



UPDATE - COVID-19 RESPONSE

COVID-19

The Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ) has been actively supporting the Government of Jamaica with the fight against the COVID19 pandemic while ensuring that the interest of you, our members, are considered in all critical decision making.

The Organisation is committed to being a part of the proactive measures to manage COVID19 and is encouraging a non-partisan national effort to successfully minimize the impact of this global pandemic on Jamaica's people, businesses and economy.

How have we been supporting the Government's efforts?

- **Consultation (Government)**- The PSOJ, along with other private sector associations, have met with the Most Honourable Prime Minister Andrew Holness, various Government ministers including Dr. the Honourable Nigel Clarke, Minister of Finance and the Public Service and Dr. Christopher Tufton, Minister of Health and Wellness and other ministry representatives over the past few weeks. Additionally, two PSOJ past presidents, Howard Mitchell and Chris Zacca, are members of the Advisory Task Force established by the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW).
- **Consultation (Other Stakeholders)**- The PSOJ has proactively engaged the Jamaica Employers Federation, the Human Resource Management Association of Jamaica and other private sector leaders to discuss and arrive at the consensus for best practices related to management of absences related to COVID-19. (payment for extended sick leave, work from home practices, defining social distancing for the workplace etc.) Guidelines have been circulated to the general membership.
- **Communication (to the general public)** – The PSOJ has engaged a social media agency, Adtelligent, to support the MOHW communication efforts. We have used the existing content and information to produce two short social media videos on 'How to Wash Hands' and 'What To Do If You Think If You Have COVID-19' that have been boosted to different demographic across the island. Our support will continue throughout this period.

- **Communication (to our members)** – The PSOJ has worked to keep the members abreast of the latest information and have been communicating updates from the MOHW. The communique from the MOHW related to social distancing and ‘work from home’ guidelines being the most recent examples.
- **Financial Support** – PSOJ President Keith Duncan and Sagicor Group CEO Chris Zacca have galvanized some of our larger members to secure funding for the purchase of forty (40) ventilators valued at J\$300 Million for the local health care system. To date we have raised J\$150 Million to support the efforts of the MOHW. The Government will match the amount raised by the private sector.
- **Advocacy for Business Continuity** – The PSOJ leadership team has been engaging the Minister of Finance and the Public Service Dr. the Hon. Nigel Clarke to discuss potential financial support for employers and employees who will be affected by the possible economic downturn resulting from COVID-19. More details will be communicated once the relevant mechanics have been determined.
- **Coalition Advocacy Efforts** - A policy paper is also being developed by a coalition of private sector associations including the PSOJ, the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce, the Jamaica Manufacturers and Exporters Association to examine the right balance between managing the risk of Covid-19 spread and slowing down the economy to a point where it can’t come back.

This paper will include sector by sector proposals that align with taking strong and early deliberate measures to mitigate the expected losses.

The completed document will be shared via all media channels.

Should you have any questions or would like to share any concerns or comments related to COVID-19, please see contact information below:

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