



MINISTRY PAPER NO .69/2023

Job Description for Ministers of Government

June 20, 2023

Office of the Prime Minister

GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA

Job Description

Ministers of Government

TITLE	Minister of (INSERT Ministry)
PORTFOLIO MINISTRY	(INSERT)
ACCOUNTABLE TO (As member of the Cabinet/Executive)	The Prime Minister
ACCOUNTABLE TO (As Member of Parliament)	The Parliament/House of Representative
MAIN PORTFOLIO ASSIGNMENT	(INSERT)

This document may be used as a tool to assess the specific performance of a Minister of Government

SIGNATURE OF MINISTER

DATE

SIGNATURE OF PRIME MINISTER

DATE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

To use the authority of office and the power of the political mandate, within the Constitution, laws, and conventions of Jamaica, to sustainably, efficiently, effectively, and with dignity, advance the peace, wellbeing, prosperity, and prospects of the people of Jamaica and its global interests. This is done by exercising general direction and control over the public bureaucracy, while leveraging public support through advocacy and engagement towards the wholistic development of Jamaica.

JOB PURPOSE

Public affairs present a diverse, dynamic, complex, and often conflicting set of interests, considerations, threats, and opportunities which are neither linearly related nor consistent in how they can be optimized to advance the public good. The optimization of public affairs requires timely decisions to be made that establish direction and order of priority. The set of decisions establishing direction and priorities for public affairs, taken together, represents policy. While there are established mechanisms to bind the decision maker and hold them to account, there remains a space in which discretion and judgement must be applied.

The Office of Minister is therefore, reposed with public trust and confidence in the use of discretion and good judgement to make decisions to promote the public good. Ministers have the awesome responsibility to make decisions on behalf of the public. They are expected, in all spheres and endeavours, to respect this public trust and confidence and embody the exercise of discretion and good judgment in stewardship of public affairs.

The purpose of the Minister is to steward and manage public affairs through the efficient and effective development of clearly defined policy, drive the implementation of such policy, and hold to account the public bureaucracy for the delivery of results. Under the direction and leadership of the Prime Minister, Ministers act collectively through the Cabinet, and individually, through their statutory powers and assigned ministries, to implement the business of the Government of Jamaica as defined by the goals and order of priority they determine.

Ministers bring their policy to life through leadership, which involves:

- conceiving ideas by critical thinking and taking initiative in agenda setting;
- communicating a clear vision inspiring hope and aspirations, and giving clear directives;
- convening, consulting, and collaborating with stakeholders to inform perspectives, marshal support, build commitment and capacity, and align effort; and
- charging agencies and officers with responsibility for implementation, and holding them accountable for results through ongoing monitoring and review.

Additionally, Ministers have a ceremonial role in the government as public officials representing the history, tradition, honour, and dignity of the state. They officiate at public events, act as interlocutors and advocates within the society, and represent government, locally and internationally.

REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The principle of ministerial responsibility applies to Ministers in the Government of Jamaica. Ministers are individually responsible for the policy stewardship of the ministries they have been assigned. In the course of an administration, Ministers must bring to Cabinet, submissions and reports for the portfolios they have been assigned, and they must also publicly report to Parliament on their portfolios. Ministers are subject to the accountability of the Prime Minister and the Parliament for their actions.

The principle of collective responsibility applies to each Minister in the Government of Jamaica. Ministers are jointly responsible for the decisions of Cabinet. As decisions of the Cabinet are taken to be decisions of all members, deliberations surrounding decisions are considered internal ruminations of the collective mind and are treated as secret to preserve the unified nature of the decision. Each Cabinet member has a responsibility under oath to support the decisions of Cabinet and keep the deliberations of Cabinet secret.

Ultimately, the government, and Ministers indirectly, are held to account in general elections.

KEY DELIVERABLES/OUTPUTS

- Government policies developed;
- Government programmes designed and implemented;
- Strategies to implement government policies developed;
- Laws, regulations and/or orders enacted;
- Parliament is routinely updated on matters related to portfolio responsibility;
- Regular and appropriate communication with the public on matters related to portfolio responsibilities;
- Leadership and direction provided to ministry/ies and agencies of government;
- Statutory and administrative duties managed and executed including; applications for permits and approvals actioned on a timely basis;
- Ceremonial duties attended/fulfilled.

KEY RESPONSIBILITY AREAS

- Attends and participates in Cabinet meetings;
- Maintains the confidentiality of the business of Cabinet;
- As part of the Executive arm of government, takes major decisions and determines government policies and priorities in keeping with assigned portfolio responsibilities;
- Co-ordinates and provides policy and strategic leadership to portfolio responsibilities;
- Presents to the Prime Minister and Cabinet, policy proposals for implementing agreed policies;
- Ensures the development of strategic plans for implementing portfolio specific responsibilities, to give effect to the mandate of the government;
- Ensures the policy directives of the government are developed into achievable and measurable plans;
- Directs heads of portfolio ministry/ies, departments and agencies on the mandate of the government, its priorities and expected course of actions to facilitate implementation;
- Harnesses the expertise of consultants, advisors, heads of entities, experts and other stakeholders to inform opinions, decisions and provide feedback/ advice to the Prime Minister and Cabinet on current and anticipated/emerging issues within areas of portfolio responsibility;

- Advises His Excellency the Governor General on portfolio matters as may be required from time to time;
- Promotes public confidence and protects the integrity of the decisions of the government;
- Develops strong connections and relationships with leaders, officials and colleagues to maintain lines of communications for effective and direct communication of government policies, actions, and perspectives towards a common, clear and stable understanding of the direction of the government and the state;
- Develops and maintains a network of professional and international contacts to promote and advance Jamaica's interests;
- Represents the government's interest at official engagements, locally and overseas;
- Participates in/conducts or leads negotiations on behalf of the government;
- Ensures the preparation of and defends overall portfolio budgetary allocations/appropriations;
- Adopts a whole-of-government approach and supports the government in key cross cutting issues;
- Reports to the Parliament on portfolio issues likely to impact the country as a whole, or generally on issues which the Parliament demands;
- Supports the oversight role of the Parliament, on matters impacting portfolio responsibilities, by appearing before Parliament and/or its relevant committees and providing relevant information;
- Pilots legislation through Parliament and supports the legislative agenda agreed to by Cabinet;
- Participates in parliamentary deliberations;
- Executes efficiently and effectively all specific functions and duties ascribed to the Minister in law;
- Executes efficiently and effectively, administrative and management functions necessary for the proper functioning of the Office of Minister;
- Upholds the Constitution and laws of Jamaica; and
- Any other duty/role assigned by the Prime Minister from time to time.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- In furtherance of the broad policy focus of the government, portfolio policies are developed and presented to the Prime Minister/Cabinet. Policy proposals/recommendations must be supported by cogent data/research, legal and financial implications and other impacts;
- New laws/bills proposed are presented to the Parliament in a timely manner, defended convincingly and followed through to completion;
- Portfolio responsibilities are coordinated through the Permanent Secretary and Boards of MDAs¹;
- The policies of the government are promoted in keeping with the approved means/channels;
- The confidentiality of Cabinet is maintained;
- In keeping with the collective responsibility of Cabinet, the expression of opinions that are at variance with the policy position of the government is refrained from; and
- Respectful behaviour towards parliamentary colleagues is maintained and engagement is pursuant to the Standing Orders of Parliament.

COMPETENCIES/ATTRIBUTES

- Good understanding of the machinery of government, particularly in relation to the three branches and the relationship between ministers and the civil service/public bodies;
- Good understanding of the Constitution and laws of Jamaica,
- Good understanding of constitutional principles such as the rule of law, separation of powers and responsible government,
- Superlative understanding of the principles of ministerial responsibility and collective responsibility;
- Good understanding of the rules of Parliament and parliamentary debate;
- Strong understanding of media relations/communicating with the public;
- Excellent ability to translate government policies into workable programmes;
- Excellent ability to lead people and to secure their commitment to facilitate completion of tasks;

¹ Ministries, Departments and Agencies

- Excellent ability to think critically, regulate emotions and personal beliefs, quickly process information,
- Excellent ability to mediate disputes, manage crises, and solve problems;
- Strong ability to explain/articulate ideas and make meaningful contribution to discussions, debates, and perspectives;
- Strong commitment to equity and transformational change to improve human condition and quality of life;
- Good understanding of the principles of public finance and fiscal discipline;
- Strong conviction to the principles of good governance and its application to ministerial and personal conduct;
- Possession of professional presence, situational awareness and flexibility, and ability to multi-task.

CONTACTS

The job of a Minister of Government carries an embracing component as representative of the government and by extension the citizens. As Government Minister contacts will include but will not be limited to:

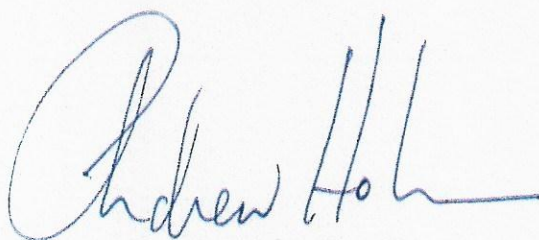
- State officials and foreign diplomats/dignitaries;
- International partners;
- Heads of/representatives of international organizations (recognized groups);
- Permanent Secretaries, Chairpersons, senior technocrats in ministries, departments and agencies;
- Other Ministers of government;
- Parliamentarians;
- NGOs and community interest groups; and
- Members of the public.

MINIMUM REQUIRED QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE

- Qualified according to the laws of Jamaica to be appointed to the House of Representatives or the Senate; and
- A period of progressive experience gained through advocacy, political or professional affiliation, community involvement, voluntary sector experience, business experience (or otherwise) which allows for exposure to, and a deep appreciation of, the historical, cultural, social, and economic realities of Jamaica.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Extended time away from family;
- Long working hours;
- Always on call and available to lead in emergencies and crises;
- Extensive travelling locally and internationally, sometimes at very short notice;
- Working with wide stakeholder interests;
- Working in challenging conditions;
- Potentially subject to verbal abuse and threats; and
- High levels of stress.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andrew Holness".

Andrew Holness ON, PC, MP
Prime Minister

June 20, 2023