

ENSURING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

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The Legal Aid Council
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Services offered by the Legal Aid Council

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**“Injustice
anywhere is a
threat to justice
everywhere.”**

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Every person who is detained or remanded at a police station lockup whether charged or not, may be granted legal aid. Once you have asked the police to contact a Duty Counsel on your behalf, they should wait until Counsel arrives before questioning you.

The Duty Counsel is an Attorney who will:

- Attend at the place where you are being detained or remanded and give you legal advice;
- Attend an identification parade where required;
- Make bail application on your behalf to the police or to the courts;
- Appear for you on your first appearance in court;
- Represent you during your Question and Answer or Identification Parade, session by the police.

The duties of the Duty Counsel end after your first appearance at court if the matter reaches that far. After that you must apply for legal aid if you believe that you need further assistance.

To apply for Legal Aid:

Complete an application form at any Legal Aid Clinic, Court's Office or the Legal Aid Council. If you are in court, indicate to the Judge that you are unable to afford an Attorney and request an assignment of an Attorney.

The Legal Aid Council Launches Website

After several months of preparation and design, The Legal Aid Council (LAC) had the launch of its website on Wednesday, September 4, 2019 at the Ministry of Justice. The website was developed in house and is the latest addition to the Councils social media platform.

The website will allow for clients, partners, colleagues and the general public to easily find information on the Legal Aid Council and links to other justice services.

The website can be accessed at: <https://legalaidcouncil.moj.gov.jm>



Executive Director of the LAC Mr. Hugh Faulkner AKA 'Hugo Barrington' entertaining guests at the LAC Website



Minister Chuck gives his support at the LAC Website Launch.



Guests at the LAC Website Launch.



Miss Kerona Spence and Miss Mishka Anderson at the LAC



Mrs. Keisha Buchanan and Ms. Wendy Rose at the LAC Website Launch.



Guests at the LAC's Website Launch being entertained by 'Hugo Barrington'.

Just-in-Time Training

The Just-In-Time Training programme is an initiative of The Legal Aid Council that targets the staff of the Courts and Police Stations to ensure that all Legal Aid Services are delivered efficiently and in accordance with the **Legal Aid Act**. Our recent visits took us to the St. Thomas Parish Court Holden at Port Maria in July, the Manchester Parish Court Holden at Mandeville in August and the St. Ann Parish Court Holden at St. Ann's Bay in October.

During these sessions there is an overview of the roles and functions of The Legal Aid Council and the offences which are covered by the Council are highlighted. The Legal Aid forms and their purposes are discussed and are filled out according to various scenarios to ensure accuracy in the gathering of information.

Additionally, our stakeholders are reminded that the Duty Counsel services are free, and that for court assignments there is no mandatory fee. A means test will determine if a contribution is payable by our clients for court matters and if yes, the client will be asked to pay the agreed amount. The Legal Aid Council through this initiative wants to ensure access to quality justice for all.



Members of the Legal Aid Council and members of the St. Thomas Court Staff who participated in the St. Thomas, Just in Time Training.

Mrs. Keisha Buchanan

Mrs. Keisha Buchanan is the Human Resource and Administration Manager at the Legal Aid Council. She has been a Human Resource Officer in the Ministry of Justice since 2006, and has over the years gained a wealth of knowledge and experience in this field. In 2012, Mrs. Buchanan acted as Court Administrator for the Corporate Area Civil Court, Traffic Court, Coroner's Court, Tax Court and the Special Coroner's Court.

She is a proud graduate of the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean where she received a Bachelor's Degree in Human Resource Management. In her free time, she enjoys watching movies and participating in 5K run/walks.

"Time is too short to waste it on being unkind to people."



States of Public Emergency (SOE)

Hanover SOE

On May 3, 2019, Mr. Hugh Faulkner visited the Barnett Street Police Station where persons detained under the Hanover State of Emergency are being held and conducted interviews with the detainees.

Westmoreland SOE

On May 3, 2019, Miss Kerona Spence visited the Negril Police Station where persons detained under the Westmoreland Public State of Emergency are being held and conducted interviews with The detainees.

St. Catherine and Clarendon SOE

On September 14, 2019 three (3) attorneys from the Legal Aid Council visited the Tamarind Farm Correctional Centre, where detainees under the St. Catherine State of Public Emergency are being held. There were sixty-seven Detainees of which the Attorneys interviewed fifty-one (51). The Legal Aid Council has also made contact with family members of detained persons and further ask that members of the public make contact with us when family members are detained. Twenty-five (25) detainees had medical conditions and were treated on September 14, 2019.



Jamaica has over five thousand seven hundred (5700) districts of which more than an estimated 90% have no access within a fifty-mile radius to a Legal Aid Clinic. However, since January 2017 the Legal Aid Council's Justice Mobile Unit has visited over 213 communities and has served over four thousand and forty-two (4042) residents in these communities.

The Legal Aid Council's Justice Mobile Unit is mandated under the Ministry of Justice limb of the Citizen Security and Justice Programme (CSJP), to visit at least fifty (50) CSJP communities islandwide yearly, in addition to over forty (40) communities that the Council includes. The Justice Mobile Unit has helped to bridge the accessibility gap to justice services islandwide.



Legal Officer, Kerona Spence, giving legal advice at the Family Planning Board 'Respect Tour' at Montpellier, Sandy Bay, Hanover.



Mr. Ted Palmer, Legal Research Officer, Legal Consultant, Mrs. Shara-Kay Dacres Moore, and Executive Director, Mr. Hugh Faulkner giving legal advice at LAC Justice Fair at Homestead, St. Catherine.



Mrs. Kaydeon Henry Campbell preparing items for items for Justice Fair.



Legal Consultant, Mrs. Shara-Kay Dacres Moore, Legal Officer, Miss Kerona Spence and Mr. Hugh Faulkner giving legal advice at LAC Justice Fair at the Half-Way-Tree Transport Centre.

LAC ThRoWbAcK

Thirty-year-old Junior Christie, who was in November 2011, charged for stealing \$350 worth of ackees from King's House received assistance from the Legal Aid Council and was represented by the executive Director, Mr. Hugh Faulkner at the Resident Magistrate court (as it them was).

Mr. Faulkner was successful in securing bail for Mr. Christie. Previously, Mr. Christie who was unrepresented, had pleaded guilty at court and was sentenced to three months in prison by then Senior Resident Magistrate Judith Pusey. The length of the custodial sentence resulted in public outcry.

Save the Date:

November 26, 2019 - Training session for St. Mary Justices of the Peace and Police Officers

November 28, 2019 - Justice Fair, St. Mary

For more information on the Legal Aid Council visit our website at:

<https://legalaidcouncil.moj.gov.jm>

Facebook: [LegalaidcouncilJA](https://www.facebook.com/LegalaidcouncilJA)

Twitter: [@Legal_Aid_JA](https://twitter.com/Legal_Aid_JA)

Instagram: [legalaidcounciljamaica](https://www.instagram.com/legalaidcounciljamaica)