



## A CIVIC EDUCATION HANDBOOK

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# Message

## from the Political Ombudsman

A strong country where citizens feel empowered and at the centre, depends on civic engagement built on knowledge, trust and self-confidence. The dynamism and innovation of our young people have brought global glory to Jamaica.

This publication addresses Jamaica's structure, goals and citizenship rules under the deft knowledgeable hand of our researcher and writer Mrs. Lena Buckle-Scott, an educator and civic exemplar.

Jamaica has the potential for greatness in all spheres to meet the individual and collective needs of the citizenry, it is important for all of us to know what services are available, what our rights are, what institutions exist to serve us and the markers of good governance and the rule of law. Honour to those who have passed laws and established benchmarks for good citizenship.

We hope this book will contribute to public knowledge, help us build trust, exercise our franchise, be tolerant of differences and proudly say I am Jamaican.

**Hon. Donna Parchment Brown, CD, JP, Notary Public**

Political Ombudsman  
March 15, 2022



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## Abstract

It has been said that active civic engagement is the bedrock of a healthy democracy. Hence, the primary goal of this Civic Education Handbook is the awakening of the social consciousness of Jamaicans, particularly in the age group of 15 – 30 years old. The focus is on their rights and social responsibility, governance, the relationship between themselves and the government and very importantly, their role as democratic, responsible, participatory and patriotic citizens.

Readers will be exposed to ideas and concepts related to gaining understanding of their civic responsibilities, the political and electoral processes, as well as, the governance structures in Jamaica. A brief look at the Jamaican Constitution is provided along with insights on the pillars of good governance and key institutions which assist in the smooth operation of the country's affairs. The Civic Education Handbook introduces its readers to a study of the importance of civic participation, the workings and significance of government and society.

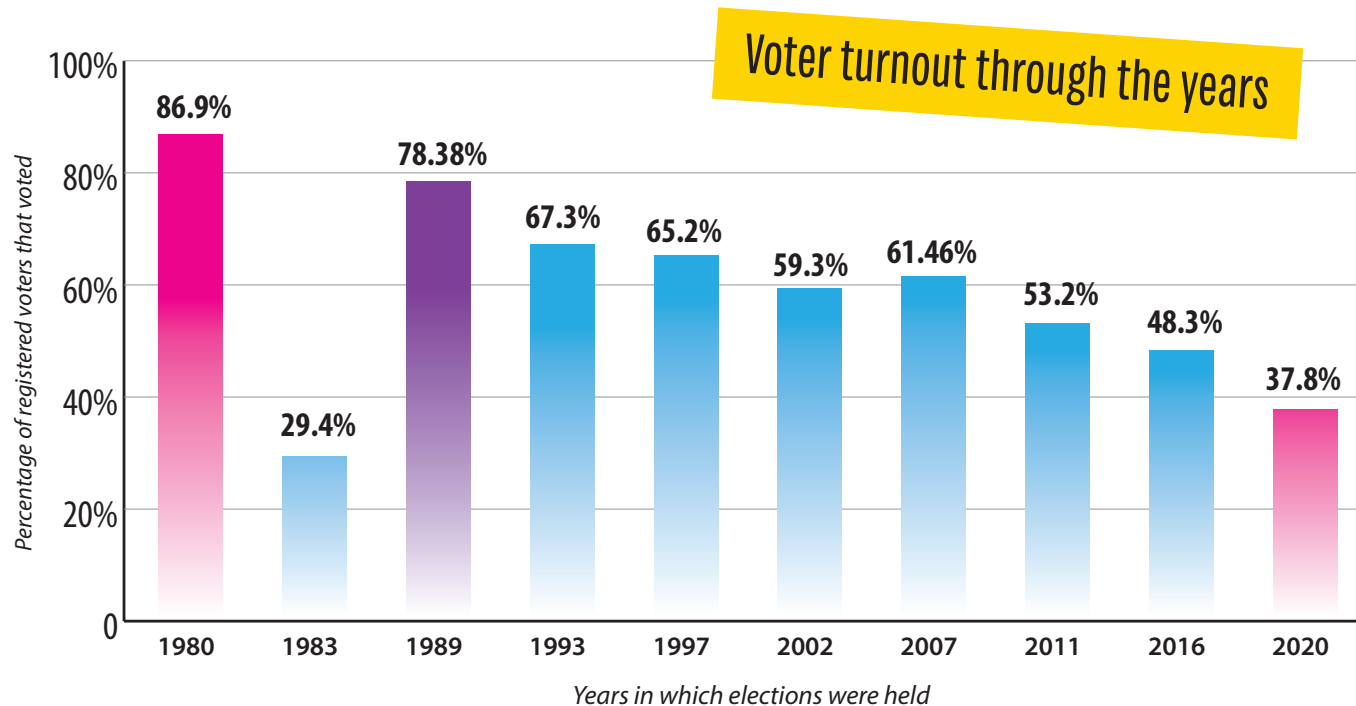
A summary at the end of each chapter along with interactive activities will assist the reader with self-assessment or sharing knowledge with others.

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# Introduction

Voter participation in Jamaica's national elections has declined. Analysts have posited that there is a definite correlation between voter apathy and low voter turnout at the polls. Voter turnout has been declining steadily since the high-water mark of 86.9% in 1980 down to the 37.8% for 2020.





## Trends

The 2020 General Election Campaign Review, conducted by the Political Ombudsman, participants agreed that there has been a trend towards disinterest in the democratic process in Jamaica. This downward trend has been attributed to:

- Citizens' lack of respect for the political system;
- Perceived lack of integrity in the proceedings;
- Withdrawal of many citizens disaffected with the process
- COVID-19 risk;
- Failure of politicians to stimulate interest of youth and other electors; and
- Campaigning targeted towards the base supporters of the political parties.

There is concern that this trend,

could undermine the foundations of our democracy. Participation in the government of a country is a critical aspect of democracy.

## Democracy

Democracy is a system in which all the members of the society have the opportunity to be involved in making decisions about its affairs. In a democratic society, it includes voting to elect representatives to a parliament and local authorities.

All eligible Jamaicans should vote. By voting, citizens actively participate in the crucial process of determining the governance structure. Democracy can also be thought of as the power of the people. It can also be described as a government on behalf of all the people, according to the will of the people. Abraham Lincoln, an American President, stated that democracy is "government of the people, by the people, for the people."

After the September 3, 2020 General Election campaign in Jamaica, the Political Ombudsman hosted the first Political Campaign Review in Jamaica's political history. Fora were held with participants from political parties; civil society; the Political Awareness and Respect Initiative (PARI); government entities; academia; the Jamaica Constabulary Force; faith-based groups; various youth organizations; media and others.

## Civic education

Findings and recommendations for action emerged from this review. The 2020 General Election Campaign Review Report, identified the need for ongoing civic and political education.

The Political Ombudsman accepted the challenge to assist in providing civic education. This handbook examines and addresses the democratic, participatory and patriotic responsibilities of Jamaican citizens.

*I pledge my  
heart forever...*



# Chapter 1 My Civic Responsibilities



## In this chapter:

- Civic responsibilities
- Jamaica's national signs and symbols.

Your civic responsibilities are those duties which you perform that lead to improvements in your community and help to make your community and country a better place in which to live, work and raise your family. Showing respect for National Signs and Symbols, the singing/reciting of the National Anthem and the Pledge are also a part of your civic responsibilities. These underpin the values and mission of Jamaica.

## JAMAICA'S MOTTO

Out of Many  
One People

## National Anthem

Eternal Father bless our land,  
Guard us with Thy Mighty Hand,  
Keep us free from evil powers,  
Be our light through countless hours.  
To our Leaders, Great Defender,  
Grant true wisdom from above.  
Justice, Truth be ours forever,  
Jamaica, Land we love.  
Jamaica, Jamaica,  
Jamaica land we love.

Teach us true respect for all,  
Stir response to duty's call, strengthen  
us the weak to cherish,  
Give us vision lest we perish.  
Knowledge send us Heavenly Father,  
Grant true wisdom from above.  
Justice, Truth be ours forever,  
Jamaica, land we love.  
Jamaica, Jamaica,  
Jamaica land we love.

### Code for use of the National Anthem

*With the exception of those who are physically challenged, all persons should stand at attention, (i.e., heels together) at the playing of the National Anthem and men should remove their hats.*

*The first verse of the National Anthem should be played or sung as specifically*

*designated on the arrival of dignitaries such as the Governor-General or the Prime Minister.*

*The National Anthem may be sung or played at public gatherings.*

*Singing of the National Anthem should form part of the ceremony of raising and lowering of the National Flag at the beginning and end of term in courts, in schools and at Independence celebrations.*

## MY CIVIC RESPONSIBILITIES

### The National Pledge

Before God and all mankind, I pledge the love and loyalty of my heart, the wisdom and courage of my mind, the strength and vigour of my body in the service of my fellow citizens; I promise to stand up for Justice, Brotherhood and Peace, to work diligently and creatively, to think generously and honestly, so that Jamaica may, under God, increase in beauty, fellowship and prosperity, and play her part in advancing the welfare of the whole human race.

#### Code for use of the National Pledge

*For use at the beginning and end of the school term, and on other special occasions.*

### The Coat of Arms



The Jamaican Coat of Arms was granted to Jamaica on February 3, 1661 under Royal Warrant. It was the first British colony to receive its own arms.

It was originally designed by William Sandcroft who then became the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1677. It was later modified in 1906, 1957 and 1962.

The motto is represented on the Coat of Arms, showing a male and female

member of the Taino tribe standing on either side of a shield which bears a red cross with five golden pineapples.

The crest shows a Jamaican crocodile mounted on the Royal Helmet of the British Monarchy and mantling.

The Jamaican Coat of Arms appears on all of our bank notes and coins as well as on all national documents. It is also used, in many respects, as the final seal of governmental approval.

**The model Jamaican citizen is engaged in civic activities, including their right to vote. Such a citizen, strives to adhere to, practice and share with others, the following:**

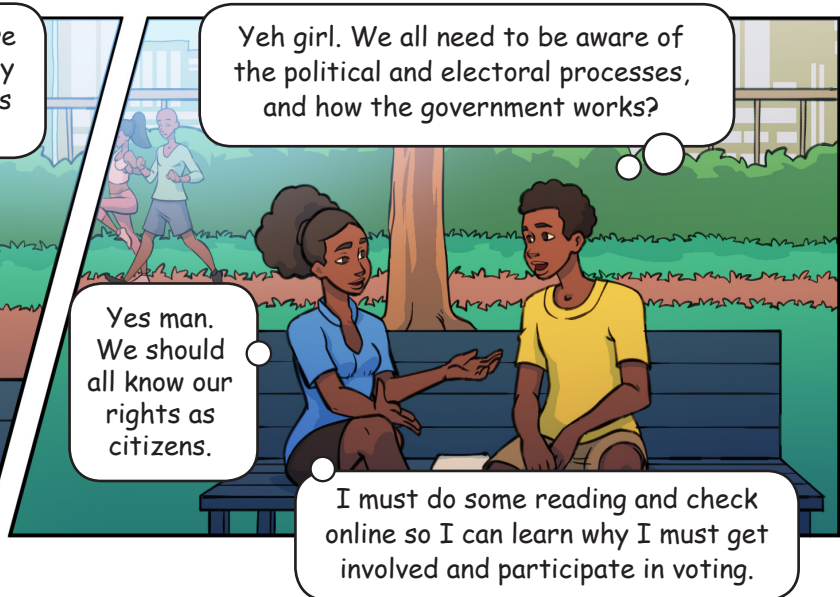
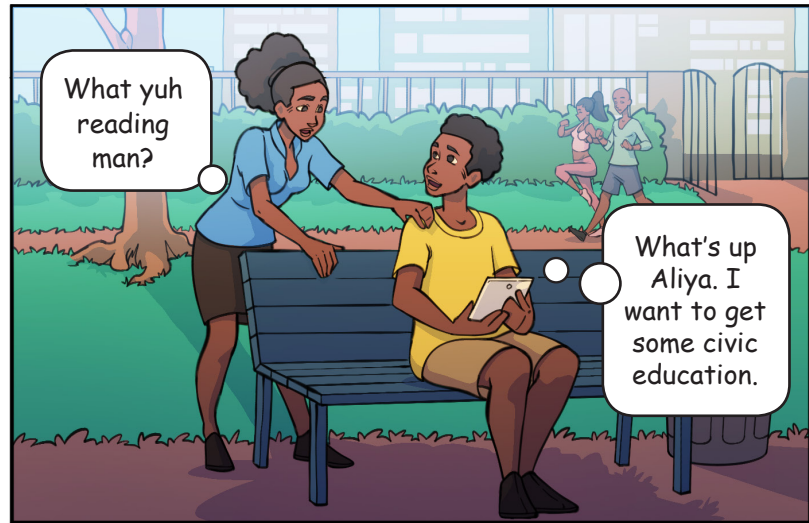
- Being law abiding - obeying the laws, rules and regulations as established by the country.
- Co-operating and partnering with lawful agencies such as the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) and the Political Ombudsman in the maintenance of the rule of law and order.
- Respecting the beliefs and opinions of others.
- Participating in the electoral process.
- Participating in civic activities, observances and celebrations.
- Being patriotic - show respect for national symbols, such as the Jamaican Flag, Coat of Arms and being respectful at the singing of the National Anthem.
- Taking responsibility for the environment - protect and safeguard the environment, including plants, animals and marine life.
- Paying taxes.
- Declaring income honestly to the relevant and lawful agencies to satisfy all tax obligations.
- Fostering national unity and living in harmony with others.
- Respecting the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of others, and generally, refraining from doing acts detrimental to the welfare of other persons.
- Volunteering and contributing to the well-being of your community.



### Summary

- Civic responsibilities are those duties which individuals perform that lead to improvements in the community and country.
- Acts of civic responsibility include, among others; adherence to the rule of law, volunteerism and showing respect for National Signs and Symbols.







# Activities

**A)** What do you consider to be the responsibilities of a citizen?

**B)** Answer the following Multiple Choice Questions. Choose the letter option that gives the best answer.

**1. Which line is NOT found in the national pledge? (page 8)**

- a. I pledge the love and loyalty of my heart
- b. the strength and weakness of my mind
- c. I promise to stand up for Justice, Brotherhood and Peace
- d. advancing the welfare of the whole human race

**2. Which animal is at the top of the Coat of Arms? (page 8)**

- a. A humming bird
- b. An iguana
- c. A crocodile
- d. A snake

**3. Which of the following actions are you supposed to do when the National Anthem is being played? (page 7)**

- a. Raise your hand in a salute
- b. Close your eyes
- c. Wipe your tears
- d. Stand at attention



# *Chapter 2*

## Brief History of the Political and Electoral Processes in Jamaica



### **This chapter will cover:**

- Significant milestones in Jamaica's journey to self-government
- Universal Adult Suffrage
- Voting Age

Jamaica was first inhabited by Tainos. It was invaded and colonized by the Spanish and later became a British colony after the Spanish were defeated by the British. Jamaica gained political independence from Britain on August 6, 1962. Independence meant, that as a country, Jamaica has full control over its internal and foreign affairs.

### Universal Adult Suffrage

In 1944, Universal Adult Suffrage made it possible for citizens, twenty-one years (21 Years) and over to vote. Prior to Universal Adult Suffrage, those who were elected, ruled without the authority of the majority of the population and sometimes for the benefit of only a very small percentage of the population. The majority of the population was enslaved up to 1838 without access to education or land ownership.

The Electoral Law of 1884 shaped the electoral system in Jamaica up to 1944. There were restrictions which made it impossible for some individuals to vote. Some of these restrictions which existed prior to 1944 are summarized as follows:

- The tax requirement to vote was 10 shillings in 1887.
- A literacy test for voting was

mandated in 1893.

- Individuals had to be owners of land and pay taxes before they were granted the right to vote
- Women were granted the right to vote in 1919 and were able to vote in the General Elections of 1920. However, whereas men had to be 21 years old or older, women had to be 25 years or older and pay taxes of at least two pounds.

In 1976, citizens eighteen (18) years and over became eligible to vote in Jamaica's national elections. Jamaica has a system of government known as a Constitutional Monarchy with a democratic parliament. In a Constitutional Monarchy, the government is formed by elected officials and the head of state is a Monarch. In Jamaica's case, the head of state is the Queen of England,

represented here by the Governor General.

The type of Electoral System used in Jamaica is called first-past-the-post. This means that the successful candidate (representing a constituency) at the polls in a National Election will become the Member of Parliament for that constituency. The political group/party that wins the most constituencies, then forms the government. It must be noted that only registered political parties and independent (individual) candidates can contest elections in Jamaica.

For the Local Government in each Parish, Councillors represent Divisions. The party which wins the most Divisions will form the majority in the Municipality and will name the Mayor, except for the Municipality of Portmore where the Mayor is directly elected.



## Significant milestones in Jamaica's independence journey.

**1738 & 1796:** 1st & 2nd Maroon treaties with Britain to end the Maroon Wars.

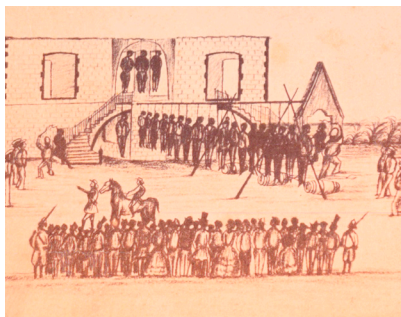


**1834: End of Slavery** and the start of the period of Apprenticeship for the ex-slaves.

**1838: Full Emancipation and end of British enslavement.**



**1865: Morant Bay Uprising:** Hanging of the Rt. Excellent George William Gordon and the Rt. Excellent Paul Bogle and hundreds of others.



*Courtesy of the National Museums of Jamaica*

**1866 - 1885:** Full Crown Colony Government.

**1914:** The Universal Negro Improvement Association is founded by the Rt. Excellent Marcus Mosiah Garvey and Amy Ashwood thereby strengthening the path for the black man to chart his own destiny.

**1928:** The Rt. Excellent Marcus Mosiah Garvey forms the People's Political Party in Jamaica, laying the foundation for political independence.



**May 2, 1938:** Organized work stoppage – labour riots started in Frome, Westmoreland which spread to other parts of Jamaica.

**September 18, 1938:** The People's National Party (PNP) is launched at the Ward Theatre by the Rt. Excellent Norman Washington Manley.

**May 23, 1938:** The BITU is formed creating a platform for labour rights and the advocacy for sovereignty.



[www.bitujamaica.org](http://www.bitujamaica.org)

**August 5, 1938:** The West India Royal Commission/Moyne Commission dispatched from London to investigate and report on the disturbances. The Commission made several recommendations in their report, chief of which included:

- Universal Adult Suffrage – the right of all citizens over the age of 21 to vote
- A fully elected House of Representatives with a Speaker
- An Executive Council or Cabinet



**July 8, 1943:** The Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) is launched at the Ward Theatre by the Rt. Excellent Sir Alexander Bustamante.

**November 20, 1944:** Universal Adult Suffrage – adults over 21 entitled to vote.

**1944:** General Elections, the JLP, led by the Rt. Excellent Sir Alexander Bustamante won majority of the 32 seats in the House of Representatives.

**1947:** The Rt. Excellent Sir Alexander Bustamante becomes the first Mayor of Kingston.



(c) 1972 The Gleaner Co. (Media) Ltd.

**1953:** Ministerial System of Government introduced, giving the government a Cabinet. Elected representatives were appointed ministers with portfolio responsibilities.

**May 5, 1953:** The Rt. Excellent Sir Alexander Bustamante becomes the first Chief Minister.

**1955:** General Elections, the PNP winning majority of the seats and the Rt. Excellent Norman Washington Manley became Chief Minister.

**February 23, 1958:** Jamaica becomes a member territory of the West Indies Federation.



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**July 28, 1959:** The PNP returns to power after 1959 elections with the Rt. Excellent Norman Washington Manley becoming Premier.

**September 19, 1961:** Referendum held on Jamaica's membership in the West Indies Federation. The vote was 54% against the federation, consequently, Jamaica withdraws.

**October 17, 1961:** A Bipartisan Parliamentary Committee established to prepare a proposal for the drafting of a Constitution.

**February 27, 1962:** The Constitution order in Council of British Parliament is ratified by the Jamaican Parliament. The new Constitution provided for full control over internal and foreign affairs.

**April 10, 1962:** The JLP wins the general elections and the Rt. Excellent Sir Alexander Bustamante becomes the first Prime Minister.

**August 5, 1962:** At midnight, the British Flag is lowered and the Jamaican Flag is hoisted. This symbolized Jamaica becoming an independent nation within the British Commonwealth.



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**August 6, 1962:** This day is established as Independence Day and is to be celebrated as a Public Holiday.

**August 1, 1991:** Instituted as a National Holiday commemorating Emancipation of enslaved Africans in Jamaica and across the British colonies in 1838.

## Summary



## Activities

- Jamaica became politically independent from Britain on August 6, 1962
- The majority of Jamaicans did not have the right to vote until Universal Adult Suffrage changed this in 1944
- Since 1976, citizens eighteen (18) years and over are eligible to vote in Jamaica's national elections
- The head of the Government of Jamaica is a monarch, the Queen of Jamaica Queen Elizabeth II, who resides in England.
- Queen Elizabeth II, The Monarch is represented by the Governor General who resides in Jamaica
- Jamaica is a Constitutional Monarchy with a democratic parliamentary system of government.

**A)** Answer the following Multiple Choice Questions.  
Choose the letter option that gives the best answer.

**1.Name the type of Electoral System used in Jamaica? (page 13)**

- a. Republic
- b. Proportional Representation
- c. First-past-the-post
- d. Gerrymandering

**2. Universal Adult Suffrage was granted in? (page 15)**

- a. 1738
- b. 1865
- c. 1944
- d. 1962

**3. In what year was the Constitution ratified by the Jamaican Parliament? (page 15)**

- a. 1963
- b. 1980
- c. 1958
- d. 1962

**4. Who was the first Prime Minister of Jamaica? (page 15)**

- a. Sir Alexander Bustamante
- b. Hon. Edward Seaga
- c. Hon. Portia Simpson Miller
- d. Hon. Michael Norman Manley

**B)** How should an eligible citizen engage in the democratic selection of its government? **(page 13)**

# *Chapter 3*



**Voter  
Education**



### This chapter will cover:

- The importance of the democratic process of voting
- How citizens can participate in Jamaica's democratic, political and electoral processes
- How citizens can hold the government accountable
- The rule of law, fairness and transparency
- The steps to becoming an eligible voter

## VOTER EDUCATION

The three basic components of civic education are civic knowledge, civic skills and civic behaviour or disposition.

- **Civic knowledge** includes a fundamental understanding of the structure and function of government, human rights, civic responsibilities, and the processes by which laws and regulatory policies are made.
- **Civic skills** relate to the engagement of individuals who are working to make a difference in the civic life of their community. It also includes the values and motivation of the individual to make a difference in their community through volunteerism and giving national service. Civic behaviour focuses on the personal and political responsibilities of citizens.
- **Civic behaviour** also speaks to respecting human dignity, participating in civic affairs in an informed and effective manner and participating in the democratic political and electoral processes.

You are already demonstrating a responsibility to develop your civic knowledge and awareness. Individuals who are educated, civically and

politically, tend to vote and participate as active citizens in the electoral process and become involved in civil society engagements.

### Your vote decides

Young people in Jamaica, are “Big Deals”. “Yah man”, tell your friends that you are all “Big Deals”. You have the ability to decide who governs your country. Jamaica is a Parliamentary Democracy, with a system of government that is “of the people by and for the people”. This means that as long as you have the right to vote you possess the power to influence the governance structure and processes of your country. You elect the government to manage on your behalf. Governance of the country refers to the structures and processes that are, intended to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, growth, equity, inclusiveness and empowerment for the people.

Parliamentary Democracy allows for the full participation of the people in the political and electoral processes. Nobody is above the law and everyone is equal before the law. There should be no discrimination. Good governance means that those in government and leadership positions should engage in



consultations with the people, respect human rights, the laws of the country and impartially utilize and distribute the resources of the country for the benefit of the citizens.

### **Play your part**

Citizens 18 years old and over have the right to vote and the responsibility to participate in the democratic processes. Ensure that you do what is necessary to be able to play your part in the democratic political and electoral processes. This means, first and foremost, getting your name on the voters' list. Your role as a democratic, participatory and patriotic citizen is far-reaching. This is a hard-won right achieved by the advocacy and courage of our forefathers.

Voting is a very important part of any democracy. This is not a right for citizens in every country. Citizens vote for leaders to represent them and their ideas, and for the leaders to support the citizens' interests. The following points summarize some important reasons why you need to vote.



## **Why do you need to vote?**

- Under universal adult suffrage, which came about in 1944, you have the hard-won privilege to vote.
- Elections will bring into power a government that will chart the course for the current and future generations. Therefore, your vote can help to determine the government that will make such far reaching decisions.
- Your vote is your voice. Voting is your chance to stand up for the issues you care about and services that you want your government to provide such as: transportation, health, education, the minimum wage, protection of the environment, availability of jobs, housing, and the level of taxation.
- You have the power to help decide on the quality of life you want for yourself and future generations.
- Your vote is your power
- If you do not vote you are giving someone else the power to decide for you.

### **Credible electoral system**

Jamaica has developed a credible political and electoral system based on laws and agreed protocols so we can have faith in the electoral process. Some people say that their one vote does not matter. This is not true. Can you remember hearing your grand-parents saying, "one one coco" full basket?." Indeed, coupled with the fact that you are a "Big Deal", your vote counts! Empower yourself to make informed decisions when voting in a general or local election.



## VOTER EDUCATION

- Listen to news
- Use physical and virtual newspapers, blogs, television
- Become aware of the policies, plans and issues on which the parties are campaigning. Political parties tend to produce and circulate manifestos for persons to read and discuss or plan.
- The pillars of good governance include accountability, transparency, fairness and the rule of law. The voter must assess whether or not the candidate will be able to uphold the pillars of good governance before voting for that candidate.
- Know your candidate and their track record and plans

### Accountability

Accountability means the government can be held responsible for its actions. The citizens can assess if the government is adhering to the rule of law, laws and protocols. The Political Ombudsman is an example of a mechanism to achieve fairness in

political life by monitoring compliance with the Agreement and Declaration on Political Conduct (Code) by receiving and investigating complaints of improper political actions which may breach the code.

### Transparency

Transparency ensures that information regarding the handling of the country's affairs by the government is available to the citizens. The citizens can then use this information to measure the performance of the government and to guard against possible misuse of powers. In this regard, transparency serves to achieve accountability. Jamaica has the Access to Information Act which allows citizens to access information from public sector entities.

### Fairness

Fairness in governance can be explained as the just and reasonable treatment of individuals in accordance with the rule of law, accepted rules or principles. This means treating all people equally, without political tribalism and applying reasonable

punishments according to the law when the laws and rules are broken.

### Rule of Law

The idea of the “rule of law” is that individuals are subject to clearly defined laws and legal principles as set out in the Constitution, legislation, the common law and judicial precedent; that residents are not subject to the personal whims of powerful people. It also means that the laws apply equally to all persons, at all times. No one—including the most highly placed official—is above the law. The application and adjudication of legal rules by various governing officials is to be impartial and consistent. Laws and rules are to be applied equally without taking into consideration the class, status, or relative power among individuals involved.

If you are 18 years old and over and you are a citizen of Jamaica you have the right to vote. The right to vote is given to citizens and some non-citizens by law. However, there are



circumstances that can render a citizen who is 18 years old and over, ineligible to vote. For persons who are convicted and serving sentences, the right to exercise their franchise is removed during their period of confinement. Also, citizens who are deemed incompetent to exercise judgement, that is they are insane/of unsound mind, do not have the privilege to exercise their franchise.

**As an eligible voter you will need to know the following:**

- Your rights and responsibilities as a voter
- The process to register to vote, that is, how to get your name on the voters' list
- How to access the electoral system
- How to complete the ballot papers and the steps in the voting process

## My Rights as a Voter

**As a voter your rights include:**

- To vote and have your vote accurately counted.
- Cast a vote if you are in line at the official closing of the polls.
- If you have certain kinds of disabilities, you can ask for and receive assistance in voting.
- Vote free from coercion or intimidation by election officers or any other person.

## My Responsibilities as a Voter

While voting is a right and privilege of citizenship, it is also a duty or responsibility. As a responsible voter you need to be mindful of the following responsibilities.

- Register to vote with the Electoral Office of Jamaica.
- Maintain a current address with the electoral office.



- Know the location of your polling station and its hours of operation.
- Treat the Police, Presiding Officer, the Poll Clerks and other workers with courtesy.
- Respect the privacy of the other voters.
- Report any problems or violations of election laws to the Electoral Commission of Jamaica or the Police
- Report breaches of the Joint Agreement and Declaration on Political Conduct (Code) to the Political Ombudsman.

## VOTER EDUCATION

- Mark your ballot correctly and place it in the Ballot Box before leaving the polling station.

Prior to the announcement of an election, that is, during the campaign/pre-election period, the prospective voter should verify if he/she is enumerated, that is, his/her name is included on the voters' list. The Voters' List is a critical component of the electoral process and for any citizen to vote, his or her name must be on the voters list.

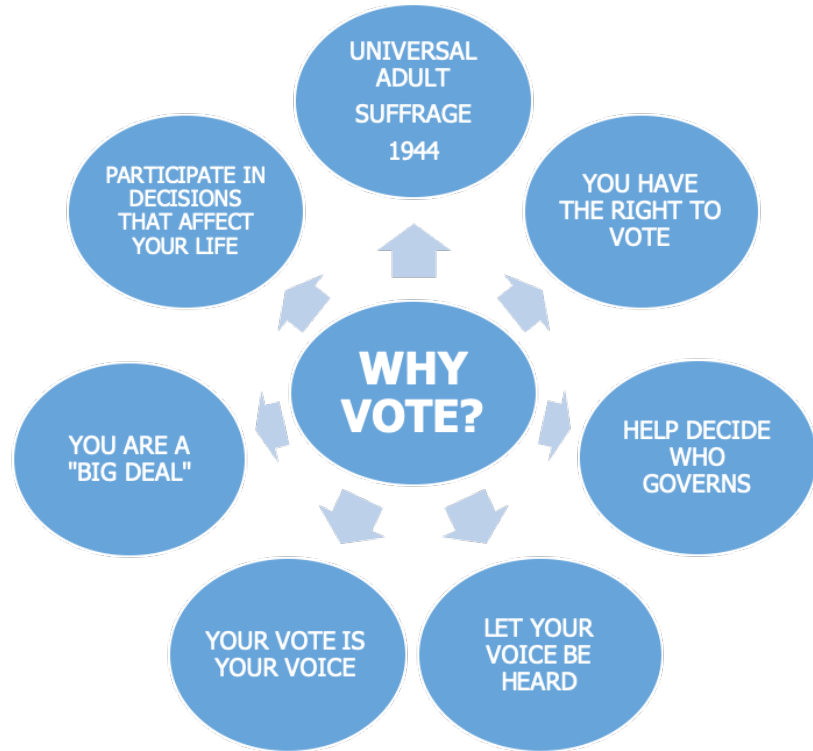
### The electoral/voting system

The electoral/voting system in Jamaica is the responsibility of the Electoral Commission of Jamaica (ECJ). The ECJ is governed by the Electoral Commission (Interim) Act (2006). It is presently comprised of nine members, four selected commissioners, four nominated Commissioners and the Director of Elections.

The four Selected Commissioners are jointly agreed upon by both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Parliamentary Opposition. They

elect one of their number as the Chairman of the Commission. Of the four Nominated Commissioners two members are nominated by the Prime Minister and the other two members are nominated by the Leader of the Parliamentary Opposition. The eight

Commissioners nominate the Director of Elections, who is appointed by the Governor General. The Director of Elections is responsible for the conduct of elections and the day-to-day activities of the operational arm of the Commission, which is the Electoral



Office of Jamaica (EOJ).

The Director of Elections and the Selected Commissioners are disqualified by law from voting in any General or Local Government Elections or Referenda.

The Constituted Authority is empanelled once an election is called. Its members include:

- The four selected members of the Commission
- Two other persons appointed by the Governor General after consultation with the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition, one a retired judge and the other a member of the

Privy Council. The Chairman must be the retired judge.

The body has power to halt an election in accordance with Section 44A of the Representation of the People Act.

The Election Centre is a special committee co-chaired by the Director of Elections and the Political Ombudsman with members drawn from:

- The Jamaica Labour Party
- The People's National Party
- The Jamaica Defence Force
- The Jamaica Constabulary Force

- The Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica
- The Jamaica Umbrella Group of Churches
- National Integrity Action
- Citizen's Action for Free and Fair Elections

The body is constituted once an election is called and may make recommendations to the Constituted Authority. The members use their resources to address issues that arise during the campaign or on Nomination and Election Day in support of the EOJ.

### Summary



- Citizens 18 years old and over have the right to register and to vote
- You have the right to vote free from

being bullied or intimidated

- Voting is your chance to stand up for the issues you care about and services that you want your government to provide
- The pillars of good governance

include accountability, transparency, fairness and the rule of law.

- Know the policies, plans and issues on which the political parties are campaigning.

# Activities

- A)** Answer the following Multiple Choice Questions.  
Choose the letter option that gives the best answer.

**1. As a citizen 18 years old and over what should you do to be able to vote in elections? (page 21)**

- a. Ensure that you have a bank account.
- b. Register to vote with a Political Party
- c. Register to vote with the Electoral Office of Jamaica
- d. Ensure that you have a driver's licence

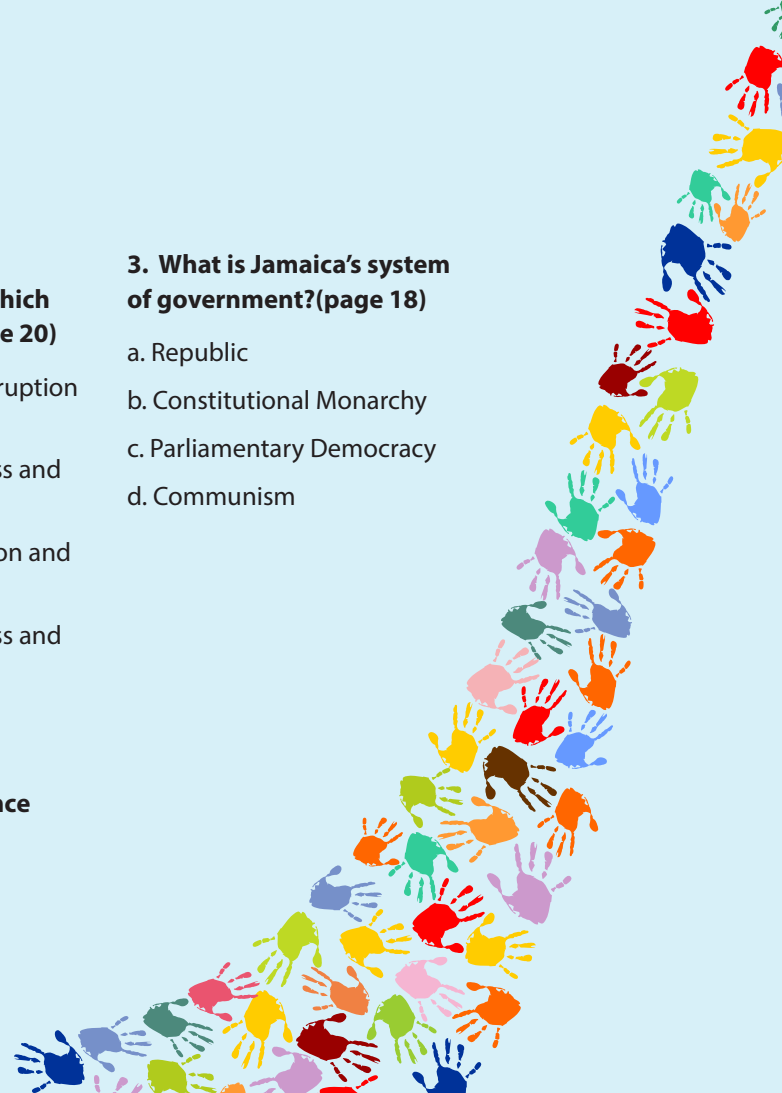
**2. The pillars of good governance include which of the following? (page 20)**

- a. Misuse of power, Corruption and Lawlessness
- b. Transparency, Fairness and Misuse of power
- c. Rule of Law, Corruption and Fairness
- d. Transparency, Fairness and Rule of Law

**3. What is Jamaica's system of government?(page 18)**

- a. Republic
- b. Constitutional Monarchy
- c. Parliamentary Democracy
- d. Communism

- B)** **Debate: Safeguarding the pillars of good governance is important to democracy**







# *Chapter 4* The Electoral Cycle

Jamaica has traditionally operated a two-party system, as there are two dominant political parties, and it has been difficult for other parties to achieve electoral success. The two dominant parties, the People's National Party and the Jamaica Labour Party, were founded in 1938 and 1943, respectively. They first contested elections in 1944. The Constitution does not mention political parties.

The Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (ROPA), 2014 and the Political Parties Registration Regulations, 2017, mandate the registration of political parties in Jamaica and the monitoring of their finances. There are four registered political parties, Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), Jamaica Progressive Party (JPP), People's National Party (PNP), and United Independents' Congress of Jamaica (UIC).

The campaign period is of great

importance as the breaches of the Code of Conduct and the ROPA especially campaign financing rules are more likely to occur in this period. Candidates may, for example, put up billboards under the exemption in the Town and Country Planning Act and do not remove same within the 14 days after the close of the poll.

The general election campaign period usually starts on the day following the end of the 54 months from the date the government actually took office or the day on which an election is announced by the Prime Minister. Campaigning must stop 24 hours before the opening of the polls.

The image on the following page showcases the Electoral Cycle in Jamaica. It includes some activities that are undertaken at each phase of the cycle, that is, the pre-election and campaign period, during the election and the post-election period.

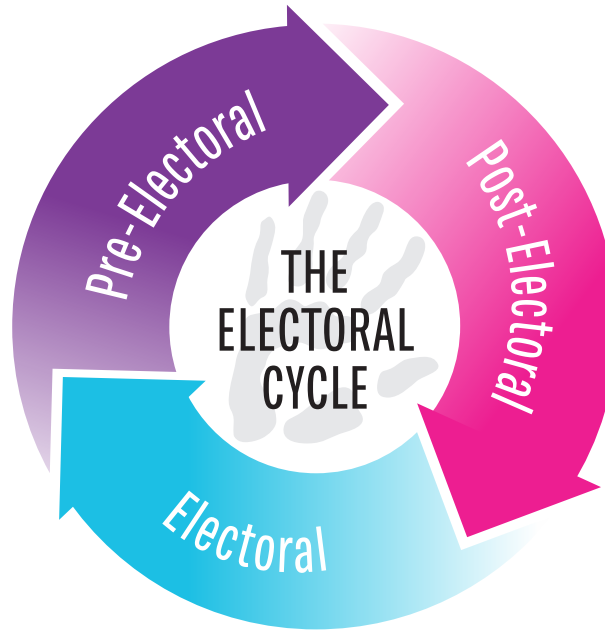


## **This chapter will cover:**

- Political Parties
- Campaign/pre-election period
- Election Day
- Post-election period

### Pre-Electoral Period:

- Prospective Voters are enumerated/registered.
- Electoral Office prepares voters list
- PM announces dates for Nomination Day and Election Day
- Political parties sign the Code of Conduct
- The Election Centre is activated
- Constituted Authority is activated
- Political parties choose and announce their candidates
- Party manifestos are published
- Polling Stations selected and publicized
- Election campaigns get underway with party meetings, electioneering, newspaper, radio and television broadcasting, social media posting and manifestos
- Nomination Day



### Electoral Period

- Election Day
- Voters cast their votes at polling stations across the Island
- Votes are counted and returns made to each Returning Officer
- Winners are declared
- Results are announced

### Post-Electoral Period:

- Recounting of ballots
- Disputed results are challenged in court
- Governor General (GG) invites the person/parliamentarian in whom majority of parliamentarians have confidence to be the Prime Minister (PM)
- PM forms Cabinet
- PM and Cabinet are sworn in by the GG
- Person with the most support from the Opposition is chosen to be the Leader of the Opposition
- Leader of the Opposition sworn in
- Members of the Senate nominated
- Members of Parliament and the Senate sworn in



## Activities

- A)** Answer the following Multiple Choice Questions. Choose the letter option that gives the best answer.

**1. In which Period should you visit the EOJ to register/ be enumerated? (page 26)**

- a. Pre-electoral
- b. Election Day
- c. Post-Electoral
- d. Electoral Period

**2. Which of the following political parties is NOT registered in Jamaica? (page 25)**

- a. Peoples National Movement
- b. Jamaica Labour Party
- c. United Independent's Congress
- d. Jamaica Progressive Party

**3. How long before Election Day should campaigning stop? (page 25)**

- a. 48 hours
- b. 5 hours
- c. 24 hours
- d. 72 hours

**B) Do debates on the following topics:**

- a) Election campaigning methods, must be modernized.
- b) Independent candidates are good for the process?
- c) Registration of political parties is important?
- d) Party manifestos are of value.



## *Chapter 5*

# The Jamaican Constitution in a Nutshell



### **This Chapter will cover:**

- Three branches of Government
- Fundamental Human Rights
- Citizenship

The Jamaican Constitution came into force in 1962. On February 27, 1962 the Constitution was ratified by the Jamaican Parliament. The new Constitution provided for full control over the internal and foreign affairs of the newly independent nation. Jamaica gained its independence on August 6, 1962. Jamaica's Constitution is called an Order in Council and was passed by the British Parliament, not in the Jamaica Parliament. A major amendment was done in Jamaica's Parliament in 2011 to set out a Bill of Rights.

The Constitution can be called the rule book for the government

## THE JAMAICAN CONSTITUTION IN A NUTSHELL

or the fundamental law. The Jamaican Constitution lays down the procedures and guidelines on how the government can be formed, it reflects the principles on which the country is to be governed, it states the rights and duties of the citizens and directs the government to see that basic rights of the citizens are not violated. The Constitution is the supreme law of Jamaica and some sections may only be amended under special procedures.

### **Rules of the society**

The rules of the society are clearly spelt out in the Constitution. There is a clear understanding of the rights and duties of all persons and institutions. The society is guided by the Constitution and by a body of written laws and the common law. Therefore, rules are not to be arbitrarily applied. Government does not take place at the pleasure of the individuals in government but is guided by a body of existing laws and procedures.

The Jamaican Constitution separates the powers of government into three

branches: the Legislative branch, which makes the laws; the Executive branch, which implements the laws; and the Judicial branch, which interprets the laws. The Constitution is generally viewed as a contract between the government and the people. The supreme law of Jamaica and it is enforced by the System of Courts.

### **The Jamaican Constitution contains the following and other critical elements:**

- The conditions for citizenship in Jamaica
- The fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens
- The structure of the Government
- The powers and procedures of the branches of government: Legislature, Executive and Judiciary
- The functioning of the Governor General
- The electoral procedure – choosing the government





## THE JAMAICAN CONSTITUTION IN A NUTSHELL

- The role and function of the Civil Service
- Finance, the collection and expenditure of government revenue
- The Auditor General
- The Director of Public Prosecutions

### Your Human Rights and Responsibilities

All human rights are indivisible and interdependent. All fundamental human rights, namely: political, civil, social, cultural and economic are equal in importance. They are interdependent because none can be fully enjoyed without the others. They apply to all persons equally, and individuals have the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives, many of these can be found in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

The Constitution states that every person in Jamaica, regardless of race,

place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex, is entitled to certain fundamental rights and freedoms. The fundamental rights and freedoms include but are not limited to:

- Right to life, liberty and security
- Freedom of movement
- Freedom from inhumane treatment
- Ownership of property, enjoyment of property
- Freedom of conscience
- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of association
- Freedom from discrimination
- Equality under the law
- Right to vote

The framers of the Constitution were careful to note that the enjoyment of these rights and freedoms is “subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others”. This means that if we trespass on the rights of other persons there are consequences under the law for

our actions. Where it is agreed by the Parliament that measures be put in place, in the public interest, some individual rights may be suspended by safeguarding the human rights of residents. Any person, who believes that his/her rights are being violated or threatened, may apply to the Supreme Court for enforcement of his/her rights and for redress. The Supreme Court also serves as the Constitutional Court, where constitutional issues are litigated before three judges.

Fundamental rights have attendant responsibilities for citizens. These are not necessarily established in the Constitution but may include, and are not limited to the following:

- Obey the laws
- Pay taxes
- Register to vote and vote
- Serve as witness in the courts
- Perform Jury duty
- It is our civic responsibility to care for the environment for present and future generations.



### Citizenship

Being a citizen means that you are a member of a country. Having citizenship in a country guarantees an individual certain rights and privileges such as the right to vote and there are attendant duties and responsibilities as well. There are different ways of becoming a citizen of Jamaica. Under Chapter two of the Jamaican Constitution, persons born in Jamaica and persons born outside Jamaica of Jamaican parents have an automatic right to Jamaican citizenship, applications based on marriage and residence are other ways that lead to citizenship.

#### The Benefits of Citizenship in Jamaica

As a citizen of Jamaica, an individual gets to enjoy certain privileges. The advantages of being a citizen of Jamaica include, but are not limited to the ability to:

- Acquire a Jamaican Passport
- Work without a work permit
- Be a candidate in the General & Local Government Elections
- Vote in General and Local Government Elections
- Receive social benefits and get access to government programmes
- Be Exempted from international fees at Jamaica's premier universities
- Have the right to free speech
- Register non-Jamaican Spouse as a citizen of Jamaica

#### Dual Citizenship

A dual citizen is a national of two countries at the same time. Laws differ



by country, however, a person may be a national of one country by acquiring citizenship later in life or by being born in that country but also a national of another country because his/her parent is a national of that country.

#### Commonwealth Citizen

In Jamaica, a citizen of the Commonwealth e.g. the United Kingdom, Barbados, Australia, Ghana, is eligible to be elected to office as a member of Parliament, Councillor or Mayor of Portmore.

### Summary:

- Jamaica is guided by laws
- Fundamental rights and freedoms are set out in the Constitution
- Citizens have unwritten responsibilities

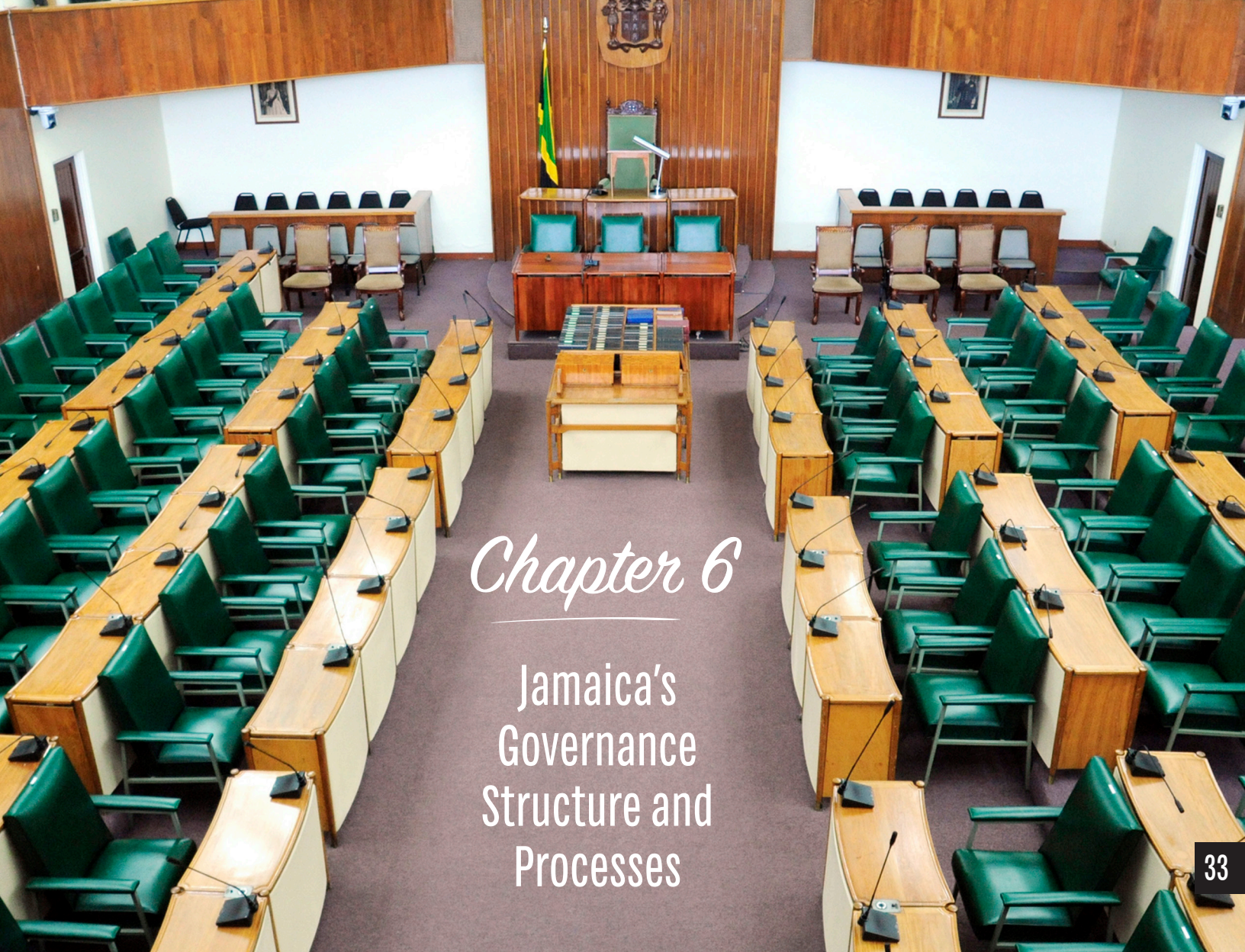
# Activity Word Search

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| V | D | I | S | C | R | I | M | I | N | A | T | I | O | N | K |
| C | O | R | E | R | E | S | P | E | C | T | O | E | V | T | C |
| O | B | N | W | C | I | W | I | T | N | E | S | S | E | M | O |
| N | E | T | S | I | F | R | E | E | D | O | M | S | N | I | N |
| S | Y | V | Y | T | L | A | M | Q | U | L | E | T | Y | B | S |
| C | B | C | R | I | U | N | D | U | R | E | M | E | O | C | T |
| I | N | D | I | Z | R | T | R | A | M | Y | E | N | V | O | I |
| E | L | W | A | E | L | A | I | L | J | U | R | Y | W | I | T |
| N | T | C | V | N | A | X | G | I | V | R | P | M | R | P | U |
| C | L | O | O | S | W | S | H | T | O | J | U | C | E | N | T |
| E | G | A | T | H | F | V | T | Y | A | N | S | W | A | K | I |
| I | I | D | E | I | D | I | S | C | R | I | M | I | L | A | O |
| D | R | E | S | P | O | N | S | I | B | I | L | I | T | Y | N |
| L | I | B | E | R | T | Y | P | D | E | S | C | E | N | T | O |

Here is a list of words relating to the areas in Chapter Four. Find and circle the words.

CONSTITUTION  
RIGHTS  
LAW  
SUPREME  
CITIZENSHIP  
RESPONSIBILITY  
JURY  
VOTE  
GOVERNMENT  
DESCENT  
CONSCIENCE  
LIBERTY  
RESPECT  
EQUALITY  
OBEY  
DISCRIMINATION  
FREEDOMS  
WITNESS





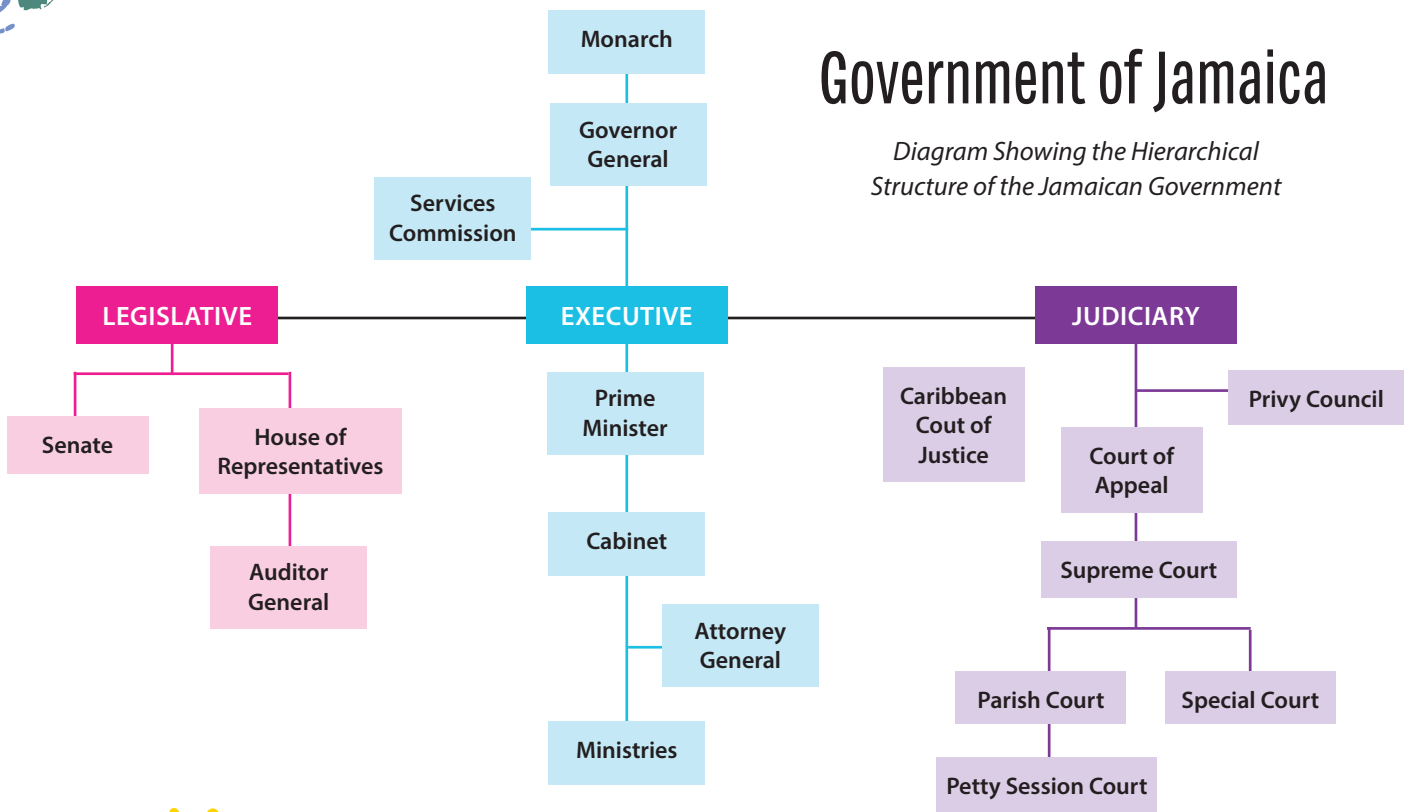
## *Chapter 6*

### Jamaica's Governance Structure and Processes



# Government of Jamaica

Diagram Showing the Hierarchical Structure of the Jamaican Government



## This Chapter will cover:

- A diagram of the structure of the Jamaican Government
- A diagram of the system of courts
- The role and function of key entities and significant officials





The government of a country is the group of people who are responsible for developing and managing the resources and goals of the country and regulating the activities and affairs of the country. The government exercises political authority. Good governance relies on citizen participation in the democratic process.

In Chapter One you would have read about the development of self-government in Jamaica. Also you would have read of the type of government in Jamaica. There are three co-equal branches of government, and the authority of the government is divided among them, namely the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary. This is known as the separation of powers which refers to the division of government responsibilities among the different branches. This is a means to have checks and balances in government. It limits any one branch from exercising the core functions of another and is intended to prevent the concentration of power in any one branch.

### The Governor General

The Governor General is appointed on the advice of the Prime Minister of Jamaica. He represents the monarch as head of state and attends important occasions such as the Ceremonial Opening of Parliament, the presentation of honours, and at military parades. He has limited, or discretionary powers. One of the major functions of the Governor General is to exercise the Prerogative of Mercy/Pardon. This means that the Governor General has the power to grant pardon to any person who has been sentenced to death for an offence that he/she has committed against the laws of Jamaica.

Further, the Governor General carries out the following functions:

- Appoints the Prime Minister
- Appoints the Leader of the Opposition
- Appoints members of the Privy Council (Jamaica)
- Appoints the Chief Justice
- Appoints President of Court of Appeal and members of the judiciary
- Appoints the Director of Public Prosecutions
- Makes appointments to the Judicial and Public Services Commissions
- Appoints members to Commissions of Parliament
- Dissolves Parliament to make way for a general election
- Signs all laws to bring them into effect
- Authorizes States of Emergency
- Authorizes Commissions of Enquiry
- Appoints Custodes and Justices of the Peace in Parishes.

### Legislature/Parliament

There are two bodies in the Jamaican Legislature/Parliament and for this reason it is known as a bicameral legislature. There is an Upper House, which is the Senate. The Senate is comprised of 21 members who are nominated by their respective political parties and appointed by the Governor General to serve in the Senate. The governing party nominates 13 members of the Senate and the Parliamentary opposition nominates 8 members. The senate has a president who guides its activities. The President of the Senate presides over the meetings of the Senate.

The other body is the House of Representatives or the Lower House. Whilst the Senate is an appointed House, the House of Representatives is an elected House. The Members of Parliament are called MPs and they are elected in a general election or by-election generally from members of the governing party and the

opposition party. The Speaker/ Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives chairs the sitting of Parliament. Additionally, the Speaker/ Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives carries out the following duties:

- Adjudicates in matters concerning Parliamentary procedures
- When "points of order" arise, the Speaker makes decisions and gives appropriate rulings when necessary
- Regulates the debates in the House of Representatives

Parliament is usually dissolved in preparation for general elections which are due every five (5) years.

Laws made by Parliament are gazetted and require the assent/ signature of the Governor General to come into effect.

### Role and Function of Parliament



Within the framework of the Jamaican Constitution, parliament has the highest authority outside of the electorate. Parliament proposes and passes the laws for the country. The Parliament has the power to enact and amend laws for the peace, order and good governance of Jamaica.

Other important work of the Parliament includes:

- Financial Control: It is for this reason the Minister of Finance tables the budget in parliament and there is a budget debate and vote which follows.
- Providing and exercising control over Cabinet.
- Critical Assessment of the Work of the Cabinet.
- Role of opposition
- A voice for disseminating important information relating to national matters.

## JAMAICA'S GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES



Gordon House

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The conduct of Parliamentarians is regulated by the Standing Orders and Ethics Committee of Parliament. Jamaica does not have a law for impeaching i.e. Removing Parliamentarians from office outside of election time.

### Executive/Cabinet

The Cabinet is made up of the Prime Minister and selected MPs usually from the governing party. These MPs are appointed by the Prime Minister as Ministers to serve in the Cabinet. Members of the Senate may also serve in the Cabinet. However, not more

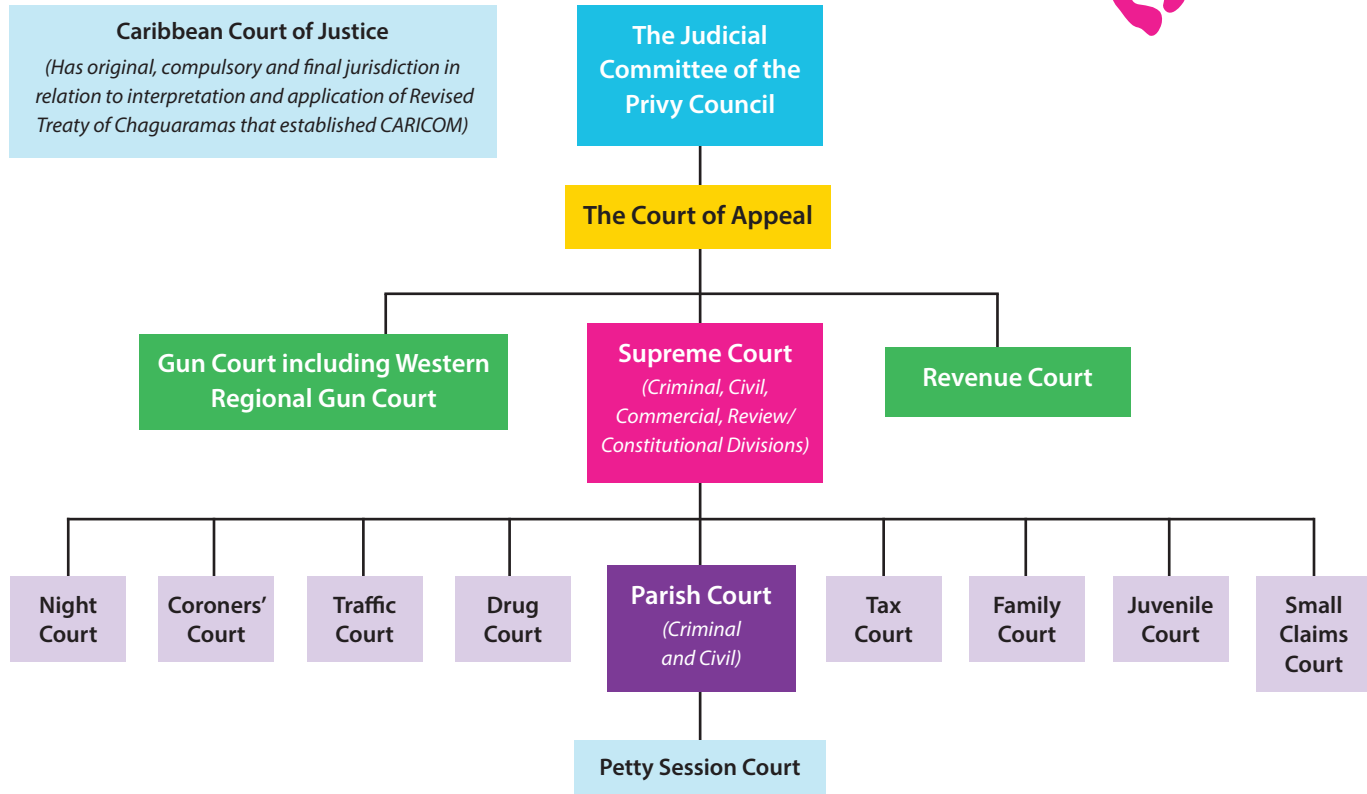
than Four (4) members of the Senate can be in the Cabinet and they cannot hold certain portfolios. The Cabinet of Jamaica is the principal source of government policy.

### Role and Function of Cabinet

The cabinet has overall responsibility for the development of government policies, implementing these policies and initiating proposals for legislation and taxation. The Ministers are assigned at least one of the core areas, known as Ministries, (for example, finance, education, agriculture, etc.). It is through the Ministries and their multiple Government Departments and Agencies or Statutory Bodies that the Cabinet manages and implements Government policies and programmes. The main function of each Minister is primarily administrative relative to the respective portfolio responsibility.

A Ministry is headed by a Minister who delegates responsibilities to a Permanent Secretary. The permanent Secretary is a senior civil servant and accountable for the work and resources of the Ministry.

## Structure of the Jamaican Court System



Source: [www.supremecourt.gov.jm](http://www.supremecourt.gov.jm)

## Judiciary

This is the System of Courts. A network of Courts, ranging from the Court of Petty sessions to the the Court of Appeal, and even beyond, to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London, the Caribbean Court of Justice based in Trinidad and Tobago. They are responsible for the administration of justice in Jamaica. The head of the Judiciary is the Chief Justice of Jamaica.

### The Chief Justice

The Chief Justice is the head of the Judiciary. The Supreme Court is presided over by the Chief Justice who is appointed by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition.

The Chief Justice exercises jurisdiction over both civil and criminal matters. The Supreme Court also serves as the Constitutional Court.

Jamaica has a President of the Court of Appeal who is also appointed

by the Governor General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition. The other judges of the Court of Appeal and Puisne judges of the Supreme Court are appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Judicial Services Commission.

## The Role and Function of the Prime Minister

The Prime Minister is usually the leader of the political group/party which gained the majority of seats in the general election. The Governor General invites this individual to form the government. The Prime Minister leads the government and presides over the Cabinet. The list below encompasses the major roles and functions carried out by the Prime Minister:

- Advise the Governor General on the portfolio responsibilities of the Cabinet Ministers
- Chair meetings in which the government discusses policies and

examines bills - chairs meetings of the cabinet where laws are proposed for enactment or amendment, government policy and other important matters of national concern such as an imminent hurricane are discussed.

- Selects members of the government to be Ministers.
- Leads Cabinet in deciding government policies.
- The chief government spokesperson.
- Gives the policy direction of the government
- Presides over the defence of Jamaica (serving as the Minister of Defence).
- Advises the queen on the appointment of the Governor General (GG) - since Queen Elizabeth II is our head of state, her representative called the GG is recommended by the PM in consultation with the leader of the opposition.
- Advises the Governor General on





## JAMAICA'S GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

the dissolution of parliament

- Advises the Governor General on the appointment of the Chief Justice
- Nominates thirteen (13) of the twenty-one (21) members of the Upper House (Senate)
- Advises the Governor General on the persons to be conferred with national honours or awards.
- Set election dates

### The Role and Function of the Leader of the Opposition

In Jamaica, the Leader of the Opposition is the leader of the minority political group/party in Parliament. The Leader of the Opposition is seen as the alternative Prime Minister and leads the Shadow Cabinet. The Governor-General appoints as Leader of the Opposition, the member of the House of Representatives who can command the support of a majority of those members who did not form the Government.

The Leader of the Opposition has several roles and functions. The list below encompasses the major roles and functions;

- Legislative process in Parliament
- Chairing meetings in which the opposition discusses policies and examines Bills
- Presenting alternative policies to those of the government.
- Selecting members of the opposition to be Shadow Ministers.
- The Leader of the Opposition is involved in consultations on a number of important matters, such as the appointments of the Chief Justice, the President of the Court of Appeal, Director of Public Prosecution, and Custodes
- The Opposition Leader nominates eight of the 21 Senators in the Upper House.
- Advises the Governor General on appointment of various officials eg. Political Ombudsman, Public Defender, ECJ Commissioners

- The Opposition critiques and opposes policies of the Cabinet with which they do not agree
- Play a role in ensuring that the legislature keeps cabinet in check

### Ministers and their Portfolio responsibilities

Government Ministers are chosen from the House of Representatives and the Senate. However, the number of Ministers that are chosen from the Senate is limited. These Ministers along with the Prime Minister comprise the Cabinet. Each member of the Cabinet is given a special task which is referred to as a portfolio responsibility. The roles and functions of the government are carried out through the various ministries, departments and agencies (MDA). Some of these include the following: providing leadership, the development of the country's resources, maintaining law and order, providing public and social services,



providing national security, education, economic security, providing economic assistance to incentivize the creation of business enterprises and generally, a climate that will foster economic growth and development.

### The Justice System - Role of the Judiciary

The judiciary interprets and applies the laws of Jamaica to specific cases relative to the type of court. In the course of deciding the disputes that come before it, the judges interpret and apply the laws. The courts sanction individuals or organizations that break the laws of Jamaica and order compensation or recourse to those affected. Trials allow the Courts to hand down judgements in disputes and conflicts that may arise among individuals or organizations.

Each court is tasked with its own specific role and function in seeing that all persons receive a high quality of justice.



### The Attorney General

The attorney General is the chief legal advisor to the government. The Attorney General may serve on the Cabinet. As the chief legal advisor to the government, the Attorney General's Chambers is responsible for providing legal advice and representation of all Ministries and Departments of government. The Attorney General and his/her appointee appears in court for the government in civil cases which are instituted against the Attorney General. Also, the office institutes civil proceedings on behalf of the government.

### Local Government - Municipalities

The local authorities in Jamaica are officially referred to as Municipal Corporations. These entities are: the Kingston and St. Andrew Municipal Corporation (KSAMC), the Portmore Municipality (PMC) and 12 Municipal Corporations relating to the other parishes in Jamaica. The Municipal Corporations are empowered to make by-laws, regulations and rules for the good governance of the parishes over which they have jurisdiction.

Their members are Councillors elected in Local Government elections and the Chair is also usually the Mayor of the Parish Capital and represents the majority party except for Portmore where the Mayor is directly elected. Municipal Corporations, formerly known as Parish Councils, therefore, consist of the Mayor or the Chairman of the Corporation, the Councillors and the administrative staff of the Corporation.

Their mandate includes:

## JAMAICA'S GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

- Social welfare for the indigent
- Road works on parochial roads
- Building permits
- Local planning
- Public electricity
- Garbage collection
- Street cleaning
- Providing and maintaining parks and markets



### The Civil Service

The civil service is responsible for implementing the policies of the government. The staff at the Government Ministries, Departments and other bodies are called Civil Servants. They carry out the work of Government and deliver public services. The administration of the respective Ministries is directed by the Permanent Secretary.

The Permanent Secretary and other Civil Servants perform the following primary functions:

- Legal accountability for

Government of Jamaica's money and assets

- Ensure the effective operation of the government and provide the best possible services to the public.
- Provide advice to the Minister with regard to policies related to their specific Ministry
- Devise strategies to implement the policies which the Minister supports
- Implement, monitor and evaluate policies

### Tax Administration Jamaica (TAJ)

Tax Administration Jamaica is a specialised body established by the government for the purpose of the management and execution of tax laws. The money used to support the work that the government does comes mostly from the taxes which are collected from tax payers in the

country. Taxes contribute to the government's revenue. This is the money which the government uses to provide, public and social services.

### The Administrator General

The Administrator General Department (AGD) was created in 1873. This department is mandated to function under the Administrator-General's Act. The chief role of the AGD is to administer the assets of intestate estates. Intestate estates are the estate or properties of persons who died and did not leave a will. The Administrator-General's Department is required to administer the estates of such deceased persons who have died and left children under the age of eighteen years.

### Registrar General's Department (RGD)

The Registrar General's Department (RGD) is an Executive Agency. This department is Jamaica's

only source of the records of births, deaths and marriages. It is an archive for the safe keeping of important historical and public documents such as wills, deed polls and naturalization certificates of citizenship.

## The Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF)

The Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) is a department under the Ministry of National Security. It is the primary law enforcement arm of the Government of Jamaica. The JCF has been in existence since 1716, while Jamaica was under colonial rule. In 1832 there was the establishment of a permanent police force. The 1865 Morant Bay uprising led to reforms and the Jamaica Constabulary Force was put in place. The JCF has authority to act under the Constabulary Force Act of 1935.



<https://jcf.gov.jm/>

### Role and Function of the JCF:

- As the primary law enforcement arm of the country, the JCF is responsible for the maintenance of law and order
- The enforcement of the criminal law
- The prevention and detection of crime
- To investigate alleged crimes.
- The motto of the JCF is to “serve, protect and reassure with courtesy, integrity and respect for the rights of all.”





### The Jamaica Defence Force (JDF)

The Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) came into being in July of 1962. The JDF is the chief defence arm of the government of Jamaica and currently comprises a Regular Force and a Reserve Force under the Minister of Defence. It defends Jamaica against external and internal aggression and provides military capability to deter and/or defeat threats against the Jamaican State and/or its interests.



<https://www.jdfweb.com/>

### Role and Function of the JDF:

- To provide military aid to the Civil Authorities, relating to:
  - o Restoration and/or maintenance of law and order;
  - o Counter-narcotics operations;
  - o Search and Rescue;
  - o Casualty Evacuation;
  - o Humanitarian and disaster relief operations;
  - o Defence diplomacy;
  - o Nation building projects;
  - o Contingency planning; and
  - o State ceremonial duties.
- Maintaining the integrity of Jamaica's waters and airspace by demonstrating sovereignty over the territorial space and protecting the rights and interests in the maritime and aeronautical areas of Jamaica's jurisdiction. This role/function includes marine environmental and fisheries protection.
- Counter Terrorism Operations by monitoring and analyzing potential terrorist activities.
- The JDF prevents or responds to terrorist incidents, including Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) detection, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDD).



### Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ)

#### National Development Plan - Vision 2030

Vision 2030 was developed by the Planning Institute of Jamaica. It is Jamaica's first long-term strategic development plan and provides a comprehensive planning framework in which the economic, social, environmental and governance aspects for national development are integrated. The Vision 2030 Plan was approved in Parliament in 2009. It is intended to advance the achievement of our national vision, which is captured in the statement: "Jamaica, the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business."



## Summary

- The government is headed by the Monarch represented by the Governor general
- The Executive is also the Cabinet and is led by the Prime minister
- The Legislature comprises the Houses of Parliament. The Parliament is divided into the Upper House (the Senate) and the Lower House (the House of Representative)
- The Judiciary also called the Justice System is made up of a system of courts

## Activities

- A)** Do a skit demonstrating:
- a) A meeting of the Prime Minister and the Leader of Opposition where the primary matter on the agenda is national security or
  - b) A sitting of a municipality to discuss public health and roads.
- B)** What are two duties of:
- a) A Police Officer (page 43)
  - b) A JDF Soldier (page 45)
- C)** Answer the following Multiple Choice Questions. Choose the letter option that gives the best answer.

### 1. Which entity is the legal adviser for the government? (page 41)

- a. The Administrator General
- b. Registrar General's Department
- c. Attorney General
- d. Tax Administration Jamaica

### 2. What are the three co-equal branches of government? (page 35)

- a. Legislature, Executive and Judiciary
- b. Court of Appeal, Cabinet, JCF
- c. Executive, JDF, Supreme Court
- d. Judiciary, Administrator General, Privy Council

### 3. What is the duty of the Prime Minister? (page 39)

- a. Selects members of the government to be Ministers
- b. To investigate alleged crimes
- c. Play a role in ensuring that the legislature keeps cabinet in check
- d. Road works on parochial roads





## *Chapter 7*

### The Role and Functions of Some Key Institutions



### **This chapter will cover:**

- Some of the significant institutions which assist in undertaking activities which attend to the smooth operations of the country's political and electoral affairs.
- Institutions which monitor fairness, integrity and adherence to the rule of law.

## **The Political Ombudsman (PO)**

The Political Ombudsman (PO) was established as a commission of Parliament, to conduct investigations in accordance with the provisions of the Political Ombudsman (Interim) Act, 2002. The Ombudsman is an official appointed by the Governor-General by instrument under the Broad Seal of Jamaica, after consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. The Political Ombudsman has a significant degree of independence.

***“Section 12 of the Political Ombudsman (Interim) Act, provides that the Political Ombudsman shall investigate any action taken by a political party, its members or supporters, where he is of the opinion that such action:***

- a) Constitutes or is likely to constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct agreed on and in force between or among political parties in Jamaica.***
- b) Is likely to prejudice good relations between supporters of various political parties”.***

***“Section 15(7) provides that after conducting an investigation under this act, the Political Ombudsman shall inform the specified officers of the result of the investigation... make recommendations for action to be taken by those officers within a specified time”.***

It is the mandate of the PO to help protect the political parties and all their supporters against breaches of the Agreement and Declaration on Political Conduct (Code). Those aspiring to political office and constituents, enjoy a fair and just campaign electoral process, as well as, wholesome representation that will positively influence the growth and development of a transparent and efficient system of governance.

The current Agreement and Declaration on Political Conduct was signed in 2005 and is the successor of previous agreements. The Code was agreed on and remains in force between the People's National Party, the Jamaica Labour Party and all other legitimate political parties in Jamaica. This includes other registered political parties, the UIC and JPP. The Code specifies certain standards for politics and is intended to promote a political



## THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF SOME KEY INSTITUTIONS

culture which places emphasis on lawfulness, freedom to participate in politics and accountability to the public and honesty of political parties, their officials and political supporters' behaviour.

### **This document binds all officials of the political parties to:**

- *“Repudiate any act of corruption in the discharge of their functions. By affixing their signatures they confirmed also their intention to uphold and defend the Constitution of Jamaica in a conscientious and impartial manner. The Political Ombudsman (Interim) Act and the Code govern politics in and out of election periods”.*

### **THE STANDARDS AGREED IN THE CODE ARE:**

#### **1. Non-Violence and Non-Intimidation**

- a). No person should engage in, adopt or otherwise encourage, any form of violence or intimidation in their political activities
- b). There should be no procurement or distribution of weapons or ammunition of any sort for use in political activities
- c). No threats of violence or intimidation whatsoever, whether expressed or implied, should be made against anyone or any group of persons because of their political affiliation

- d). No person should be forced against his or her will to disclose his or her political affiliation or to acknowledge any affiliation whatsoever
- e). Every individual should be free to go about his or her lawful business without restriction, harassment or intimidation and should actively discourage the erecting of roadblocks in this regard
- f). Candidates or others acting on behalf of candidates:
  - i). Must not use funds derived from any source, public or private, to improperly influence electoral choices and
  - ii). Shall exercise all reasonable care in ensuring that all financial donations are derived from legitimate sources

#### **2. Safety of Private and Public Property**

No damage should wilfully be done to any property, whether private or public, in the course of, or, as a result of, any political event or activity

#### **3. Avoidance of Confrontation**

- a). Nothing should be done or encouraged which can reasonably be expected to lead to volatile confrontation between opposing political factions
- b). Every effort must be made to avoid any act which is likely to be provocative or which will increase tension between opposing political factions

## THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF SOME KEY INSTITUTIONS

The Political Ombudsman's visit to the York Castle High School for the Office's 'Conversation with Young Jamaicans' Programme.



### 4. Public Utterances

Party Officials (including platform speakers) should not make statements which:

- a) Are inflammatory or likely to incite others to confrontation or violence
- b) Constitute slander or libel
- c) Are malicious in reference to opposing candidates, their families and Party Officials

### 5. Freedom of Access

- a). Nothing should be done to unlawfully prevent or restrict anyone from canvassing or campaigning in any place
- b). Nothing should be done to unlawfully restrict or jeopardize the movement along any public road, of anyone or any group of persons engaged in legitimate political activity

### 6. Avoidance of Defacing of Buildings or Installations

- a) There should be no defacing of any structure, roadway or installation (whether privately or publicly owned) for the purpose of displaying any political message or slogan except in such manner as permitted by law
- b). No action in relation to the distribution of any pamphlet, handbill, poster or any similar material

shall be taken in such manner as would constitute a breach of the Anti-litter Act

### 7. Political Tribalism

The Parties eschew the practice of political tribalism rooted in coercion, intimidation or violence of any kind and parties commit themselves to removing any structures and resisting the development of any behavioural, cultural, social or organizational practices, which reinforce political tribalism

### 8. Code of Ethics

In case of a breach or suspected breach, the Parties agree that each side will, firstly, consult with each other and if necessary, invoke the intervention of the PO before recourse to any other forum.

Nothing in the above should be deemed to mean that any party or any individual has relinquished ultimate recourse to the courts.

Citizens can also assist the PO in building and maintaining a positive political culture in Jamaica. Some of the ways that young people can play a critical role in this regard are as follows:

- Advocacy to maintain a positive political culture. Individuals have a right to their political views, which might differ from yours, nonetheless you must respect the other person's views and they on the

## THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF SOME KEY INSTITUTIONS

other hand must respect yours.

- Reject the use of violence and at all times seek to amicably settle disputes that may arise between yourself and others.
- Bring to the attention of the PO matters that are considered breaches of the Joint Agreement and Declaration on Political Conduct (Code) that is in force between/among political parties.
- Promote good governance and the Rule of Law

In carrying out its mandate, the PO receives the support of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF). The JCF provides the PO with the investigative support which is needed to investigate complaints which are made by citizens against the political parties and their supporters regarding their conduct. Police Liaison Officers are drawn from each Police Division island-wide.

Today, Jamaica experiences less violence compared to that of the 1970s and the 1980s which was marked by rampant tribalism and bitter violent conflicts. This led to the signing of peace agreements between the major political parties aimed at alleviating strife in our politics. This also created the post of an Ombudsman to deal specifically with political matters. The Office of the Political Ombudsman is a Commission of Parliament which is specifically tasked to investigate breaches of the Agreement and Declaration on Political Conduct (Code).



### Summary

- The Office of the Political Ombudsman (OPO) is a Commission of Parliament.
- The OPO is specifically tasked to investigate breaches of the Agreement and Declaration on Political Conduct (Code).
- OPO ensures that political representatives, those aspiring to political office and constituents, enjoy a fair and just campaign electoral process.
- The OPO promotes wholesome representation that will positively influence the growth and development of a transparent and efficient system of governance.
- The JCF assists the OPO with its investigative functions





## THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF SOME KEY INSTITUTIONS

### The Public Defender

In Jamaica, the Public Defender is a Commission of Parliament who is appointed by the Governor General to investigate complaints made by citizens against public authorities. Members of the public who feel that they have been wronged by the State or Statutory Bodies can complain to the Public Defender.

The Public Defender plays an important role in Jamaican Justice. This official ensures that citizens' interests and rights are not abused. The Office of the Public Defender (OPD) operates independently and carries out an investigative function. The following features are key among the major roles and functions of the OPD:

- Investigate circumstances where citizens allege that their Constitutional rights have been violated.
- Promote Human Rights
- In circumstances where there has been maladministration. This

refers to instances when a service takes longer than it should to be provided, and when attempts have been made to have this resolved and there is no change

- When service is not conducted in the right and proper manner
- When persons are not treated fairly
- When rules/procedures are not being followed
- In general, when the systems in place are faulty and not to the benefit of those using it.
- Make recommendations for actions to correct acts that may do harm

Citizens can make complaints to the OPD. If the OPD is unable to assist, for instance if the matter falls outside its purview, they will advise and refer you to the relevant authority to seek assistance. Individuals can also visit the OPD to lodge complaints in person. In such instances, they will be interviewed by an Information & Complaints Officer, who will record their statement and

collect any documentary evidence provided at the time.

The OPD has three (3) offices open: Mandeville, Montego Bay and the main office in Kingston. The OPD also receives and accepts complaints on the different social media platforms and by mail.

### The Electoral Commission of Jamaica (ECJ)

The Electoral Commission (Interim) Act, 2006 created the Electoral Commission of Jamaica (ECJ). The Electoral Advisory Committee (EAC) was established in 1979 as an independent oversight body for Jamaica's electoral process. The EAC successor is the Electoral Commission of Jamaica (ECJ), an independent Commission of parliament which gives direction to the EOJ. The EOJ is the operational arm of the ECJ.

In addition to conducting general elections, by-elections or referenda, the Commission is responsible for



## THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF SOME KEY INSTITUTIONS

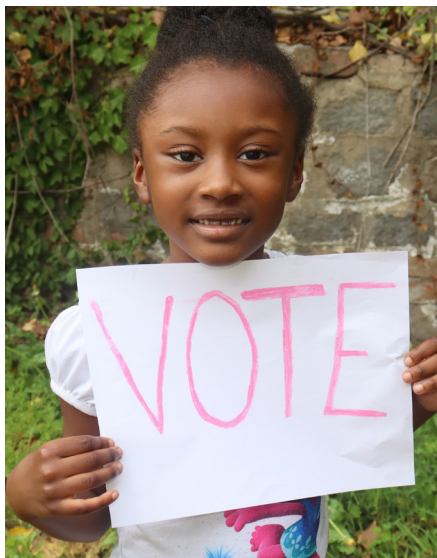
compiling and maintaining the register of eligible electors; verifying the identity of every eligible elector; approving political parties eligible to receive state funding; and administering electoral funding and financial disclosure requirements.

The Governor General appoints the members: four selected members on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Leader of Parliamentary Opposition and, four nominated members which includes two persons nominated by the Prime Minister and two nominated by the Leader of the Opposition and the Director of Elections.

### The Electoral Office of Jamaica (EOJ)

The Electoral Office of Jamaica (EOJ) was established in 1943 as the public body responsible for the administration of national elections and referenda.

The mission of the Electoral Office of Jamaica (EOJ) is to so conduct



national elections in a manner that no unfair advantage is given to any party or individual contesting the polls. The EOJ works to ensure that the objective of one man one vote is met under the six stated principles of Universal Adult Suffrage. These principles are:

- The vote is universal, hence, all citizens who meet the qualifications established by law have the right to vote.

- The vote is free, that is, the elector/voter is entitled to vote free.
- The vote is secret, so the electoral process guarantees not to publicize the preference or will of any elector/voter.
- The vote is direct, meaning the citizen elects the representative of his choice.
- The vote is personal, the Elector shall attend in person at his/her designated polling station. Another person cannot vote for you.
- The vote is non-transferrable. This means that the elector/voter cannot give his or her right to vote to anyone.

### The Role and Function of the EOJ:

- Conducts local government and parliamentary elections and referenda
- Monitors electoral funding and financial disclosure requirements.
- Determines polling division and constituency boundaries.

- Does continuous registration of electors and residence verification of applicants
- Prepares the voters list which is updated every six months, on May 31 and November 30 of each year.
- Prints and issues voter ID cards. The EOJ also produces ID cards for external agencies.
- Recruits and trains Election Day workers
- Produces and prints electoral maps for planning and general information.
- Conducts voter education.

### The Auditor General

The Jamaican Constitution and the Financial Administration and Audit Act both state the duties and responsibilities of the Auditor General. The Auditor General is appointed by the Governor General. The Auditor General checks to see that all money expended and charged to an appropriation account has been

applied to the purpose for which the provision made by Parliament was intended and that any payment of public money conforms to the authority which governs it, and has been incurred with due regard to the avoidance of waste and extravagance.

The Auditor General is also responsible for assessing the effectiveness of the management of the Government of Jamaica's financial management systems and the level of compliance with financial management policies and guidelines. The Auditor-General is expected to do an audit of government Ministries and departments annually. This audit is done for the purpose of checking government spending to see that all spending is being done in the most efficient way possible based on legal requirements good management practice with proper recording, permits, accountability and authority. The Auditor General submits periodic reports to Parliament.

### The Director of Public Prosecutions - DPP

The Independent Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) was established in 1962 under the Jamaican Constitution as a function to protect the society. The DPP is appointed by the Governor General after consultation with the Prime Minister and the Leader of Opposition. The DPP has the power to initiate, authorize, take over and terminate criminal prosecutions in all the courts in Jamaica.

To carry out these functions the staff is divided into several units, including:

- Clerk of Courts Liaison Unit
- Corruption Prevention, Coroner Matters and Organised Crime Unit
- Digital Evidence and Cyber Crimes Unit
- Environment Matters/Referrals Unit
- The Extradition Unit
- Gun Court Matters Unit

## THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF SOME KEY INSTITUTIONS

- Home Circuit Administrative Unit (The Box)
- The Human Rights, Intellectual Property, and Sexual Offences Unit
- Labour Relations and Industrial Disputes Unit
- Legal and Legislative Reform Unit
- The Mutual Legal Assistance, Financial Crimes & Financial Services Commission Unit
- Privy Council Unit

### The Integrity Commission - IC

The Integrity Commission is a Commission of Parliament. The IC is one of the entities that monitors fairness, integrity and adherence to the rule of law. It is set up under the Integrity Commission Act of 2017. The Commissioners are appointed by the Governor General. They serve to combat corruption through the development, implementation and enforcement of Anti-Corruption legislation policy and initiatives.

The Integrity Commission is



mandated to promote and enhance standards of ethical conduct for parliamentarians, public officials and other persons. This is carried out through and policies laws relating to the prevention of corruption and the award, monitoring and investigating government contracts and prescribed licences. The establishment of the Integrity Commission is intended to meet the need to strengthen the measures for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of acts of corruption in Jamaica.

### The Services Commissions

Service Commissions are established to provide for an independent and impartial body to deal with matters concerning the appointment, dismissal and exercise of disciplinary measures in respect of public officers.

These are the Public Services Commission, the Police Services Commission and the Judicial Services Commission. Under the Constitution of Jamaica, the Governor-General acting on the advice of the respective Commissions, has the power to make appointments to public offices, to exercise disciplinary control, and to remove persons acting in ways contrary to the rules or staff orders.

### Custodes/Custos Rotulorum

In Jamaica, each parish has a Custos Rotulorum. This is an official who represents the Governor General at the local level. He/she is appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister. The Custos serves



## THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF SOME KEY INSTITUTIONS

as chairman on many of the Governor General's committees and the Disaster Relief Committee. The Custos is also the Chief Magistrate of the parish to which he is appointed. He/she resides in the parish to which he/she is appointed and is the keeper of the rolls of Justices of the Peace (JP's).

The Custos also helps to select, guide and support the work of Justices of the Peace who play a vital role as community leaders and witness to legal documents eg. passport and driver's licence, bank and land transactions. Any adult may apply.

The Custos Rotulorum performs several functions, notably:

- It is his duty, in the absence of the Governor-General, to receive the Sovereign, any member of the royal family, the Prime Minister on an official visit, or any important personage commended by the Governor-General who arrives within the precincts of the parish.
- It is his duty to receive the

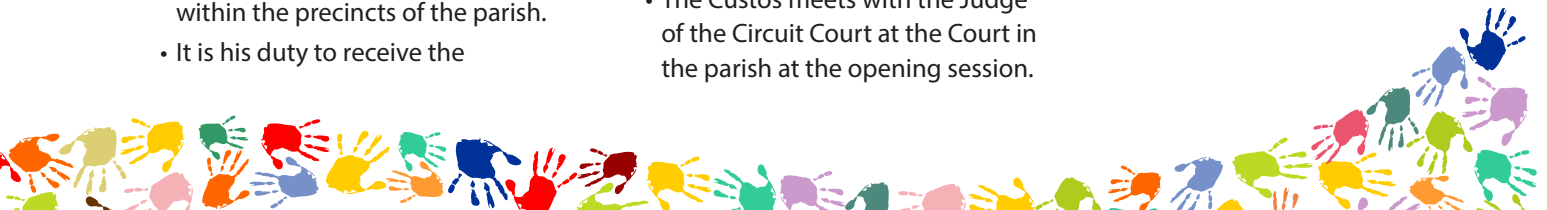
Governor-General when he pays an official visit to the parish.

- It is his duty to prepare a roster of the Justices of the Peace (JP) within the parish so that there are sufficient JPs at each meeting of the Court of Petty Sessions and in the various districts to carry out the functions of a JP.
- The Custos acts as Chairman of the committee in each parish that is responsible for making recommendations to the Minister of Justice in regard to suitable persons for appointment as Justices of the Peace.
- The Custos supervises the JPs.
- On behalf of the Governor-General, the Custos will get involved in the work of all voluntary organisations within the parish, and will ensure that their activities receive suitable recognition on public occasions.
- The Custos meets with the Judge of the Circuit Court at the Court in the parish at the opening session.

### Justice of the Peace (JP)

A Justice of the Peace is a volunteer who is not paid for his or her services. This is a very important, helpful and influential official and is usually someone of integrity. Some of the duties of a JP include:

- Witnessing of documents for citizens for the purpose of authenticating their signature e.g. passport and driver's licence applications, land transactions, financial documents
- Writing testimonials for individuals as character reference
- Administering oaths to persons swearing to affidavits
- Facilitating bail applications
- Serving as Lay Magistrate, who sits on the Bench in the Court of Petty Sessions
- Mediating in disputes



## THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF SOME KEY INSTITUTIONS

### The Jamaican Maroons

At the end of the Spanish occupation of Jamaica in 1665, free and enslaved Africans fled to the mountains and settled. During the 18th to early 19th century, enslaved Africans also fled the plantations and settled in the mountains of Jamaica. These people were called Maroons. Today, Jamaica has a large number of citizens who are Maroons. They are descendants of the enslaved Africans who fled the plantations and who reside today primarily in four (4) settlements and are described as the Leeward and Windward Maroons. The settlements are:

- Accompong/Trelawny Town – Leeward Maroons
- Scott's Hall – Windward Maroons
- Moore Town - Windward Maroons
- Charles Town - Windward Maroons

These Maroons hold much of their land in common. They are also citizens of Jamaica. They elect their own Colonels or Chiefs and nominate their own Councils to manage the affairs of their settlements. The leaders are elected for terms ranging from four years to life. Maroons enjoy special rights and privileges as the first freedom fighters who after 80 plus years of wars entered into treaties with then colonial power, Britain.

### Other Entities

Some key institutions which relate to community involvement in national life are:

- Jamaica Umbrella Group of Churches - JUGC
- Media
- Civil Society Organizations
- Non-Government Organization - NGO's
- Advocacy Groups – Jamaicans for Justice, Jamaica Environmental Trust
- Youth Groups – Police Youth Clubs, 4H Clubs, Political Awareness and Respect Initiative (PARI)
- National Secondary Schools' Council - NSSC –
- Jamaica Union of Tertiary Students - JUTS
- Chambers of Commerce
- Small Business Association
- Social Development Commission
- National Consumers' League
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Private Sector Organization – PSOJ
- Trade Unions
- Jamaica Manufacturers and Exporters Association - JMEA
- Peace Management Initiative - PMI
- Consumer Affairs Commission - CAC
- General Legal Council - GLC
- Child Protection and Family Services - CPFS
- Independent Commission of Investigations - INDECOM
  - Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation - CCAMF
- Dispute Resolution Foundation - DRF





## Summary

- Jamaica is served by many key entities which are neutral and not politically aligned.
- Political Ombudsman, Public Defender, ECJ, INDECOM and the Integrity Commission are some Commissions of parliament.
- The DPP and Auditor General are protected under the Constitution.

## Activities

- A)** Write a letter to the Political Ombudsman reporting a breach of the Code.
- B)** Name five (5) key institutions in Jamaica. (pages 53 - 57)
- C)** List 3 duties of a Justice of the Peace. (page 57)
- D)** Answer the following Multiple Choice Questions. Choose the letter option that gives the best answer.

### **The Electoral Commission Members: (page 54)**

- a. Are elected
- b. Must be more than ten
- c. Are appointed by the Governor General
- d. Serve for one year

### **2. What is the mandate of the Political Ombudsman? (page 48)**

- a. protect the political parties and all their supporters against breaches of the Agreement and Declaration on Political Conduct
- b. it is his duty to receive the Governor-General when he pays an official visit to the parish.

- c. investigate circumstances where citizens allege that their Constitutional rights have been violated.
- d. administering oaths to persons swearing to affidavits

### **3. Which of the following are the standards of the Political Ombudsman? (pages 49 - 51)**

- a. Non-Violence and Non-Intimidation
- b. Safety of Private and Public Property
- c. Public Utterances
- d. Freedom of Access
- e. All of the above



## *Post Script*

### **The Civic Education Handbook seeks to:**

- Create citizen awareness of the Jamaican Constitution and key institutions
- Improve civic knowledge, skills and dispositions
- Sensitize Jamaicans on their roles, rights and responsibilities as citizens
- Promote the active engagement of citizens in political and electoral processes
- Encourage the participation of the electorate in elections thereby strengthening Jamaica's democracy

Involved and engaged citizens are the foundation of a healthy democracy. It is also the leading force for more efficient and effective decision-making processes. Therefore, there is a fervent hope that the readers of the Civic Education Handbook will themselves become more civically and politically engaged, become more attentive to politics, register and vote in elections, both local and general, as well as, be more active members of their community and civil society. The reader is also being encouraged to be an advocate and share his/her knowledge with others.

# Glossary

**ADVOCATE:** An advocate is someone who champions and promotes a particular cause or policy.

**ADULT SUFFRAGE:** Universal Adult Suffrage (also called universal franchise) gives the right to vote to adult citizens 21 years of age and above, regardless of wealth, income, gender, social status, race, ethnicity, political stance.

**CITIZENSHIP:** Having citizenship in a country guarantees an individual certain rights and privileges such as the right to vote and there are attendant duties and responsibilities as well.

**COMMONWEALTH:** The Commonwealth is an association of 54 countries that were once ruled by Britain. Most of these countries are now sovereign independent states.

**CONSTITUTION:** The fundamental laws which guide the operation of Jamaica. The constitution outlines the citizens' rights and responsibilities, as well as, the powers and duties of the government.

**DEMOCRACY:** a system in which all the members of the society have the opportunity to be involved in making decisions about its affairs. In a democratic society, this includes voting to elect representatives to parliament and local authorities.

**DUAL CITIZEN:** A dual citizen is a national of two countries at the same time. Laws differ by countries.

**FRANCHISE:** The right to vote is an individual's franchise. An adult (presently in Jamaica – 18 years and over) has the right to vote. (Universal Adult Suffrage/ the Franchise).

**LEGISLATURE:** This is the "Law Making" body in a country. There are two bodies in the Jamaican Legislature/Parliament and for this reason it is known as a bicameral legislature, the Senate, and the House of Representatives.

**MAROONS:** In Jamaica, the term Maroons refer to the free and formally enslaved Africans who fled to the moun-

tains and settled there at the end of the Spanish occupation of Jamaica in 1665. Today, Jamaica has a large number of citizens who are Maroons.

**NATURALIZATION:** The legal process by which an alien living in a country can become a citizen of that country

**POLITICAL OMBUDSMAN:** The Political Ombudsman (PO) is a Commission of Parliament. The chief mandate of the PO is to investigate breaches of the Agreement and Declaration on Political Conduct (Code) and make recommendations to correct.

**RULE OF LAW:** The idea of the "rule of law" is that individuals are subject to clearly defined laws and legal principles as set out in the Constitution, legislation, the common law and judicial precedent; that residents are not subject to the personal whims of powerful people. It also means that the laws apply equally to all persons, at all times.

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*Consumer Affairs Commission – CAC: <https://www.cac.gov.jm>*

*Director of Public Prosecutions: <https://dpp.gov.jm>*

*Electoral Commission of Jamaica: <https://ecj.com.jm>*

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*International Foundation for Electoral Systems - IFES: [www.IFES.org](http://www.IFES.org)*

*Independent Commission of Investigations – INDECOM: <https://www.indecom.gov.jm>*

*Integrity Commission: <https://integrity.gov.jm>*

*National Consumers' League: <https://wca.org>*

*Office of the Political Ombudsman: <https://opo.gov.jm>*

*Office of the Public Defender: <https://opd.gov.jm>*

*Jamaica Peace Management Initiative – PMI: <https://www.oas.org>*

*Registrar General Department: <https://www.rgd.gov.jm>*

*Social Development Commission: <https://sdc.gov.jm>*

*Tax Administration Jamaica: <http://www.jamaicatax.gov.jm>*

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