



**Appoint licensed estate agents
to handle property transactions**

(30 July 2024) The Estate Agents Authority (“EAA”) is concerned that recently some mainland students suffered monetary loss from a suspected fraud case involving renting flats in Hong Kong through an unlicensed estate agent. The EAA would like to remind all consumers to be more cautious and that they should appoint licensed estate agents for better protection of their rights.

Although property transactions in Hong Kong can be concluded directly between the vendor/landlord and the purchaser/tenant, it is very common for parties to appoint licensed estate agents to list or introduce properties and assist in the negotiation and completion of the deal.

While there is humongous information on online property platforms for introducing leasing properties in Hong Kong, the EAA would like to warn potential tenants that there are potential risks, such as safety, ownership and legal issues, in seeking to rent a flat by oneself.

For one’s own protection, it is strongly advised to appoint licensed estate agents as they are regulated by the EAA. Licensed estate agents have the professional knowledge in property leasing and their practice and conduct are regulated by the EAA. They are required to sign an estate agency agreement with their clients, through which the parties to the transaction could obtain the particulars of each other. Moreover, if one suspects any misconduct on the part of the licensed estate agent during the appointment period, he/she could lodge a complaint with the EAA.



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If an estate agent is licensed, an A4-sized licence (or online version) and an estate agent card with his/her name, licence number and the expiry date of the licence, will be issued to the licensed estate agent. In addition, the public could check against the “licence list” on the EAA’s website (www.eaa.org.hk/en-us/Licence-list) if the person concerned is a holder of a valid licence.

The EAA also published a booklet titled “*Tenancy Guide for Non-local Students in Hong Kong*” which Mainland students can read at the EAA’s website. The EAA had written to various universities in Hong Kong in June this year, advising them to share this booklet with their non-local students, with an aim to enhance their understanding in the points-to-note when renting properties in Hong Kong.

Last but not least, it should be noted that practicing estate agency work in Hong Kong without a licence is an offence.

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