



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services



MEDIA RELEASE

January 15, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Priority: **HIGH**

Minister Cox meets with FCB to discuss Food Support

To ensure that the needs of our clients remain a top priority, Minister of Social Development and Family Services Senator the Honorable Donna Cox met with key representatives of First Citizens Bank today, Monday 15th January 2024, to discuss the way forward for this fiscal, ensuring that there is an ease of doing business for vulnerable citizens.

The meeting was held at the Ministry's Head Office in Port of Spain and included Permanent Secretaries Lenor Baptiste-Simmons and Ryan Ramcharan, Deputy Permanent Secretary Wendy Guy-Hernandez, First Citizens' Banks Group Chief Executive Officer General Manager Karen Darbasie and other representatives of FCB.

Among the items discussed were the recent technical challenges associated with the 2023 Christmas Food Card distribution. The meeting sought to ensure that systems are in place for a seamless process in the future. The Minister also reiterated the Ministry's commitment to digitalizing most of its grant processes to overcome several challenges, including fraudulent activities.

During the meeting, FCB indicated that they too have a duty of care to clients and that the organization will continue to work with the MSDFS to enhance customer experience. Both parties agreed to have further discussions on the way forward with regards to a sustained improvement in service delivery.



Minister Cox meets with FCB including its Group Chief Executive Officer and GM Karen Darbasie to discuss Food Support.