



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Ministers discuss travel information access from National Security**

Minister of Social Development and Family Services, Senator the Honourable Donna Cox and the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds, Minister of National Security continued their discussions on information sharing between the two Ministries. Under this arrangement, the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services (MSDFS) will access the travel information of social welfare grant recipients.

During a brief meeting on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022, Minister Cox was presented with a letter of authorization from Minister Hinds indicating that the Ministry is now an official recipient of immigration data. The meeting was held at the Ministry's Head Office on St. Vincent Street, Port of Spain, and included executives of both Ministries, key officials from the Immigration Division as well as representatives of both Ministries Legal Department and Information and Communications Technology Department. Also in attendance were representatives from the Social Welfare Division.

The meeting continued prior discussions on arrangements to share travel information from the MNS to the MSDFS with respect to citizens and residents of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago applying for the Senior Citizens' Pension and other social assistance grants offered by the Ministry namely, the Public Assistance Grant, Disability Assistance Grant and the Disability Assistance Grant for Minors.

The meeting also focused on the commencement and receipt of data, the information and communications technology infrastructure needed for a secure and certified platform for data exchange as well as the other information necessary to facilitate the seamless transmission of travel information.

The Ministry anticipates that when implemented, the new arrangement will eliminate a myriad of challenges related to dual citizenship and travel patterns as well as garner real-time responses, thereby reducing the wait time for grant applications.

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services looks forward to advancing discussions towards the finalization of the Memorandum of Understanding that will allow for easier access to real-time, accurate information, as the Ministry forges ahead with helping, empowering and transforming lives.



(l-r) Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, Jacqueline Johnson, Minister Cox, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds, Minister of National Security and PS Gary Joseph of the Ministry of National Security



Minister Cox and the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds, Minister of National Security discuss data exchange after the meeting



Minister Cox and the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds, Minister of National Security