

Introduction and Procedures of Application

Background and Introduction of The Scheme

The strong demand of housing for the general public in Hong Kong, according to the data from The Hong Kong Housing Authority at the end of June 2020, there were about 155 800 general applications for Public Rental Housing, and about 103 900 non-elderly one-person applications under the Quota and Points System. The average waiting time for general applicants was 5.5 years. Among them, the average waiting time for elderly one-person applicants was 3.0 years. In addition, the Census and Statistics Department announced in 2019 that nearly 210,000 people live in more than 90,000 subdivided units in Hong Kong, of which nearly 30% are youths under the age of 25. Referring to the results of the 2016 Population By-census, there are about 27,100 units in Hong Kong divided into approximately 92,700 subdivided rooms, a total of about 91,800 households and 209,700 people living in, and the average number of people per household is 2.3.

In general, there are more children, young and middle-aged people living in sub-divided flats, 28.4% are youths under the age of 25 and 39.4% are 25 to 44 years old. The median monthly income of subdivided households is \$13,500, which is lower than the median household income of \$25,000 in Hong Kong. Excluding rent-free tenants, the median monthly rent for tenants living in subdivided housing is \$4,500. According to a survey of subdivided households in 2018, the ratio of rent to subdivided households' income rose to 36%. Comparing with the ratio of the average public housing rent to the average household income of public housing tenants was mentioned in the "2020 rent review for public rental housing", From 9.97% in 2007, gradually decreased to 9.39% after adjusting the rent according to this review. It can be seen that the rent pressure of sub-housed households is much greater than that of public housing households.

At the beginning of 2019, it is estimated that the distribution of subdivided housing in Hong Kong will be Yau Tsim Mong District (21,500), Sham Shui Po District (15,400), Kowloon City District (9,000), Eastern District (8,400) and Tsuen Wan District (6,600). The median area of subdivided rooms is 10 square meters. The median residential floor area per capita is 5.3 square meters, which is lower than the number of domestic households (15 square meters) in Hong Kong. According to the analysis of race, 87.1% of the residents in subdivided rooms are Chinese, followed by about 6.5% of South Asians.

In view of this, Emperor International Holdings Limited (hereinafter referred to as EIHL) and New Home Association (hereinafter referred to as NHA) are concerning the difficulties in basic housing of the disadvantaged groups, especially for the service targets of NHA. EIHL cooperates with NHA to launch the "ALL AS ONE Co-living Scheme" (hereinafter referred to as The Scheme), which aims to provide suitable transitional housing (not more than 12 months) for the clients of NHA to meet their housing needs and helps ease their financial pressure. The Scheme rents all units from EIHL at a nominal rent of \$1, renovated, and then sub-leased to objects with housing difficulties as their transitional residence.

Aims and Target Clients of The Scheme

The Scheme will provide short-term (not more than 12 months) relief measures for individuals or families through the provision of transitional housing and support services, and the targets are disadvantaged people / families (Single parents or ethnic minorities / relevant families / NHA Member priority).

Objective and Theme of Cohesion and Co-living

The cohesion of The Scheme refers to the cohesion of ethnicity and intergeneration whereas the idea of Co-living provides community housing which originates in Denmark when a group of dual families were searching for better childcare and a way to share evening meal preparation. Later on, cohousing or living communities has grown and spread out to other European countries and North American countries. They typically range from 10 to 35 households, some of them even emphasizes a multi-generational mix of singles, couples, families with children, and elders. And, taking advantage of the communal area in the cohousing units, tenants get to build a strong relationship with one another, hence a network of mutual / community support, which in turn increases their living quality.

In response to the objective and theme of "Cohesion and Co-living", in addition to people of different ethnicities / ages who have successfully applied for The Scheme. The Scheme also has "Shared Leisure Space", "AAOCS Community Service Team" and "Good Neighbor Awards", those are introduced and expected to implement the objective and theme of The Scheme eventually. Its contents are:

"Shared Leisure Space"

In The Scheme, 1 unit is specially designed to provide a shared space for all residents. It is fully equipped, including laundry room, TV, reading corner, game corner and refrigerator etc., where residents can eat, play, work, and organize different activities to mingle with each other and build up friendship.

"AAOCS Community Service Team"

This team that every household must participate in for the place where they live. It is responsible for managing and executing tasks that are jointly responsible, including cleaning inside and outside the place of residence, maintaining public security and participating in various social activities, among which our staff/social work colleagues Lead, expects that each household can manage the co-living and symbiotic place by themselves.

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“Good Neighbor Awards”

This is in the form of rewards for some households to consciously helping other households to solve problems among themselves (such as helping taking care other households' children), repairing equipment (no matter the building or other households), or promoting mutual assistance. The household is confirmed to have made relevant contributions with certain scores and will receive different levels of rewards for recognition.

The above 3 measures are expected to promote the good-neighborliness, mutual help and friendship of all households, to reach the objective and theme of “Cohesion and Co-living”.

Fees of The Scheme

- i. CSSA Families / Individuals
Equal to the maximum level of the rent allowance under the CSSA scheme.
- ii. Non - CSSA Families / Individuals
The fees stipulated in The Scheme (Subject to the fees listed in The Scheme at the time of application).

Accommodation Period of The Scheme

Because of The Scheme is a transitional housing movement, the accommodation period of each unit is generally not more than 12 months.

Eligibility Criteria

The prerequisites for the families / individuals who successful application of The Scheme is:

1. Living in subdivided flat and Having queued for Public Rental Housing (PRH) for no less than 3 years OR
2. Those having urgent need for transitional housing (Short term and not more than 12 months)

Meanwhile, the above applicants need to meet the following conditions and requirements:

1. The main applicant must be aged 18;
2. The main applicant or relevant family has low-income full-time job or receives CSSA;
3. The applicants must pass both the income and assets tests (Subject to the latest announcement of the Working Family Allowance Scheme) ;
4. Agree and Accept the objective and theme of “Cohesion and Co-living”, accept to live in the same unit or share using public facilities with other households;
5. Caring and helping neighbors, willing to actively participate in the “AAOCS Community Service Team” or group activities organized by The Scheme AND
6. Applicants allocated by The Scheme have a practical plan to move out and must move out after end of the contract.

(Single parents or ethnic minorities / relevant families / NHA Member priority)

Procedures of Application

1. Applicants must submit the application form and relevant supporting documents on or before the specified date.
2. As the operating organization, NHA will undergo tests and select eligible tenants based on the income and assets of the applicants.
3. After the selection result, NHA will notify the result of the application by phone and in writing; if the applicant does not receive any form of notification within 1 month after the deadline for the application of The Scheme, it means that the application will be automatically rejected.
4. Applicants must reply within 7 working days after receiving the notification whether they are accepted or not; and the allocated rooms are allocated by the staff of The Scheme as needed, and residents are not allowed to change by themselves.
5. The staff of The Scheme arrange for successful applicants who have already responded to the check-in procedures and sign the relevant contract. The applicant must pay the admission fee, deposit and printing fee (if applicable) to NHA according to the contract.

Enquiry

"ALL AS ONE Co-living Scheme"

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NHA reserves the rights to optimize and revise The Scheme from time to time, and also has the rights of final interpretation and decision.