

Problems for widowed new immigrants in government

housing apartments

YWCA of Taiwan

Issue at hand: Many new immigrants are being evacuated from the government housing apartments after the death of their husbands, who were the official tenant of those apartments. Those old women are unable to find a place to rent due to their old age and poor financial situations.

Details:

1. YWCA, Taiwan, has a community service program caring for new immigrants (marital immigrants to Taiwan from Southeast Asia and China in recent decades) in west Taipei City. Between 2016 and 2017, there have been reports of 23 cases of such immigrants met with problems (mainly financial and health) after their Taiwanese husbands died. Most of their husbands were veterans.

2. Four of the above mentioned cases had housing problems. Years ago those veterans rented apartments in government housing projects. The new immigrants were allowed to continue living in the apartments after their husbands died – up to 11 years, according to government regulations. Among the four cases, some are still within 11 years and some are near expiration. One of them is already overdue and is allowed a one-year extension, but that will soon expire, too. The lady said it is almost impossible for her to find any new place to rent due to her poor financial situation, because she is already on welfare. What makes new immigrants' problem unique is that most of them have no family in Taiwan, so there is no available resource for them to find any financial help.

Related information:

“Guidelines for Renting and Management of Taipei City Government Housing Apartments”:

Guideline No. 13: Change of tenant upon original tenant’s death or major family incidents

In principle, the lease terminates upon tenant’s death.

However, if the original tenant dies halfway through the first 11-year lease, the tenant’s spouse, parent or child in the same registered household can apply to become the new tenant and finish the lease, under the following conditions:

- The applicant has the required qualifications of being a government housing project tenant.
- The applicant must file application for continuance of the lease within three months after the original tenant’s death.
- Required documents: copy of the most recently renewed (in less than a month) household registration papers, and a copy of guarantor’s ID or household registration papers.
- The duration of the lease remains at 11 years. The new tenant is required to evacuate after the lease is expired and there is no extension.
- If the original tenant had renewed the lease before death and had begun the 2nd (3rd, 4th,...)11-year, his/her spouse, parent or child in the same registered household can apply to become a new tenant and stay until the expiration of the renewed 11-year lease. The new tenant is required to evacuate after the lease is expired and there is no extension.
- Applicants are not permitted to apply for lease renew if married to someone else during the lease.
- Applications for the government housing waiting list are governed by Guideline No. 2.
- In the event of major incidents (such as divorce), the tenant can apply to transfer the lease to his/her qualified spouse, parent or child. The new tenant can stay until the 11-year lease expires.
- The applicant is obligated to pay for notarization during the process. If the number of members in the registered household reduces so the tenant loses the qualification for renting the apartment, he/she is required to give up the said apartment and apply for a smaller apartment elsewhere.