



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

## Ministry of Social Development and Family Services

### MEDIA RELEASE

November 22, 2024

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **Minister Cox lauds the Launch of Persons with Disabilities Parking Permit Regulations**

**San Fernando** — Minister of Social Development and Family Services, Senator the Honourable Donna Cox endorsed the launch of the new Persons with Disabilities Parking Permit Regulations. The Minister addressed the event which was held at South Park Plaza, San Fernando, earlier today, Friday November 22, 2024. This launch marks a significant milestone in the nation's journey towards greater inclusion and accessibility for all citizens.

In her remarks, Minister Cox highlighted the global and local importance of this initiative, stating that according to the United Nations, over one billion people worldwide live with some form of disability, with 80% of them residing in developing countries like Trinidad and Tobago. She added that as part of the nation's commitment to the U.N Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the new parking regulations are a key step towards fulfilling the international obligation of increasing accessibility to public spaces.

The Minister emphasized that this launch is more than just a regulatory update, as it represents the Government's moral duty to remove barriers that hinder the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in society. By addressing these challenges, she noted, another crucial step has been taken towards achieving the first pillar of our Vision 2030 strategic plan — putting people first.

Minister Cox spoke to the importance of accessibility in allowing persons with disabilities to live with dignity and independence. She stated that, "Access to public spaces, services, and workspaces is essential for persons with disabilities, and it has long been a significant barrier in urban areas." She continued, "this initiative reflects our commitment to empowering persons with disabilities, ensuring they are not excluded from vital aspects of society simply because of physical limitations."

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services provides significant financial support annually to persons with disabilities, funding resources and relief to address their unique needs. The Minister reflected on incidents where persons with disabilities often face exclusion from buildings due to a lack of accessible infrastructure, or encounter able-bodied individuals occupying designated parking spaces.

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“Today, we are taking action to ensure that persons with disabilities who are drivers or passengers will have access to secure, accessible parking spaces,” she stated, as “this is an essential step in removing obstacles to mobility and supporting the autonomy of all citizens.”

The new regulations aim to ease the daily challenges faced by persons with disabilities and underscore the Government’s broader vision of building a more just, compassionate, and fair society. By working together across ministries, the government continues to promote inclusivity, ensuring that all citizens, regardless of ability, have the opportunity to thrive.

For more information, please contact:

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Minister of Social Development and Family Services, Senator the Honourable Donna Cox delivers remarks at the launch



(Left to Right) Minister of Rural Development and Local Government, Faris Al Rawi, Minister of Works and Transport, Rohan Sinanan, Minister of Social development and Family Services, Donna Cox, and Minister in the Ministry of Works and Transport, Richie Sookhai.



(L to R) Senator Richie Sookhai, Minister in the Ministry of Works and Transport; Senator Donna Cox, Minister of Social Development and Family Services; Mr Bhawani Persad, Vice President of the Consortium of Disabilities Organisation; Senator Rohan Sinanan, Minister of Works and Transport and Mr. Anthony Rahael, CEO, South Park Plaza.



Works and Transport Minister, Senator the Hon. Rohan Sinanan and Social Development, Senator the Hon. Minister Donna Cox, chat with Sudhir Ramessar, President of the TT Paralympics Organisation