

**Housing Policy:** Housing policy in Hong Kong is currently formulated, co-ordinated and monitored by the Secretary for Housing. The Housing Department (HD) supports the Housing Bureau in dealing with all housing-related policies and matters.

The Government promulgated the Long Term Housing Strategy (LTHS) in December 2014. It has three major strategic directions: (1) to provide more public rental housing (PRH) units and to ensure the rational use of existing resources; (2) to provide more subsidised sale flats (SSFs), expand the forms of subsidised home ownership and facilitate the market circulation of existing stock; and (3) to stabilise the residential property market through steady land supply and appropriate demand-side management measures, and to promote good sales and tenancy practices for private residential properties.

The Government set out in 2017 four elements of the housing policy of the Government:

(i) housing is not a simple commodity; while maintaining respect for a free market economy, the Government has an indispensable role to play in this area; (ii) the Government will focus on home-ownership, and strive to build a housing ladder to rekindle the hope of families in different income brackets to become home-owners; (iii) the Government will focus on supply and increase the supply of housing units based on LTHS; and (iv) when new supply is not yet available, the Government will optimise existing housing resources to help families awaiting PRH and residents in poor living conditions.

According to LTHS, the Government updates the long term housing demand projection annually and presents a rolling ten-year housing supply target to capture social, economic and market changes over time, and make timely adjustments where necessary. The Government announced the LTHS Annual Progress Report 2024 in October 2024. According to the latest projections, the total housing supply target for the 10-year period from 2025/26 to 2034/35 is 440 000 units. According to the public/private split of 70:30 for new housing supply, the public and private housing supply targets for the above 10-year period are 308 000 units and 132 000 units respectively. The target of 308 000 public housing units is comprised of 185 000 "PRH/Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme (GSH)" units and 123 000 "other SSFs". The Government has identified land for providing sufficient public

Housing units to meet the public housing supply target of 308 000 units in the coming 10 years. The Government will continue to strive to increase housing supply on the basis of LTHS.

**Private Sector Housing and Consumer Protection:** The private sector has an important role to play in meeting the housing needs of the community. At the end of June 2022, the number of private permanent housing amounted to about 1.66 million units. The Government publishes statistics on private housing supply in the primary market on a regular basis to enhance market transparency. Based on the projection as at end-March 2025, the supply of first-hand private residential property market for the coming three to four years will stay at a high level of about 105 000 units, including about 28 000 unsold units in completed projects, about 65 000 units under construction less units sold by pre-sale; and about 12 000 units from disposed sites where construction may start any time. The figure 105 000 is about 2 000 units lower than that of the previous quarter (i.e. as at end-December 2024). Following the Government's continuous effort in increasing supply of housing land, the supply of first-hand private residential property should continue to maintain at a relatively high level.

To maintain the healthy and steady development of the residential property market, the Government has continued to adopt a two-pronged approach by increasing housing land supply in the long run under a supply-led strategy, and closely monitoring the residential property market situation, with appropriate measures taken as and when necessary in response to market changes.

The Estate Agents Ordinance requires individuals/companies engaging in estate agency work to obtain the required licences. The Estate Agents Authority was set up in 1997 to handle the licensing work, regulate estate agency practices, and enhance the professionalism of the sector.

The Residential Properties (First-hand Sales) Ordinance and the work of the Sales of First-hand Residential Properties Authority (SRPA) have enhanced the transparency and fairness of sales in first-hand homes, strengthened consumer protection and provided a level playing field for vendors. Since the ordinance took effect in April 2013 and up to March 2025, the SRPA has conducted about 194 600 examinations on sales-related documents and about 6 530 site inspections to sales offices and show flats.

**Public Housing Providers:** Public housing in Hong Kong is mainly provided by the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HKHA) and the Hong Kong Housing Society (HKHS). HKHA is a statutory body established in 1973 responsible for implementing the majority of Hong Kong's public housing programmes. HKHS is an independent statutory organisation established in 1948 for providing specific categories of housing to help meet the housing needs of the community.

**Public Rental Housing (PRH):** PRH is a long-established safety net for low-income families. As at the first quarter of 2025, about 2.13 million people (about 30 per cent of the population) lived in PRH flats while the PRH stock was about 868 700 units.

The Government will continue to assist low-income families who cannot afford private rental accommodation through PRH. The HKHA's target is to provide the first flat offer to general applicants (i.e. family and elderly one-person applicants) at around three years on average. As at end-March 2025, there were about 116 400 general applications. Both composite waiting time for subsidised rental housing (CWT) and average waiting time for public rental housing (AWT)^ for general applicants who were housed in the past 12 months were about 5.3 years.

It is the policy of the Government and the HKHA to accord priority to general applicants over non-elderly one-person applicants in the allocation of PRH units. Towards this end, the HKHA implements the Quota and Points System (QPS) for non-elderly one-person applicants. As at end-March 2025, there were about 86 300 QPS applications. Unlike general applicants, under QPS:

- the allocation of flats is subject to an annual quota;
- the priority of applicants for allocation of PRH units is determined by their accumulated points under the points system;
- the target of providing the first flat offer at around three years on average is not applicable to QPS applicants; and
- HD will conduct regular checking on the eligibility of applicants and cancel applications which no longer fulfill the PRH eligibility criteria and applicants who did not respond to the checking requests.

The HKHA has implemented the following measures to ensure that PRH flats are allocated to people in genuine need:

- Allocation of PRH flats to eligible general applicants in accordance with the order of registration;
- To be eligible, applicants must be 18 years of age or above. Applicants and their family members must be residing in Hong Kong and have the right to land in Hong Kong. They must not own or co-own or have an interest in any domestic property in Hong Kong. Applicants and their family members must also undergo comprehensive means tests covering both income and assets. Applicants' family income and total net asset must not exceed prescribed limits.

At the time of flat allocation, at least half of the family members included in the application must have lived in Hong Kong for seven years and all family members must be still living in Hong Kong;

- PRH tenancies cannot be passed on automatically from one generation to the next. Upon the death or moving out of the tenant, when there is no surviving spouse in the tenancy, the tenancy may be granted to an authorised person residing in the PRH flat but they have to pass the comprehensive means test (with income and asset limits under the Well-off Tenants Policies (WTP)) and fulfil the "no-domestic-property" requirement in order to determine the eligibility for grant of a new tenancy and the level of rent payable;

- PRH tenants and all family members are required to declare to the HKHA every two years after admission to PRH on whether they have any domestic property ownership in Hong Kong, have retained regular and continuous residence in PRH flats and have complied with the terms in the tenancy agreement regarding occupancy status. They are also required to authorise the HKHA to verify the household particulars with the concerned government departments/private organisations, and agree to make declaration to the HKHA after having acquired a domestic property in Hong Kong (within one month of entering into any agreement, including provisional agreements); and

- Households who have been living in PRH for 10 years are required to declare their income and assets (including whether they have any domestic property ownership in Hong Kong) on a biennial basis pursuant to the WTP, for determining their eligibility for PRH flats and the level of rent payable. In addition, households who are granted a new tenancy under the Policy on Grant of New Tenancy and households with their applications under the Tenancy Management Policies for PRH approved are also required to make a declaration biennially, irrespective of their length of residence. PRH households whose family income exceeds 5 times the prevailing PRH income limits (PRHILs) or whose total household net asset value exceed 100 times the prevailing PRHILs or opt not to declare should vacate their PRH flats. Under the tightened WTP which was endorsed in March 2025, PRH households whose family income exceeds 4 times the prevailing PRHILs for two consecutive declaration cycles (i.e. 4 years) are also required to vacate their PRH flat. Under the tightened WTP which was endorsed in March 2025, starting from the declaration cycle in October 2025, PRH households whose family income exceeds 4 times the prevailing PRHILs for two consecutive declaration cycles (i.e. 4 years) are also required to vacate their PRH flats; and

- Households with less than 10 years' residence in PRH are not required to declare their income and assets but they are required to declare their occupancy status and whether they own any domestic property in Hong Kong every two years. If tenants own any domestic property in Hong Kong, they will be required to vacate their PRH flats, irrespective of their length of residence.

It has been a long-established policy of the HKHA for setting PRH rent at an affordable level. As stipulated in the Housing Ordinance, the HKHA shall conduct a rent review every two years and adjust PRH rent upwards or downwards according to the changes in the overall household income of PRH tenants as reflected by the change in the income index. PRH rent is inclusive of rates, management costs and maintenance expenses. After the rent review conducted in mid-2024, as at end-March 2025, PRH rent ranged from \$539 to \$6,295, and the average rent was about \$2,523 per month.

The income-based rent adjustment mechanism provides a framework that matches rental adjustments to changes in overall PRH household income, reflects tenants' affordability and contributes to the sustainability of Hong Kong's public housing programme.

**Subsidised Home Ownership:** Subsidised home ownership is one of the essential elements of the housing ladder. It serves as the first step for low- to middle-income families to achieve home ownership. It also provides an opportunity for PRH tenants whose financial conditions have improved to achieve home ownership, thereby releasing their PRH units for PRH applicants. As at end-March 2025, there were about 456 700 SSFs\*, mainly flats under HOS. To ensure that SSFs are affordable to the target households, the pricing mechanism was revised in 2018 such that HOS flats are priced at an affordable level which is no longer linked to market prices of private housing. Since SSFs are subject to alienation restrictions, owners have to pay premium to lift the alienation restrictions before selling their flats in the open market. They can also sell their flats through the HOS Secondary Market Scheme without paying premium.

The HKHA put up about 48 400 new HOS flats for sale from 2014 to 2024. The latest batch of about 7 100 new HOS flats was put up for sale in 2024, which are scheduled for occupation by 2027/2028. Besides, the HKHS put up a total of about 5 700 SSFs for pre-sale/resale since 2012.

● **White Form Secondary Market Scheme (WSM):** Apart from the development of new HOS flats, the HKHA offers the HOS Secondary Market Scheme, under which Green Form applicants (mainly PRH tenants, but also include PRH applicants who have passed the detailed eligibility vetting) can purchase SSFs with premium unpaid. In response to the home ownership aspirations of low to middle-income families, the HKHA has endorsed regularising the White Form Secondary Market Scheme (WSM), allowing buyers with White Form status<sup>#</sup> to purchase SSFs with premium unpaid in the Secondary Market. In view of the persistently strong response to WSM, the HKHA set the quota for WSM 2020, WSM 2022 and WSM 2023 at 4 500. In response to the measures in the 2024 Policy Address for enhancing the housing ladder, which include, among others, assisting young people to

purchase SSFs, the HKHA's Subsidised Housing Committee endorsed in January 2025, that starting from WSM 2024, the quota will increase significantly by 1 500 to 6 000. All of the 1 500 additional quotas will be allocated to young applicants aged below 40 under the Youth Scheme (WSM), while the remaining 4 500 will be ordinary quotas.

● **Green Form Subsidised Home Ownership Scheme (GSH):** The HKHA regularised GSH in January 2018 to provide an alternative avenue for Green Form applicants to achieve home ownership. The HKHA put up a total of about 18 800 new GSH flats for sale from 2016 to 2025. The latest batch of GSH flats is scheduled to be launched for application in Q3 2025, providing a total of about 2 500 new GSH flats, with scheduled occupation in 2026/27.

● **“Starter Homes for Hong Kong residents” (SH) projects:** Besides, the Government introduced SH projects, with a view to helping higher-income persons who are not eligible for HOS and yet cannot afford private housing meet their home ownership aspirations. Apart from the first two SH projects offered for sale by the Urban Renewal Authority (i.e. eResidence Towers 1 and 2, as well as eResidence Tower 3) with a total of over 600 SH units sold, the Government is taking forward a few other SH projects, which will provide around 5 000 SH units in total.

● **Tenants Purchase Scheme (TPS):** In order to accelerate the sale of unsold TPS flats and taking into account the positive response of recovered TPS flats in the GSH 2020/21 and HOS 2022 sale exercises, after review, HA decided to regularise the sale of recovered TPS flats in June 2023. Around 400 recovered TPS flats were put up for sale under HOS 2024. Flat selection commenced from May 2025. The HKHA endorsed in June 2024 the sales arrangements for putting up a new batch of recovered TPS flats for sale under GSH 2024.

● **Letting Scheme:** In the light of the operational experience of the HKHS's Letting Scheme for Subsidised Sale Developments with Premium Unpaid (Letting Scheme), in July 2019, the HKHA endorsed joining the HKHS's enhanced Letting Scheme on a trial basis, allowing eligible owners of the HKHA's SSFs who have owned their flats for 10 years or more with premium unpaid to let their flats to eligible PRH applicants as well. Taking into account the HKHS' results of the enhanced Letting Scheme and the effectiveness of the HKHA's participation in the scheme, the HKHA agreed to join the scheme on a regular basis in June 2021. As at end-March 2025, around 2 010 applications from eligible owners and around 1 140 applications from eligible tenants had been approved, with 518 tenancy agreements signed.

**Interim Housing:** Interim housing mainly provides interim accommodation for persons affected by natural disasters or government clearance operations while waiting for PRH

allocation, if they have stayed in the transit centre for three months, passed the “homeless test” and fulfilled the eligibility criteria for PRH.

**Housing for Elderly People:** As at end-March 2025, about 769 000 people aged 60 or above live in PRH flats of the HKHA and the HKHS, representing about 33 per cent of the elderly population in Hong Kong. The Government will continue to give elderly people in need priority access to public housing through various allocation schemes. As at end-March 2025, both CWT and AWT for elderly one-person applicants who were housed in the past 12 months were about 3.3 years. In support of the “ageing in place” policy of the Government, the HKHA has currently put in place a series of policies and measures to address the needs of the elderly PRH applicants and sitting elderly tenants include granting priority to elderly PRH applicants and encouraging the younger generation to take care of their elderly parents/relatives by living together or in the vicinity such that they could take care of each other. Regarding building design and facilities, since 2002, the HKHA has been adopted the major elements of Universal Design concept on various types of barrier-free facilities at common areas and inside the flats of new public housing developments, and incorporated some Universal Design elements in the refurbishment of all recovered PRH units. HKHA also undertakes adaptation/home modification works in PRH units and installs elderly fitness facilities/equipment. When implementing certain housing policies, such as the under-occupation policy and financial assistance, the HKHA will also provide appropriate arrangements with reference to the needs of elderly.

The Chief Executive’s 2018 Policy Address suggested that the HKHA launch a new concessionary initiative whereby under-occupation households whose family members are all aged 70 or above (UO70+) are allowed to enjoy lifetime full rent exemption upon their transfer to smaller units.

In December 2019, the HKHA implemented a trial scheme for granting full rent exemption to UO70+ upon their transfer to PRH units of suitable sizes. This initiative aims to provide a rent-free housing option for such all-elderly households to transfer to new or refurbished units, and to save living expenses. Furthermore, this initiative will help increase the supply of larger units for allocation to households awaiting PRH allocation with more family members. In December 2020, the HKHA approved the regularisation of the scheme with enhancement measures, i.e. extending the coverage of the scheme to elderly households residing in Housing for Senior Citizens of Type I Design and non-self-contained Converted One-person units; and widening the district choice from the same District Council district to the same PRH Application District.

Furthermore, the HKHS has launched different types of elderly housing, including projects under the Senior Citizen Residences Scheme which are subsidised in nature,

and The Tanner Hill which is non-subsidised in nature. The two types of projects, both under a “lease-for-life” arrangement, provide integrated housing, recreation, healthcare and social support services under one roof for individuals aged 60 or above in Hong Kong, thereby promoting “ageing in place”. In 2024, Chung Yuet Lau, a brand new elderly-friendly rental block, was completed at Jat Min Chuen in Shatin by HKHS for its elderly under-occupation households to apply for transfer. Their original under-occupation units surrendered will then be reallocated to other families in need, optimising the use of public housing resources. In addition to developing elderly housing projects, HKHS has also been exploring in recent years to include units with “adaptable design” in its projects (including those for rent and for sale), and to further adopt universal and accessible design, allowing residents to flexibly reconfigure their units into elderly-friendly units that may cater to their evolving needs as they age. Furthermore, HKHS launched the “Flat-for-Flat Pilot Scheme for Elderly Owners” in October 2019, which enables owners aged 60 or above who have owned a SSF under HKHS for at least ten years to sell their original flat and then purchase a smaller one in the Secondary Market under HKHA or HKHS without payment of premium.

**Squatters:** The number of squatters and squatter structures has been reduced in recent years through rehousing and clearance programmes. Since December 2002, the criteria for rehousing squatters upon clearance have been relaxed. Families who have resided in 1982-registered domestic squatter structures for two years immediately preceding to the date of announcement<sup>®</sup> of squatter area clearance and met the prescribed eligibility criteria for PRH will be allotted a notional PRH application number with a two-year waiting time. If they will soon be allocated with PRH flat within 12 months’ time, their application will be handled in advance.

**Light Public Housing (LPH):** The Chief Executive announced the implementation of LPH in 2022, in order to fill the short-term gap of public housing supply and improve the living conditions of people in inadequate housing at the soonest. LPH will be built under a Government-led approach, with the target of completing the construction of about 30 000 LPH units before 2027/28. LPH will mainly cater for applicants who have been on the waiting list for PRH for three years or more, with priority given to family applicants. Among others, the tenant intake for the first LPH project (at Yau Pok Road in Yuen Long), providing about 2 100 units, was fully completed in mid-June 2025. The second LPH project at Choi Hing Road in Ngau Tau Kok, which is also the first LPH project in urban area (providing about 2 900 units), completed its full tenant intake in early Sep 2025. With the gradual

tenant intake of the LPH projects, people and families in need can be provided with an improved living environment, more comprehensive living facilities, and more living space at a lower rent, as well as a series of social services and supports within a short period of time.

**Assisting Residents of Inadequate Housing:** The Government has been actively promoting the development of transitional housing (TH) since 2020, through providing construction funding to non-government organisations to provide short-term accommodation to those in need, which also brings greater values to the short-term land and premises. The Government has taken forward TH projects providing over 21 000 units, exceeding the original target of 20 000 units. As at end August 2025, about 18 400 TH units have been made available for application by those in need, and the remaining about 2 700 units will also be gradually completed in this year and next. Some units have been made available for intake of the second batch of residents, assisting more people with imminent housing need to improve their living conditions.

Part IVA of the Landlord and Tenant (Consolidation) Ordinance (Cap. 7) which implements tenancy control on subdivided units (SDUs) came into force on 22 January 2022. It provides protection to SDU tenants in various aspects, which include providing four-year security of tenure for the tenants; restricting the rate of rent increase on tenancy renewal; and prohibiting landlords from overcharging tenants on specified utilities and services, etc.

Besides, in order to tackle the long-standing, big and difficult issue of substandard SDUs in an orderly and comprehensive manner, the Chief Executive announced in the 2024 Policy Address to put in place, through legislation, the Basic Housing Unit (BHU) regulatory regime, under which SDUs in residential buildings have to comply with minimum standards of living conditions, including minimum area, minimum height, fire safety, structural safety, separate toilet, water supply requirements, lighting and ventilation, as well as separate water and electricity meters, and obtain BHU recognition before they can be legally let out for habitation. This aims to ensure the provision of safe, hygienic and reasonable living conditions in SDUs. The Basic Housing Units Ordinance (the Ordinance) was passed by the Legislative Council in late September 2025, and will come into effect on 1 March 2026. The BHU regulatory regime will provide a 48-month transitional arrangement to allow time for SDU owners/operators to gradually adapt to the BHU-related requirements. To this end, the Housing Bureau will, on the effective date of the Ordinance, launch a 12-month registration system (i.e. until 28 February 2027) for pre-existing SDUs to make registration and then obtain a 36-month grace period that runs after the expiry of the registration period (i.e. from 1 March 2027 to 28 February

2030) to enable necessary alteration works to be carried out and applications for BHU recognition to be made. Also, the Housing Bureau will take enforcement actions against the illegal letting of unregistered/unrecognised SDUs after the expiry of the registration period (i.e. 1 March 2027 onwards) in an orderly manner, with a view to eradicating substandard SDUs gradually.

<sup>^</sup> Composite waiting time for subsidised rental housing (CWT) is calculated as the average of the waiting time of those general applicants (i.e. family applicants and elderly one-person applicants) who were housed to PRH or Light Public Housing (LPH) in the past 12 months. CWT is not applicable to non-elderly one-person applicants under the Quota and Points System. Waiting time refers to the time taken between registration for PRH and first flat offer, excluding any frozen period during the application period (e.g. when the applicant has not yet fulfilled the residence requirement; the applicant has requested to put his/her application on hold pending arrival of family members for family reunion; the applicant is imprisoned, etc). The methodology of calculating average waiting time for public rental housing (AWT) is largely the same as that of the CWT. AWT refers to the average of the waiting time of those general applicants (i.e. family applicants and elderly one-person applicants) who were housed to PRH in the past 12 months.

\* SSFs refer to those units with premium not yet paid. Hence, they are still being subsidised by the Government and subject to alienation restrictions. Those units with premium paid/no need to pay premium and can be transacted in the open market are not included.

# White Form applicants have to satisfy certain eligibility criteria including residence rule, and the income and asset limits set by the HKHA.

@ Following the announcement of the Development Bureau on 10 May 2018 and the approval by the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council on 18 July 2018, the Government will exercise flexibility in assessing the continuous residence/occupation duration of clearers in determining the eligibility for ex-gratia allowances and/or rehousing arrangements. Not only the length of continuous residence/occupation immediately preceding the date of Pre-clearance Survey(PCS) will be counted, but also that after the date of PCS but before 10 May 2018.