



INTEGRITY COMMISSION

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Media Release

Integrity Commission Commences Enforcement of its Zero Tolerance Policy – Several Public Officials Referred for Criminal Prosecution

February 12, 2021 - The Integrity Commission has commenced the formal enforcement of its Zero Tolerance Policy against Jamaica Public Officials who fail to comply with the law.

Section 39 (1) of the Integrity Commission Act (ICA) provides that "... every person who, on or after the appointed day, is a Parliamentarian or Public Official, shall submit to the (Commission's) Director of Information and Complaints, a Statutory Declaration of his assets and liabilities and his income in the form set out in the Third Schedule".

Pursuant to the referenced provision of the ICA, the Integrity Commission had served thirty (30) day Statutory Notices on several Public Officials who were outstanding with the filing of their Statutory Declarations for 2018 and 2019. At the expiration of the notice period, those Public Officials who did not comply were referred to the Commission's Director of Corruption Prosecution for criminal prosecution.

In keeping with the provisions of the law, the Commission's Director of Corruption Prosecution has approved the offer of a Discharge of Liability for delinquent Declarants, by the payment of a lesser fine of \$250,000 and the submission of the outstanding Statutory Declaration. Delinquent Declarants, who fail to pay the \$250,000 fine and submit the Declaration within the specified time, will become liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding \$500,000, or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 6 months.

The Commission's Chairman, the Hon. Mr. Justice Seymour Panton (Ret'd.), in the Commission's 2019/2020 Annual Report, had warned "all Public Officials ... to comply, as a failure to comply will result in prosecution". The Commission is now following through on that warning.

The Commission is urging all Public Officials to ensure that they file their 2020 Statutory Declarations, within their respective organizations, no later than March 31, 2021. All outstanding Statutory Declarations for 2018 and 2019 should also be filed forthwith to avoid prosecution. The Commission's objective is to ensure that it secures a 100% compliance filing rate by all of the country's 37,000-plus Public Officials who are required to file.

"There will be no exceptions", said the Commission's Executive Director, Greg Christie. "Laws are promulgated by the Parliament to be complied with and enforced, not to be arbitrarily ignored, disregarded or set aside".

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