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TITLE: SAME RULES FOR CITIZEN, PR SIBLINGS: HDB



HDB clarifies that both unmarried citizens and PRs can buy resale flats if eligibility criteria are met (Yahoo! file photo).

Disgruntled Singaporeans who felt that the [Housing Development Board](#) was biased towards [permanent residents](#) (PRs) can finally feel more at ease – the HDB has clarified that homebuyers who are siblings and unmarried, whether citizens or PRs, can apply to buy HDB resale flats if their parents live overseas and do not already own a public flat.

They do not have to be above the age of 35, and their applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis, according to *The Straits Times (ST)*.

The clarifications were made in response to *ST*'s queries after concerns about the sibling rule surfaced recently in online forums. Some users had noted that unmarried PR siblings above the age of 21 were allowed to buy HDB resale flats whereas Singapore citizen siblings were not.

Under HDB rules, unmarried Singapore citizens can buy HDB resale flats only if they are above the age of 35 under the [Singapore Citizen scheme](#). An exception only occurs when siblings fall under the [Orphans Scheme](#), which allows those below 35 to purchase a resale flat if their parents are dead.

When asked why there was a difference in the way the rules treated citizens and PR siblings, the HDB clarified otherwise – applications from any unmarried siblings above 21 whose parents are alive as long as the parents live overseas and do not own a HDB flat concurrently will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

It did not say how many flats are owned by siblings in such situations, but industry observers noted that such cases are quite rare. [Dennis Wee Group](#) director Chris Koh told the same paper that less than 5 per cent of HDB resale flats sold fall into this category.

He added that the perception that more PR siblings are buying HDB resale flats mostly came about because they are more likely to fulfill the requirements.

An escalating number of PRs and foreigners in Singapore has raised much immigration concerns in recent years, particularly with regard to rules and privileges for citizens and PRs.

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Already addressing these concerns in March last year, the HDB had made a bigger distinction between benefits for citizens and PRs. New quotas on PR ownership of flats in specific blocks and neighbourhoods were set and it was also noted that a citizen-PR couple will receive S\$10,000 less subsidy than a citizen-citizen couple.

Not everyone is appeased by HDB's clarification, however.

Letter writer Mr Tan, 33, who runs his own health-care business, said he still fears PR siblings will compete with Singaporeans for flats since they are more likely to meet the eligibility criteria.

On the other hand, Dennis Wee Group's Mr Koh felt the policy was fair as "policymakers must also cater to those PR siblings who have chosen to sink their roots here and buy homes".

Thank you for the incredible, amazing response to Yahoo!'s Fit-To-Post blog so far. We continue to welcome your views and comments but please don't abuse this opportunity. Be nice. Be courteous. Be sensible. Respect the feelings of others and refrain from using any kind of offensive language. And in the spirit of great conversations, please don't stray from the topic at hand.

Source: Yahoo News

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