in Hong Kong's air quality has resulted in a continuous reduction in the associated long-term health risks. From 2004 to 2024, the improvement in air quality has led to over a 50 per cent reduction in long-term health risks (Annex 3).

Making reference to health risk data from hospital admissions associated with air pollutants over the past decade, the EPD will update the relevant risk factors assigned to relevant air pollutants. The EPD will also update the compilation methods of AQHI with reference to the latest guideline levels for air pollutants as set out in the latest air quality guidelines published by the World Health Organization, thereby providing more accurate information and warning forecast. The updated AQHI will come into effect on March 22, 2025. Detailed information on the updates will be made available to the public via the dedicated AQHI website www.aqhi.gov.hk/en/index.html.

An EPD spokesman said, "With the Government's continued promotion and implementation of the comprehensive air quality improvement measures put forth in the Hong Kong Roadmap on Popularisation of Electric Vehicles, the Clean Air Plan for Hong Kong 2035 and Hong Kong's Climate Action Plan 2050 announced in 2021, and the Green Transformation Roadmap of Public Buses and Taxis announced in 2024, including the promotion of electric vehicles, green transport and net-zero electricity generation, the overall air quality in Hong Kong will improve continuously."

Electoral Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2025 gazetted today

â€‹The Government today (March 21) published in the Gazette the Electoral Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill 2025 to make amendments to the prevailing electoral laws to ensure the smooth conduct of two important elections to be held later this year, namely the 2025 Election Committee Subsector (ECSS) By-elections and the 2025 Legislative Council (LegCo) General Election (LCGE).

The Bill mainly seeks to introduce adjustments regarding the delineation of geographical constituencies of the LCGE; empower the Electoral Affairs Commission (EAC) the use of counting machines in the counting work for the LegCo functional constituencies elections and consolidate ballot paper accounts for relevant constituencies; and to improve the arrangements for the publication of the ECSS registers.

A Government spokesperson said, "The Chief Executive announced on March 18 that the date of polling for this year's LCGE will be on December 7 (Sunday), and that the date for the ECSS by-elections will be on September 7 (Sunday)."

The spokesperson added, "The Government will continue to liaise closely with the EAC, and actively prepare for the two aforesaid elections according to the relevant electoral legislation and actual circumstances to ensure that the elections are conducted smoothly in a fair, just, honest, safe and orderly manner. Details of the electoral arrangements will be announced separately later this year."

The Bill will be introduced into the LegCo for first reading on March 26.

Hong Kong Customs special operation combats sale of counterfeit perfumes, cosmetic and skin care products (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs on March 11 and 13 mounted special operations in

Sheung Shui and Yuen Long to combat the sale of counterfeit goods activities and seized about 9 000 items of suspected counterfeit perfumes, cosmetic and skin care products, with a total estimated market value of about \$2 million. Five persons were arrested during the operations.

Customs earlier conducted inspections in various districts and detected the sale of counterfeit cosmetic products at some shops in Sheung Shui and Yuen Long. After comprehensive investigations and with the assistance of the trademark owners, Customs officers took enforcement action on the aforementioned dates and raided five retail shops in the above-mentioned districts. A batch of suspected counterfeit goods, including perfumes, cosmetic products and skin care products, was seized.

During the operation, one man and four women, aged between 27 and 47, were arrested. They comprised one person-in-charge and four staff members of the retail shops.

An investigation is ongoing and the likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out. Moreover, samples of the suspected counterfeit goods involved in the case were sent to the Government Laboratory for safety testing, and a preliminary result revealed the samples did not contain heavy metals above the allowed limit.

Customs will continue to step up inspections and enforcement to vigorously combat the sale of different kinds of counterfeit goods.

Customs reminds consumers to procure goods at reputable shops and to check with the trademark owners or their authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt. Traders should also be cautious and prudent in merchandising since selling counterfeit goods is a serious crime and offenders are liable to criminal sanctions.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses for sale any goods with a forged trademark commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected counterfeiting activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 182 8080 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002).



Modifications to road works for public housing developments at San Hing Road and Hong Po Road in Tuen Mun gazetted

The Government published a notice in the Gazette today (March 21) on the modifications to the road works for the public housing developments at San Hing Road and Hong Po Road in Tuen Mun. The works have been authorised by the Chief Executive in Council.

Details of the works are set out in the Annex. The modifications involve revision to the proposed limit of works areas. The modification plans are available for public inspection at the following government offices during office hours:

Central and Western Home Affairs Enquiry Centre,
G/F, Harbour Building,
38 Pier Road, Central, Hong Kong

Tuen Mun Home Affairs Enquiry Centre,
2/F, Tuen Mun Government Offices,
1 Tuen Hi Road, Tuen Mun, New Territories

District Lands Office, Tuen Mun,
6/F, Tuen Mun Government Offices,
1 Tuen Hi Road, Tuen Mun, New Territories

Further enquiries can be addressed to the Housing Projects 2 Division, Civil Engineering Office, Civil Engineering and Development Department, Units 01, 05-09 of 35/F, One Kowloon, 1 Wang Yuen Street, Kowloon Bay, Kowloon, and at telephone number 3919 8666.