

March



Newsletter 2025

FOR HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICERS & STAFF IN THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE



People engagement is a key indicator of a healthy and thriving workplace, where customers feel important and employees feel valued, involved, and invested in their roles and that of the organisation at large. As Strategic Human Resource (HR) Practitioners, it is prudent to improve people engagement as engaged employees perform better, boosting the success of their teams and increasing the outputs and outcomes of their organisations. It is with this in mind that the Chief Personnel Officer hosted the Office of the Services Commissions (OSC) Biennial Human Resource Practitioners One-Day Conference for Directors, Managers, Officers and Administrators. The Conference was held on Thursday, February 13, 2025, at the Negril/Montego Suite, The Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, 81 Knutsford Boulevard, Kingston 5, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. under the theme :

"People Engagement....The Fibre of HR."

Missed the Conference? No need to worry. Here are the highlights of the day's events. Happy Reading!!!!

HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTITIONERS'

CONFERENCE 2025

Highlights

The Office of the Services Commissions' HR Practitioners' Conference 2025, focused on People Engagement and the important role it plays in carrying out Human Resource functions. The Conference provided a forum for HR Practitioners to gather in-depth knowledge on Industrial Relations, Discipline and Retirement Planning. Mrs. Jacqueline Mendez, JP, Chief Personnel Officer, offered a hearty welcome to each participant. She informed the participants of the importance the gathering is to OSC as the aim is to expand their knowledge in the areas identified for greater efficiency in the performance of their duties. She also encouraged participants to interact with their colleagues to build and strengthen greater collaborations across the Public Service. The Chairman of the Public Service Commission, Mrs. Patricia Sinclair McCalla, CD, JP and Cabinet Secretary, Ambassador the Hon. Audrey Sewell, OJ, CD, JP also brought greetings, and both were well received.

Mrs. Georgia Morris-Josephs, Deputy Chief Personnel Officer, Information, Standards and Public Education, was the gracious Madam Moderator who expertly managed the time and ensured each presenter had ample time to make their presentation while affording the participants an opportunity to ask questions and share the insights received, this facilitated robust conversation. The keynote speakers were Dr. Lauren Marsh, JP: Industrial Relations Specialist (Presenter: Industrial Relations) and Miss Yvette Brown: Senior Assistant Attorney General-Office of the Services Commissions (Presenter: Discipline). The day ended on a high note with an interactive, informative and uplifting session from Retirement Coach, Mrs. Patricia Reid-Waugh, JP: (Retirement Planning & Emotional Wellness).

A total of fifty (50) entities submitted nominations for the Conference and eighty (80) participants were in attendance from Ministries, Departments, Executive Agencies and the OSC.

In addition to the presentations, participants were issued with Trainee Kits containing an Information Sheet, Programme Schedule and branded Notebooks, courtesy of the OSC. Participants were also issued with a name badge along with two (2) QR Codes for registration and the other for accessing information on the presenters, and activities in relation to the Conference.



HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTITIONERS'

CONFERENCE 2025

Presenters



DR. LAUREN MARSH, JP | INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SPECIALIST

Dr. Lauren Marsh, JP is the Head of the Hugh Shearer Labour Studies Institute at the University of the West Indies, Global Campus. He was awarded his PhD by the University of the West Indies (UWI). Dr Marsh has also completed studies in the United Kingdom and the United States of America at various institutions and in various subject areas, including Employment Relations.



MS. YVETTE ANGELLA BROWN | SENIOR ASST. ATTORNEY GENERAL

Ms. Yvette Angella Brown is a seasoned attorney-at-law, with extensive experience in public sector law, developing policy frameworks, crafting legislative proposals and navigating the legislative process to drive effective legal and regulatory reforms, and corporate governance. Miss Brown currently serves as the Senior Assistant Attorney General in the Office of the Services Commissions.



MRS. PATRICIA REID-WAUGH, JP | RETIREMENT COACH

Mrs. Patricia Reid-Waugh, JP a Retired Chartered Accountant, now serves as a Retirement Coach, designing and delivering presentations at retirement seminars, committed to the mission of helping persons appreciate the importance of planning for retirement, and remaining active and engaged when they get there. She is the author of two books: Retirement, A New Adventure and Retirement: The Journey and The Destination – A Planning Guide.

1. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The presentation on Industrial Relations provided an in-depth overview of the key principles governing workplace dynamics between employers, employees and unions as well as essential concepts such as labor laws, and conflict resolution strategies.

According to the International Labour Organisation, **Industrial Relations (IR)** is the relationship between employers and workers whether at the national, regional or company level and all dealings with social and economic issues like wages, working times and conditions.

To understand the relevance of IR, we must consider how we got to where we are today. The history of IR spans from the harsh working conditions of the early industrial revolution in the 18th-19th centuries. Over the years, industrial relations have continued to evolve with the changing nature of work, and debates about workers' rights, union power, and employer responsibility remain central to modern economies.

Tripartite Approach to IR:

A tripartite approach to IR refers to the collaboration and cooperation among three key parties: the government, employers/management and workers and their trade unions. This approach emphasizes the importance of developing work-related policies that are inclusive and consider the rights of employees.

Key principles of the tripartite approach include:

1. Fair Compensation:

Ensuring that workers receive equitable pay for their work, reflecting their contributions and the value they provide for the organisation.

2. Decent Work:

Advocating on safe, secure, and respectful working conditions that support workers' well-being.

3. Union-Employer Cooperation:

Encouraging positive and cooperative relationships between unions and employers to foster a collaborative work environment, resolve conflicts, and enhance productivity.



Trade Union Act

The Trade Union Act of 1919 is a key piece of legislation that grants workers the fundamental right to either join or not join a trade union. This law empowered workers to organise, fostering a stronger collective voice in advocating for their rights and working conditions. A key component of this act is the concept of collective bargaining, which allows trade unions and employers to negotiate terms related to wages, benefits, and working conditions on behalf of the workers. It establishes a framework for the negotiation process and aims to create a more equitable working environment.

Relevant Legislation and Policies:

Labour Relations and Industrial Disputes Act (LRIDA) 1975: This act provides a formal process for resolving industrial disputes and establishes frameworks for negotiations, dispute resolution, and industrial harmony.

1. Labour Relations Code (1976):

The code provides detailed guidelines and principles for handling industrial relations and worker rights, ensuring fair treatment in disputes and interactions between employees and employers.

2. Staff Orders for the Public Service:

This set of policies defines the rights, responsibilities, and conduct of public service employees, addressing grievances and ensuring fair labour practices in government employment.

3. Grievance Procedures for Public Bodies:

This outlines the procedures to be followed when employees in public service institutions raise grievances, ensuring that they are dealt with in a fair, transparent, and timely manner.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CONT'D



SIMILARITIES AMONG THE LEGISLATION AND POLICIES:

Industrial Harmony (Union-Employer Cooperation): The legislation encourages collaboration between unions and employers, aiming to maintain industrial peace and prevent conflicts that could disrupt operations.

Employees' Right to Representation: The right to unionize and be represented in negotiations ensures that workers' voices are heard, and their interests are considered in decisions impacting their work lives.

Natural Justice and Due Process: These policies emphasize fairness in the treatment of employees, ensuring that procedures for grievance handling, dispute resolution, and disciplinary actions are transparent, just, and based on merit.

Need for Established Mechanism for Collective Bargaining: These laws underscore the importance of an organized system for collective bargaining to ensure that workers and employers can negotiate effectively and in good faith, establishing fair terms for both parties.

INTEREST-BASED VS. ADVERSARIAL BARGAINING:

Interest-Based Bargaining (IBB) focuses on collaboration and problem-solving by addressing the needs and interests of both parties, promoting communication, mutual respect, and a win-win solution. It aims to find common ground and benefits both employees and employers, fostering positive long-term relationships.

In contrast, Adversarial Bargaining is confrontational, with each party seeking to maximize their own gain, often resulting in a zero-sum game and potential conflict, which can damage relationships.

GRIEVANCE

According to the Labour Code (1976), specifically in Part VI - Grievance Disputes and Disciplinary Procedures, guarantees that all workers have the right to seek redress for grievances related to their employment and management. It stresses the importance of not denying workers representation once a grievance progresses beyond the initial stage. This ensures that workers have support during the grievance process, ensuring fair treatment and transparency.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GRIEVANCE AND A COMPLAINT:

Grievance: Grievance is a violation of contracts, practices, rules and regulations that cause distress or discomfort for both employees and management over time. Grievances typically refer to more serious or systemic issues and often follow a formal procedure for resolution, as outlined in the Labour Code.

Complaint: A complaint, on the other hand, is generally a less formal expression of dissatisfaction or concern about something in the workplace, such as minor issues or individual concerns that might not necessarily involve a breach of rights or employment terms.

The key difference between a grievance and a complaint lies in the seriousness and formality of the issue at hand, with grievances typically being more significant and following a formal resolution process.

2. DISCIPLINE



The presentation on **DISCIPLINE** examined the critical role of natural justice in disciplinary proceedings within the public service, with a particular focus on Jamaica.

Natural justice principles ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability, protecting both employees and the broader governance framework. Given the significant impact of adverse employment decisions on individuals' livelihoods and reputations, adherence to natural justice is crucial in both preliminary investigations and formal disciplinary processes.

PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL JUSTICE

Natural justice is anchored in two fundamental principles:

1. RIGHT TO A FAIR HEARING (*AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM*) –

Employees must be notified of allegations, allowed to present their case, granted legal representation, and permitted to review the evidence.

2. RULE AGAINST BIAS (*NEMO JUDEX IN CAUSA SUA*) –

Decision-makers must be free from conflicts of interest, impartial, and independent.

Where a decision-maker's objectivity is compromised it is important that the decision maker recuses himself/herself from disciplinary panels. It is recommended that disciplinary panels be independent of the organisation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Natural justice is a fundamental administrative law principle which upholds the rule of law. Influential legal scholars such as Albert Venn Dicey and Lon L. Fuller highlight its role in preventing arbitrary power and ensuring legitimacy in governance. Paul Craig and Mark Elliott emphasize how natural justice has evolved in common law systems to reinforce due process and procedural fairness.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN JAMAICA

Jamaican law embeds natural justice in disciplinary proceedings through:

The Constitution of Jamaica (1962) – Guarantees due process and fair hearings under Section 16(2).

The Public Service Regulations (1961) – Outlines disciplinary procedures (Regulations 28–47).

The Public Service Enquiries Act (1964) – Grants committees investigative powers.

These laws are interpreted through judicial decisions to ensure fair procedural application in employment-related disciplinary actions.

DISCIPLINE CONT'D

Landmark Judicial Decisions

Three significant judicial precedents demonstrate how Jamaican courts reinforce natural justice in employment discipline:

1. Faith Webster v Public Service Commission (2017)

Mrs. Webster was interdicted on half salary without prior hearing. The court ruled in her favour, emphasizing that interdictions proceedings require that the employee be afforded an opportunity to indicate the portion of their salary to be withheld. The process for such a decision should not be arbitrary.

2. Robert Rainford v Governor-General (2014)

Rainford was dismissed as a Permanent Secretary for posting bail for a fraud suspect. His dismissal came before the fourteen (14) day period for him to be afforded a reference to the Privy Council had expired. The court held that dismissal before the completion of the appeal process violates natural justice.

3. Erlin Hall v Public Service Commission (1993)

Hall, a prison warder, was summarily dismissed without a chance to respond. He had been absent from work for five days without permission. The court ruled that even summary dismissal must adhere to the principles of natural justice. As such Hall was entitled to be notified of the charges against him and be afforded an opportunity to respond.

These cases reinforce the need for adherence to the principles of natural justice in disciplinary proceedings.



LESSONS LEARNED:

Decisions about employees must adhere to the principles of natural justice. Where there are constitutional or regulatory provisions these must be complied with.

In the case of proceedings for interdiction, employees must be afforded an opportunity to say what portion of their salary ought to be withheld.

Disciplinary proceedings do not come to a finality until after the expiration of the time for an employee to have a reference/ appeal to the Privy Council.

Notwithstanding that the regulations provide for summary dismissal; through case law the court has reinforced that the principles of natural justice must be applied to those proceedings.

The Courts has the power of oversight in respect of administrative decisions and will hear matters concerning whether the correct procedure was followed in respect of disciplinary proceedings. Where the correct procedure was not followed, no matter how sound the case against the employee, the court will quash the decision.

Strict adherence to the principles of natural justice is vital for integrity, fairness, and accountability in public service disciplinary proceedings.



3. RETIREMENT PLANNING AND EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

The key to retirement is to find joy in the little things. -C.S. Lewis

THE EMOTIONAL LANDSCAPE OF RETIREMENT

RETIREMENT often brings a mix of emotions. People may feel excitement and relief about leaving work, but it's also common to experience fear, anxiety, or a sense of loss of purpose. These mixed emotions stem from the significant change retirement represents. Managing these feelings involves conditioning your mindset to understand that adjustments are a natural part of the process. It's important to recognize that while change can be challenging, it doesn't have to be negative. By focusing on cultivating a positive mindset and embracing the opportunities retirement offers, individuals can adapt and find new sources of fulfillment such as freedom and time for personal passions. Ultimately, how you approach retirement-mentally and emotionally-shapes your experience of this new phase of life.



OLD DOG CAN LEARN NEW TRICKS

The phrase "You can't teach an old dog new tricks" often implies that older individuals may be resistant to change or unable to learn new things. However, through retirement we've come to learn that "old dogs" can in fact learn new tricks. Retirees have the ability to embrace change, acquire new skills and knowledge, and engage in fresh activities. Retirement is not a time to stop learning or growing; it is the perfect time to explore new opportunities and develop new skills. In fact, retirement is an exciting phase of life that offers new opportunities to explore passions, stay active, and contribute to the community. Beyond volunteering and pursuing hobbies, there are numerous ways retirees can stay engaged and enjoy this stage of life. Here are some examples and ideas of activities retirees can consider:-

1. VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY SERVICE:

Mentoring/Nonprofit Work: Offering guidance to younger individuals, whether in professional or personal development, can be very fulfilling. As well as volunteering for different nonprofits.

Tutoring or Teaching: Retirees with specialized knowledge or skills can help students or adults in need of education.

3. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLNESS:

Exercise Classes: Many retirees enjoy staying fit by joining yoga, walking groups or Pilates classes specifically designed for older adults.

Meditation and Mindfulness: Practicing mindfulness or meditation helps retirees stay mentally sharp, reduce stress, and maintain emotional balance.

2. HOBBIES:

Arts and Crafts: Retirees can explore painting, knitting, woodworking, photography.

Music: Learning to play a musical instrument or even joining a choir can bring joy and creativity to one's life.

Writing: Writing blogs, books, memoirs, or articles can keep the mind sharp and allow retirees to share their experiences or insights.

4. TRAVEL AND EXPLORATION:

Traveling: Many retirees enjoy the freedom to explore new places. This could mean international travel, domestic road trips, or even cruises that cater to older adults.

Local Exploration: Discovering nearby parks, museums, or cultural events can be an exciting and fulfilling way to spend time.

By engaging in any of these activities, **RETIREEES** can enjoy their newfound freedom, maintain a sense of purpose, and continue living a vibrant, fulfilling life. There are so many countless ways to stay **ACTIVE, ENGAGED, AND HEALTHY.**

Highlights



Mr. Sean A. Davis, JP



**Dr. Lauren Marsh, JP &
Ms. Carol Lee-Lea**



Ms. Tameika Estick



Mrs. Camille Campbell



**Mrs. Patricia Sinclair McCalla, CD, JP
Dr. Lauren Marsh, JP &
Mrs. Jacqueline Mendez, JP**



Mrs. Carla Anne Harris-Roper



**Mrs. Renae Spence &
Mrs. Georgia Morris-Josephs**



**Mrs. Rene Phillips &
Mrs. Patricia Sinclair McCalla, CD, JP**



**Mrs. Nicole Fletcher-Brown &
Mrs. Patricia Reid-Waugh, JP**



Ms. Julia Campbell



Hon. Audrey Sewell, OJ, CD, JP



Mr. Wayne Grant



**Mrs. Patricia Reid-Waugh, JP
& Mr. Taquane Bowen**



**Mrs. Juliet Bonner Clarke &
Mrs. Georgia Morris-Josephs**



Fun Quiz Table Winners



Mrs. Alexia Jones



**Miss Tanesha Johnson &
Mrs. Desreen Smith**



Mrs. Lorraine Henry-Grant



Mr. Cranston Morgan



Mrs. Juliet Lee Burke-Clark



Mrs. Dionne Hamilton-Earle



Mrs. Lavern Brown



Mrs. Kady-Ann Hyde Grant



OSC



Ms. Everett Moore



Ms. Tashieka Campbell



Ms. Sheree Bent



Mrs. Cadein Madden Bennett



Mr. Yohan Ricketts



Miss Julian Tomlinson



Miss Charlene Pennant



Mr. Texeire Campbell



Miss Sheena Russell

Inna di NEWS

RESUMPTION OF THE COURT REPORTING TRAINING PROGRAM

The Justice Training Institute (JTI) reintroduces the Certificate in Court Reporting. This eighteen (18) month programme is designed to train individuals to record and transcribe verbatim notes of legal and other proceedings.

In March 2024 the Justice Training Institute along with the Court Administration Division received over \$30 million dollars' worth of equipment to improve service delivery. The JTI received fifteen (15) laptops and fifteen (15) stenography machines.

The Court Reporting programme had its last cohort approximately a decade ago and the resumption provides an opportunity for individuals to gain the skills needed to become a vital part of the Legal system, Individuals who have keen listening skills, an eye for detail and who are interested in a career that blends technology, communication and precision are encouraged to join this programme.

Applications closed on March 14, 2025, and were opened to three Tiers of applicants: Tier 1 to employees in the Ministry of Justice, the Justice Sector and Ministries, Department and Agencies; Tier 2 to the Private Sector and Tier 3 to International and Regional applicants.

REMINDERS

As we embark on the new financial year 2025/2026, here are a few reminders:

ITEM/EVENT	DEADLINE/DATE
End of year Evaluations	March 31, 2025
Statutory Declarations	
Study Leave/ Day Release Applications	
Good Friday	April 18, 2025
Easter Monday	April 21, 2025
Administrative Professionals Day	April 23, 2025

See you in June!

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