



Ministry of Local Government and Community Development

LOCAL E TIMES

NEWS, VIEWS & HIGHLIGHTS ON LOCAL
GOVERNANCE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT



WEAR A MASK



SANITIZE



**MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCE
OF 6 FT.**

Government aims to deliver **100 Indigent Houses**



Palmer's Cross

An indigent house in Palmer's Cross, Clarendon that was among the first two units built and handed over under the Municipal Social Assistance Programme (MSAP). MSAP was rolled out in 2017 as part of the Ministry's plan to improve the social programmes and strengthen governance at the local level.

KINGSTON, Jamaica: The Government is targeting the delivery of approximately 100 indigent housing solutions to persons in need across the island.

Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Honourable Desmond McKenzie, said 32 houses have been built and handed over to beneficiaries, with another 12 to be constructed by the end of the financial year.

"I took a conscious decision that if we are going to provide for these people who have served their country, we should provide the best possible solution, so that they can be comfortable living out the last days of their lives."

Some J\$63 million has been spent to construct 32 units with four more targeted for construction during the new financial year. All municipalities, except for St. Mary, St James, Hanover, Westmoreland, and Manchester, have received units for those vulnerable who live outside of Infirmaries.

Minister McKenzie said that the beneficiaries on the Indigent Housing Programme have served the country in various areas, such as health and security, and while they have fallen on hard times, the best care must be given to them.

He noted that the Ministry is also looking at increasing the monies allocated to the municipal corporations for social housing assistance.

"We are also continuing to improve our infirmaries islandwide. The final phase of the J\$200 million project financed by the National Housing trust is underway. In the 2019/2020 fiscal year, the new female ward at the Manchester Infirmary was completed," the Minister stated.



FALMOUTH, Trelawny: The Ministry of Local Government and Community Development expanded its Municipal Social Assistance Programme (MSAP) with the opening of a Drop-In Centre to serve the homeless population in Falmouth, Trelawny.

The J\$19m facility was built on lands at Victoria Street and is a stone's throw away from the Trelawny Police Headquarters and the Falmouth Public General Hospital.

"The expansion of national facilities that will provide care and comfort to our homeless citizens is an important aspect of the work of this Government," said Portfolio Minister, Honourable Desmond McKenzie.

"It is one of the features of the human face of this Administration, and a symbol of our commitment to assisting the vulnerable in our society."

He was speaking at the official hand-over ceremony on Wednesday, July 15, 2020.

Minister McKenzie noted that it is the duty of the Government to protect the vulnerable and the Administration continues to fulfill this responsibility through the rehabilitation of infirmaries and the construction of drop-in centres.

The Trelawny Drop-In Centre is the fifth to be constructed under MSAP's conceptualization in 2017. Similar facilities have been opened in Ocho Rios, St. Ann; Port Maria, St. Mary; Lucea, Hanover, and Black River in St. Elizabeth.

Those expected to be commissioned into use next are in Linstead, St. Catherine and St. Thomas. Drop-In Centres are the first point of contact for homeless persons and offer a range of care including a bath and other hygiene care, food, and medical assessment.



KINGSTON, Jamaica: Ground was officially broken for the construction of the first in 100 indigent housing solutions over the next 12 months by the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development.

The houses are being built under the Ministry's Municipal Social Assistance Programme (MSAP) which was conceptualized during the 2017/2018 fiscal year.

"The Andrew Holness administration has committed to do as much as we can to help to ease the sufferings of persons who fall within the category of poor and destitute," said Portfolio Minister Desmond McKenzie. "We put a new feature in it now, we added a water tank so if there's no water, you have a tank to catch water."

He was speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony for an indigent house at Grant Hill in Lawrence Tavern, St. Andrew on July 29. The one-bedroom residence will be built at a cost of J\$2.5 million. The beneficiary is 47-year-old Michelle Cookhorn.

"I'm very glad. Whether it's one or two, I will be a very happy woman," the single mother of five said between tears. "I feel very happy to be selected for this indigent house, I will take care of it. I prayed hard for this house and now victory is mine."



MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
& COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

///CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

HOTLINE

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☎ 888 754 7792

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covid19@moh.gov.jm | jacovid19@gmail.com



Property Owners, Tenants and Occupiers



In keeping with the new guidelines to **promote social distancing**, we are encouraging you to take advantage of our **online payment platforms**.



As we all work to prevent the spread of the **Coronavirus**, remember to **stay at least 3 feet away from persons** who are **coughing or sneezing** and **wash or sanitize your hands regularly!**



Remember no need to go in office, pay your property tax online and pay on time. Help us to serve you better!

Log on to www.jamaicatax.gov.jm and pay your property tax online and on time!

A message from the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development.

KINGSTON, Jamaica: Property taxpayers are being asked to communicate with the Tax Administration Jamaica (TAJ) and the local municipal corporations regarding their ability to remain compliant.

The TAJ and the Corporations acknowledge and are aware of the current disposition due to the Covid-19 Pandemic; and seek the assistance of property taxpayers to make arrangements for the collection of outstanding monies.

“The current condition has placed our communities at risk, unprecedented in our history and novel in our experience. Given the pervading circumstances your property tax has never been so significant, so crucial and central to the continued maintenance of the way of life in our communities,” read a release from the TAJ.

“We express our appreciation and say thank you for your contribution over the years which have made the provision of certain services to our communities possible, such as the provision of streetlights and garbage collection. Our property taxpayers are some of the most patriotic and resilient Jamaicans and you are amongst our heroes, and for this reason we urge all property taxpayers to continue to support your local communities by paying your property tax.”

Property tax payments can be made in full as well as half-yearly or monthly arrangements agreed upon with the Local Government Tax Unit Desks at Collectorate islandwide.

The TAJ has also implemented several facilities to ensure that the interface for the payment of property tax is accessible and seamless, such as:

- Online payment
- Payment at the Tax Offices
- Outstations
- Mobile Units

Persons may also obtain further information on the tax law and any other tax-related matters by contacting the TAJ Customer Care Centre at 888-TAX-HELP (888-829-4357) or the nearest Tax Office.



STARTING

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 8, 2020

ENDING ON

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 2020.

UPDATED NIGHTLY ISLAND WIDE CURFEW

8:00PM - 5:00AM DAILY

Taxis must take one less passenger
than they are licensed to carry and all are
required to wear masks while in the vehicle.



Effective September 8, 2020 and ending on the morning of September 23, 2020.



Persons 70 years and older
are required to stay at home but are
permitted to leave home **once per day** for
food, exercise or other essentials.

Effective September 8, 2020 and ending on the morning of September 23, 2020.

NUMBER OF PERSONS ALLOWED
TO GATHER HAS BEEN REDUCED TO
15 PERSONS.



Effective September 8, 2020 and ending on the morning of September 23, 2020.

**Church Services allowed to
continue as per protocol**
(social distancing, wearing of masks,
sanitisation and based
on square footage). **No special
services/events must be held.**

**Burials are allowed
15 persons**
• 10 mourners
• 5 officiants/gravesite workers

**Funerals & Parties are still
prohibited as per the
previously announced
protocol.**



Effective September 8, 2020 and ending on the morning of September 23, 2020.

BRIDGEPORT, St Catherine: Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Honourable Desmond McKenzie (second right) is assisted by Raheem Powell (third left) in cutting the ribbon to a J\$3.2 million two-bedroom unit built for Raheem and his family.

The keys to the house, which also contained new furniture, was officially handed over during a ceremony in Watson Grove in Bridgeport, St. Catherine on July 24.

Minister McKenzie offered housing and educational assistance to Powell in November 2018 after his needs were highlighted in the media following his participation in the St. Catherine leg of the Local Government and Community Month's Cross-Island Run.

Raheem has also been enrolled into the Jamaican Foundation For Lifelong Learning (JFLL) programme by the Portmore City Municipality.



From left are Mayor of Portmore, Leon Thomas; Raheem's mother, Ann-Marie Douglas; and Minister of State in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information and Member of Parliament, East Central St. Catherine, Honourable Alando Terrelonge.





KINGSTON, Jamaica: The long-awaited J\$534 million construction of the new four-storey Barnett Street Fire Station in Montego Bay, St. James is in the advanced phase.

Work on the Yallahs Fire Station in St. Thomas as well as the Port Maria Fire Station, St. Mary is also being undertaken at a cost J\$113 million and J\$217 million, respectively.

Construction on the Spanish Town Fire Station and rehabilitation works on the Frankfield and Falmouth Fire Stations have been completed.

Work is progress at the May Pen Fire Station in Clarendon, which is undergoing a J\$30 million rehabilitation.

Fire stations in Black River, St. Elizabeth and Lucea, Hanover have been earmarked for rehabilitation during the 2020/2021 fiscal year at a total cost of J\$39.5M.

Relief is coming for the firefighters in Old Harbour, St. Catherine. A temporary facility will be built on the site of the old stationhouse; and infrastructure improvement is expected to begin before the end of this calendar year.

The Building Act 2018

A new Building Act was passed with a modern legislative framework to reduce the vulnerability of Jamaica's built environment and ensure public safety.

The Building Act 2018 repealed the Kingston and St. Andrew Building Act and the Parish Councils Building Act.

The Act also facilitates the adoption and efficient application of the National Building Code of Jamaica. It also regulates building work and change of building use by requiring permits to protect public safety and public health and other public interest considerations.

It provides for the establishment of a Building Practitioners' Board; A building Advisory Council and a and Building Appeal Tribunal.

Human Services Bill

This Bill is expected to be tabled, debated and passed by Parliament, to replace the Poor Relief Act, abolish the Board of Supervision as an Agency and transfer the functions of the Board to the Ministry. It will also modernize the systems and structures through which human services are provided.

National Solid Waste (Amendment) Bill, 2020

This will allow the National Solid Waste Management Authority to participate in the Metropolitan Parks and Markets Pension Plan.

New Regulations in Progress

- National Solid Waste Management Authority (Disposal of Solid Waste Facilities) Regulations, 2020
- National Solid Waste Management (Public Cleansing) Regulations, 2020
- National Solid Waste Management Authority (Disposal of Hazardous Waste) (Electronic and Electrical) Regulations and Order, 2020
- Building (Service and Enforcement of Notices and Orders) Regulations, 2020
- Building Regulations, 2020
- Disaster Risk Management (Emergency Shelters) Regulations, 2019

The Disaster Risk Management Act was promulgated in 2015 and repealed the Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management Act. The Act establishes a legal and institutional framework for disaster risk management in Jamaica. At its core, is risk identification, risk reduction, disaster preparedness and recovery. In this regard, the Act provides for the following:

- Legal recognition of existing organizational structures such as the Parish Disaster Committees and Zonal Disaster Committees.
- Establishment of a National Disaster Fund
- The right to legally evacuate persons identified to be at risk as a prevention measure
- The identification and description of high risk areas as "specially vulnerable" areas and the necessary action to be taken in respect of such areas

The Act also designates authorised officers with primary responsibility for responding to disasters to specifically include members of the police force, defence force, fire brigade and public health officers. Additionally, the Minister is empowered to require all government ministries, departments and other public bodies to establish liaison officers to work with the Director-General in the disaster management and emergency response planning.

Under the Act, the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) is required to advance disaster preparedness and emergency management measures in Jamaica by facilitating and coordinating the development and implementation of integrated disaster management systems and institute measures where necessary for mitigating disasters.

The Disaster Risk Management Act is available for download from the following websites:

www.localgovjamaica.gov.jm
www.japarlament.gov.jm
www.moj.gov.jm
www.odpem.org