

Defeated DC election candidate jailed for bribing electors

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A defeated candidate of the 2007 District Council (DC) Election (Healthy Village Constituency), charged by the ICAC, was today (Tuesday) sentenced to nine weeks' imprisonment at Eastern Magistracy after being found guilty of offering free body check services to electors in return for their votes.

Chan Tak-wai, 49, was convicted of two counts of offering advantages to other persons as inducements to vote at the election, contrary to Section 11(1)(a) of the Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Conduct) Ordinance (ECICO).

In passing sentence, Deputy Magistrate Mr William Lam noted that a custodial sentence had to be meted out in view of the seriousness of the offences.

The court heard that in October 2007, Chan submitted a nomination form to the Registration and Electoral Office to stand as a candidate for the Healthy Village Constituency of Eastern District DC election.

At the time of the offences, the defendant employed three nursing students to perform free body check services, including blood pressure tests, weight and height measurements, to residents at a booth set up in the vicinity of Healthy Village Estate, and to help him conduct electioneering activities in the course of the provision of the service.

On the instruction of the defendant, the nursing students gave out souvenirs bearing his name and urged the residents to vote for him on the Election Day.

The court heard that whilst the above activities were being conducted, the defendant was at the scene wearing his election sash canvassing votes from the residents and the recipients of the service.

The defendant was also charged with one count of failing to include election expenses in his election return, contrary to Section 23(3) of ECICO.

The trial in respect of this charge was adjourned, pending the result of Chan's application for a relief order from the Court of First Instance.

The prosecution was today represented by prosecuting counsel Wong Hin-lee, assisted by ICAC officer Derek Cheung.