



## MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, July 19, 2024

**PRIORITY: HIGH**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### Amendment to the Public Assistance and Senior Citizens' Pension Acts

The Public is advised that Legal Notices Nos. 125 and 126, made by the Minister of Social Development and Family Services (MSDFS), under section 10 of the Senior Citizens' Pension Act, Chap. 32:02 and section 16 of the Public Assistance Act, Chap. 32:03, the Senior Citizens' Pension (Amendment) Regulations and the Public Assistance (Amendment) Regulation, 2024, were published on 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2024.

These Regulations were amended to limit the encashment of all Public Assistance Grant and Senior Citizens' Pension cheques exceeding the value of \$3,500.00 at supermarkets, groceries and shops throughout Trinidad and Tobago with effect from 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2024.

This measure seeks to deter fraudulent activities, mitigate risks and reduce financial losses to the Treasury. The Public is asked to note that grant cheques exceeding the sum of **\$3500.00** must be encashed at banks or other approved financial institutions, since they are legally bound to utilise stringent verification measures to ensure the validity of cheques and beneficiaries before payment.

Recipients who access these grants via the "Direct Deposit" system will not be affected by this measure.

Therefore, any grant cheque which value exceeds the sum of **\$3500.00** must be encashed at banks or other approved financial institutions, as such institutions utilise more stringent verification measures to ensure the validity of cheques and beneficiaries before payment.

The Ministry has indicated that these amendments to the Regulations seek to ensure that allocated funds are efficiently and effectively administered to whom they are intended, namely the poor and vulnerable. The Ministry assures that every step is being taken to ensure that Public Assistance Grant and Senior Citizens' Pension reach those households who are truly in need, aligning with its commitment to helping, empowering and transforming lives.

For further information about the Ministry's grants and services, persons are encouraged to visit the Ministry's website at <https://social.gov.tt/grants/> or call the MSDFS' Toll-Free hotline at 800-1MSD (1673).

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**For more information:**

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