



LABOUR PULSE

DON'T SKIP A BEAT

newsletter

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT

AT WORK- **KNOW IT! STOP IT!**

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Dear Reader,

It is my pleasure to present the first edition of Labour Pulse, an inside look into how the Ministry of Labour (MOL) continues to enhance the lives of workers, employers, students, policy-makers and other stakeholders.

No longer are we just “The Labour Board”- a place where disgruntled workers and employers voice complaints or seek advice. Our Ministry, founded on the practice of Decent Work, ensures that opportunities for work exist and that the quality of work meets international labour standards.

The MOL Team seeks to educate, equip and empower the labour force of Trinidad and Tobago, as we work toward socio-economical sustainability. Our e-newsletters will highlight the daily endeavours of our employees and the significant contributions that we make together in the lives of citizens. They will also provide information on our easily accessible services and programmes. In so doing, we hope to bring “Team Labour” closer to you.



The Hon. Stephen Mc Clashie
Minister of Labour

Stephen Mc Clashie

Hello and Welcome!

Some of you may know us well, and some of you may have only heard of us. For those of you who work with us, thanks for all the great work you do.

Labour Pulse is an e-newsletter, designed by our very own Corporate Communications Team with you our readers in mind. It allows us to keep you in tune with the happenings of the Ministry whilst keeping our finger on “the pulse” so to speak.

We are ecstatic to share the work that has been going on here at the Ministry of Labour and also to provide you with educational information, helpful tips, events and resources.

Happy Reading!

Natalie Willis



Natalie Willis
Permanent Secretary (Ag.)
Ministry of Labour

OJT Adapts to the New Norm

The On the Job Training Programme (OJTP) like many other Divisions of the MOL has been challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Division has been able to adapt to the new norm. The OJTP has been successful at adjusting its operating processes to observe COVID-19 protocols, while meeting increased demands for placement.



The OJT Division hosts Virtual Trainee Development Sensitization Sessions once a month. The first for the year was held on January 28th which was attended by three hundred and seventeen (317) Trainees and supported by eighteen (18) staff members. The second was held on February 25th and was attended by two hundred and twenty eight (228) Trainees. The sessions included OJT regions in both Trinidad and Tobago.

For the months of January and February, five hundred and twenty three (523) Trainees were placed of which one hundred and forty six (146) were male and three hundred and seventy seven (377) were female. The trainees were placed into both the public and private sector for relevant industry training.

As the OJT Division continues to adapt to the “new normal” it has also successfully implemented measures to communicate virtually with key stakeholders through the use of communication platforms such as Microsoft Teams and Zoom Video Conferencing.

These are important and significant steps for the Division as it seeks to ensure that the orientation and placement processes continue unhindered in order to achieve its set goals and objective for the OJT Programme.



Getting to Zero HIV and AIDS Discrimination in the Workplace

The HIV Workplace Advocacy Unit (HWAU) of the MOL continues to its commitment to reduce employment related stigma and discrimination against people living with or affected by HIV or AIDS. In recent months, the Ministry of Labour through the HWAU has entered into ten (10) Memoranda of Understanding, with business organisations throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

Recognising the need to protect the rights of persons living with HIV in the workplace, including vulnerable groups of workers; these companies have pledged their commitment to establish procedures to manage HIV and AIDS in the workplace and to promote non-discrimination, care, treatment and support for their employees. With the support of HIV Advocacy Officers, each organisation will develop their respective HIV and AIDS Workplace Policy.

In January, the Trinidad and Tobago Blind Welfare Association (TTBWA) with the technical support received from the team of officers at the HWAU, completed and presented its HIV and AIDS Workplace Policy, which is available in hardcopy, braille and audio, to the Ministry's HWAU Unit.

The Ministry of Labour recognises the diversity of our national labour force and through partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a Spanish version of the National Workplace Policy on HIV and AIDS will soon be available to all our stakeholders.

Sexual Harassment at Work- Know It! Stop It!

"Being in the place where I spend most of my waking hours has become a living nightmare."

"Being violated that day in the office car park easily caused me to slip into being an introvert because I did not want to experience that feeling ever again. I felt like no one will take it seriously. An inner battle ensued, whether to speak out against my manager or stay silent on the incident which taunted me each day especially when I saw him. Overwhelmed with trauma and fear, I became silent because I thought I would be victimized, I felt that I would lose my job and that others would look at me in a negative light.



I did not know that I had rights. It has been five (5) years now since my employer rested his hand on me inappropriately and to this day the image is imprinted in my mind. I had told no one up until today, when I saw a television programme with the Ministry of Labour talking about Sexual Harassment in the workplace."- Janice, February 2021

Every worker has the right to a safe and healthy work environment despite his or her gender or sexual orientation. Recognizing that it has become commonplace for sexual harassment to remain unaddressed across workspaces, the National Workplace Policy on Sexual Harassment was laid in Parliament on International Women's Day (March 08) in 2019. To spread the message far and wide, the Conciliation Advisory and Advocacy Division (CAAD) of the Ministry of Labour hosted a series of radio and television interviews outlining 'What it is Sexual Harassment' vs 'What is Not Sexual Harassment', the steps to take in addressing sexual harassment at work and to whom should reports be made.

Chief Labour Relations Officer, Sabina Gomez, and Senior Legal Officer, Sangeeta Boondoo, appeared on television and radio across ten (10) stations to promote the new Policy. The CAAD also continues to conduct sensitization sessions with stakeholders across the public and private sectors to ensure that the working population takes a zero tolerance approach to Sexual Harassment in the workplace and utilize the Ministry's Guidelines to address this issue.

The Ministry of Labour continues to champion this initiative by launching its National Sensitization Campaign aimed at educating employers and employees about sexual harassment in the workplace under the proposed title:

Sexual Harassment at Work - Know It! Stop It!

Report Sexual Harassment at Work or Develop your Workplace Policy today: Contact the Conciliation Advisory and Advocacy Division at 299-0300 ext. 2043 or shcaad@gov.tt. For complaint forms and to get more information on sexual harassment, visit the Ministry's Website at labour.gov.tt

What is Sexual Harassment ?

Any type of unwanted and unwelcomed sexual advances, whether verbal or physical in the workplace. Both males and females are victims.

What to do if you are sexually harassed?

- Keep a record of what happened: date, time, location and name of witnesses.
- Speak to the person in the organization assigned to deal with issues of this nature at work.
- Document all meetings and the persons involved.

Each case is based on its own merit

Ministries of Labour and National Security join forces to protect T&T residents.



The Labour Inspectorate Unit (LIU) has formalized its relationship with the Counter Trafficking Unit (CTU) of the Ministry of National Security, through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU will streamline these Units' collaboration on combating Human Trafficking, Child Labour and Labour Exploitation and was signed at the Ministry of Labour's Head Office on March 09, by Permanent Secretaries (Ag.) Ms. Natalie Willis, Ministry of Labour and Mr. Gary Joseph, Ministry of National Security.

Since 2013, The Team at the LIU has been partnering with the CTU to conduct joint exercises towards tackling these crimes. Thus, this MOU bolsters and sets the guidelines for continued collaboration to protect residents, including migrants, from crimes that breach their human and labour rights.

This is a milestone initiative especially as this year is **The International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour**; this move solidifies the action being taken to reduce Child Labour, Human Trafficking and Forced Labour in Trinidad and Tobago. Congratulations to the LIU!

OSHA Inspections

To elevate risk management, its commitment to world standards and accountability to safety across all industries, sectors and staff in Trinidad and Tobago, OSHA conducted the following inspections over the period 01 Oct. 20 to 3 Jan. 21

- 969** Inspections were conducted at Industrial Establishments in Trinidad and Tobago.
- 25** Prohibition Notices were issued due to breaches of the OSH Act Chap 88:08.
- 58** Improvement Notices were issued due to breaches of the OSH Act Chap 88:08.
- 128** Complaints were investigated and completed.
- 174** Accidents were investigated and completed.
- 11** Matters were initiated in the Industrial Court against Industrial Establishments as a result of Occupational Accidents that occurred.

Fun Easter Facts



- Easter is the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the Christian religion,
- Eggs have been seen as ancient symbol of fertility, while springtime is considered to bring new life and rebirth.
- 70% of Easter candy purchased is chocolate.
- Egg dyes were once made out of natural items such as onion peels, tree bark, flower petals, and juices.
- The first story of a rabbit (later named the "Easter Bunny") hiding eggs in a garden was published in 1680.
- Easter takes place on a Sunday (Palm Sunday), after the 40-day period called Lent. Lent is referred to as a time of fasting, but participants focus more on giving up one significant indulgence.
- Holy Week is celebrated during the week leading up to Easter. It begins on Palm Sunday, continues on to Monday Thursday, Good Friday, and then finally, Easter Sunday.