

350,000 Jamaicans to Receive New CARE Grants

APPROXIMATELY 350,000 Jamaicans will benefit from new grants under the Government's COVID-19 Allocation of Resources for Employees (CARE) Programme, which is being expanded by \$5.3 billion.

Vulnerable persons in six categories will receive one-off grants, ranging from \$10,000 to \$18,000, at a cost of \$3.75 billion.

This was announced by Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Dr. the Hon. Nigel Clarke, as he opened the debate on the first 2021/22 Supplementary Estimates of Expenditure in the House of Representatives on October 12.

He informed that automatic grants of \$10,000 will be paid to the heads of all Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH)-beneficiary households; retirees receiving a National Insurance Scheme (NIS) pension at a monthly rate of \$10,000 or less; and all Pay as You Earn (PAYE) employees,



Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Dr. the Hon. Nigel Clarke, addresses the House of Representatives on October 12 during the debate on the first 2021/22 Supplementary Estimates of Expenditure.

whose gross salaries total \$15,000 a week or \$60,000 per month or less.

Self-employed persons, whose monthly statutory income totals \$60,000 or less, will also receive \$10,000. They will, however, be required to apply through the CARE portal.

Unemployed persons, previously receiving Supporting Employees with Transfer of

Cash (SET Cash) grants and who remain out of work as of September 30, 2021, will get an automatic \$18,000 payment.

One-off \$10,000 payments will also be made to beneficiaries of the Government's \$800 million Social Pension Programme, which provides a guaranteed income for vulnerable persons, 75 years and

older, not currently receiving a pension, disability or other retirement benefit or PATH or Poor Relief Programme cash grants, and who do not reside in a state care institution.

The allocations will be dispatched over a period of six months by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in collaboration with the Finance Ministry.

Lower House Passes National Identification System Bill

JAMAICA IS one step closer to implementing a new identification system, following the passage of the National Identification and Registration Act, 2021 in the House of Representatives on October 13.

The National Identification System (NIDS) is designed to verify an individual's identity, facilitate the electronic signing of documents, and securely access a range of

Government services online.

Making his contribution to the Debate on the Bill, Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness said introduction of the new legislation and its accompanying policies will redound to the benefit of all Jamaicans, particularly those who have been denied access to government services in the past because of a lack of legal identification documents.

"We are giving our commitment that this Bill will work in favour of the people."

He pointed out that the new law, which will be voluntary, will not infringe on the rights of Jamaicans.

"We are giving our commitment that this Bill will work in favour of the people. It will respect their rights to privacy, it will be forward leaning in protecting those rights and it will increase the efficiency. It will [also] increase the well-being and welfare of our people," the Prime Minister noted.

Gov't Lifts Travel Restrictions on Trinidad & Tobago and India

THE GOVERNMENT has lifted restrictions on travel to Jamaica from the Republics of Trinidad and Tobago, and India.

This was announced by Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith, who said formal notification was conveyed to the relevant High Commissions, and that airlines have also been notified.

In a Ministry statement, Senator Johnson Smith said as part of the measures under the Disaster Risk Management Act to curtail the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Government imposed restrictions on persons seeking to travel from



Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith

vant data and risk factors, the restrictions on travel from the Republics of India and Trinidad and Tobago have been lifted," she further advised.

"Accordingly, based on relevant data and risk factors, the restrictions on travel from the Republics of India and Trinidad and Tobago have been lifted."

"I am pleased that persons in these countries awaiting the opportunity to visit or return to Jamaica for work, study and business, will be able to make their plans," the Minister said, while indicating that other countries remain under review at this time.

Senator Johnson Smith reminded Jamaican and non-Jamaican travellers that they must receive authorisation to enter the island and follow the terms of the conditional quarantine orders.

The application for Jamaicans is to be found at: <https://jamcovid19.moh.gov.jm/immigration.html> and for non-Jamaicans at <https://www.visitjamaica.com/>



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness making his contribution to the debate on the National Identification and Registration Act 2021 in the House of Representatives on October 13.

143 Outstanding Jamaicans Being Recognised Today

ONE HUNDRED and forty-three Jamaicans making outstanding contributions to nation building will be duly recognised at the annual National Honours and Awards Ceremony, today, as part of activities commemorating Heroes' Day.

Heading them is Professor Donald Jasper Harris, who will receive the country's third-highest honour, the Order of Merit (OM), for outstanding contribution to national development.

Professor Harris is a Jamaican-born economist and Professor Emeritus at Stanford University. He was the first black person to receive tenure in Stanford's Economics Department.

He is the father of the current Vice President of the United States of America (USA), Kamala Harris.

Four prominent Jamaicans

will be conferred with the Order of Jamaica (OJ), the fourth-highest national award.

They are former Speaker of the House of Representatives and former Member of Parliament, Pearnell Patroe Charles, CD, JP, for distinguished public service; former leader of the People's National Party (PNP), Dr. Peter David Phillips, MP, for distinguished and exemplary public service; Ian Kent Levy, CD, for outstanding contribution to business and philanthropy in Jamaica; and Ernest Adheir "Ernie" Ranglin, CD, for exceptional contribution to the development and internationalisation of reggae music.

Thirty-five persons will be conferred with the Order of Meritorious Service (BH{M}) will be conferred on 30 individuals and another 31 will receive the Badge of Honour for Long and Faithful Service (BH{L}).

The Badge of Honour for Gallantry (BH{G}) will be conferred on two civilians: Kyme Matthew Duncan for act of bravery in rescuing his elderly and physically impaired neighbour from a burning building on March 6, 2021, and Dwight Anthony Moore for act of bravery and heroism in saving the life of a policeman under attack on August 19, 2020.

Two members of the JCF, Detective Constable Michael Beckford and Constable Delano Dunn along with firefighter, Dennis Maconey Taylor of the JFB will also receive the Medal of Honour for Gallantry.

The Badge of Honour for Meritorious Service (BH{M}) will be conferred on 30 individuals and another 31 will receive the Badge of Honour for Long and Faithful Service (BH{L}).

THE CABINET of Jamaica officially resumed in-person meetings on October 11, after convening remotely for approximately 10 months.

As part of the stipulations, members presented their coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination cards for inspection by protocol staff of the Office of the Prime Minister.

In his remarks at the start of the session, Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, said while online facilities are useful, they cannot replace the effectiveness of meeting in person.

He maintained that the Government "has to lead the country towards normality and to live with the virus and the disease that it causes".

"The way to do it is for every Jamaican to take the



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) shows his vaccination card during the official resumption of face-to-face Cabinet meetings at the Office of the Prime Minister on October 11.

option of getting vaccinated. The way to do it is for every

Jamaican to comply with the infection prevention and control measures that have been established, which will eventually be relaxed, the higher the level of vaccination," he added.

Mr. Holness noted that for those choosing not to take that option, "the requirement would still be in place for testing, particularly in situations where we have to gather and have to meet in person".

"We need a high level of guarantee that each person in the room or in the space is safe and would not potentially cause a spread or outbreak," he emphasised

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