

Legal aid applicant convicted of giving false statement

A legal aid applicant pleaded guilty to giving false statement about his financial resources to the Legal Aid Department in connection with his legal aid application in the Kwun Tong Magistracy today (May 26).

He was sentenced to two months' imprisonment, suspended for one year, and a fine of \$2,000.

The applicant pleaded guilty to giving false statement that he had no property in or outside Hong Kong and had no fixed deposit in bank when he applied for legal aid to divorce in 2003.

Under Section 23 of the Legal Aid Ordinance, it is an offence punishable by a fine of \$10,000 and six months' imprisonment for an applicant to make any false statement or representation or to fail to disclose any information relating to his financial resources.

If an applicant obtains legal aid by providing false information, the Director of Legal Aid may revoke the certificate and shall have the right to recover all the costs paid or payable in the proceedings to which the legal aid certificate relates.

The Legal Aid Department has referred six suspected cases to the Police for investigation this year compared to 11 cases last year.