
18 April 2018

**MAN CONVICTED AND FINED \$71,500 FOR UNREGISTERED
ESTATE AGENCY WORK**

A man was convicted in Court today for eight charges of holding himself out to the public as being a property agent without being registered as such with the Council for Estate Agencies (CEA). Raymond Chng (Chng Leimeng), 36, was involved in closing a lease transaction and posting online advertisements for the sale of HDB and private properties.

2. Chng was sentenced to a fine totaling \$71,500, in default of 25 weeks' imprisonment. In sentencing Chng, the Court also took into consideration 26 other similar charges of Chng holding out as a property agent to the public when he was not a registered agent.

3. Under the Estate Agents Act¹ (EAA), it is an offence for entities and/or individuals to act or hold out as estate agents and/or salespersons in any property transaction if they are not licensed or registered with the CEA.

¹ Under the Estate Agents Act (Cap. 95A), "estate agents" refer to estate agency businesses (sole-proprietors, partnerships, and companies) or individuals who do estate agency work. Estate agency businesses are commonly known as property agencies. "Salespersons" refer to individuals who perform estate agency work. They are commonly known as property agents.

CEA's charges against Chng

4. Chng pleaded guilty and was convicted in Court for a total of eight charges under Section 29(1)(a) of the EAA for holding himself out as a salesperson for Dennis Wee Realty Pte Ltd (DWR), without being registered as a salesperson.

5. Chng was a former agent with DWR between 18 November 2011 and 28 April 2015. He was terminated by DWR on 28 April 2015 and was therefore no longer a registered agent after 28 April 2015.

6. One of the charges against Chng was in relation to the closing of a lease transaction. In October 2015, he assisted a tenant in the rental of an apartment for a year, from 13 October 2015 to 12 October 2016. He had held himself out as a property agent with DWR to the landlord's agent and suggested that they co-broke the transaction. He then arranged for a viewing of the property, negotiated the monthly rental on the tenant's behalf, closed the transaction, and collected a commission of \$1,450 from the tenant.

7. The other seven charges were in relation to advertisements that Chng had posted online. Investigations revealed that between early May 2015 and end August 2015, Chng had posted seven advertisements on an online property portal to market the sale of seven HDB and private properties in Singapore.

8. In all the advertisements, Chng held himself out as a registered agent and an Associate Division Director of DWR when he was not. The advertisements included his name, photograph, mobile number, previous CEA registration number, designation in DWR, DWR's CEA licence number, and DWR's logo.

9. In sentencing Chng, the Court took into consideration 26 other similar charges of Chng holding himself out as a property agent without being registered. Details of the offences are in the **Annex**.

10. The punishment for an offence under Section 29(1)(a) of the EAA is a fine not exceeding \$25,000, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months, or both.

Advice to consumers

11. Consumers who choose to have a property agent to assist them in their property transactions should engage only property agencies and agents who are licensed and registered with the CEA. The public can verify whether an entity or individual is licensed or registered with the CEA via the [Public Register](#) on the CEA website.

12. The public can report those who perform unlicensed estate agency work or are unregistered agents to the CEA at 1800-6432555 or feedback@cea.gov.sg. [Useful information](#) on engaging a professional and effective property agency and agent is also available on the CEA's website.

About the Council for Estate Agencies

The Council for Estate Agencies (CEA) is a statutory board established in 2010 under the Estate Agents Act to regulate and promote the development of a professional and trusted real estate agency industry. The key responsibilities of CEA are to license property agencies and register property agents, promote the integrity and competence of property agencies and property agents, and equip consumers with the necessary knowledge to make informed decisions in property transactions. For more information, please visit: www.cea.gov.sg.

DETAILS OF THE EIGHT PROCEEDED CHARGES AGAINST RAYMOND CHNG

1. Sometime before October 2015, a prospective tenant and his friend responded to Raymond Chng's advertisement on an online property portal and learnt from Chng that there was an apartment unit at Spottiswoode Park available for rent.
2. On or around 1 October 2015, Chng sent a Short Message Service (SMS) text to the agent who was representing the owner/landlord of the unit. The landlord's agent had advertised the unit for rent at a monthly rental of \$3,200. Chng asked to co-broke with the landlord's agent as he had tenants who could commence a lease soon. In his SMS text to the landlord's agent, he indicated that he was from Dennis Wee Realty Pte Ltd (DWR).
3. Chng arranged for his clients to view the unit on or around 2 October 2015 and facilitated the closing of a lease transaction for one year, from 13 October 2015 to 12 October 2016, at a monthly rental of \$3,000.
4. Chng prepared a Letter of Intent for the lease of the unit and sent it to the landlord's agent. The landlord's agent then prepared the tenancy agreement, which Chng signed off as a witness for his client. Chng also indicated his previous CEA registration number on the tenancy agreement. Chng received \$1,450 as commission for closing this lease transaction.
5. Separately, between early May 2015 and end August 2015, Chng also posted seven advertisements on an online property portal to market the sale of seven HDB and private properties.

6. In all his advertisements, Chng had represented that he was a registered agent and an Associate Division Director of DWR. The advertisements included his name, photograph, mobile number, previous CEA registration number, designation in DWR, DWR's CEA licence number, and DWR's logo. He also signed off as an agent from DWR in the text of his advertisements.

7. During the same period, Chng also posted 30 other similar advertisements on the property portal to market the sale and/or lease of 28 other HDB and private properties, which form the basis of the other 26 charges that the Court took into consideration when sentencing Chng.