

Driven by

Service Excellence

Technology-Driven Solutions

Motivated Workforce

Efficiency in Service Delivery

Customer-Focused Policies

Evidence-Based Policy Programs





MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE

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and Public Relations Branch

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As the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service (MOFPS) continues to align its strategic plans with the National Development Plan, it is paving the way with a clear road map that is ***Driven by Service Excellence***. This encompasses five tenets which are to develop a motivated workforce, providing efficiency in service delivery, facilitating technology-driven solutions with customer service focused and evidence-based policies programmes. With the aforementioned, the MOFPS prides itself on creating a centre of excellence that enables sustainable growth and development through sound policy, planning and quality service delivery.

While the Ministry focuses on its operational procedures it must simultaneously manage the country's budget. The Minister of Finance and the Public Service tabled Jamaica's first trillion-dollar budget on Tuesday, March 7, 2023. This historic budget will see Jamaicans from all economic levels benefiting from infrastructural upgrades, improvement in the quality of life for public sector pensioners as well as better access to tertiary education.

The Budget is effective from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

In this edition of the **MOFPS Insider**, we share the Ministry's efforts to clamp down on fraudulent activities in the banking sector while changing the relationship between security guard firms and the government. You will also see highlights from the unions that have recently accepted the restructured compensation system.

Additionally, in this edition, you can find information on the government's move to relocate the Manchester-based tax office to allow for the expansion that will offer convenience to staff and the general public.

If you wish to share feedback on this publication, please send an email to mofps.pr@mof.gov.jm.



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GOJ TABLES FIRST TRILLION-DOLLAR BUDGET



Hon. Nigel Clarke, DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service delivers the 2023 Opening Budget Presentation in the House of Representatives on Tuesday, March 7, 2023.

Hon. Nigel Clarke, DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service delivered the 2023/2024 National Budget in the House of Representatives on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, to outline how the Government of Jamaica plans to spend its historic trillion-dollar budget in the upcoming fiscal year.

The Central Government Expenditure Budget of \$1,021.7 billion comprises:

- ▶ Non Debt Recurrent Expenditure of approximately \$657.2 billion
- ▶ Capital Expenditure of \$75.4 billion
- ▶ Debt Service of \$280.6 billion
- ▶ Below the Line Expenditure of \$8.5 billion.

The presentation highlighted the following for the upcoming fiscal year:

- ▶ Compensation of employees accounts for \$367.4 billion or 56% of the \$657.2 billion allocated for non-debt recurrent expenditure. This amount covers the cost of gross wages and salaries; \$32.8 billion to meet the estimated second-year cost of the new compensation system; \$6.5 billion contribution to Public Sector Health Insurance Schemes for current employees and government pensioners; and \$1.4 billion to continue payment of GOJ's arrears to the National Housing Trust.

- ▶ The Government of Jamaica will supplement the budgetary grant extended to The UWI for \$200 million as a down payment to endow a Fiscal Research Institute within the Department of Economics.
- ▶ The Accountant General's Department will be assuming responsibility for the disbursement of pensions to retirees of Municipal Corporations within the next fiscal year. This will complete the process of centralisation of payment which includes some statutory bodies.
- ▶ Over several years, the Government of Jamaica plans to upgrade tax offices across Jamaica to provide a more comfortable, timely and efficient experience.



- ▶ The MOFPS will partner with the Ministry of Industry and Investment and Commerce to establish the Jamaica Screen Fund in the initial amount of \$1 billion over two years. The fund will provide financing for the development and production of film and television shows in Jamaica.

▶ **Effective for the new school year beginning in September, students from PATH Households who apply to the Student Loan Bureau (SLB) will not need to provide any guarantors.**

- ▶ SLB will partner with Mico University College, to provide full-tuition scholarships to develop 1,250 new STEM Teachers over five (5) years.

New Banknote Upgrade

- ▶ The timeline for the issue of the new notes into circulation requires the banks to complete the adaptation of their automated banking machines and other equipment. Following calibration of the ABMs, testing is scheduled for May 2023 with a view to implement by mid-June 2023.



Hon. Andrew Holness, ON, PC, MP, Prime Minister of Jamaica and Hon. Olivia 'Babsy' Grange, CD, MP, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport scrutinise the upgraded banknotes.

Ministry of Finance and the Public Service

- ▶ \$42 billion in pension payments which includes \$1.0 billion towards an annual increase in pensions paid each year.
- ▶ \$3.1 billion to support local authorities for street lights.

Ministry of Education

- ▶ \$142.9 billion is allocated to education in the upcoming fiscal year. Education expenditure will represent approximately 22% of non-debt expenditure.

Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation

- ▶ \$4.7 billion for the maintenance of roads, repairs to roads, river training, island-wide, disaster mitigation and cleaning of gullies.

- ▶ \$1.2 billion for bridge development and construction inclusive of the replacement and maintenance of bridges that need urgent improvements across the island.
- ▶ \$943 million for traffic management and control.

Ministry of Health and Wellness

- ▶ \$14.7 billion for Drug and Medical Supplies.
- ▶ \$10.0 billion for the University Hospital of the West Indies.

Ministry of National Security

- ▶ **\$111.7 billion is allocated to support the recurrent operations of the group of which: \$59.1 billion is for the Police; \$32.0 billion is for the Jamaica Defence Force; \$11.4 billion is for the Department of Correctional Services; and \$2.0 billion is for the Major Organised Crime & Anti-Corruption Agency.**

Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology

- ▶ \$1.2 billion to support the National Broadband Initiative.
- ▶ \$770 million to support the Tablets in Schools Programme.

Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

- ▶ \$1.1 billion in production incentives aimed at increasing livestock and fisheries production, provision of irrigation and land equipment services, improving animal health, promoting climate-smart technologies, improving genetic material of livestock species, exploring alternate protein sources to bolster food security and welfare and the provision of clean planting materials to the sector.
- ▶ \$235 million for maintenance of the National Irrigation Commission's infrastructure.
- ▶ \$610 million to rehabilitate farm roads.

Ministry of Tourism

- ▶ \$3.6 billion is allocated to the Jamaica Tourist Board.
- ▶ \$1.1 billion for the Tourism Enhancement Fund.
- ▶ \$1.0 billion for the Tourism Product Development Company.

Ministry of Transport and Mining

- ▶ \$7.0 billion to meet operational expenses including salaries, suppliers' payments (lubricants, toll charges, fuel and fuel tax, etc.) of the JUTC.

Ministry of Labour and Social Security

- ▶ \$8.4 billion to support payment of cash grants to PATH beneficiaries.
- ▶ \$408 million for Social Pensions for the elderly to support bi-monthly cash grants to approximately 20,000 elderly persons over 75 years, not in receipt of a pension, disability grant, welfare support, or residing in a Government state-run facility.

Recurrent Programmes

- ▶ \$289.8 billion is the amount proposed for recurrent programmes for FY 2023/24.

For the upcoming fiscal year, there will be

NO NEW TAXES.

Hon. Nigel Clarke, DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service returned to the House of Representatives on Tuesday, March 21, 2023, to close the budget debates.

2023/24 National Budget is available at mof.gov.jm.



THE CITIZENS' GUIDE TO THE 2023/24

BUDGET

SUNDAY MARCH 19, 2023

WHAT'S INSIDE:

- PART I: NOTABLE HIGHLIGHTS - FISCAL YEAR 2022/2023
- PART II: THE BUDGET PROCESS
- PART III: WHAT GOES INTO THE PREPARATION OF THE BUDGET?
- PART IV: HOW BIG IS THE NATIONAL BUDGET?
- PART V: WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM TO FUND THE BUDGET?
- PART VI: WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?
- PART VII: MEDIUM TERM INITIATIVES



mof.gov.jm



The Citizens' Guide to the Budget contains basic information on the budgetary process and system of the government's finances. Use the link below to view the Citizens' Guide to the 2023/24 Budget:

https://www.mof.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/citizens_guide_to_the_budget-publication_2023_web.pdf

FINANCE MINISTER ADDRESSES LAST IDB ANNUAL MEETING AS CHAIRMAN



Hon. Nigel Clarke, DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service in his capacity as Chairman of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), chaired the opening sessions of the Annual Meeting of the IDB and the Inter-American Investment Corporation in Panama on Saturday, March 18, 2023.

During his final address as Chairman, Minister Clarke spoke on the common challenges facing Latin America and the Caribbean and the response and achievements of the IDB Group over the past year 2022/23. Hector Alexander, Minister of Economy and Finance of the Republic of Panama was elected to succeed Minister Clarke as the incoming Chairman of the IDB.





Government of Jamaica

A series of seven vertical bars in orange, blue, yellow, maroon, orange, and pink.

VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW **REPORT** ON THE **2030** AGENDA AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT **GOALS**



The Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) is the coordinating entity and National Focal Point for monitoring the implementation of the SDGs in Jamaica.

Download here: <http://sdg.pioj.gov.jm/sites/default/files/Reports/2022%20VNR%20Report.pdf>

PIOJ DIRECTOR GENERAL ADDRESSES REGIONAL LATIN AMERICAN COUNCIL MEETING

On Tuesday, January 17, 2023, Dr. Wayne Henry, Director General of the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) delivered Jamaica's presentation at the Regional Council for the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES), which is a forum of the UN Economic Commission for the region.

The meeting was held in Santiago, Chile from Tuesday, January 17 – 18, 2023 and virtually from Panama City on January 19.



▶ Dr. Wayne Henry, Director General, Planning Institute of Jamaica pauses for a photograph with Hector Alexander, Minister of Economy and Finance of the Republic of Panama and Chair of the Regional Council for Planning of the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning.



▶ Dr. Wayne Henry (right), Director General of the Planning Institute of Jamaica is all smiles with Cielo Morales (left), Director of Latin American and the Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning.



Need to **appeal** a **tax liability**?

Want to **avoid** the **hassle**?

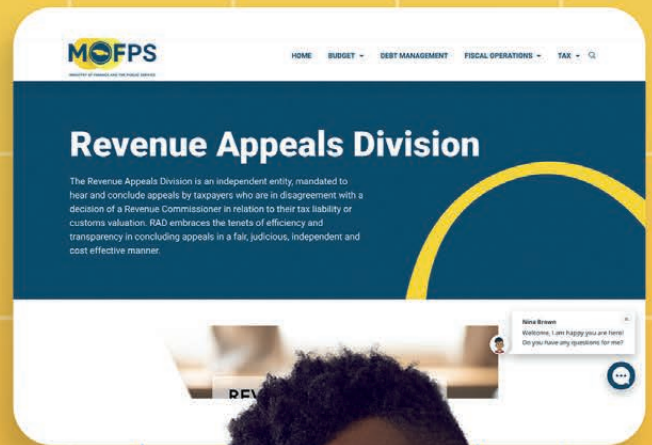
File your tax appeal via the Revenue Appeals Division's web portal.

The process is

- ✓ **Convenient**
- ✓ **User-Friendly**
- ✓ **Secure**

Whether you are a tax paying individual, business owner, exporter, importer, property owner, or lawyer or accountant representing a client, you can register to use the portal today.

Just provide your full name, TRN, address, telephone number, email address and a password of no less than 8 characters. It's that SIMPLE.



MOF SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH KROLL ASSOCIATES TO PROBE **SSL FRAUD**



Hon. Nigel Clarke, DPhil., MP, (right) Minister of Finance and the Public Service and Howard Cooper (left), Managing Director at Kroll Associates Ltd. sign a Statement of Work to conduct a forensic audit into the Stocks and Securities Limited on Tuesday, March 7, 2023. (L-R) Looking on is Peter Tutton, Associate Managing Director, Kroll Associates UK Ltd., Selvin Hay, Chief Technical Director at the Financial Investigations Division and Daniel Shepherd, Deputy British High Commissioner to Jamaica.

Hon. Nigel Clarke, DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service and Howard Cooper, Managing Director at Kroll Associates Ltd., UK, sign a Statement of Work to conduct a forensic audit to identify the nature, extent and value of the fraud perpetrated and to identify any potential assets or benefit obtained by directors, shareholders, employees or parties connected to Stocks and Securities Limited (SSL).

The brief ceremony was held at the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service on Tuesday, March 7, 2023.

A report is expected to be submitted in the next few months as this fraud is complicated and complex and has been perpetrated for 13 years,

According to Selvin Hay, Chief Technical Director at the Financial Investigation Division (FID), "This audit will not hamper or detract from the investigation being done by FID or the fraud squad".

Additionally, the Financial Services Commission (FSC) and SSL will be granted access to the findings.

► **Contracting an international company such as Kroll Associates will allow for full transparency and integrity in the investigation.**

POLICY ADDRESS ON THE FINANCIAL SECTOR REGULATION



The alleged fraud at Stocks and Securities Limited ("SSL"), which at this time, is estimated at over J\$2 billion represents one of the largest securities frauds in a security dealer since the Financial Services Commission came into existence nearly 30 years ago. It is an alarming amount that shocked the soul of Jamaica.

In addition, the anger and unease we all feel have been magnified by the long duration – 13 years - over which the fraud was allegedly perpetrated and the fact that the perpetrator or perpetrators seemed to have deliberately and heartlessly targeted elderly persons, as well as our much loved and respected National Icon, Ambassador Usain Bolt.

Furthermore, the coverage of this fraud in every major media outlet across the globe is a source of great embarrassment to Jamaicans here and in the diaspora. I feel the full range of those emotions...anger, disgust and hurt. Like many Jamaicans, I am pained by these events.

This is a body blow to Jamaica and has the unfortunate impact of tarnishing Jamaica's global reputation. I am extremely saddened by this.

Over the past thirty years, Jamaica has successively failed to successfully arrest and prosecute persons who were allegedly criminally responsible during the "FINSAC" era, nor those criminally responsible for "Cashplus", "Olint", "Worldwise" and other such schemes. Similarly, persons allegedly responsible for public sector fraud over much

of the last thirty years have escaped the punishment regularly meted out to others. With that as our historical context, the SSL fraud has touched especially raw nerves:

- ▶ A nerve that represents the reservoir of distrust that has developed based on what many believe to be the historical Jamaican experience of one law for some and another law for others;
- ▶ A nerve that captures the wells of suspicion that white-collar crimes are processed and treated differently from other crimes;

These waters of distrust, suspicion and cynicism are existential threats to our society. It will take time to drain the system of these and we must begin now.

This time must be different. Let me repeat what I have said and what the Most Honorable Prime Minister has said:

▶ **There will be full transparency in this matter. No stone will be left unturned.**

The investigative authorities have full operational independence and will pursue the facts wherever they may lead. They will unearth exactly how funds were allegedly stolen, who benefited from such theft and who organized and collaborated in this. The probe will also seek to identify whether assets have been acquired with the proceeds of this fraud. If and when such assets are identified all legal steps will be taken to restrain these assets with the intention of full forfeiture. Having spoken with some of those leading the investigation I can say that they are resolute and determined to unravel its complexities and bring all responsible to justice.

▶ **Based on the magnitude of this fraud and the lines of enquiry being pursued, the Financial Investigations Division and the Fraud Squad have already sought assistance from the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and other international partners.**



Jamaica Stock Exchange
e-Campus

NCB
FINANCIAL GROUP
LIMITED

GK
GraceKennedy
General Insurance



CEOs SEMINAR AND FORUM

UTILIZING CAPITAL TO DRIVE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: A CEOs PRACTICAL GUIDE

Dr. Marlene Street Forrest, Managing Director, JSE (centred)
Amalia Toro, Partner at McKinsey & Company, Panamá (left)
Hon. Patrick Hylton - Chairman, NCB Financial Group (right)
Ungad Chadda - Former Senior VP, TMX Group, Canada (rear, left)
Hugo Baquerizo - Senior Partner, McKinsey & Company, Panamá (rear, 2nd left)
Felipe Villarreal - Partner, McKinsey & Company, Panamá (rear, right)

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POLICY ADDRESS ON GOJ'S CONTRACTED SECURITY GUARD SERVICES WITH PRIVATE SECURITY FIRMS



Hon. Nigel Clarke (centre), DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service shares a moment with the members of the security fraternity following his policy address on Thursday, January 19, 2023.

The government is moving to change the status of security guards from independent contract workers to regular employees for guards providing services within the public sector.

Hon. Nigel Clarke, DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service during his Policy Address on GOJ's Contracted Security Guard Services with Private Security Firms, announced that a task force has been set up to engage with private security companies that have contracts with the government to better position them to access the full benefits of entitlements under the law.

The task force is expected to negotiate with scores of security guard firms who are counterparties to these contracts for an adjustment to the required rates for service.



Hon. Nigel Clarke, DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service delivers the Policy.

▶ **The effective date of the new contracts will be April 1, 2023.**

JSE HOSTS 18TH REGIONAL INVESTMENTS AND CAPITAL MARKETS CONFERENCE

The Jamaica Stock Exchange hosted its 18th Regional Investments and Capital Markets Conference from Tuesday, January 24, 2023, to Thursday, January 26, 2023, at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel. The event saw hundreds of industry leaders, regulators, state leaders and experts at the region's premier investments and capital markets event.

See Highlights



MOFPS AND TAJ HOSTS JAMAICA EXCISE – GCT REFORM PROJECT

The Ministry of Finance and the Public Service in collaboration with the Tax Administration, Jamaica (TAJ) hosted high-level discussions with the heads of the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Irish Revenue from Monday, January 23, 2023, to Friday, January 27, 2023.

The 5-day discussion encompasses GCT policy and legal issues, compliance framework, case law and tax appeals as well as a deep dive into excise policy. There were also solution-oriented discussions that explored ways to boost Jamaica's Excise compliance framework.

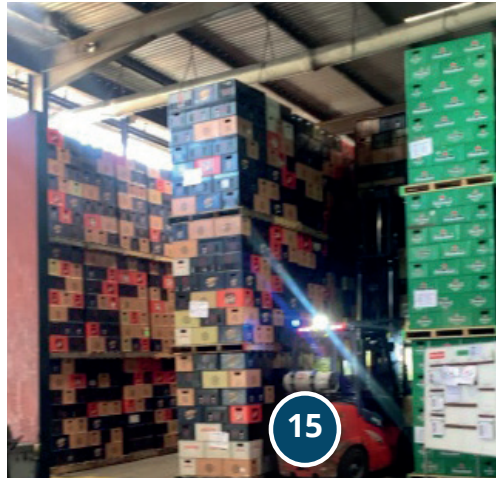
See Highlights

The international mission team, including representatives from TAJ and the MOFPS, conducted site visits to the New Yarmouth Estate in Clarendon, Red Stripe Limited, J.Wray and Nephew Ltd. and Petrojam Ltd, Jamaica's oil refinery in Kingston.

The Members of the Mission were, Ana Cebreiro, David O'Sullivan and Philip Brennan from the World Bank, Thomas Ecker from OECD and Duncan Cleary, Michael Daly and Justin Walsh from the Irish Revenue.

The week's activities culminated with a networking mingle held at the MOFPS where the mission team was recognised for their contribution and involvement in the activities and discussions that took place throughout the week.





MOFPS SIGNS NEW COMPENSATION AGREEMENT WITH BARGAINING UNITS

SUPERINTENDENTS AND ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS IN JUVENILE INSTITUTIONS



Hon. Nigel Clarke (centre), DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service and Hon. Marsha Smith (left), State Minister in the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service signed a memorandum of understanding with John Levy (2nd left), General Secretary of the Union of Clerical Administrative and Supervisory Employees (UCASE) on behalf of Superintendents and Assistant Superintendent in Juvenile Institutions on Friday, March 31, 2023. The signees also included Maulette White (2nd right), Chief Union Delegate, UCASE and Karen Elliot Taylor (right), Delegate, UCASE.

JAMAICA ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATION OFFICERS



Hon. Nigel Clarke (4th right), DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service and Hon. Marsha Smith (3rd left), Minister of State in the Minister of Finance and the Public Service signed a memorandum of understanding under the new compensation system with the Floyd Kelly (4th right), President of the Jamaica Association of Education Officers and its executive members on Thursday, March 30, 2023.

POLICE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION



Hon. Nigel Clarke (4th right), DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service signed a memorandum of understanding under the new compensation system with Senior Superintendent Wayne Cameron (4th left), President of the Police Officers' Association and its executive members on Monday, March 27, 2023.

JAMAICA POLICE FEDERATION



Hon. Nigel Clarke (3rd left), DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service and Hon. Marsha Smith (left), MP, Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service signs a memorandum of understanding with Corporal Rohan James (3rd right), President of the Jamaica Police Federation on the new compensation system. Dr. the Hon. Horace Chang (2nd left), Minister of National Security and other members of the Jamaica Police Federation also signed the agreement on Tuesday, March 21, 2023.

UNITED DISTRICT CONSTABLE ASSOCIATION



Hon. Nigel Clarke (right), DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service present a signed MOU to Damion Pryce (2nd right) President, United District Constables' Association after a brief ceremony at the Ministry on Tuesday, March 21, 2023. Present is Dr. the Hon. Horace Chang (2nd left), MP, Minister of National Security and Hon. Marsha Smith (left), MP, Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service.

SENIOR UNIFORMED OFFICERS ASSOCIATION, JAMAICA FEDERATION OF CORRECTIONS AND THE UNIVERSITY AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION



Hon. Nigel Clarke (2nd right), DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Marsha Smith (right), MP, Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, Senator Lambert Brown (3rd left), CD, President of the University and Allied Workers Union, Leslie Campbell (2nd left), Chairman, Senior Uniformed Officers' Association and Arlington Turner (left), Chairman, Jamaica Federation of Corrections signed the new compensation agreement on Friday, March 17, 2023.

JAMAICA MEDICAL DOCTORS ASSOCIATION



Hon. Nigel Clarke (2nd right), DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Darlene Morrison (right), CD, Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, Dr. Mindi Fitz Henley (2nd left), President of the Jamaica Medical Doctors Association and Dr. Brian Kazaara, (left) 2nd Vice President, Jamaica Medical Doctors Association signed a memorandum of understanding between both entities on the restructured compensation system on Thursday, March 16, 2023.

PROBATION AFTERCARE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION



Hon. Nigel Clarke (2nd right), DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Darlene Morrison (right), CD, Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance and the Public signed a memorandum of Understanding with the Probation Aftercare Officers Association regarding the restructured compensation system on Thursday, March 16, 2023.

JAMAICA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION



Hon. Nigel Clarke (2nd right) DPhil., MP, Ministry of Finance and Public Service, Hon. Marsha Smith, MP (right) MP, Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, Leighton Johnson (2nd left), President-Elect and Mark Nicely (left), General Secretary, both of the Jamaica Teachers' Association signed a Memorandum of Understanding signalling the acceptance of the new compensation package on Monday, March 13, 2023.

DENTAL ASSISTANTS AND UNION OF TECHNICAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL



Hon. Nigel Clarke (2nd left), DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Marsha Smith (left) MP, Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service signed a Memorandum of Understanding under the new compensation system with Dental Assistants and Union of Technical, Administrative and Supervisory Personnel (UTASP) on Friday, February 10, 2023. Also seen are St. Patrice Ennis (3rd left), General Secretary of UTASP, Vivette Smith Parchment (3rd right), President of the Dental Assistant Association and her members.

JAMAICA VETERINARY PARAMEDICS ASSOCIATION



Hon. Nigel Clarke (2nd right) DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service, presents the signed MOU to Marsha Martin-McKie (2nd left) President, Jamaica Veterinary Paramedics Association on Thursday, January 26, 2023. Looking on is Hon. Marsha Smith (right), MP, Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service and Nardine Cohen, Secretary, Jamaica Veterinary Paramedics Association.



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TAJ BREAKS GROUND FOR RELOCATION OF NEW TAX OFFICE IN CHRISTIANA, MANCHESTER



Hon. Nigel Clarke (3rd left), DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Audley Shaw (3rd right), CD, Member of Parliament for Northeast Manchester, Paul Lalor (2nd right), Board Chairman, Tax Administration Jamaica, Ainsley Powell (2nd left), CD, Commissioner General, Tax Administration Jamaica, Althia Scott-Jones (left), General Manager, Mandeville Revenue Service Centre and Claudette Gayle-Foster (right), JP, Senior Manager, Christiana Tax Office break ground during the ceremony.

Press Release dated: Saturday, February 25, 2023

Residents of Christiana and neighbouring communities are set to benefit from a new tax office in Struan Castle following a ground-breaking ceremony for the facility by the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service and the Tax Administration Jamaica on Thursday, February 23, 2023.

The new building, which will replace the existing facility, will be accommodative to the physically challenged, with adequate parking bays, bathroom facilities for all users, sufficient office spaces, basic amenities (lunch room, kitchen, sick bay and stock and

filing rooms) and fully equipped with the necessary networking support and generator.

▶ **There is also a proposal for a recreational area and conference room along with a guard house and fire-prevention system.**

Hon. Nigel Clarke, DPhil., MP, Minister of Finance and the Public Service in his remarks said more upgrades are coming for tax offices across the island.

"Over the next decade, Jamaica is going to be in a position to spend hundreds of billions of dollars to improve public service delivery through infrastructure upgrades. The Tax Administration, Jamaica and the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service are working on an upgrade to tax offices across Jamaica," he said.

He also noted that the groundbreaking for the new tax office in Christiana is a prelude to the infrastructural development that is to come across Jamaica.

Meanwhile, Audley Shaw, CD, MP, Member of Parliament for Northeast Manchester and Minister of Transport and Mining in his remarks said the location of the new tax office will be convenient to Jamaicans living in nearby parishes who are seeking to do business with TAJ.

"Instead of people going to Browns Town in St. Ann, Trelawny by the seaside, or in Clarendon it's shorter for them to come to Christiana. So, I'm really happy that finally, we're breaking the ground here for the construction of this very important facility... this is a significant moment for us," he highlighted.

Paul Lalor, Chairman of Tax Administration, Jamaica underscored the importance of a comfortable and convenient space for employees and the general public.

"The importance of these spaces from which we operate cannot be underestimated. We must not only make our locations comfortable and convenient but the service provided must be efficient and the processes need to be seamless. Additionally, to achieve our quality service mandate we must ensure the team at TAJ is provided with a working environment that is conducive to higher levels of employee welfare thereby boosting productivity and reducing turnover."

The location of the current office is limited with space, both internally and externally, and the tax-paying public is inconvenienced due to the non-existence of amenities such as seating, restroom availability and parking.

▶ **Approximately \$670.8 million has been included in the budget estimates by the Government of Jamaica to build the new office.**

It is estimated that the building should be completed and ready for occupancy within 18-24 months. This project will be on 2 floors with approximately 10,000 sq. ft. to facilitate both the Tax Office and storage for records.





MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE



PENSIONS ADMINISTRATION BRANCH

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THE PEOPLE INSIDE THE MOFPS

DFS Pamela Wade-Fearon

Meet Pamela Wade-Fearon, Deputy Financial Secretary (DFS) of the Taxation Policy Division at the Ministry of Finance and Public Service. DFS Wade-Fearon oversees the 4 branches, namely Tax Relief, International Trade Relations, Research and Analysis and the Tax Policy Development Branch. She has been in the public sector for over 38 years.

Here are some things about her.

1. If you could change something about Jamaica what would it be? Why?

I would change the values and attitudes of young people. This means I would implement a programme in schools for children to learn about values and attitudes which would assist them in changing their attitudes and mindset. I think it would be good to start in the school to reach that generation because it would enable them to become an agent of change, for a brighter future.

2. What is your favourite way to spend a day off?

If I am tired, my favourite way to spend a day off is to read a good book or watch a movie. If I am not tired, I like to be creative by doing things with my hands such as cooking, baking or icing a cake.

3. If money were no object what would you do?

I would travel the world.

4. What is your favourite thing about your job?

What I enjoy most about my job is its diversity. Things do not repeat themselves, and there is always something interesting like a new request for a waiver that we need to research. Every application for waiver or trade is different and most of my work involves the private sector. I also get the opportunity to be involved in the early stage of planning and development for eg. if someone is building a factory and needs tax relief they would have to contact us. If the Government is doing something that involves taxation they would come to us and that allows us to get first-hand knowledge of what is happening ahead of other ministries and other divisions within the MOFPS. Additionally, there are the development and creation of new policies that did not exist and I love working with people.

5. Top 3 lessons you would teach your younger self:

- Listen without judging as everyone has a voice.
- Start saving early for my retirement.
- Spend more time on myself, self-care.

MINISTRY MATTERS

Health Fair

The MOFPS Health Fair was held on Friday, January 13, 2023 and was geared at empowering staff through health and wellness.







Farmer's Market

MOFPS Farmers' Market happens every last Friday of each of month.





New Year, *New Vibes*

GOSPEL CONCERT

The MOFPS New Year, New Vibes Concert was held on Thursday, February 16, 2023 and was geared at helping staff to start the new year on a motivated and positive note.



New Year, New Vibes

GOSPEL CONCERT

