



**PRESS RELEASE
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MNS Signs MOU with HEART/NSTA & HOPE to Provide Training for Wards & Inmates

The Ministry of National Security and the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to provide training to DCS staff along with wards and inmates transitioning out of correctional facilities.

The MOU was signed with the Human Employment and Resource Training/National Service Training Agency (HEART/NSTA) Trust and the Housing, Opportunity, Production and Employment (HOPE) Programme and will facilitate the placement of ex-wards and ex-inmates in entrepreneurial programmes offered by the HEART/NSTA Trust.

Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of National Security, Senator Hon. Matthew Samuda said he was pleased to begin the implementation stage of the agreement. **“Through this MOU, the wards will reintegrate into society and give their families and themselves a sense of pride to contribute to the nations’ continued growth and success. This programme is not just simply training people to get jobs but we are training them to create jobs and ensuring that when they are released they will lead more meaningful interactions in society,”** he said during the signing ceremony, which was held at the Ministry’s Oxford Road office in Kingston.

Some provisions under the newly minted agreement include the matriculation of wards from the Ministry’s WeTransform youth empowerment programme into the HOPE Programme after their release from state care. Additionally, DCS staff members will benefit from Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET), which is required to provide certifiable training courses to inmates and wards in correctional facilities.

National Coordinator of the HOPE Programme, Colonel Martin Rickman said, **“the HOPE Programme is very happy to be associated with this project, which will provide more opportunities for our youth and the people of Jamaica, particularly those who have run afoul of the law, to have a new lease on life.”**

Meanwhile, Managing Director at the HEART/NSTA Trust, Dr. Janet Dyer, said the **“HEART/NSTA Trust continues to focus on providing programmes which will decrease social exclusion and unemployment among under-served youth in Jamaica. We are truly grateful for opportunities like these where we can live our mandate and work to prepare young Jamaicans for employment and an opportunity at a decent living.”**

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