



MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SMALL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

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PRESS RELEASE

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MINISTER OF LABOUR AND SMALL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT
OBSERVING WORLD AIDS DAY

Today, the 30th anniversary of the first WORLD AIDS Day, the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development joins the global community in remembering the millions of persons who have died from AIDS-related illnesses, persons who have lost their lives due to limited or no access to health and social services that they urgently needed, persons who were discriminated against and were victims of stigmatization.

This year, under the UNAIDS theme “*Know Your Status*”, we recommit our solidarity with all who are living with or affected by HIV, and encourage you the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago to know your HIV status. Unfortunately, there are many persons among us who are living with this potentially deadly, but treatable, disease. However, if persons are unaware of their HIV status, those who are living with HIV cannot begin treatment, protecting their health and stopping HIV transmission; they cannot protect themselves, their families, their partners nor their co-workers.

HIV continues to have a critical impact on individuals and communities- in our homes and our workspaces. The disease knows no economic nor geographic boundaries. It is impossible to speak of HIV and AIDS without taking into consideration both social and workplace issues. In this regard, the HIV Workplace Advocacy Unit of the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development presses on steadfastly in ensuring the implementation of the **National Workplace Policy on HIV and AIDS** within organisations across Trinidad and Tobago.

The implementation of these Workplace Policies and Programmes not only promote a non-discriminatory environment but also provide HIV prevention education to all workers and the reduction of the risk of infection. It also lends support to the UNAIDS 90-90-90 international target, in which one of the goals is to ensure that by the year 2020, 90% of all people living with HIV will know their HIV status.

Today, we recognise our fellow advocates, partners and stakeholders who join us in this ongoing fight against HIV and AIDS. Remember that knowledge is of no value unless we put it into practice. Therefore let us continue to work together to achieve “sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”.

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