



MEDIA RELEASE

August 26, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ribbon cut for new Social Services Centre *Minister Cox urges staff to remain courteous at all times*

Minister of Social Development and Family Services Senator the Honourable Donna Cox cut the ribbon today (Monday 26th August, 2024), formally opening the new Port of Spain Social Services Centre. The Centre, now located at 132 Henry Street, Port of Spain, was previously situated at the corner of Duke and Richmond Streets, Port of Spain.

During her featured address, Minister Cox indicated that the move showcases the Ministry's aim to enhance service delivery and improve accessibility for those in need. According to Minister Cox, "This multi-service office highlights the decision of the Ministry to move in a different direction to establish social services that work hand in hand to help, empower, and transform the lives of our poor and vulnerable clients. The collaboration of these divisions is necessary to expand and improve this Ministry's customer service delivery and to enhance convenience and access to the public. I look forward to the Social Welfare Division, National Family Services Division, National Social Development Programme, and the Citizen Engagement and Outreach Unit working together to respond to the needs of eligible poor and vulnerable persons in this country."

She also mentioned that plans are in progress to establish an additional local board in Arima. "The Ministry will be opening an additional centre in Arima for fiscal 2025. Most of our clients who live in the Borough of Arima and environs will now be required to go to the Local Public Assistance Board in Arima. More details will be shared about this in the near future. These changes will positively impact our clients and our staff. We continue to look for buildings that can adequately and comfortably accommodate our staff in Aranguez, Point Fortin, Couva, and Sangre Grande. These are the Local Public Assistance Boards that will be our focus for fiscal 2025," said Minister Cox.

She closed by encouraging staff to be professional, compassionate, and kind to clients at all times, emphasising the importance of maintaining a professional appearance.

In her remarks, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry, Mrs. Lenor Baptiste-Simmons, encouraged staff to continue embodying the true spirit of public service by delivering exceptional service to clients and assured them that the Ministry is steadfast in its commitment to putting people first: nurturing our greatest asset, promoting good governance, and service excellence.

The Social Services Centre accommodates four social service delivery divisions of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services: Social Welfare Division, National Family Services Division, National Social Development Programme, and the Citizen Engagement and Outreach Service Unit.

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Minister Cox joined by Permanent Secretary Mrs. Lenor Baptiste-Simmons (l) and Deputy Permanent Secretary Mrs. Wendy Guy-Hernandez (r), cut the ribbon, formally opening the Port of Spain Social Services Centre.



Minister Cox greets staff as she tours the Social Services Centre in Port of Spain.



Minister Cox joined by Permanent Secretary Mrs. Lenor Baptiste-Simmons (l) and Deputy Permanent Secretary Mrs. Wendy Guy-Hernandez (r) cut the ribbon, formally opening the Port of Spain Social Services Centre.



Minister Cox greets clients following the formal opening of the Port of Spain Social Services Centre on August 27, 2024.