

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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"Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are."

Benjamin Franklin.

NOTE: 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 Legal Aid Council enlist various Attorneys to assist individuals with criminal matters. The services offered are listed below:

Duty Counsel: A Duty Counsel is an Attorney-at-Law who will:

- Among other things, visit the location an individual is being detained or arrested and give legal advice, attend identification parades, make a bail application and attend the first Court hearing.

Court Representation: The assigned Attorney-at-Law will:

- Appear before the court on an individual's behalf, on or after the first court hearing date and represent that said person up until the conclusion of the trial proceedings.

NOTE: All services provided by the Attorneys empaneled by the Legal Aid Council are free. Terms and condition apply.

- 1. Can I get an Attorney from the Legal Aid Council to represent me in a Family, Land, or Civil?**
Unfortunately, the Legal Aid Council is currently authorized to provide/assign representation (an Attorney) for only criminal matters. Therefore, an attorney cannot be assigned for land, family or any other civil matter. The Council, through the Legal Officers on the Mobile Unit, provide legal advice and information in relation to civil matters and any other legal matter.
- 2. Do I need an Attorney to represent me in Court?**
Generally, it is always highly recommended that an individual seek to retain an attorney or apply for legal aid to represent him/her during court proceedings as an Attorney is equipped with the requisite expertise and experience to handle matters before the Court. However, where persons are unrepresented, Judges have a duty to assist them in presenting their case to the Courts.
- 3. How do I become the registered owner of the Land I now occupy?**
To become the owner of a piece of land, you must be registered on the title as the owner at National Land Agency (NLA). There are four ways an individual can have his or her name registered as a land owner at NLA, namely Transmission of Land Application, Transfer of Land Application, Adverse Possession Application and First Registration Application. All the applications involve various legal principles, for more information please contact an Attorney-at-Law, the Legal Aid Council or NLA.
- 4. How do I get a Divorce?**
To obtain a Divorce an individual would need to file a document in the Supreme Court called a Petition for Dissolution of Marriage, to initiate divorce proceedings. Thereafter a series of documents are required to be filed and court appearances may be required depending on the circumstances. Due to legal complexity of the proceedings, it is highly recommended that the whole divorce process is handled by an Attorney-at-Law.
- 5. How do I get an expungement?**
Expungement is done by way of an application to the Ministry of Justice. It is recommended that a person first contact the Legal Aid Council or the Ministry of Justice for more information. Note it is important to ascertain whether the conviction against an individual can be expunged as well as the procedure for the application.

Homage to our Legal Intern

It was with a flurry of emotion that members of staff, on 12th of August, 2022 proudly sent off our Legal Intern Ms. Sashuana Butler, with a small celebration, following the conclusion of her internship with the Legal Aid Council. Ms. Butler, who joined the Legal Aid Council on or about June 2022, graciously undertook her time at the Council, with the hopes of completing her mandated in service training for the Norman Manley Law School. From each and every member of staff we wish you great success academic studies and the work world thereafter.



Here we see Ms. Sashuana Butler and Mr. Young, another valued member of staff, sharing one of those lovely Christian side hug.

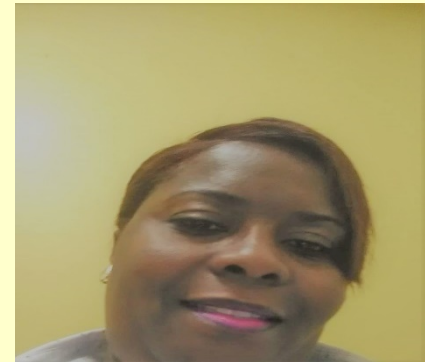
Ms. Moesha Pickett

Ms. Moesha Pickett is currently operating as an Administrative Intern, in doing so, she operates as one of the faces of the Legal Aid Council interacting with and providing assistance for legal aid applicants, on a daily basis. Her secondary education was fostered by the Old Harbor High School. Thereafter she matriculated to the University of the West Indies, where she studied for and acquired a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and Criminology. She hopes to one day join the legal fraternity.



Ms. Racquel Baugh

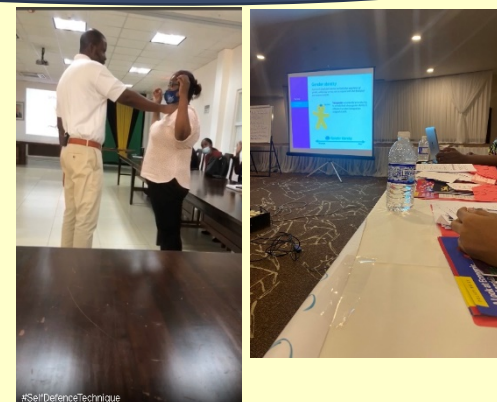
Ms. Racquel Baugh is our Customer Service Representative who, among other things, facilitates the smooth transition from client to the assigned Attorney. The experience and zeal she translates into her daily duties was garnered through the education she received at the Saint Mary's College and the Excelsior Community College. She hopes to further her education at the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean in the area of Human Resource Management sector.



Creating a well-rounded team

The Legal Aid Council in an effort to create a well-rounded staff has exposed its members to various training sessions to ensure staff members are capable of effectively serving legal aid applicants of varying backgrounds. Such training sessions include:-

- Justice Training Institute's Training on the Jamaican Legal System;
- Self Defense Workshop;
- Sensitization Workshops; and
- National Land Agency Workshops.



In January 2017 the Legal Aid Council's launched the Mobile Justice Unit, a project instituted to provide free legal advice and information to persons in targeted communities across Jamaica. The Council has continued to keep a steady presence in communities across Jamaica, while providing legal advice to an average of 70 persons each month.

The Mobile Justice Unit operated by the Legal Aid Council under the aegis of the Ministry of Justice visits at least seventy-two (72) Restorative Justice Centres and communities island wide yearly. The Mobile Justice Unit has continued to bridge the accessibility gap to justice services islandwide.



Ms. Rose, member of staff of the Legal Aid Council assisting at the Saint Elizabeth Justice Fair 2022.



Presentation at the Saint Elizabeth Justice Fair 2022, to which members of the Legal Aid Council were participants.



Executive Director, Mrs. D. Watson, advising clients and holding down the forth at Saint Elizabeth Justice Fair 2022.

Suggestions?

The Legal Aid Council constantly seek ways to improve its services in providing justice to all and in doing so is inviting suggestions on how we can better assist members of the public.

Additionally, if you would like to see anything included in the next issue please feel free to contact us by calling (876)948-6999, leaving an email at aid.legal@moj.gov.jm, or leaving a message on our Instagram page [legal.aid.council](https://www.instagram.com/legal.aid.council).

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

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

Instagram: [legal.aid.council](https://www.instagram.com/legal.aid.council)

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