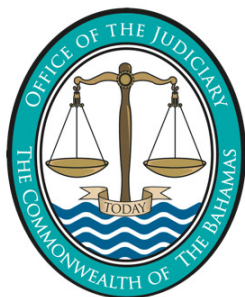




JUDICIARY
THE BAHAMAS

2019



The Annual Judicial Report

The Office of The Judiciary

Vision

To provide the framework to minimize the time between the initiation and disposition of criminal complaints and between the organization and resolution of civil claims and provide the public with ethical, courteous, efficient and professional service in the process.

Mission of Judicial Officers

Judicial Officers, who comprise The Judicature, an independent arm of Government, are, by their oath of office, sworn: *“...to do right to all manner of people, after the laws and usages of The Bahamas without fear or favour, affection or ill will.”*

Mission of Administrative Officers

In support of the Vision of the Office of the Judiciary and the Mission of Judicial Officers, the Administration will seek to create and maintain the means necessary to ensure that all matters placed before the courts are dealt with competently and efficiently, within a reasonable time and with the minimum of expense and inconvenience to all parties, in the realization that the trust and confidence of the public in the judicial system is dependent upon the integrity and reliability of each person involved in the administration thereof.

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Foreword

Chief Justice of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas



The Honourable Mr. Justice Brian M. Moree Q.C.

An independent and impartial Judiciary is the ultimate guardian of the Rule of Law and all of its concomitant safeguards for the protection of rights and liberties in a democratic and free society. For this reason, the Courts are essential to our way of

life in The Bahamas. With this in mind, we set out in this Annual Report a summary of the work of the Courts during 2019. In doing so, we acknowledge our obligation to account to the public in connection with the discharge of our constitutional duties as a separate but co-equal branch of Government.

I was appointed to the office of Chief Justice on 12 June, 2019 and prior to that date, during the first part of this year, the Judiciary was under the leadership of Acting Chief Justice Vera Watkins. I wish to thank Senior Justice Watkins for her commitment and industry in adroitly discharging the duties and responsibilities of her office under challenging circumstances. She provided the Judiciary with much needed stability and continuity in the aftermath of the untimely death of former Chief Justice Stephen Isaacs. I also express my gratitude to Senior Justice Watkins for her support and cooperation during the transition period following my appointment.

The Court system in The Bahamas comprises a complicated and interconnected network of departments, units, registries, services, processes and procedures. Over the past 10 – 15 years the scope and pace of the development of these components of the Judiciary have been diminished by increased bureaucracy, entrenched orthodoxy, perennial staffing shortages, accommodation and infrastructural deficiencies and inadequate funding. Additionally, the absence of operational, administrative and financial autonomy of the Judiciary over its affairs has impaired its ability, as a separate branch of Government, to create the institutional capacity to support its own operations. Notwithstanding these challenges, incremental progress was achieved during this period although it was widely accepted that the time had come for a major intervention to introduce transformative reform and modernization throughout the Court system. Upon my appointment, the Judiciary undertook to spearhead that intervention and during the latter part of 2019 we embarked on a project to bring our Court system into the 21st century in line with best practices. As we now stand on the eve of a new Legal Year, we have put in place the institutional foundation to roll out multiple reform initiatives in 2020. I will be detailing many of those reforms during my address at the opening of the Legal Year.

At this time, I need only say that our objective over the next few years is to introduce smart and sustainable change throughout the Court system in The Bahamas. As I stated in an earlier message to the members of the Judiciary, the process will involve installing a technology platform across all Courts hosting an integrated case management system with “e service” modules covering a wide range of areas, structural changes in our management model, the introduction of a new service orientated culture, rationalizing internal procedures and work flows, an increased emphasis on efficiency, productivity and accountability to the public and enhanced training for our staff. We intend to consult all stakeholders

throughout the implementation of the reform and modernization project in order to develop and execute a cohesive and collaborative strategy.

I expect that it will be a busy and interesting 2020.

Perhaps the most enduring memory of 2019 for all persons within The Bahamas will be the devastating visitation to our shores of hurricane Dorian. The tragic and destructive impact of this massive hurricane on The Bahamas and particularly Abaco and Grand Bahama, has been widely reported throughout the country. Lives were lost, families ripped apart, property destroyed or damaged and infrastructure uprooted. Fortunately, the Court buildings in Marsh Harbour and Grand Bahama escaped major roof and structural damage although there was significant interior damage resulting primarily from water leaking into the buildings and heavy winds. The judicial officers and staff members in Abaco and Grand Bahama were profoundly affected by Dorian as some of them lost family members and most of them had substantial property damage to their homes. They endured tremendous hardship as the hurricane lingered over and around Abaco and Grand Bahama before eventually moving away from the Bahamas. I wish to pay tribute to all of our colleagues in those two islands for their inspirational fortitude in responding to this national crisis. They represent the very best of our Bahamian people.

I must also convey my gratitude to the Judges, the Deputy Registrar, the Magistrates and the staff members of the Court in Abaco and Grand Bahama for their enormous contributions to the recovery plan and re-opening of the courts in the aftermath of Dorian. Even while dealing with serious personal and family challenges caused by the hurricane, they worked tirelessly to ensure that the Court's core functions were quickly restored as we moved to resume full court operations. Their sense of duty and commitment to the national interest are sterling examples for all of us who work together in the Judiciary to serve the public.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the competence, hard work and faithful service of all of our judicial officers and court staff during 2019. It is apparent from the material in this Annual Report that despite the serious and persistent systemic, financial and operational challenges confronting the Judiciary, we continue to adeptly discharge our duties under the Constitution. This is a tribute to the diligence, proficiency and commitment of our judicial officers and supporting staff. I thank them for their service throughout the past year.

I conclude with a fond and respectful farewell to the Honourable Sir Hartman G. Longley, KT, the President of the Court of Appeal. As I write this Foreword, Sir Hartman is scheduled to retire from the Bench at the end of this year. He has had a remarkable career defined by legal scholarship, acclaimed intellectual dexterity, consistent standards of excellence, judicial temperance, jurisprudential insight and public service. He is one of our finest jurists having served as Chief Magistrate, Chief Justice and President of the Court of Appeal. These are outstanding accomplishments.

I wish Sir Hartman all the very best as he moves to a more sedate and private life style. On behalf of the Judiciary I express our deep gratitude to him for his exemplary service to the Bahamian people for more than a quarter of a century.

I trust that you will find this Report informative and interesting. In line with our move to deploy technology throughout the Court System, we are providing this Report on a wallet size USB flash drive in addition to the printed booklet. Next year we plan to discontinue the booklet as we migrate to an electronic platform. This Report will also be posted on the newly designed website of the Judiciary which will become the primary portal for providing information about the Courts and communicating with court users.

Brian M. Moree QC

Chief Justice



Chief Justice of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas



The Honourable Mr. Brian M. Moree Q.C.

POSITION
Chief Justice

COURT #
1 (Hansard Building)

DATE OF APPT.
12 June, 2019

Senior Justices of the Supreme Court



THE HON. MADAM SENIOR JUSTICE

Vera S. Watkins

POSITION
Senior Justice

COURT #
7 (Annex 1 Ground Floor)

DATE OF APPT. AS SNR. JUSTICE
1 May, 2016



THE HON. MADAM SENIOR JUSTICE

Estelle G. Gray-Evans

POSITION
Senior Justice (Northern Region)

COURT #
Garnet Levarity Building

DATE OF APPT. AS SNR. JUSTICE
1 January, 2019

Justices of the Supreme Court



THE HON. MR. JUSTICE

Bernard S. A. Turner

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
6 (Annex 1 Ground Floor)

DATE OF APPT.
15 December, 2009



THE HON. MADAM JUSTICE

Indra Charles

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
10 (Annex 1 3rd floor)

DATE OF APPT.
6 January, 2012



THE HON. MADAM JUSTICE

Carolita D. Bethell

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
4 (Supreme Court building 1st floor)

DATE OF APPT.
1 July, 2013



THE HON. MR. JUSTICE

Ian R. Winder

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
11 (Annex 1 3rd floor)

DATE OF APPT.
1 July, 2014



THE HON. MADAM JUSTICE

Deborah E. Fraser

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
2 (Supreme Court Building Ground floor)

DATE OF APPT.
14 October, 2014



THE HON. MADAM JUSTICE

Cheryl M. Grant-Thompson

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
15 (Annex 2)

DATE OF APPT.
1 May, 2016



THE HON. MR. JUSTICE

G. Gregory Hilton

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
14 (Annex 2)

DATE OF APPT.
1 November, 2016



THE HON. MADAM JUSTICE

Petra Hanna-Adderley

POSITION
Justice (Northern Region)

COURT #
Garnet Levarity Building

DATE OF APPT.
1 February, 2017



THE HON. MADAM JUSTICE

Guillimina C. Archer-Minns

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
5 (Supreme Court Building 1st floor)

DATE OF APPT.
1 August, 2017



THE HON. MADAM JUSTICE

Donna D. Newton

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
12 (Annex 1 3rd floor)

DATE OF APPT.
1 February, 2018



THE HON. MADAM JUSTICE

W. Renae McKay

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
16 (Annex 2)

DATE OF APPT.
1 February, 2018



THE HON. MR. JUSTICE

Keith H. Thompson

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
8 (Annex 1 3rd floor)

DATE OF APPT.
13 August, 2018



THE HON. MADAM JUSTICE

G. Diane Stewart

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
9 (Annex 1 3rd floor)

DATE OF APPT.
2 October, 2018



THE HON. MADAM JUSTICE

Ruth M. Bowe-Darville

POSITION
Justice

COURT #
17 (Annex 2)

DATE OF APPT.
30 May, 2019

Registrars of the Supreme Court



Mrs. Camille D. Darville-Gomez

POSITION
Registrar

DATE OF APPT. AS REGISTRAR
1 November, 2018



Ms. Stephana J. Saunders

POSITION
Deputy Registrar (Northern Region)

DATE OF APPT. AS DEP. REGISTRAR
1 January, 2005



Ms. Carol D. Misiewicz

POSITION
Deputy Registrar

DATE OF APPT. AS DEP. REGISTRAR
1 November, 2016



Mr. Edmund Von Chilean Turner

POSITION
Deputy Registrar

DATE OF APPT. AS DEP. REGISTRAR
1 January, 2018



Mrs. Constance A. Delancy

POSITION
Deputy Registrar

DATE OF APPT. AS DEP. REGISTRAR
1 January, 2018



Mr. Renaldo Toote

POSITION
Assistant Registrar

DATE OF APPT. AS ASST. REGISTRAR
24 April, 2019



Ms. Jennifer F. Stuart-Bastian

POSITION
Assistant Registrar

DATE OF APPT. AS ASST. REGISTRAR
7 October, 2019

“The Registrar, Deputy Registrars and Assistant Registrars shall be Masters of the Court and as such shall have all such authority and jurisdiction to transact civil business of the Court as may be conferred upon a Master by rules of court”

- Sec. 68 of the Supreme Court Act.

Stipendiary & Circuit Magistrates



Ms. Joyann L. Ferguson-Pratt

POSITION
Chief Magistrate

COURT #
9

DATE OF APPT. AS CHIEF MAGISTRATE
15 October, 2013



Mr. Andrew D. Forbes

POSITION
Deputy Chief Magistrate

COURT #
8

DATE OF APPT. AS DEP. CHIEF MAG.
1 June, 2015



Ms. Debbye L. Ferguson

POSITION
Deputy Chief Magistrate (Northern Region)

COURT #
Garnet Levarity Building

DATE OF APPT. AS DEP. CHIEF MAG.
1 February, 2016



Mrs.

Subusola O. Lawanson-Swain

POSITION
Assistant Chief Magistrate

COURT #
11

DATE OF APPT. AS ASST. CHIEF MAG.
1 August, 2017



Mrs. Carolyn C. Vogt-Evans

POSITION
Senior Magistrate

COURT #
6

DATE OF APPT. AS SNR. MAGISTRATE
1 May, 2017



Mr. Derence A. Rolle-Davis

POSITION
Senior Magistrate

COURT #
5

DATE OF APPT. AS SNR. MAGISTRATE
1 May, 2017



Mrs. Gwendolyn C. Claude

POSITION
Magistrate

COURT #
Eight Mile Rock, Grand Bahama

DATE OF APPT.
20 November, 2007



Ms. Ancella J. Evans

POSITION
Magistrate

COURT #
Marsh Harbour, Abaco

DATE OF APPT.
15 December, 2008

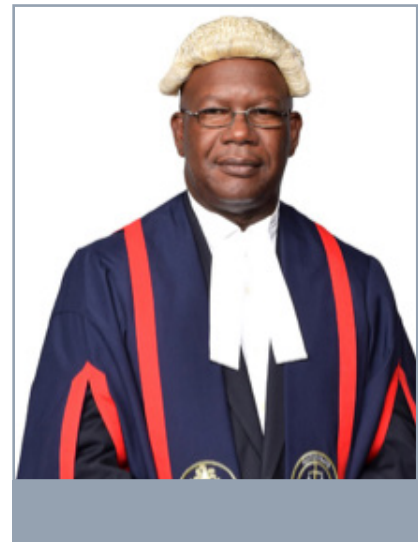


Mrs. Kara Turnquest-Deveaux

POSITION
Magistrate

COURT #
2

DATE OF APPT.
17 October 2011



Mr. Charlton H. Smith

POSITION
Magistrate

COURT #
Garnet Levarity Building

DATE OF APPT.
16 September, 2013



Mr. Samuel S. McKinney

POSITION
Magistrate

COURT #
1

DATE OF APPT.
3 February, 2014



Mrs. Ayse Rengin Johnson

POSITION
Magistrate

COURT #
Garnet Levarity Building

DATE OF APPT.
1 February, 2017



Mrs. Jeanine M. Weech-Gomez

POSITION
Magistrate / Coroner

COURT #
7 (Coroner's Court)

DATE OF APPT.
1 May, 2017



Mr. LaQuay V. Laing

POSITION
Magistrate

COURT #
George Town, Exuma

DATE OF APPT.
4 May, 2017



Mr. James L. Moxey

POSITION
Magistrate (Acting)

COURT #
13 (Night Court)

DATE OF APPT.
14 April, 2008



Ms. Sandradee I. Gardiner

POSITION
Magistrate (Acting)

COURT #
3 (Family Court)

DATE OF APPT.
1 July, 2016



Mr. Darron D. Ellis

POSITION
Magistrate (Acting)

COURT #
12 (Night Court)

DATE OF APPT.
1 July, 2016

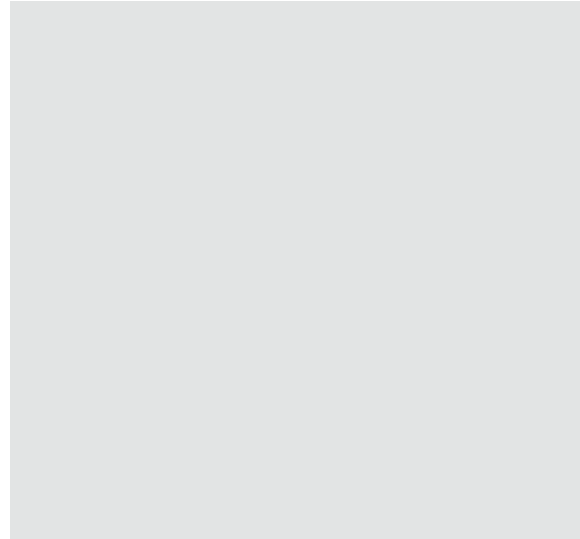


Mr. Ambrose V. Armbrister

POSITION
Magistrate (Acting)

COURT #
10

DATE OF APPT.
4 September, 2017



ADDRESS BY

The Hon. Madam Senior Justice Vera S. Watkins Acting Chief Justice of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas - 15 August, 2018 - 12 June, 2019

AT THE OPENING OF THE LEGAL YEAR WEDNESDAY, 9th JANUARY 2019

Justices of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal, Members of the Industrial Tribunal, Registrars, Magistrates, Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. President of The Bahamas Bar Association, Invited guests, Counsel and Attorneys, Invited guests, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

I begin my remarks today by expressing my gratitude to the Dean of Christ Church Cathedral for permitting us to congregate at Christ Church this morning to invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit on members of the judiciary and all members of the legal profession. On behalf of the Judiciary, I express gratitude to Dean Harry Bain for the prayers, words of wisdom and encouragement imparted to us earlier today.

I also express the sincere gratitude of the Judiciary to His Grace Archbishop Patrick Pinder for inviting the members of the Judiciary to St. Francis Xavier Cathedral for the celebration of the traditional Red Mass last Sunday, 6th January. We are grateful for the prayers and well wishes.

To those I have just mentioned and to all of our invited guests who have taken the time to come out and sit with us on this special occasion - on behalf of the Judiciary I sincerely thank you. Your presence here today is an indication of the fact that you continue to hold the Judiciary in high esteem.

Before moving on I wish to acknowledge the presence of one of our guests, that is, Rev. Dr. Phillip Rahming. I single out Dr. Rahming because he is easily recognizable by me, having been one of my Lecturers at The Bahamas Teachers' College many years ago. For as far back as I can recall Dr. Rahming has attended each and every opening ceremony. He attends the church service as well as the Court

ceremony. I believe that his faithful attendance is an indication of his respect and belief in the judicial system. Dr. Rahming I am grateful for your commitment and I thank you for taking time to come out year after year to attend our ceremonies.

The Attorney-General, Senator the Hon. Carl Bethel was granted the opportunity to address you earlier. I wish to thank him for participating in today's opening ceremony.

Mr. Kahlil Parker, the President of the Bar Association, addressed you earlier and I wish to thank him for participating in this opening ceremony.

I acknowledge the presence of the Provost Marshall who is also the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Anthony Ferguson and I wish to thank him for attending the opening ceremonies today.

Mr. Provost Marshall, I am cognizant of the fact that you are wearing two hats today. While you are here in your capacity as the Provost Marshall who is mandated by Statute to perform certain duties in the Court system, as the Commissioner of Police, your presence Sir, is symbolic of the role that the members of the Royal Bahamas Police Force play in the administration of justice with respect to criminal matters that come before the courts.

Like the courts, the Royal Bahamas Police Force has a vital role to play in enforcing the laws of The Bahamas and on behalf of the Judiciary I trust that you and your Officers continue to work diligently towards the resolution of alleged criminal offences.

Mr. Commissioner of Police, I also wish to express the gratitude of the Judiciary to you for providing the members of the Royal Bahamas Police Force who assisted with the procession route, at

the Church this morning and also within the precincts of the Court as I speak. Their presence gives us peace of mind in knowing that we are safe from undue interference from persons who may harbor ill-will towards members of the Judiciary or those who would just like to create mischief.

We are also grateful to you Sir, for providing the renowned Royal Bahamas Police Force Band and the members of Force who participated in the inspection of the guard. No doubt, this was a treat for the tourists and local residents who witnessed the display today.

To all of the members of The Bahamas Bar who came out today I wish to express a heartfelt thank you. It is a pleasure to see so many of you come out to sit with us at this special sitting of the Court. To those of you who are attending the ceremonies for the first time, I trust that it is a memorable experience for you.

It is perhaps fitting to note that the Supreme Court Act merely provides for the recognition of the second Wednesday in the month of January as the beginning of the legal year for the hearing of criminal Informations. There are no provisions as to the manner in which the opening ought to be recognized. Since there are no special provisions in the law as to how this recognition ought to be carried

out, the Chief Justice may very well dispense with all of the pomp and pageantry and perhaps convene a special sitting of the Court with no guests and with just a Bailiff and Clerk of the Court in attendance.

Nonetheless the tradition of the procession through the streets, the inspection of the guard and a formal opening ceremony in the courtroom, together with the gathering of members of the Bar to witness the opening of the legal year is one that will remain with us for a long time to come. The ceremonies would not be the same without the colourful array of wigs and gowns donned by the members of the legal profession who take the time out of their busy schedules to come and sit with us.

While it is a very pleasant sight for the spectators who stand along the procession route to watch the procession of judges of the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court, the members of the Tribunal, the Registrars, the Magistrates, Counsel and Attorneys, all donned in their legal regalia of wigs of various hues of white or beige or brown and gowns of various colours, I am mindful of the fact that, with respect to criminal matters, it is a requirement of the Statute Law of The Bahamas that a new legal year begins in the Supreme Court on the second Wednesday in the month of January of each year. In this regard section 54(1) of the Supreme Court Act, Chapter 53 states:

54(1) Sittings of the Court shall commence on the second Wednesday in the month of January and the Court shall sit throughout the legal year –

- (a) for the trial of criminal informations by a jury; and
- (b) for the hearing of appeals in criminal cases and matters

At such times and in such places as the Chief Justice may direct.

It is perhaps fitting to note that the civil side of the Supreme Court sits continuously. There is no beginning and no end of the legal year on the civil side.

It is traditional for the Supreme Court to mark this statutory opening of the legal year for the hearing of criminal matters with a procession or walk to Christ Church Cathedral to pray for wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit in the administration of justice throughout the legal year.

Although the long procession of members of the legal profession is a beautiful sight to behold for tourists and local residents, I am mindful of the fact that the brief service at Christ Church Cathedral is an opportunity for all who are involved in the administration of justice, to make resolutions with respect to the dispensation of justice.

This is the time of year when there is much talk about New Year's resolutions. Some of the common resolutions that we make at this time of year are to lose weight, to spend less and save more money, to

be kinder to others, to spend more time with our loved ones and to drink less alcohol. With respect to the Judiciary, this is an opportunity to reflect on our performance in the Judiciary during the previous year and to resolve to make improvements where we find that there are shortcomings.

This is also an opportunity for Judicial Officers to reflect on our pledge to administer justice to all manner of people without fear or favour, affection or ill will.

It is also an opportunity for all Counsel and Attorneys of the Supreme Court to reflect on the oath that was taken upon admission to the Bahamas Bar. The majority of persons in attendance today are counsel and Attorneys of the Supreme Court. Some of you may have taken the oath many years ago while others may have taken the oath recently. For those of you who took the oath many years ago, I remind you that the oath states in part: I will truly and honestly demean myself as Counsel and Attorney of the Supreme Court.



“ It is also an opportunity for all Counsel and Attorneys of the Supreme Court to reflect on the oath that was taken upon admission to the Bahamas Bar. ”

I encourage you to recommit yourselves to your pledge to demean or humble yourself or subject yourself to the Constitution and to all laws and usages of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

While reflecting on our pledge to abide by the laws and usages of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, it is perhaps fitting to reflect on the role of the Judiciary in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

Year after year after we all gather on the second Wednesday in January and we parade through the streets with our heads held high and strutting like proud as peacocks.

Some of us come out for the sole purpose of being recognized as an attorney-at-Law but do we stop to think of the important role that the Judiciary plays in our system of government?

Westminster System

The system of government in The Bahamas is based on what is known as the Westminster System of Government. This structure provides for three branches of government viz;

- *the Executive branch*
- *the Legislative branch, and*
- *the Judicial branch*

The Executive branch has responsibility for developing and implementing policy and for drafting laws while the Legislative branch has responsibility for examining, debating and approving new laws.

The role of the Judicial branch is to arbitrate disputes. This involves the extraction and dissemination of facts presented by the parties appearing before the courts; extracting the law relevant to the adjudication of the dispute; applying the law to the facts and deducing the requisite judicial conclusion. There are occasions when the disputes involve members of the executive and legislative branches of government.

Each of the three branches operate independently of each other and while it may be so that the executive and legislative branches work closely with each other, the Judicial branch **must** maintain its independence. The Judicial branch must maintain its independence because it is mandated by Article 28 of the Constitution **to protect all fundamental** rights of individuals which are guaranteed by the Constitution of The Bahamas.

This means that the Judicial branch of government is responsible for ensuring that the executive and the legislative branches of government perform their duties in accordance with the laws and usages of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. In other words the Judicial branch is the watch dog for the Constitution and by extension, the watchdog for the citizens of The Bahamas. It is therefore, of paramount importance that Judges of the Supreme Court and all persons who are engaged in the protection and enforcement of the fundamental rights of the citizens of our country, are always mindful of the fact that the Judicial branch of government must maintain its independence from the executive and legislative branches of government.

The primary objective of the Judiciary ought to be, to maintain an independent and competent judicial system which upholds the rule of law and safeguards the rights and freedoms of all who reside in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. And so, in this vein, I remind all members of the Judiciary to reflect on the role that we play in our system of government and to resolve to be true to our pledge to dispense justice without fear or favor, affection or ill will.



Passing of Chief Justice Isaacs

On a more somber note, as I reflect on the year 2018, I do so with a sense of sadness. In July of last year Chief Justice Stephen Isaacs passed away. Last year the Late Chief Justice sat in this very same chair in which I sit today and he presided over the opening ceremony. We were all shocked by the sudden departure of Chief Justice Isaacs. We have all been deeply affected by his passing and we are still in the process of adjusting to his departure.

We are grateful for his many years of service in the Judiciary. He performed his duties with a tremendous amount of pride and dignity. He has left us with a legacy of humility. I trust that his soul will continue to rest in eternal peace.

Judicial Appointments

- With regard to judicial appointments over the past year, in the Court of Appeal, Sir Michael Barnett and Supreme Court Justice Milton Evans continue to act as Justices of Appeal.
- In the Supreme Court the late Honourable Senior Justice Stephen Isaacs was sworn in as Acting Chief Justice on 9 June 2018. He remained in that position until his passing on 24 August 2018.
- I was appointed Acting Chief Justice at various intervals during the period May to July of 2018. I have held the position from 3 September, 2018 to the present day.
- Madam Justice Estelle Gray-Evans was appointed Senior Justice with effect from 1 January 2019.
- Former Supreme Court Registrar Donna Newton who was appointed Acting Supreme Court Justice on 1 February 2017 was sworn in as a substantive Justice of the Supreme Court on 1 May 2018. She presides over matters concerning the family.
- Ms. Renae McKay who was appointed as Acting Justice of the Supreme Court on 1 November 2016 was sworn in as a substantive Justice of the Supreme Court on 1 May 2018. Justice McKay presides over criminal matters.
- The Supreme Court also welcomed Justices Keith Thompson and Diane Stewart on 13 August 2018 and 2 October 2018 respectively. Both Justices preside over civil matters.
- We are grateful to Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court, Stephana Saunders who acted as Registrar of the Supreme Court for the period 1 February 2018 to 30 September 2018.

- Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court, Camille Darville-Gomez was sworn in as Registrar of the Supreme Court on 1 November 2018.
- Assistant Registrar of the Supreme Court, Edmund Turner was appointed to the post of Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court with effect from 1 January, 2018. Madam Justice Estelle Gray-Evans was appointed Senior Justice with effect from 1 January 2019.
- Acting Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court, Carol Misiewicz was confirmed in her appointment as Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court with effect from 1 November, 2017.
- Assistant Registrar Constance Delancy was appointed to the post of Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court with effect from 1 January 2018. She also performs the duties of Director of Court Services.
- Mrs. Eureka Coccia, who served in the post of Acting Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court, was transferred to the Office of the Attorney-General with effect from 4 December 2017. We thank her for her service to the Judiciary.
- Ms. Ntshonda Tynes served as a Deputy Registrar in Freeport for a period of approximately two years. We are grateful to her for her service.
- Messrs James Moxey and Darren Ellis were appointed to the post of Acting S&C Magistrates with effect from 1 January 2018.
- We express our gratitude to Mr. Roderick Malone who was appointed to act as Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court (Northern region) for the periods of 16 April 2018 to 22 May 2018 and 1 to 7 October 2018.

Retirements

Madam Justice Rhonda Bain attained the Constitutional age of retirement and she demitted office on 30 June 2018. She retired after nine (9) years of service in the Supreme Court. The Judiciary is grateful for her dedicated service.

Planning

As indicated earlier, in January of 2018 the late Chief Justice Isaacs sat in this chair and presided over the opening ceremony. At that time he did so as Acting Chief Justice. Today I am sitting in the same chair and presiding over the opening ceremony in the capacity of Acting Chief Justice.

As you are aware, former Chief Justice Sir Hartman Longley was sworn in as President of the Court of Appeal in late December of 2017. Up to July of 2018 there was no substantive Chief Justice. The late Chief Justice Isaacs became Chief Justice in July of 2018. Sadly, he passed away three weeks later.

The fact that there was no appointment of a Chief Justice for a period of eight (8) months, together with the untimely passing of former Chief Justice Isaacs and the fact that the Judiciary is still without

a substantive Chief Justice, has been a tremendous challenge as it is difficult for the Judiciary to make any long term plans for the future.

The undisputable fact is that while it may be so that I am sitting in this chair as Acting Chief Justice at this moment, I am not certain as to whether I will be sitting in this chair later on today or tomorrow morning. As a result of the tenuous position in which I find myself it may be a futile exercise to make any long term plans for the Judiciary.

And so it is my hope that we will all do our part in ensuring that the judicial system functions as smoothly as possible. To put it another way, it is my hope that we will all do our part „in keeping the judicial boat afloat”. I pledge to do my part.

Function of the Criminal Court

As I indicated earlier, the judicial arm of government is the watchdog of the fundamental rights set out in The Constitution of The Bahamas.

With regard to the role of the courts in the fight against crime, it gives me great pleasure to acknowledge that over the past year, unfair criticisms against the courts have subsided. There was a time not too long ago when the courts bore the brunt of the blame for the high level of crime in The Bahamas.

It was convenient for members of the public as well as persons who are held in high esteem by the public, to make public pronouncements that suggest that the proliferation in criminal activities was due to the fact that Judges and Magistrates were too lenient in their dispensation of sentences and

that too many accused persons were being released on bail.

It is refreshing to note that based on the reports on these matters in the media over the past year, the trend has now shifted to where it ought to have been and that is, that emphasis is now being placed on the role of the family in the prevention of crime.

It is imperative that society in general and all of those who engage in the practice of blaming the judicial system for the behaviour of the criminal elements in our society, come to the realization that the courts **do not create criminals**. Criminals are created in the homes and societies in which they live.

We live in a country which is bound by a supreme law called The Constitution. Judges and Magistrates are bound by the Constitution of The Bahamas. The executive and the legislative branches of government are also bound by the provisions of the Constitution. The statute laws which are passed by Parliament must conform or comply with the provisions of The Constitution.

Each person who is brought before the court and charged with a criminal offence is presumed to be innocent. This is a right that is enshrined in The Constitution of The Bahamas. Article 20(2) of The Bahamas Constitution states:

“Every person who is charged with a criminal offence -

a) shall be presumed to be innocent until he is proved or has pleaded guilty”

Contrary to the popular misconception, persons brought before the courts are not to be regarded as guilty. The courts must regard them as being innocent and the courts must treat them as innocent persons.

The courts cannot therefore, punish innocent persons by denying bail. Each bail application must be considered on its own merit and bail can only be denied within the confines of the law.

It is the responsibility of the court to provide the facilities to ensure that every person who is accused of a crime is afforded a fair hearing within a reasonable time. It is only when accused persons are found guilty of a criminal offence that the court will mete out an appropriate punishment according to the statute law and guidelines set by case law.

At the present time there are sixteen (16) substantive Judges of the Supreme Court. Ten (10) Judges are assigned to hear criminal matters. One of those Judges presides over matters brought before the Supreme Court in Freeport.

In the Magistrates' courts there are 20 Magistrates most of whom hear criminal matters. Of this number one Magistrate sits in Abaco and one

Magistrate sits in Exuma. In Grand Bahama there are four Magistrates.

A few years ago the Supreme Court Act was amended to increase the maximum number of Judges to twenty (20). I am of the view that there is a need for 20 Judges. The Judges hearing civil matters are inundated with cases. At the present time five Judges are assigned to civil matters.

This means that there are twice as many judges hearing criminal matters. I hasten to point out however, that while the Supreme Court Act makes provisions for 20 justices of the Supreme Court, at the present time there are no accommodations available to house an additional four judges. It is my hope that the Judiciary will be able to secure additional accommodations in the near future.

I also note that the work of the courts is hindered by the shortage of clerical staff. It is imperative that this issue is addressed immediately as the work of the court is being compromised.

The acute shortage of staff is quite evident in the Magistrates' court in the area with responsibility for the collection and distribution of funds relative to maintenance payments. The need to restructure the system is severely handicapped by the shortage of staff.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard working Clerks to the Judges and the Secretaries to the various Judges as well as the other members of the support staff of the Supreme Court and the Magistrates' Courts, all of whom have worked tirelessly during the last legal year.

“ I am of the view that there is a need for 20 Judges. The Judges hearing civil matters are inundated with cases.”

Director of Public Prosecutions

In June of 2018 Mr. Garvin Gaskin was sworn in as the country's first independent Director of Public Prosecutions. With such an experienced and distinguished leader at the helm, it is our sincere hope that that matters on the criminal side of the court are disposed of more expeditiously.

Sexual Offences Court

As I mentioned before, the Court has a mandate to hear and determine cases in the shortest possible time.

In this vein I take note of the fact that the Attorney-General, the Director of Public Prosecutions and other agencies who are involved with matters relating to women and children, have expressed concern about the length of time that it takes for matters involving allegations of sexual offences committed against women and children to be heard in the Supreme Court.

I too, share the view that all matters involving allegations of sexual offences ought to be heard expeditiously. This is so because victims of sexual abuse sometimes withdraw complaints made by them after lengthy delays in the court system. They do so for various reasons. Perhaps the reason cited most is that after going through a process of psychological healing, the victim simply does not want to re-live the traumatic events of the past.

The reality is that the Supreme Court is inundated with matters involving homicide. Trials involving allegations of murder and manslaughter tend to go for periods of three weeks or more. The average

time it takes for a trial to be completed is two weeks. There is no doubt that it will be beneficial to the victims of sexual offences to have their matters heard as soon as possible after the event takes place.

I am of the view that a court which is focused on matters of this nature will be of tremendous benefit to the victims of sexual assault.

While I am receptive to the idea of designating a court to hear matters involving sexual offences, I hasten to add that, if we are to achieve success in this regard, it will be necessary to appoint another Justice of the Supreme Court as the present complement of judges on the criminal and civil sides of the Court are inundated with cases.

“I am of the view that a court which is focused on matters of this nature will be of tremendous benefit to the victims of sexual assault “

Civil Side

On the civil side of the court, there remains much concern about the length of time that it takes to resolve matters. The Judges hearing civil matters work tirelessly in trying to complete matters in a timely fashion.

The reality is that there are too few judges hearing matters on the civil side of the court. There is an urgent need for more judges to hear civil matters.

Perhaps the time is right to increase the number of judges to 20 so as to relieve the burden placed on the four judges in New Providence and the single judge in Grand Bahama who are hearing matters on the civil side of the court.

Judicial Training

Judicial education is another matter on which I will make a few comments. There is an old saying that you cannot teach old dog new tricks. I disagree with that school of thought. No matter the age, we in the Judiciary, can all benefit from training sessions, seminars and conferences which are geared towards enlightening and enhancing our understanding of legal issues.

I am pleased to say that we have already begun training in this New Year. Just yesterday a training session was held for Judges, Registrars, Members of the Industrial Tribunal and Magistrates. The topics that were discussed included:

- *gender protocols for the Judiciary*
- *a renewed focus on Sexual Offences*
- *New Rules of the Supreme Court*
- *Limits of Judicial Authority*
- *writs of subpoenas*
- *writs of execution*
- *the law of unfair dismissal*
- *Judging in a digital age*

I am grateful to the Judicial Education Committee for organizing this conference and I trust that all of the Judges who attended the conference have benefitted from it. It is my hope that we will have the opportunity to organize and/or attend training seminars and conferences throughout this year - at home and abroad.

During the year 2018 a number of judges attended seminars and conferences abroad.

- In May of last year Justice Cheryl Grant-Thompson attended a conference in Guyana on Caribbean Financial Action Task
- In July of last year Justices Deborah Fraser and Renae McKay attended the Judicial Case Management and Ethics Training Program at the Civil Service College, St. James Park, London, England
- From 1 to 5 August last year Justices Ian Winder and Gregory Hilton attended the International Association of Refugees and Migration Conference held in Washington D.C.
- From 7th to 10th August last year Justices Bernard Turner attended the Cybercrime Workshop for Caribbean Judges in Montego Bay, Jamaica
- From 27 to 31 August last year Magistrate Ambrose Armbrister attended the Trafficking in Persons Course in El Salvador
- in September of last year Justices Carolita Bethel, Indra Charles and Gregory Hilton and Magistrates Kara Turnquest-Deveaux and Jeanine Weech-Gomez attended the 18th Triennial Conference of the Commonwealth Magistrates and Judges Association in Brisbane, Australia
- From 17 to 19 October last year Justice Donna Newton attended the Caribbean Meeting on International Child Protection in Kingston, Jamaica
- From 24 to 26 October Justice Donna Newton attended the Network of Judges of the International Hague Convention on Child Abduction in Miami, Florida
- From 13 to 15 December last year Registrar Camille Darville- Gomez attended the 5th Biennial Conference on Law at Kingston, Jamaica

We, in the Judiciary, intend to embrace every opportunity for enhancement of our skills and I look forward the continuation of training for Judges, Registrars and Magistrates throughout the New Year.

Digital Audio Recording System

One of the challenges in any judicial system is keeping pace with technology. The widespread application of information technology will continue to have a tremendous impact in all areas of human endeavour. The courts and the legal profession must continue to adapt in order to cope with the rapid changes in technology. In this regard I am pleased to say that during the year 2018 Digital Audio Recording equipment was installed in all of the Supreme and Magistrates' courtrooms in New Providence, Grand Bahama and Abaco. All Justices, Magistrates, Registrars and support staff participated in training sessions.

It is regrettable that at the present time the system is not being fully utilized. This is so, in part, because

of the need to train transcriptionists. We are in the process of identifying suitable members of staff for training in this regard.

The audio recording system in our courtrooms will work in tandem with the present recordings by stenographers. It will enhance the efficiency of the system of recording by eliminating disputes as to what was said during court proceedings.

Once installation of the system has been completed, Judges and Magistrates will have speedy access to evidence taken from witnesses and submissions made by Counsel. This no doubt, will help to reduce delays in the production of Rulings and Judgments from Magistrates and Judges.

Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen, apart from the fact that I find myself in a tenuous position with regard to making or commenting on any long term goals for the Judiciary, I acknowledge the fact that I have a reputation of being a woman of few words.

- *I will be true to my reputation and therefore, I shall not keep you much longer.*
- *My task here today is to declare the 2019 Legal Year open and I now do so.*
- *I trust that you are all blessed with a peaceful, healthy and prosperous year.*
- *I sincerely thank you all for coming out today.*



Opening of the Legal Year 2019



The Red Mass 2019, St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, The Honourable Chief Justice(Acting) Mrs. Vera Watkins and members of the Judiciary, The President of The Court of Appeal, Sir Hartman Longley ,KT and Judges of the Court of Apoeal, The Honourable Attorney-General, Director of Legal Affairs, Director of Public Prosecutions and Legal officers of the Office of the Attorney General , President of The Bahamas Bar, Officers and members of The Bahamas Bar Association



Red Mass 2019 - St. Francis Xavier Cathedral



The Judicature

Constitution, Composition and Jurisdiction

The Judicature is one of the three (3) branches of Government (*Chapter VII of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas*) and is independent of the Executive and the Legislature. It is headed by the Chief Justice who is responsible for the administration of justice in The Bahamas.

The Judicature comprises the Judicial Committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council, the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court.

The Privy Council

The Judicial Committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council is the highest Court of Appeal of The Bahamas. These appeals are heard in England.

Court of Appeal

The highest resident court in the country is the Court of Appeal, which sits on a full time basis throughout the year. The Court of Appeal is comprised of a President, and not more than six (6) Justices of the Court of Appeal. The Chief Justice, by virtue of his office as head of the Judiciary is also a member of the Court of Appeal but he shall not sit on the Court of Appeal unless he has been invited to do so by the President of the Court of Appeal.

The Court of Appeal has jurisdiction in Criminal, Constitutional and Civil matters under the Constitution, the Court of Appeal Act and other statutes. The Court of Appeal also hears appeals from the Industrial Tribunal.

Appeals from the *Supreme Court* and from the Magistrate's Court (in some cases) lie to the Court of Appeal; and appeals from the Court of Appeal lie to the Privy Council.

The Supreme Court

(a) ESTABLISHMENT

The Supreme Court of The Bahamas is established by Article 93 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas which states:

“93 (1) There shall be a Supreme Court for The Bahamas which shall have such jurisdiction and powers as may be conferred upon it by this Constitution or any other law.

(4) The Supreme Court shall be a superior court of record and, save as otherwise provided by Parliament, shall have all the powers of such a court.”

(b) JUSTICES

Justices of the Supreme Court include the Chief Justice and such number of other Justices as may be prescribed by Parliament. No office of Justice of the Supreme Court shall be abolished while there is a substantive holder thereof - Article 93(2) and (3).

The Chief Justice is appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition. Other Justices of the Supreme Court are appointed by the Governor-General, acting on the advice of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission.

Section 3 of the Supreme Court Act, provides that there shall be, in addition to the Chief Justice, not more than twenty and not less than six Justices of the Court and that the title of Senior Justice may be conferred upon not more than two Justices by the Governor-General acting on the advice of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission.

To qualify for appointment as a Justice of the Supreme Court, a person must be a member of The Bahamas Bar or the Bar of a Commonwealth country, membership of which is a qualification for admission to practice as a counsel and attorney in The Bahamas, and must have practiced as a counsel and attorney for not less than ten years.

Once appointed, the salaries and other terms of appointment of the Chief Justice, and Justices of the Supreme Court cannot be altered to their disadvantage. *Justices of the Supreme Court can serve until the age of sixty-five (65) years and, where agreed, may serve until the age of sixty-seven (67) years.*

(c) JURISDICTION

Subject to the provisions of the Supreme Court Act or any other law, the Supreme Court has unlimited original jurisdiction in civil and criminal causes and matters; and such appellate jurisdiction as may be conferred upon it by the Supreme Court Act or any other law.

■ Civil

The civil jurisdiction of the Supreme Court includes causes and matters in the Admiralty, Probate, Matrimonial, Common Law and Equity and Commercial Divisions of the Court.

■ ***Criminal***

The criminal jurisdiction includes applications for bail and trials with a jury of indictable offences and those hybrid offences which the accused elects to be tried in the Supreme Court.

■ ***Appellate***

In Criminal cases, appeals from a conviction by a Stipendiary & Circuit Magistrate lie to the Supreme Court, except where the term of imprisonment is not less than one (1) year or the offence falls within the category of offences set out in the Third Schedule of the Criminal Procedure Code Act, Chapter 91, Statute Laws of The Bahamas. In civil cases, appeals from decisions of the Chief Magistrate or an S & C Magistrate lie to the Supreme Court.

■ ***Constitutional***

Article 28 of the Constitution provides that the Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction:

(a) to hear and determine any application made by any person in pursuance of paragraph (1) (i.e. if any person alleges that any of his fundamental rights and freedoms has been, is being or is likely to be contravened in relation to him), then, without prejudice to any other action with respect to the same matter which is lawfully available, that person may apply to the Supreme Court for redress; and

(b) To determine any question arising in the case of any person which is referred to it in pursuance of paragraph 3 which states:

“(3) If, in any proceedings in any court established for The Bahamas other than the Supreme Court or the Court of Appeal, any question arises as to the contravention of any of the provisions of Articles 16 to 27 (inclusive) the court in which the question has arisen shall refer the question to the Supreme Court”

In the exercise of the civil jurisdiction, matters are heard by a single judge. In criminal matters before the Supreme Court, proceedings are instituted in the name of the Queen and are heard by a Judge and Jury.

(d) DIVISIONS OF THE SUPREME COURT

By the Supreme Court (Divisions of Court) Order 2002, the Chief Justice, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 7(2) of the Supreme Court Act, Ch. 53, established the Divisions of the Court as follows:

Commercial Division (COM)	Admiralty (adm) Bankruptcy and Insolvency (bnk) Applications under the Companies Act, 1992 (com) Labour (lab)
Common Law & Equity Division (CLE)	Applications under the Legal Profession Act, 1992 (lpa) Quieting of Title (qui) Civil matters not allocated to any other Division (gen)
Family Division (FAM)	Adoption (adn) Divorce (div) Guardianship and custody (qua) Applications under the Mental Health Act (men)
Probate Division (PRO)	Non-contentious probate matters (npr) Contentious probate matters (cpr)
Public Law Division (PUB)	Administrative (adm) Constitutional (con) Judicial Review (jrv)
Criminal Law Division (CRI)	Coroner (cor) Financial Crimes (fin) Bail Applications (ba) Habeas Corpus (hcs) Information and Voluntary Bill of Indictment (vbi) Restraint and Forfeiture applications (rfa) Criminal matters not allocated to any other Division (crg)
Appeals Division (APP)	Magistrates (mag) Statutory (sts)

The Magistracy

The Magistracy in The Bahamas consists of: Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrates and Lay Magistrates appointed under the Magistrates Act, Chapter 54, Statute Laws of The Bahamas.

(a) STIPENDIARY AND CIRCUIT MAGISTRATES

Stipendiary and Circuit (S & C) Magistrates hold permanent appointments and travel on circuit to try cases in different districts in The Bahamas. In order to be appointed an S & C Magistrate, a person must be an attorney-at-law and a member of the English, Irish, Scottish or Bahamas Bar, or of the bar of any other country of the Commonwealth to which a member of The Bahamas Bar is admitted without examination, for at least five (5) years.

S & C Magistrates are appointed by the Governor-General acting in accordance with the advice of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission - *Section 13 of The Magistrates Act.*

(b) LAY MAGISTRATES

Lay Magistrates, who require no legal training, are appointed by the Governor General acting on the advice of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission. Family Island Administrators, who also serve as Magistrates in their respective districts, form the largest group of such magistrates.

Lay Magistrates are also appointed from the Roll of Justices of The Peace

(c) JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Justices of The Peace are appointed by the Governor General by Warrant under his hand and the Public Seal, and, within the limits of an area or district in respect of which they are appointed, have the same powers as a magistrate to sign warrants or arrest and commitment, to issue search warrants and to take affidavits and administrator oaths.

Jurisdiction of Magistrates

■ *Criminal*

In the Magistrates Court, criminal proceedings are instituted in the name of the Commissioner of Police. S & C Magistrates sit alone without a jury and are the judges of both the law and the facts in cases before them. S & C Magistrates hear summary matters or indictable matters which may be heard summarily.

S & C Magistrates have jurisdiction to impose a sentence of imprisonment of not more than seven (7) years or a fine as stipulated in the relevant statute. They also conduct preliminary inquiries to determine whether a prima facie case has been made against an accused person. If a prima facie case is made, the accused is committed to the Supreme Court to stand trial.

Lay magistrates have jurisdiction to hear minor summary matters only.

■ *Civil*

S & C Magistrates also have jurisdiction to hear and determine any civil cause or matter where the amount sought to be recovered or the value of the property does not exceed \$5,000.00 and they have jurisdiction and authority to try summarily any case in which the title of land is involved where the value of the land does not exceed \$200.00 – *Section 15, Magistrates Act*. Lay Magistrates try civil cases involving claims up to \$400.00 for contract and tort and \$600.00 for debts.

■ *Appeals in the Magistrates Court*

Appeals from a conviction (criminal cases) or decision (non-criminal cases) by Lay Magistrates lie to the Chief Magistrate, an S & C Magistrate or Circuit Justice while on circuit.

■ *Quasi-Judicial Role of Magistrates*

Magistrates also issue warrants of arrest and summonses to accused persons to attend Court to answer allegation e.g. Road Traffic Offences. They perform marriages and sit as Chairperson of the Rent Control Board and the Licensing Board or Authority for the grant of licences for the sale of alcoholic beverages as well as shop licences.

Specialized Magistrates Courts

■ *Juvenile Court*

The Juvenile Court tries criminal offences committed by children and young persons, except where an offence is triable only in the Supreme Court, or a child or young person is charged jointly with an adult. The Juvenile Court also hears matters with respect to children who are deemed beyond parental control and those in need of care and protection. The Magistrate is assisted by a Juvenile Panel, one of whom must be a female. The proceedings in Juvenile Court are governed primarily by the provisions of the Child Protection Act, Chapter 132 of Statute Laws of The Bahamas.

■ *Domestic Court*

The Domestic Court deals with applications for relief under the Child Protection Act, the Matrimonial Causes (Summary Jurisdiction) Act and the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act. Matters adjudicated include applications for legal separation, maintenance orders, arrears of maintenance payments, protection orders, custody, paternity and access to minor children.

■ *Coroner's Court*

The Coroner's Court holds inquiries in cases where a person dies in a sudden, violent or unnatural manner, or where the cause of death is unknown and in other situations where the law requires, for example, where a person dies while housed in a public facility or confined to a place of lawful detention.

■ *Night Courts*

The Night Courts were established for the convenience of persons who work during the day and are unable to take time off to attend court. Traffic and civil matters are dealt with by Magistrates sitting in two courts in the Magistrates Court Complex, New Providence.

Night court sessions commence at 6:00 p.m., Mondays through Fridays.



Magistrates Court Complex, South Street
New Providence



Magistrate Court for the Eleuthera district, Bahamas Government Complex, Governor's Harbour, Eleuthera.



Garnet Levarity Building, Supreme Court Freeport, Grand Bahama.



Magistrate Court, for the Marsh Harbour District, Bahamas Government Complex, Marsh Harbour, Abaco.

Report of the Office of the Chief Justice

Report of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission

The Judicial & Legal Service Commission was established under Articles 116 of The Constitution of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas 1973 and the Judicial & Legal Service Regulations (Article 125) of the Statute Law of The Bahamas.

The Commission is comprised of:

- 1 The Chief Justice as Chairman;*
- 2 Such other Justice of the Supreme Court or Justice of Appeal as may be designated by the Governor General, acting on the recommendation of the Chief Justice, by instrument under the Public Seal;*
- 3 The Chairman of the Public Service Commission; and*
- 4 Two persons appointed by the Governor General by instrument under the Public Seal, acting on the recommendation of the Prime Minister after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition.*

Members appointed under sub-paragraphs 2 & 4 above serve for a maximum period of three (3) years. The post is deemed to be vacated at the expiration of the period from the date of his/her appointment or such earlier time as may be specified in the instrument by which he/she was appointed, or he/she becomes a member of either the House of Assembly or Senate.

Pursuant to the Judicial & Legal Service (Prescribed Public Offices) Act, Chapter 42 of the Statute Law of The Bahamas, Officers that fall under the jurisdiction of the Commission are as follows:

- 1 Justices of the Supreme Court;*
- 2 Registrars of the Supreme Court & the Court of Appeal;*
- 3 Stipendiary & Circuit Magistrates;*
- 4 Legal officers within - the Department of Legal Affairs, Department of Public Prosecutions, Industrial Tribunal, the Registrar General's Department and other legal officers within the Public Service.*

Power to make appointments to public/judicial offices and to remove and exercise disciplinary control over persons holding or acting in such offices is vested in the Governor General acting in accordance with the advice of the Commission. Other responsibilities of the Commission include:

- (a) *Reclassifications*
- (b) *Promotions*
- (c) *Transfers*
- (d) *Resignations*
- (e) *Retirements*
- (f) *Vacancy Notices/Advertisements*
- (g) *Disciplinary Action*

The Secretary to the Commission is the Registrar of the Supreme Court. During the reporting year, the following officers held office: Miss Stephana Saunders, Deputy Registrar/Acting Registrar, up to 30 September 2018; Mrs. Camille Darville-Gomez, Deputy Registrar/Acting Registrar from 1 October 2018 and Registrar from 1 November 2018. The Secretary is responsible to the Commission for the daily operations of the Commission's office through the Secretariat, presently managed by Ms. Bathsheba Algreen, Office Manager. She is assisted by Mrs. Marinda Pritchard, Senior Clerk.

The Secretariat performs a broad range of duties, which include:

- 1) *Maintaining a registry of all Commission files, including the receipt and registration of incoming correspondence;*
- 2) *Accounting Officer for the Commission's budget;*
- 3) *Responding to inquiries;*
- 4) *Meeting preparation, including: issuing notices to Members; preparing agenda and minutes;*
- 5) *Taking action on Commission Decisions;*
- 6) *Preparing and forwarding all Orders by the Commission to the Governor General for approval/signature;*
- 7) *Forwarding all signed Orders to the Ministry of the Public Service for the appropriate letters to be prepared and forwarded to the relevant persons/agencies;*
- 8) *Arranging interviews with applicants.*

The Commission held nine (9) meetings during the current reporting year, 2018-2019.

“The.... Justices of the Supreme Court shall be appointed by the Governor-General by instrument under the Public Seal acting on the advice of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission.”

Administrative Direction

No. 3 of 2009

Style of Recording Dates on Documents Issued by the Court

It would have been observed that, in common with other persons in The Bahamas who have been exposed to both British and American styles of writing, including how dates are recorded, the staff of the Office of the Judiciary have not been consistent in recording dates on receipts and other documents issued by the Court.

This has resulted in uncertainty when the date is recorded numerically so that, for example, it is not clear whether a document stamped as filed on "11-06" was in fact filed on 11 June or 6 November.

With immediate effect, the date on all documents issued by the Court shall be recorded in the day-month-year style with the day expressed as a cardinal number and the month being expressed alphabetically, not numerically. The date may be abbreviated.

Accordingly, dates should appear as:

10 February 2009 or, if abbreviated,

10 Feb 09.

Burton P C Hall

Chief Justice

12 March 2009

Judicial Appointments

- 1 *Miss Sandradee Gardiner, Assistant Director of Public Prosecutions, was appointed to act as S & C Magistrate for a further period of 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019.*
- 2 *Mr. LaQuay Laing, S & C Magistrate, was confirmed in his appointment with effect from 7 May 2017.*
- 3 *Miss Ntshonda Tynes, Attorney-at-Law, was appointed to act as Deputy Registrar (Northern Region) for a further period of 4 December 2018 to 8 January 2019.*
- 4 *The Hon. Madam Justice Estelle Gray Evans, Senior Justice, was appointed to act as Chief Justice during the following periods:*
 - I) *23 to 30 December 2018;*
 - II) *17 to 24 April 2019.*
- 5 *Mrs. SubusolaLawanson-Swain, Assistant Chief Magistrate, was appointed to act as Deputy Chief Magistrate for the period 1 January 2018 to 28 February 2019.*
- 6 *Mrs. Carolyn Vogt-Evans, Senior Magistrate, was appointed to act as Assistant Chief Magistrate for the period 1 January 2018 to 28 February 2019.*
- 7 *The Hon. Madam Justice Estelle Gray Evans (Northern Region) was conferred with the title of Senior Justice with effect from 1 January 2019.*
- 8 *Mr. James Moxey, Attorney-at-Law, was appointed to act as S & C Magistrate for further periods of six (6) months with effect from 1 January 2019 and 1 July 2019.*
- 9 *Mr. Darron Ellis, Attorney-at-Law, was appointed to act as S & C Magistrate for further periods of six (6) months, with effect from 1 January 2019 and 1 July 2019.*
- 10 *Mr. Derence Rolle Davis, Senior Magistrate, was seconded to the Industrial Tribunal and appointed to act as Vice-President, Industrial Tribunal, for the period 21 to 28 February 2019.*
- 11 *Mr. Andrew Forbes, Deputy Chief Magistrate, was appointed to act as Justice of the Supreme Court for a further period of 1 March 2019 to 31 May 2019.*
- 12 *Miss Koschina Marshall, Senior Counsel, Office of the Attorney General & Ministry of Legal Affairs, was seconded to the Office of the Judiciary and*

appointed to act as S & C Magistrate for a further period of 31 January 2018 to 30 April 2019.

13 *Mrs. Jethlyn Burrows, Attorney-at-law, was appointed to act as Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court (Northern Region) for the period 1 April to 28 April 2019.*

14 *Ms. Carol Misiewicz, Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court, was appointed to act as Registrar of the Supreme Court during the following periods:*

I) 11 to 15 April 2019;

II) 25 to 28 April 2019;

III) 30 October to 1 November 2019.

15 *Mr. Renaldo Toote, Attorney-at-Law, was appointed as Assistant Registrar of the Supreme Court (Northern Region) with effect from 24 April 2019.*

16 *Mrs. Ruth Bowe-Darville, Attorney-at-Law, was appointed to the Supreme Court Bench as a Justice of the Supreme Court with effect from 30 May 2019.*

17 *Mr. Brian M. Moree, Queens' Counsel, was appointed as Chief Justice of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas on Wednesday, 12 June 2019.*

18 *The Hon. Madam Justice Vera Watkins, Senior Justice was appointed to act as Chief Justice during the following periods:*

I) 10 to 17 August 2019;

II) 27 October to 10 November 2019.

19 *Mr. Edmund Turner, Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court, was appointed to act as Registrar of the Supreme Court during the period of 11 to 18 August 2019.*

20 *Mr. Charlton Smith, S & C Magistrate, was re-engaged on contractual terms for a further period of three (3) years with effect from 16 September 2019.*

21 *Mrs. Jennifer Stuart-Bastian, Senior Counsel, Office of the Attorney General & Ministry of Legal Affairs, was transferred to the Office of the Judiciary and reclassified as Assistant Registrar of the Supreme Court with effect from 7 October 2019.*

22 *Mr. Samuel McKinney, S & C Magistrate, was re-engaged on contractual terms for a further period of three (3) years with effect from 3 February 2020.*



Swearing-In of The Chief Justice of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, 12 June 2019



Swearing-In of The Chief Justice of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas - 12 June 2019

Judicial Research Counsel



Ms. Roseanne Sweeting (Freeport)

Five Attorneys were recently appointed by the Judicial & Legal Service Commission as Judicial Research Counsel (JRC) to assist the Justices of the Supreme Court.

Left to right:

Mr. Howard Thompson, Mr. Kevin Armbrister, Ms. Indy Hunter, and Mr. Matthew Walker. In photo on right, Ms. Roseanne Sweeting (Freeport).

Admissions to the Bar

Friday, 14th December 2018	Sebastian Anton Masnyk Kingsley Valentine Smith Jr. Cedric Barnabus Moss, II Anwar Elliott Cyril Mitchell Sydney Marie Lihou Rolle Wilfred Preston Ferguson Jr.
Friday, 21st December 2018	Danielle Christina Francis
Friday, 23rd January 2019	Leslie Andra Brown
Friday, 14 June 2019	Samantha Brittney Pinder

Friday, 27 September 2019	Demi Peyton Annette Forbes Gabrielle Annay Rahming Parkco Roberto Deal Anna Amelia Moss Creswell Godfrey Sturup AkilahTulani Gibson Susie Thelma Bethel
Friday, 25 October 2019	Kevin Cadwell Armbrister Gabriel KristonMikayah Brown Krystian Gem Butler ShakaraShadae Olive Ernest KevaLindzell Louis Monique Alana Millar Alexandria C Newton Mark Anthony Penn DarzhonJonoy Reginald Rolle Matthew Calvin Walker

Special Admissions to the Bar

6 March 2019	Fenner Moeran, Q.C.
7 March 2019	John S. Smith, Q.C. Lawrence Cohen, Q.C.
25 March 2019	Mehdi Hodge Malek, Q.C.
1 July 2019	Simon Taube, Q.C. Richard C. Wilson, Q.C.
19 September 2019	Keith Desmond Knight

Commemorative Sitting

In accordance with Practice Direction No.3 of 2006, the Chief Justice, on Friday, 1 March 2019, presided over the Annual Commemorative Sitting of the Supreme Court to mark the death of the following Counsel and Attorneys-at-Law (By Order of Call):



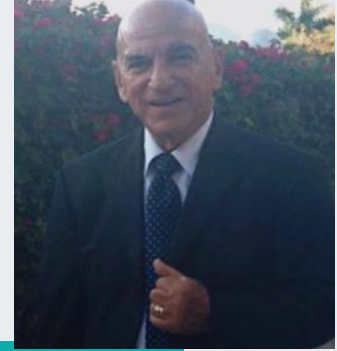
Harry B. Sands

Date of Call: 12 January 1949
Date of Death: 15 August 2018



William McP. Christie

Date of Call: 15 May 1951
Date of Death: 18 February 2018



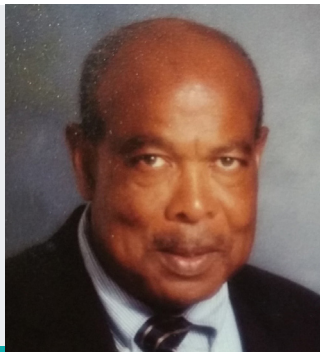
Nicholas Zervos

Date of Call: 23 January 1967
Date of Death: 4 December 2018



Alpin A. Russell Jr.

Date of Call: 20 July 1970
Date of Death: 14 January 2019



Maxwell Turner

Date of Call: 28 December 1972



Richard Rawle-Maynard

Date of Call: 26 November 1982



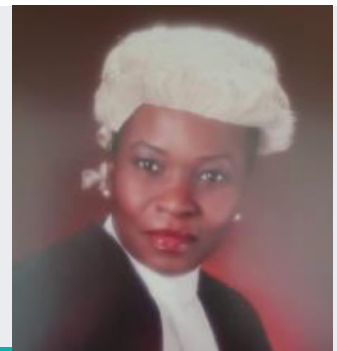
Gina P. Morley

Date of Call: 22 November 1991



Deyane E. Russell

Date of Call: 22 December 1995



Evaneth McPhee

Date of Call: 26 November 1982

Report of the Office of the Registrar

Registrar's Report

Our Honourable Chief Justice Mr. Brian M. Moree, Q.C. was sworn in as Chief Justice on June 12, 2019 and foreshadowed reform and modernization of the courts as the hallmark of his tenure. He succeeded the Honourable Senior Justice Mrs. Vera Watkins, who, as I noted in my report last year, kept the “judicial boat” afloat with grace and diplomacy since the passing of the Honourable Chief Justice Mr. Stephen Isaacs in August, 2018. On behalf of the staff of the Court, I thank her for her service and dedication to the Judiciary.

I have intentionally kept my report brief because I expect that the Honourable Chief Justice Mr. Brian M. Moree, Q.C. will share his vision and plans with you for the Office of the Judiciary. However, I will highlight some of the happenings at the Judiciary which I hope will demonstrate a commitment to positive change that will enure to the benefit of the public whom we serve.

The year began with a Judicial Training Day for all judicial officers from the Magistrates Court up to the Court of Appeal as well as the members of the Industrial Tribunal. In June, the Judiciary participated in the two day training sessions held by the Bahamas Bar Association.

This provided a unique opportunity for the meeting of the bench and bar on topics of mutual interest. In September, 2019 the Honourable Justice of Appeal of the Court of Appeal of Trinidad and Tobago Mr. Gregory Smith conducted a session for all judicial officers and members of the Industrial Tribunal on judgment writing. This was made possible through a collaboration with the Judicial Education Institute of Trinidad and Tobago. Regrettably, the staff training day scheduled for October, 2019 was cancelled due to the displacement of the staff after the

passage of Hurricane Dorian. It will be rescheduled to a date in the New Year. Training for judicial officers and staff is an important feature in the Judiciary's calendar and in the future is intended to be continuous in nature. The importance of training cannot be over emphasized because it is crucial to increasing efficiencies and productivity. Its ability to bolster morale cannot also be overestimated.

The Registrar is by law responsible for the daily operations of the Office of the Judiciary. Miss Stephana Saunders serves as the Deputy Registrar and has responsibility for the northern region and her report will address that region.

Mr. Renaldo Toote joined the Supreme Court as Assistant Registrar for the northern region in April, 2019 and he has been a welcome addition to the Registrars' pool. During the absence of Mrs. Carol Misiewicz for study leave (who has since returned), he has rendered invaluable assistance in the Family, Probate and Criminal Divisions of the Supreme Court and continues to do so. Due to the renovations being carried out to the Garnet Levarity Building he remains in New Providence.

Mrs. Jennifer Stuart-Bastian recently joined as Assistant Registrar for New Providence in October, 2019 and has assumed the responsibility for the Probate Division of the Supreme Court. She too has been a welcome addition and will assist in returning a singular focus to this busy registry. Therefore, in New Providence the Managers of each of the Registries with effect from October 7, 2019 is as follows:

Camille Darville-Gomez - Civil Division

Carol Misiewicz - Family Division

Edmund Turner - Criminal Division

Jennifer Stuart-Bastian - Probate Division

Deputy Registrar Mrs. Delancy continues to serve as Acting Director of Court Services.

As I had noted in my report last year, the challenges due to the disparate court buildings remain and make it tough to manage and oversee daily operations efficiently or effectively. However, there are plans afoot to bring some resolution to these issues including the hiring of Court Administrators for the Magistrates and Supreme Court.

Additionally, a Building and Plant Manager has been assigned to the Magistrates Court and it is hoped that this dedicated person would oversee and bring a much needed focus to the daily issues experienced there.

The Supreme Court buildings have been temporarily renamed and very soon we expect that references to the Ansbacher Building and the Swift Justice Building will be in the past. Additionally, each Supreme Court has been assigned a number. Therefore, attorneys practicing before the courts should be aware of this, in particular. The buildings have now been renamed as follows:

- . Main Supreme Court Building – Supreme Court Building
- . Ansbacher Building – Supreme Court Annex 1
- . Swift Justice Building – Supreme Court Annex 2

There are plans afoot to install signage in the Magistrates and Supreme Court to make finding courts and administrative offices much easier.

The Office of the Judiciary Newsletter called the “Courterly” is being re-launched in December, 2019 and the website has already been re-launched. These modes of communication provide avenues for our users and the public to obtain useful information about the courts and for the provision of feedback. I invite you to stay close to the website which is updated weekly at:

www.bahamasjudiciary.com and to follow us on twitter at: twitter.com/BAHjudiciary.

The Magistrate court building in Abaco was not significantly impacted by Hurricane Dorian, however, the Magistrate and staff have lost their homes. The majority of the staff have relocated to New Providence and

are working in the Magistrates and Supreme Court until they can return home. The Court has resumed full daily operations. The Magistrate is to be commended for her faithful service in returning to Abaco despite the continuing challenges.

I applaud the judicial officers and staff of the Judiciary who toil daily despite the leaking buildings, the malfunctioning air conditioning and elevator systems and a myriad of other issues plaguing the Judiciary. I believe the expression “there is always the continuing challenge of doing more with less” to be most appropriate. I am particularly grateful for my fellow Registrars and the management team who despite competing priorities and long hours remain committed to the vision of the Honourable Chief Justice.

I also wish to express gratitude to our various partners including the National Center for State Courts and Courts in the region including in Trinidad and Tobago and St. Lucia for their unwavering support in providing funding or training for our various projects aimed at the better delivery of service.

It would be remiss of me to not highlight, that the year, 2019 will undoubtedly be marred by the unprecedented devastation caused by Hurricane Dorian which claimed countless lives and rendered thousands of people homeless, particularly, in Abaco.

We remain grateful for the overwhelming support of our brothers and sisters in the region and internationally including Courts, which have engaged in fundraising efforts to support this most worthy cause. There is much work ahead, however, with the continued support of donors, The Bahamas will move as its motto says:

**“Forward,
Upward,
Onward,
Together.”**

Registrars' Statistics

The Supreme Court Matters Before The Office of The Registrars (New Providence) For the Period January to November 2019

Registrars	Total Matters Scheduled	Matters Taken off The List	Matters Adjourned	Matters Heard and Completed
Camille Darville-Gomez Registrar	56	0	24	32
Carol D. Misiewicz Deputy Registrars	121	2	30	89
Edmund V. Turner Deputy Registrars	428	4	201	223
Constance Delancy Deputy Registrars	217	0	94	123
Renaldo Toote Assistant Registrars	158	6	61	91
Jennifer Stuart-Bastian* Assistant Registrars	*Sworn in 7th October, 2019 therefore no matters listed.			
Total	980	12	410	558

Listing Office

The Listing Office is comprised of three persons, Mrs. Bain-Archer as supervisor, and supported by Mrs. D'Avante Curtis and Mr. Thomas Grant. It is managed under the oversight of Deputy Registrar Carol Misiewicz. Located on the 4th Floor of Annex I of the Supreme Court in New Providence, it is responsible for:

- Receiving, reviewing and processing all requests for trials or chamber hearings before a judge or registrar in matters excluding Criminal cases;*
- Distributing files and obtaining court dates from the relevant judicial officer*
- Data entry for JEMS;*
- Notifying lawyers or clerks and litigants of their respective court dates;*
- Retrieving and then returning files to division registries.*

The information below pertains to New Providence. This Listing Office is not responsible for distribution of cases to Judges and Registrars in the Northern Region. Information for that division is presented in the report from the Deputy Registrar, elsewhere in this Report.

ANNUAL STATISTICS

7TH JANUARY TO 31ST OCTOBER, 2019

JUDGES		REGISTRARS	
AMOUNT OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED (Files Requested)	AMOUNT OF APPLICATIONS ASSIGNED (Files Received)	AMOUNT OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED (Files Requested)	AMOUNT OF APPLICATIONS ASSIGNED (Files Received)
1866	1638	636	630

TOTAL AMOUNT OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED	2502
TOTAL AMOUNT OF APPLICATION ASSIGNED (Files Received)	2268

Probate Division

The Probate Registry is responsible for non-contentious or common form probate business which includes the processing of all types of grants of representation (including resealing grants that have already been obtained in the United States and Commonwealth Countries); the maintenance of the citation and caveat proceedings and other proceedings such as the admission of a copy will to proof. Additionally, the files for all contentious probate proceedings are maintained in the Registry. In January, 2019 the Registry mourned the untimely passing of its Supervisor, Mr. Mario Knowles.

Mr. Knowles was a consummate professional, always helpful and well loved by the staff and attorneys to the Registry. He has been sadly missed. Also, in January, 2019 Ms. Nicole Ferguson transferred from the Supreme Court in Freeport to the Registry in New Providence and in June, 2019 Miss Princess Coakley was transferred out of the Registry.

In November, 2019 Miss Monique Curry replaced Miss Princess Coakley. In addition to the previously mentioned individuals, the full complement of staff includes: Miss Desiree Robinson who has temporarily assumed the role of Supervisor, Miss Sharon Fernandez, Miss Keisha Ferguson, Mrs. Jacqueline Lewis and Ms. KergsinaCochinamogulos.

The performance of this Registry has not been what we envisioned at the beginning of 2019 due to the

staff shortages and the fact that I remained primarily responsible for this registry despite my elevation to the post of Registrar. Therefore, the addition of the Assistant Registrar, Mrs. Jennifer Stuart-Bastian as Manager of this division will bode well for the future of this most busy registry.

As previewed in last year's Annual Report, it has become necessary to assign a second Registrar to the Registry to ensure that the applications are processed in a timely manner. In the interim, Mr. Renaldo Toote will fulfil this role.

The focus in the years ahead is to deliver better and timely service to the customers of the Registry through the use of technology and better systems to track and monitor applications from submission to completion. Such a system would permit the Supervisor and Registrar to be proactive and better manage the processing of applications.

It will also have the effect of reducing the amount of follow up required by the customers.

Plans are already in process to develop such a system. Additionally, with the re-launch of the Judiciary's website, there will be a dedicated section for the Registry where forms and other helpful information will be uploaded to the site. The Registry will use in the first instance, a non-reply email to advise law firms of corrections.



The statistics for January to October, 2018 are set out below.

PROBATE REGISTRY STATISTICS

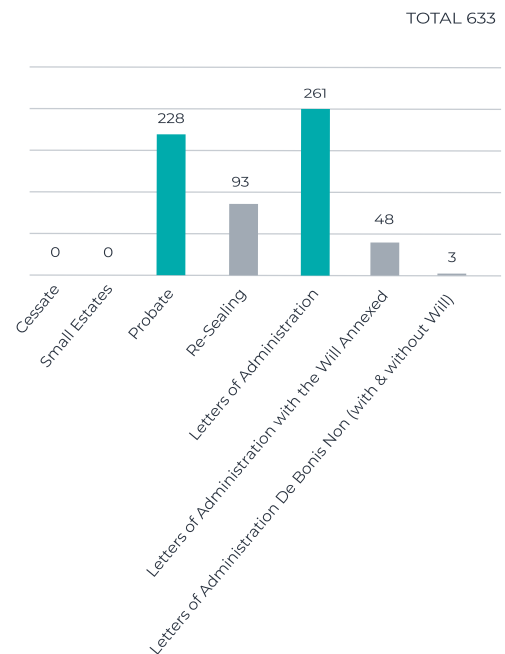
January to October, 2019

New applications received	
Cessate	0
Small Estates	0
Probate	228
Re-Sealing	93
Letters of Administration	261
Letters of Administration with the Will Annexed	48
Letters of Administration De Bonis Non (with & without Will)	3
Total	633

Grants Issued	
2019	512
Total Grants Refused	0

PROBATE REGISTRY STATISTICS

January to October, 2019



Family Division

The Family Registry is responsible for processing petitions or applications for divorce, adoption, guardianship applications under the relevant legislation. Mrs. Katie Smith-Mackey, Senior Executive Officer, presently supervises the Family Registry assisted by Miss Jacara Smith, clerk.

The Family Registry is responsible for processing petitions and applications, updating the Cause List, logging documents into the computer system, filing and procuring documents and forwarding final Adoption Orders to the Adoption Registry at the Registrar General's Department, on a daily basis. Staff also provide assistance to legal professionals and members of the public.

Statistics in the Registry are compiled on a weekly and monthly basis and show the amount of applications filed under the four sub-divisions within the current year, and the number of Decrees Nisi (divorce granted by judges) and Certificates of Making Decree Nisi Absolute / Decrees Absolute (divorce completed by registrars) made within the year.

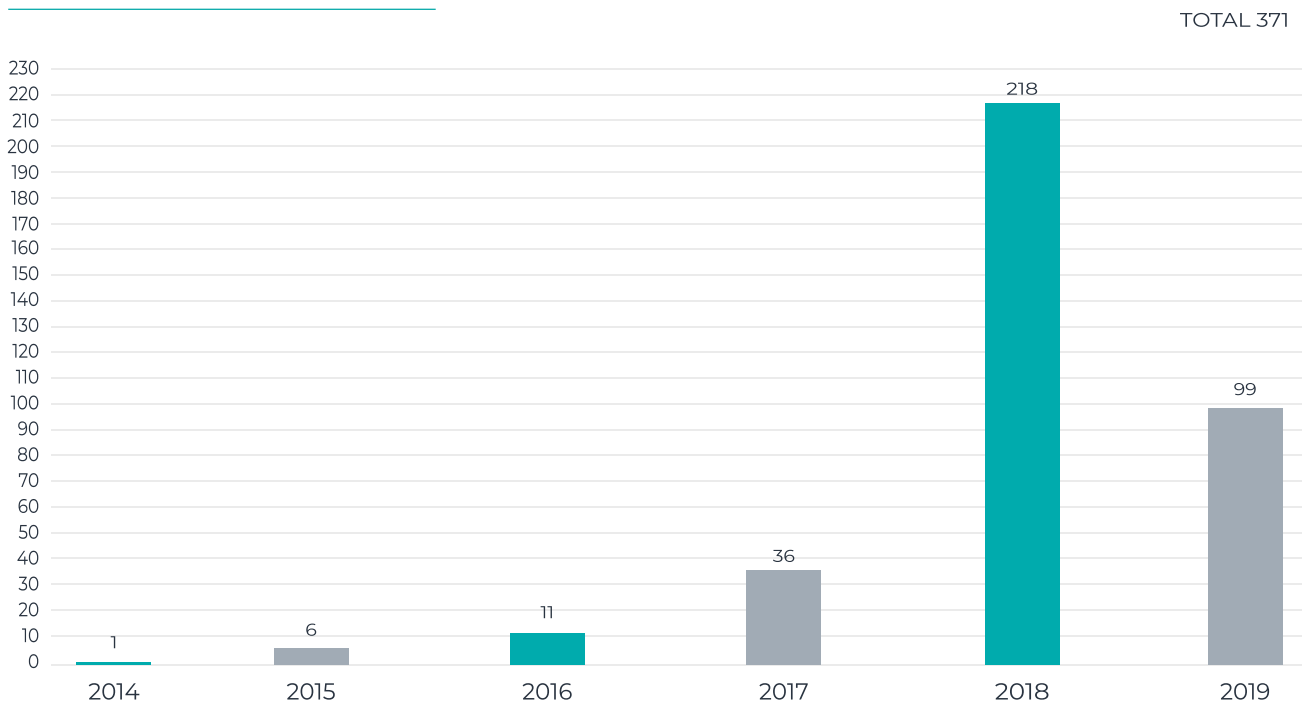
Family Registry Statistics for the Year 2019

(As at November, 2019)

Applications filed under the five sub-divisions

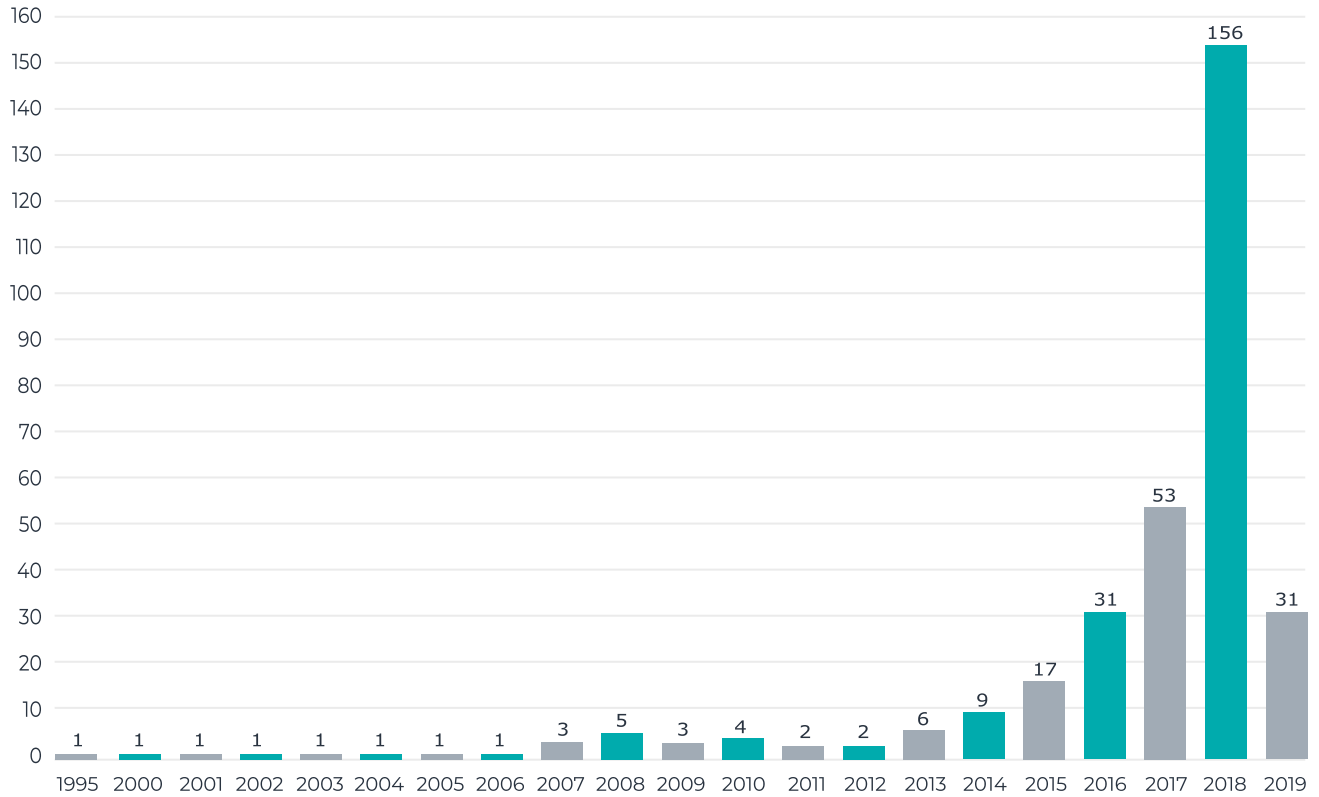
Divorce (MCA. Ch. 125)	549
Adoption (Ch. 131)	27
Guardianship (Ch. 132)	24
Mental Health Act (Ch. 230)	15
Status of Children Act (Ch. 130)	4
TOTAL	619

Decrees Nisi



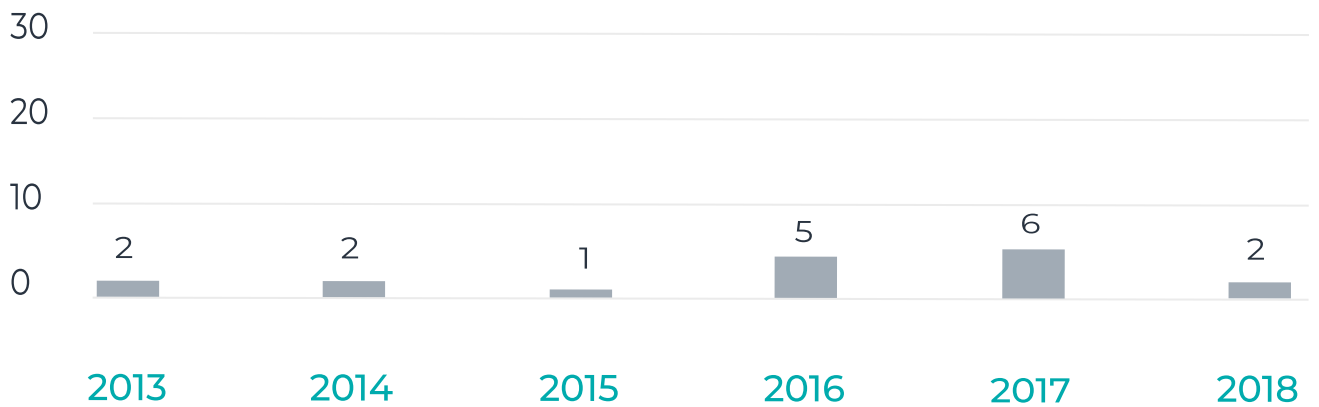
Decreases Absolute

TOTAL 330



Adoption Orders

TOTAL 18



2019 Annual Report of Deputy Registrar with Responsibility for the Criminal Registry

It is with pleasure that I present my 2019 Annual Report as Deputy Registrar with responsibility for the Criminal Registry. As Deputy Registrar I perform a dual role which includes hearing certain civil interlocutory applications in addition to the supervision of the daily functions of the Criminal Registry which includes the processing of bail bonds, the Juror Assistance Office, the Bailiff Unit, the proposed Bail Management Program, and The Public Defender's Office.

Civil Litigation Hearings

The volume of files delegated to this Registry for hearing has increased significantly over the past year. The nature of applications included Taxation of Costs, applications for Judgment in Default, Assessments and applications for Leave to Extend time. As the complement of Court Reporters is limited and priority is given to Supreme Court matters, there is a shortage of Reporters which should be addressed as soon as possible.

Despite the challenges, rulings were given in seven contested assessments from January to October, 2019. There is also the issue of the delay in placing documents filed at the Civil Registry on the relevant files at the appropriate time for hearings. This failure can lead to adjournments and can affect the efficiency of hearings. Below is the relevant statistical data up to the end of October 2019.

	Total Matters Heard	Matters taken off list	Matters Adjourned	Matters Completed
JANUARY	8	0	7	1
FEBRUARY	56	0	15	41
MARCH	37	0	11	26
APRIL	52	1	26	25
MAY	20	1	6	13
JUNE	25	0	14	11
JULY	86	1	30	55
AUGUST	20	0	7	13
SEPTEMBER	59	0	33	26
OCTOBER	87	1	40	46

The implementation of the proposed e-filing system at the Civil Registry will ameliorate the problem arising from the delay in updating the files which will greatly assist in the more timely disposition of applications.

Criminal Administration

The Criminal Registry is responsible for facilitating the proper processing of bail bonds. In order to discharge this duty, the Registry must always be properly staffed with trained personnel in all areas.

Further, to meet the demand of new projects such as the proposed Bail Management System, the Registry must be provided with a technology platform which supports the move towards automation and be provided with all necessary equipment.

The Bail Management System, which is a multi-disciplinary venture between the Judiciary, Royal Bahamas Police Force, and The Bahamas Department of Corrections is poised to significantly improve the processing of bail applications.

The same will enhance our current bail system by eliminating the current ,paper' based system by transforming the same into a modern computer based e- system that will allow sureties to complete applications online outside of the Criminal Registry and only bring in relevant documentation for scanning. In addition, the new system will enable accused

persons who are detained, whether represented or not, to make application for bail via a kiosk located at the Department of Corrections and sign in using biometrics at kiosks located at police stations within New Providence.

The same will also enhance monitoring of those persons who are granted bail and are required to sign in at police stations via use of biometric data. The implementation of the new Bail Management System is scheduled for the month of December 2019.

In addition to the enactment of the enabling legislation for the Bail Management System, the Criminal Registry will be retrofitted and refurbished to accommodate the additional equipment to support the System. This will include upgrading the reception area to facilitate the migration to the automated platform.

Training for the Registry Staff, Registrars, Justices, The Royal Bahamas Police Force, Counsel at the Private Bar and legal officers at The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions commenced in October 2019.

Crown Brief Allocations

Allocations via Crown Brief is still the predominant means of allocating counsel for those accused persons charged with indictable offenses who are unable to retain private counsel. Set out below is the statistical data to October 2019 for Crown Brief allocations.

Month	Number
JANUARY	18
FEBRUARY	25
MARCH	17
APRIL	33
MAY	19
JUNE	30
JULY	24
AUGUST	15
SEPTEMBER	11
OCTOBER	10

Juror Assistance Office

The role of the Juror Assistance office is to assist the Bailiff Office in the:

1. selection of prospective jurors from the Jury Master List;
2. preparation of Juror Summonses;
3. signing of Summonses by the Registrar;
4. distribution of relevant Summonses to Bailiffs for service;
5. receipt of returns for each of the criminal courts and subsequent creation of lists for each court;
6. provision of letters to jurors for employers; and
7. receipt of attendance record for juror's attendance at Court and submission of same to the Accounts Department for payment.

Only one (1) staff member from the original team of juror assistants is still in place, but additional staff were assigned and they all made a significant contribution to the overall work of this unit. These persons include Mr. Shannon Bethell, and Ms. Jackie Lewis.

It is anticipated that the Criminal Registry will be a part of the digitization project throughout the Court system thereby modernising the current procedures and work flows used in this area.

Bailiff Unit

The Bailiff Unit has maintained a high level of proficiency in serving documents on jurors and ensuring their attendance for each of the nine (9) criminal courts. Data obtained from The Register of Voters has enabled the Bailiff Unit to locate and serve those jurors selected with relative ease.

The unit has reformed the process for payment of jurors after service of jury duty by obtaining banking particulars from each juror at the beginning of each session. Upon completion of jury duty, the relevant returns are forwarded to the Juror's Assistant's office for vetting and forwarding to the Accounts Section of the Judiciary.

The responsibilities of the Bailiff Unit includes the:

1. the submission of returns of service to Juror Assistants;
2. the calling of jurors to remind them of court dates;
3. the conducting of Juror Orientation; and
4. the submission of attendance records of Jurors to the Juror Assistant's office for onward transmission to the Accounts Section.

The Bailiff Unit continues to have the challenge of not being able to find adequate parking on Bank Lane. New signage has assisted with this issue to some extent, but further enforcement of the same will go a long way in ensuring that there is adequate parking available for bailiffs.

Conclusion

It is apparent from the statistical data for 2019 that notwithstanding the formidable challenges confronted over the past twelve months it has been a very productive year for the Criminal Registry. We look forward to the foreshadowed technological innovations planned for the Judiciary in 2020 and the expected positive impact on the work of the Criminal Registry.

I wish to thank the hard working staff of the Criminal Registry, as well as all members of the Judiciary who assisted my office in carrying out its function in the past legal year and I look forward to working with you in 2020.

Edmund Von Turner

Deputy Registrar



Magistrates Appeals

The Magistrates Appeals registry is responsible for the effective processing and maintenance of its record for Appeals (Civil and Criminal) for decisions of the Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrates of the Magistrates' Courts to the Supreme Court made pursuant to Section 54 of the Magistrates Act Chapter 54, or section 231 of the Criminal Procedure Code, Chapter 91. When an appeal is filed from the Magistrate's Court to the Supreme Court, the Magistrate must be given notice of the Appeal so that the record may be prepared and transmitted to the Appeals Section. The appeal is filed at the cashier's cage and then forwarded to the Appeals Section for a case number.

When the case number is assigned a written request is made to the Magistrate's Court where the case was first heard for transcripts/dockets or any relevant documents pertaining to the case to be prepared. A hearing date will be fixed and a Notice of Hearing will be served on the relevant parties or their respective attorneys.

After the appeal hearing is completed and a ruling is given the information is recorded in the Cause List. The file is then marked completed and filed away. A copy of the ruling is sent to the respective magistrate's court(s) and the Appellant or Respondent or their attorney is given a copy.

The same procedure applies to matters originating in the Family Islands.

"The objective is to reduce the disposition cycle for all appeals to the Supreme Court to a period which is constant with international best practices."



The interior of one of the Courts in the Magistrates Court Complex



Magistrates Court Complex, New Providence

“We are working on a software module for use in the Magistrates Family Court dealing with maintenance payments and other financial support orders for parties involved in proceedings before that court. The money is paid into court for onward payment to the receiving party. Currently, the processing of the orders and disbursement of funds involve unacceptable delays and inconvenience for both paying and receiving parties. Under the new automated procedure, parties will not have to go to the Magistrates Court Complex on Nassau Street to make payments or collect monies. This will save an enormous amount of time and inconvenience for the public and will improve the service platform of the Courts as we migrate to a more service orientated culture in the Judiciary.”

- Chief Justice Brian M. Moree QC – 27 September, 2019.

Court Marshal Services

The Court Marshal Services (CMS) is the internal security division of the Office of the Judiciary which began in October 2005 with the assignment and/or appointment of serving/retired police officers to the Courts as security officers. Presently, Mr. Eden Zonicle is the Manager who oversees the daily operations of the CMS.

The CMS is responsible for identifying key security risk areas for the court and its personnel. Several recommendations have been made, some of which have been implemented and others still being considered in an effort to ensure that a safe and secure environment is established and maintained for all judicial officers, court staff and members of the public who use the courts. Additional staffing is required for the CMS and hopefully this matter will be addressed in the near future.

The year 2019 began with the retirement of the following Court Marshals: Messrs. Vernon Adderley, Pertlin Moss, Garnette McGregor, Cephias Moncur, Allan Fawkes, Archie White and Errol Miller. Together, these officers served, on average, fourteen (14) years with distinction and professionalism.

On Tuesday 1 October 2019, the Office of the Judiciary welcomed the following four (4) new Marshals: Mrs. Frances Campbell-Butterfield, Mr. David Stubbs, Mr. Nelson Larrimore and Mr. Patrick Knowles.

Recommendations for A Safer Judiciary

The CMS continues to review and assess the security arrangements for the Judiciary relating to the personal safety of all judicial officers and the protection and utilization of all Court buildings.

Parking for the Staff of the Judiciary

Additional parking is required for staff members of the Judiciary. It is recommended that certain parking spaces in the Bank Lane area be designated and reserved for court staff.

Office Space for the Supervisor of the Marshals at Nassau Street

It is hoped that office space in the Magistrate's Court Complex on Nassau Street will be made available to the Supervisor of the Marshals in order to better facilitate the discharge of his duties. An area in the building has been identified for this purpose.

Death of Earnest Rahming, Court Marshal

On Tuesday, 3rd September 2019, Magistrate Ancella Williams of Magistrate Court Abaco Division reported the death of Mr. Earnest Rahming, Court Marshal resulting from a road traffic accident.

He is survived by his wife Yvonne and five children. On behalf of the Chief Justice the Hon. Brian M. Moree QC and all judicial officers and staff members of the Judiciary, we extend our deepest sympathy to the family of Mr. Rahming. May his soul rest in peace.

Court Services

The Director of Court Services is responsible for the general supervision and administration of non-judicial activities and functions of the Office of The Judiciary. Court Services has oversight of the physical plant and daily logistical operations. The Office of The Judiciary operates from the following locations:

- *The Supreme Court, Bank Lane, New Providence*
- *The Garnet Levarity Justice Centre, The Mall, Freeport, Grand Bahama*
- *Supreme Court Annex I (formerly known as Ansbacher House)*
- *Supreme Court Annex II (formerly known as (Swift Justice Annex)*
- *Supreme Court (The Hansard) Annex*
- *BAF Building, Marlborough Street (Civil Registry)*
- *Saffrey Square, Bank Lane (Law Library, Bailiffs)*
- *The Magistrates Court Complex, South Street, New Providence.*

Magistrate Courtrooms are also located in various government complexes in Marsh Harbour, Abaco; Governor's Harbour, Eleuthera; George Town, Exuma; and throughout The Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

Court Services in conjunction with the Ministry of Works and the Office of The Attorney General & Ministry of Legal Affairs is overseeing a number of improvements and expansion to the physical infrastructure of the Office of the Judiciary. Extensive renovations were conducted on the historic Supreme Court building, Bank Lane to restore and preserve this 1921 Neo-Georgian structure for future generations of Bahamians.

Deputy Registrar Constance Delancy continues to act as Director of Court Services, assisted by Ms. Kennise Burrows and Ms. Kimberley Butterfield.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Unit, located on the 4th Floor, Annex I, is responsible for the proper management of Personnel in the Office of the Judiciary. It consists of the following five officers: Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor, Human Resources Manager, Ms. Nicoya Neilly, Mrs. Deborah Gibson, Ms. Sharece Davis and Mr. Randolph Munroe.

Acting on the instructions of the Registrar, the Human Resources Unit manages the staff compliment of over three hundred (300) persons, inclusive of Abaco and Grand Bahama, but excluding the Marshal Unit and Judicial Officers, by carrying out the following functions:

- Recruitment & Staffing
- Training & Development
- Compensation & Benefits
- General Management Of Staff
- Career Counseling

It is the ultimate goal of the Human Resources Unit to ensure that each staff member succeeds in the Public Service and that the Office of The Judiciary as a whole, functions at its fullest potential. To accomplish this mandate, the staff of the Human Resource Unit is required to go above and beyond the call of duty in many instances.

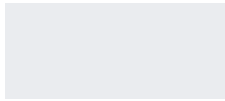
New Hires

- ***Ms. Frances Butterfield***, Court Marshal of the Office of The Judiciary, commenced duty on 30th September, 2019
- ***Mr. Nelson Larrimore***, Court Marshal of the Office of The Judiciary, commenced duty on 30th September, 2019
- ***Mr. David Stubbs***, Court Marshal of the Office of The Judiciary, commenced duty on 30th September, 2019
- ***Mr. Richard Leadon***, Court Marshal of the Office of The Judiciary, commenced duty on 8th October, 2019 (Grand Bahama)
- ***Mr. Patrick Knowles***, Court Marshal of the Office of The Judiciary, commenced duty on 30th September, 2019
- ***Mr. Enoch Coleby***, Court Marshal of the Office of The Judiciary, commenced duty on 25th November, 2019
- ***Mr. RenauldFazier***, Court Marshal of the Office of The Judiciary, commenced duty on 25th November, 2019
- ***Mr. Andrew***, Court Marshal of the Office of The Judiciary, commenced duty on 25th November, 2019

Confirmations and Reclassification

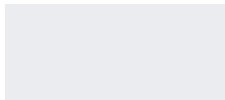
- ***Mrs. Sandra Lightbourn***, Janitress, Supreme Court
- ***Ms. Rickeish Taylor***, Clerk, Magistrate's Court
- ***Ms. Geofricka Hepburn***, Clerk, Supreme Court
- ***Ms. Devante Curtis***, Clerk, Supreme Court
- ***Ms. Birdenia Roberts***, Janitress, Supreme Court
- ***Ms. Esther Pinder***, Clerk, Supreme Court

Resignations



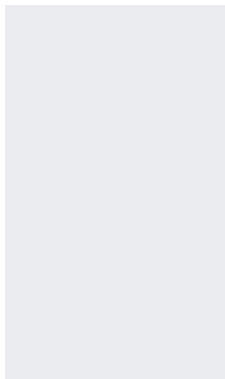
- **Mr. Daval Higgs**, former Court Clerk to Acting Justice Mr. Andrew Forbes
- **Mr. Delvin Duncombe**, former Court Clerk to Justice Mrs. Renae McKay

Retirees



- **Mrs. Bettymae Lookie**, Chief Executive Officer
- **Mrs. Rocelia Wright**, Executive Secretary

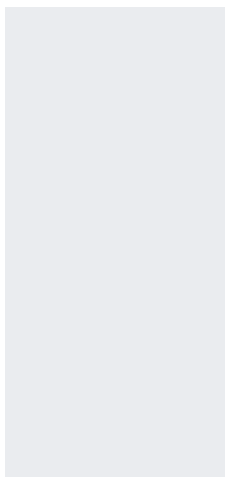
Deployed To The Office Of The Judiciary:



- • **Ms. Vincola Henfield**, Department of Inland Revenue
- • **Ms. Jennifer Sweeting**, Ministry of The Public Service
- • **Mr. Ray Sands**, Department of Environmental Health Services
- • **Ms. Tereka Thompson**, Treasury Department
- • **Mr. Johnathan Fawkes**, Department of Environmental Health Services
- • **Mrs. Cheryl Brown**, Ministry of The Public Service
- • **Ms. Claudia Clarke**, Treasury Department

National Job Creation Skills Enhancement Programme

This programme commenced on 1st July, 2019 and the following persons were assigned:



- **Mr. Derek Gardiner**
- **Ms. Brittany Ferguson**
- **Mr. Rakeem Linden**
- **Ms. Shanteish Mitchell**
- **Ms. Nickeisha Thompson**
- **Ms. Brenisha Moxey**
- **Mr. Justin Cash**
- **Mr. Patrick Williams**
- **Ms. Donica Murphy**
- **Ms. Alliyah Richards**

Training For Staff

Court Clerks Training Day 2019 held 8 - 9 January 2019

- *Mr. Gary Brennan*
- *Mr. Justin Cash*
- *Mr. Christopher Pennerman*
- *Mr. Roy Burrows*
- *Mr. Christopher Pennerman*
- *Ms. Katrea Saunders*
- *Mr. Thomas Grant*
- *Mr. Andymore Saunders*
- *Mr. Derek Gardiner*
- *Mr. Christopher Thompson*



Mrs. Grace Bostwick addresses the group on Oaths and Affirmations



Ms. Sharece Davis on the stand as Mr. Christopher Thompson demonstrates the process of being sworn in.



Mr. Andymore Saunders lectures on Criminal Court procedure

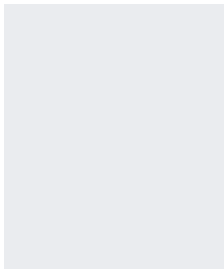


Thomas Grant presenting on procedures regarding court documents: Civil, Family and Probate

The Public Service Centre For Human Resources Development Courses

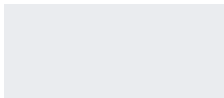
This institute offers various courses for public service officers. Successful completion of the courses qualifies such officers to be eligible for upgrading or reclassification. The following courses were attended by the Officers of The Office of The Judiciary:

Effective Writing in the Public Service 6-8 February 2019



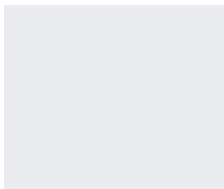
- *Mazell Knowles*
- *Marinda Pritchard*
- *Earnestine Rahming*
- *Raquel Sands*
- *Rocelia Wright*

Writing Cabinet Papers Workshop 26 February – 1 March 2019



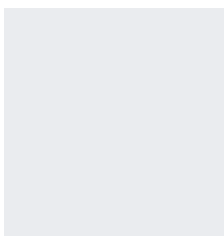
- *Nicoya Neilly*
- *Sharmaine Archer*

Maintaining Ethical Standards in the Public Service Seminar 5 March 2019



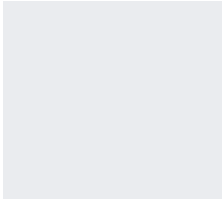
- *Beverley Cooper*
- *D'Avante Curtis*
- *August Johnson*
- *Katelean Lockhart*

Microsoft Excel Intermediate Workshop 28-30 May 2019



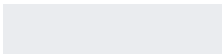
- *BriniqueRoache*
- *Shamaine Lopez*
- *Sherman Campbell*
- *Sharece Davis*
- *Jacara Smith*

Labour Laws & Union Agreement 19 - 21 March 2019



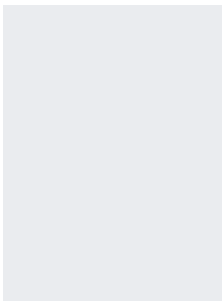
- Elizabeth Taylor
- Sharmaine Archer
- Claudia Hall
- Ralph Rolle

Advanced Writing Skills Workshop II-III 3-5 April 2019



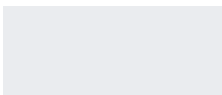
- Nicola Fowler

Managing an Effective Performance Appraisals 16 – 17 April 2019



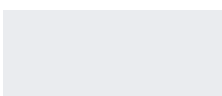
- Sharmaine Archer
- Katie Mackey
- Ingrid Hunt
- Ralph Rolle
- Janice Minus-Rolle
- Nolan Scavella

PITMAN: Booking & Accounts 2 September 2019



- Ezrica Sweeting
- Sharece Davis

PITMAN Office Procedures 2 September 2019



- Kimberley Butterfield
- Freda Farrington

BJC English 2 September 2019

— *Majorie Evans*

BGCSE English 2 September 2019

— *Jacara Smith*
 — *Bettymae Bostwick*
 — *Julie Buchanan*
 — *Elizabeth Johnson*

Dealing With Difficult Customers 5- 7 November 2019

— *Elvis Rolle*
 — *Naomi Taylor*
 — *Dionette Richardson*
 — *Cruzel Nottage*
 — *Bettymae Bostwick*
 — *Kendi Storr*
 — *Christina Richards*
 — *Kesha Ferguson*
 — *Patrick Williams*
 — *Hyacinth Sands*

Dealing With Difficult Customers 5- 7 November 2019

— *Judy Simmons*
 — *Jack Davis*
 — *Janice Minus-Rolle*
 — *Shirley Moncur*
 — *Pauline Tucker*
 — *Bathsheba Algreen*
 — *Sharon Fernander*
 — *Joycelyn Johnson*
 — *Sheilamae Brown*
 — *Majorie Evans*



Report From The Northern Region - Ms. Stephana J. Saunders

The Office of the Judiciary (Northern Region) comprises the islands of Grand Bahama, The Abacos and Bimini. In Grand Bahama, the offices are located in the Garnet Levarity Justice Centre, Downtown Freeport and in the Administrators Building, Martin Town, Eight Mile Rock, Grand Bahama.

There are two Supreme Courts and three Magistrate Courts in Freeport and one Magistrate Court is located in Eight Mile Rock. The responsibilities and duties of the Office of the Judiciary mirror that

of those in New Providence although on a smaller scale.

The Supreme Courts are presided over by The Honourable Senior Justice Madam Estelle Gray-Evans and The Honourable Madam Justice Petra Hanna-Adderley. The Magistrate Courts are presided over by Miss Debbye Ferguson, Deputy Chief Magistrate and Ms. Gwendolyn Claude, Mr. Charlton Smith and Ms. Ayse Rengin Johnson, Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrates.

Registrar's Office

The Deputy Registrar, Miss Stephana J. Saunders is responsible for the overall administration of the Office of the Judiciary in Grand Bahama and oversees the day to day operations of the Courts. She is assisted in the performance of her administrative duties by a team of supervisors, namely: Mr. Ricardo Russell, Administrative Officer, Mrs. Eleanor Stuart, Senior Executive Office, Ms. Zenobia Duncombe, Assistant Accountant, Ms. Clara Johnson, Ms. Tameisha Munroe and Miss Chinello Sears, Executive Officers and Mrs. Adriann Gilbert, Chief Clerk.

been kind to the edifice - the lack of maintenance and repeated poor workmanship being the primary reasons for its myriad of problems such as air-condition failures and mold infestation.

Thankfully, on the 26 November 2018, a contract was signed for the renovation of the Garnet Levarity Justice Centre to address the vexing issues which have marred its existence.

After the Church Service to mark the opening of the Legal Year on 11 January, 2019 at The Pro Cathedral of Christ the King, the renovations began in earnest on the 28 January 2019. In the following months, the renovations and refurbishment proved taxing to Judicial Officers, Staff and the General Public alike.

The Judicial Officers and Staff were displaced and had to function in less than ideal circumstances and cramped surroundings and the Legal Fraternity and General Public had to endure adjournments and delays due to sharing of court rooms and increased volume in public areas. The patience and fortitude displayed by all involved is to be highly commended.

2019

2019 has definitely been a year of celebration and one of challenges.

It is noteworthy that The Garnet Levarity Justice Centre which houses the Supreme and Magistrate Courts in Freeport marked twenty-five years of being opened by Queen Elizabeth II on the 7th March, 1994. The ensuing years however, have not

The Magistrate Court in Eight Mile Rock was not without its challenges as well. The Court is situated in the Local Government Building which experienced a break-in earlier this year in May. The Court relocated to the building in 2016 due to damage to the Administrators Building in the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew. The Court did not return to the Administrators building due to the expansion of the Administrators for West Grand Bahama staff complement. Again the patience and fortitude displayed by those who work and utilize the space where the Magistrate Court in Eight Mile Rock is located should be highly commended. There is hope on the horizon as there is a new complex that is proposed to house the Eight Mile Rock Magistrate Court for the year 2020. We look forward with anticipation in occupying the new and modern environs.

We welcomed our new Chief Justice, Mr. Brian Moree, QC for his inaugural visit on 3 July 2019. His Lordship viewed the construction works, met with the Staff and with senior members of the Bar.

There continues to be a critical staff shortage in the Northern Region. The National Work Relief programme (52 week programme) provided great assistance to the Office of the Judiciary, Northern Region with ten (10) participants who have provided

invaluable service and assistance to our staff complement.

The passage of Hurricane Dorian proved the greatest challenge for 2019. The Garnet Levarity Justice Centre was closed for three (3) weeks from 3-20 September. The building experienced minor damage, however it could not open due to there being no electricity and the water pressure could not support being open to the public. Many members of staff were devastated and lost all of their belongings. The Judicial Officers and Staff received care packages from the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court of Nassau and we thank them for their care and generosity. Upon opening on the 23 September, the Staff complement who were available worked half days until the 7 October when we resumed normal working hours. We are grateful that there was no loss of life amongst us; however, we grieve with those who lost family and loved ones because of the monster storm.

Through all the challenges and trials of 2019, we are definitely thankful, grateful and hopeful. We are thankful for our lives and grateful to be able to serve. We are also hopeful to continue to serve the citizens of the Northern Region to the best of our abilities in 2020.

Statistics

The Deputy Registrar in addition to being an administrator also discharges judicial functions pursuant to Order 32(11) Rules of the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas which states:-

- 11.** (1) The Registrar shall have power to transact all such business and exercise all such authority and jurisdiction as under the Act or these rules may be transacted and exercised by a judge in chambers except in respect of the following matters and proceedings, that is to say –
- (a)** matters relating to criminal proceedings;
 - (b)** matters relating to the liberty of the subject;
 - (c)** proceedings to which Order 57 applies and with respect to which a judge in chambers has jurisdiction;
 - (d)** any other matter or proceeding which by any of these Rules is required to be heard only by a judge.
- (2) The Registrar shall have power to grant an injunction in the terms agreed by the parties to the proceedings in which the injunction is sought.

Listed below are statistics for matters heard before the Deputy Registrar (Northern Region) during the period of November 2018 – August, 2019.

November, 2018 - August, 2019	Number of matters scheduled	Number of matters heard and determined	Number of matters with no appearance	Number of matters taken off the list	Number of matters adjourned
	240	133	6	7	94

The Supreme Court Registry

Unlike New Providence, where the registries of the Supreme Court are separated and supervised by different Deputy Registrars, all registries of the Supreme Court are located at the Garnet Levarity Justice Centre and overseen by the Deputy Registrar (Northern Region) and assisted by Mr. Ricardo Russell and Mrs. Eleanor Stewart. Staff members include Miss Sophia Clarke, Assistant to the Deputy Registrar and Probate Clerk, Mrs. Loylean McCartney, Probate Clerk, Mrs. Deon Smith, Family Clerk and Mrs. Octavia Sweeting, Civil Clerk and Listing Officer. These Officers also perform the work of the Criminal Registry and process and file bail applications.

Applications and matters filed under the said divisions from November 2018 – August, 2019:

COMMON LAW AND EQUITY DIVISION (CLE)		
COMMON LAW AND EQUITY	COMMERCIAL	PUBLIC LAW
215	6	4

FAMILY DIVISION (DIV)			
DIVORCE	ADOPTION	GUARDIANSHIP	MENTAL HEALTH
164	18	3	2
Decree Nisi Granted			
36			
Decree Absolute Granted			
14			

PROBATE DIVISION (PRO)

New applications received	Grants issued	BAIL APPLICATIONS
90	70	142

Training

The Office of the Judiciary (Northern Region) held its first training day for 2019 at the Pelican Bay Resort under the theme “It’s All About You!!!”. A dynamic group of presenters taught and encouraged the Staff to get themselves in the best financial, physical, mental and spiritual health. Mrs. Caline G. Newton, the Money Maven, Robert Harris a.k.a. “Big Rob”, Pastor Cedric Beckles and Miss Sharmaine Russell, Psychologist with the Ministry of Education all inspired and motivated the Staff to be their best selves.

The favorite activity of the day was a vision board session with Ms. Raquel Hart-Beneby who emphasized the three Ps – Purpose, Plan and Path. During the activities, Staff was encouraged to dream and envision their best life and create a board for their daily inspiration. The day culminated in a delicious lunch and the joy of socializing with retired employees of the Office of the Judiciary.

We look forward to the reforms foreshadowed for 2020 as we seek to modernize the Court system through

Below: The Hon. Madam Senior Justice Estelle G. Gray-Evans



Court Reporting Unit Report

Court Reporting Unit Report 2019

“To ensure that transcripts are produced within a reasonable period of time to enable The Bahamas to possess the best judicial system in the region.”

A court reporter, or stenographer, is responsible for transcribing spoken or recorded speech into written form, using machine shorthand equipment to produce official transcripts of court hearings and other official proceedings.

The current staff complement of the Court Reporting Unit is thirty-one functioning reporters, headed by Mrs. Judith Clare, Acting Director, and ably supported by Mrs. Tabitha Morley and Mrs. Gwen Deveaux, Supervisors. The unit consists of CAT (Computer Aided Technology) along with realtime proficient reporters who provide hundreds of pages of transcripts on a daily basis to the Court of Appeal, nine (9) Criminal Supreme Courts and seven (7) Civil Supreme Courts. Additionally, the unit provides reporting services to Registrars and Magistrate Courts upon request whenever possible.

Our mission is to provide timely and accurate records of court proceedings, to maintain the highest levels of professionalism and to continue to upgrade the skills of court reporters through training and professional development.

Activities and Training

- 1.** On the 15th to 18th August, 2019, the Office of the Judiciary sponsored two court stenographers, Mrs. Tonia Colebrook and Mrs. Shakara Allen, to attend the National Court Reporters Association Annual Convention in Denver, Colorado. The NCRA Convention is an educational forum which provides opportunities for court reporters to reinforce and enhance their reporting skills.
- 2.** In keeping with the Office of the Judiciary’s observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, on Wednesday, 16th October, 2019, Mrs. Kenya Culmer of Sister Sister Breast Cancer Support Group made a presentation and the CRU gave a donation to the group. Other speakers and invited attendees were: Registrar Camille Gomez, Dr. Tracy Halkitis, Sherika Bastian and Shequeena Newry of Fourth Terrace Diagnostics and Rev. Patricia Rolle, PHA, Moderator.

Challenges

Our challenges remain the shortage of resources (staff and equipment) and the lack of consistent training; these issues directly impact the unit’s productivity.

While we face many difficulties in effectively maintaining the current system, I must express gratitude to the stenographers who are functioning efficiently despite these challenges. We are ever mindful of our position and place within the Office of the Judiciary as guardians of the record and we strive to improve our output both in terms of time and product in keeping with our motto.



United States Embassy Charge d'Affaires Ms. Stephanie Bowers calls on The Honourable Mr. Brian Moree, Chief Justice on June 18, 2019



The Honourable Madam Senior Justice Vera S. Watkins laying the Wreath at the Cenotaph in the Garden of Remembrance on Sunday, November 10, 2019

The Magistracy

Report of the Chief Magistrate

This report represents the collaborative work of the eighteen (18) Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrates who make up the group of hard working and dedicated individuals that I have been privileged to lead as Chief Magistrate from July, 2013.

I am aware of the criticisms by some in our community of the work of the Magistrates Courts in New Providence, Grand Bahama, Abaco and Exuma, where there are resident Magistrates. Magistrates also serve across our archipelago on circuit duty. Regrettably, that criticism is often based on misinformation or a misunderstanding of the multiple duties of Magistrates. I can attest to the stellar accomplishments in terms of court adjudications as well as results derived from the continued relationships with a cross section of stakeholders, to include the Police, Immigration and Correctional Services Department.

The Magistrates Courts are an essential part of the administration of justice in our country. They deal with a large volume of cases during the course of a year and have the greatest contact with the members of the public. We operate under difficult and challenging circumstances and I wish to express my gratitude to the support staff of the Magistracy without whom we could never effectively and efficiently perform our duties.

At the conclusion of this report is the statistical data of individual courts. These statistics do not detail the nature of the types of matters adjudicated but it gives one a global picture of the vast numbers of matters being heard.

I now move to highlight the work of the Courts for 2019.

Recent Modification to Payment Process of Domestic and Civil Matters.

As of September, 2019 clients of the courts are now being paid by direct deposit at their designated bank account. Persons who do not have bank accounts are still able to receive manually granted cheques.

This has improved the efficiency within the payment process for both Domestic and Civil matters.

Increase in Human Resources

The year 2019 has been another challenging year in terms of insufficient staff particularly at the clerical level. This has contributed to delays as often courts were made to function in the absence of pertinent courts staff.

I am confident that with the addition of properly trained staff, the work of the Magistrates Court will be more professionally and efficiently carried out. I reiterate my appeal for a robust campaign to increase staff at all levels of the tier.

Effects of Hurricane Dorian upon the Northern Region

I had previously reported some years ago, that hurricane damage had affected the court at Eight Mile Rock, Grand Bahama. With the vengeance of Hurricane Dorian, 2019 upon Grand Bahama and Abaco courts in these regions have been further compromised, resulting in the loss of some judicial time.

Despite these unforeseen challenges, the work of the court has steadily continued as both Magistrates and staff have gone beyond the call of duty.

In some instances, this has also increased the volume of work in New Providence as many residents from the North have relocated.

Digital Recording Facility

It has been said that the life blood of a judicial officer is accurate record keeping. Magistrates to date are still taking manual longhand notes, and in very limited circumstances may have the aid of a stenographer. This fact is exasperated when a higher court requests transcripts in the instance of an appeal being filed.

The clerical staff is hard pressed to prepare the record by typing the notes from the court's diary, in addition to executing their day to day responsibilities in court. Last year a digital system was put in place but sadly, I have observed that it is not fully functional in terms of transcriptions, and in some courts the recording facility of the machine is compromised.

I respectfully suggest that technical personnel dedicated to the management of the digital system should be effected thus ensuring the greatest effectiveness of the machines.

Jurisdiction of Stipendiary & Circuit Magistrates on Bail Applications

The amendments to the Bail Act, 2014 removed the jurisdiction of Magistrates in the granting of bail in certain matters where they maintain jurisdiction to adjudicate. The question of reform in this area was raised by our former Chief Justices Stephen Isaacs and Sir Hartman Longley. Unfortunately, Chief Justice Isaacs' demise came before reform was addressed in this area. I am hopeful that this anomaly would soon be considered. We also look forward to being included in the implementation of the Bail Management System, which will use biometrics to keep track of accused persons on Bail.

Environmental Court

Within the Magistracy there are specialized courts which assume the bulk of the work in a specific area. Recent complaints from the Department of Environmental Health Services necessitated a Court to adjudicate on Environmental matters.

These hearings commenced in January, 2019 and the courts calendar completed all prosecutions instituted by August, 2019. At present there are no outstanding environmental matters before the Magistrates court.

Regular Consultation with Senior Leadership Team

Since coming into the office as Chief Justice, The Honorable Justice Brian Moree QC has consistently invited Magistrates in round table discussions on matters pertaining to improving operations. This has included inviting Magistrates to participate in training sessions locally and abroad, coupled with regular one on one meetings which has fostered respectful open communications.

I am confident that our time together has improved our productivity and will bring about further positive change.

Conclusion

While there is still more work to do, as a whole the Magistracy has made good progress for the year 2019.

Recognizing that the Magistrates Court is where most Bahamians first encounter the judicial system and also where the largest amount of adjudications are conducted, it is my view that any effort to improve the efficiency of the justice system should contemplate the Magistracy as a strategic priority. My team and I continue to be committed to working assiduously under the leadership of the Chief Justice The Honorable Brian Moree QC.

Later in this Report is the statistical reports of individual Magistrates Courts.





Magistrate Samuel Mckinney , Magistrates Court No.1

Statistical Reports of the Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrates

Magistrate Division of The Judiciary - Magistrate Court No. 1

Criminal

JANUARY 2019

MAGISTRATE: Mr. Samuel McKinney

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
519	1496	585	802	64	45	0	0

Civil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
391	754	337	343	61	13	0	0

Notes

* Column 2 is a total of columns 3,4, 5, & 6. Dated 11th November, 2019

Criminal

JANUARY 2019

MAGISTRATE: Mr. Samuel McKinney

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
55	181	67	101	4	9	0	0

Civil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
32	90	38	44	4	4	0	0

Notes

* Column 2 is a total of columns 3,4, 5, & 6. Dated 11th November, 2019

Criminal

FEBRUARY 2019

MAGISTRATE: Mr. Samuel McKinney

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
41	132	64	59	5	4	0	0

Civil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
29	60	30	25	4	1	0	0

Notes

* Column 2 is a total of columns 3,4, 5, & 6. Dated 11th November, 2019

Criminal

MARCH 2019

MAGISTRATE: Mr. Samuel McKinney

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
67	129	60	57	3	9	0	0

Civil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
25	61	19	33	7	2	0	0

Notes

* Column 2 is a total of columns 3,4, 5, & 6. Dated 11th November, 2019

Criminal

APRIL 2019

MAGISTRATE: Mr. Samuel McKinney

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
55	164	62	96	5	1	0	0

Civil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
36	92	44	43	2	3	0	0

Notes

* Column 2 is a total of columns 3,4, 5, & 6. Dated 11th November, 2019

Criminal

MAY 2019

MAGISTRATE: Mr. Samuel McKinney

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
73	179	68	104	5	2	0	0

Civil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
46	74	29	35	10	0	0	0

Notes

* Column 2 is a total of columns 3,4, 5, & 6. Dated 11th November, 2019

Criminal

JUNE 2019

MAGISTRATE: Mr. Samuel McKinney

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
72	192	76	96	17	3	0	0

Civil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
49	69	24	32	12	1	0	0

Notes

* Column 2 is a total of columns 3,4, 5, & 6. Dated 11th November, 2019

Criminal

JULY 2019

MAGISTRATE: Mr. Samuel McKinney

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
30	176	67	93	7	9	0	0

Civil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
35	82	34	37	10	1	0	0

Notes

* Column 2 is a total of columns 3,4, 5, & 6. Dated 11th November, 2019

Criminal

AUGUST 2019

MAGISTRATE: Mr. Samuel McKinney

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
43	105	42	58	2	3	0	0

Civil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
39	62	36	24	2	0	0	0

Notes

* Column 2 is a total of columns 3,4, 5, & 6. Dated 11th November, 2019

Criminal

SEPTEMBER 2019

MAGISTRATE: Mr. Samuel McKinney

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
50	121	37	72	9	3	0	0

Civil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
52	94	55	31	8	0	0	0

Notes

* Column 2 is a total of columns 3,4, 5, & 6. Dated 11th November, 2019

Criminal

OCTOBER 2019

MAGISTRATE: Mr. Samuel McKinney

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
33	117	42	66	7	2	0	0

Civil

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. New Matters	Total Matters Heard	No. Cases Completed	No. Cases Adjourned	No. Warrants Issued	No. Warrants Cancelled	No. of cases Committed to Supreme Court	Transfer Cases
48	70	28	39	2	1	0	0

Notes

* Column 2 is a total of columns 3,4, 5, & 6. Dated 11th November, 2019

Magistrate Division of The Judiciary - Magistrate Court No. 2 Magistrate Kara G. Turnquest-Deveaux

Bound Over Matters

YEAR 2019	NO. OF NEW CASES	NO. OF ADJOURN CASES	NO. OF WARRANTS ISSUED	NO. OF WARRANTS CANCELLED	NO. OF TRANSFER CASES	NO. OF COMPLETED CASES
JANUARY	18	33	09	04	0	39
FEBRUARY	42	46	06	05	0	19
MARCH	27	28	15	06	02	17
APRIL	22	26	06	02	0	17
MAY	59	61	09	01	0	31
JUNE	14	36	06	06	0	20
JULY	45	46	09	01	01	31
AUGUST	01	02	0	0	01	0
SEPTEMBER	32	44	06	02	02	16
OCTOBER	49	37	05	02	0	36
NOVEMBER						
DECEMBER						
TOTAL	309	359	71	29	06	226

Juvenile Matters

YEAR 2019	NO. OF NEW CASES	NO. OF ADJOURN CASES	NO. OF WARRANTS ISSUED	NO. OF WARRANTS CANCELLED	NO. OF CASES COMMITTED TO SUPRIME COURT	NO. OF COMPLETED CASES	NO. OF TRANSFER CASES
JANUARY	07	78	10	04	0	15	0
FEBRUARY	16	114	21	04	07	26	01
MARCH	17	119	09	05	0	09	02
APRIL	13	78	13	10	0	12	0
MAY	10	103	04	01	01	20	0
JUNE	15	95	09	01	0	16	0
JULY	03	70	07	0	01	10	0
AUGUST	01	02	0	01	0	0	0
SEPTEMBER	08	59	06	04	0	08	0
OCTOBER	20	75	06	03	01	18	0
NOVEMBER							
DECEMBER							
TOTAL	110	793	85	33	10	134	03

* Notes: Majority of adjourned cases for probation progress report.

Civil Matters

YEAR 2019	No. Of New Cases	No. Of Adjourn Cases	No. Of Warrants Issued	No. Of Warrants Cancelled	No. Of Transfer Cases Received	No. Of Completed Cases	Sine Die
JANUARY							
FEBRUARY							
MARCH							
APRIL							
MAY							
JUNE							
JULY							
AUGUST							
SEPTEMBER	29	20	08	0	20	10	
OCTOBER	60	30	03	0	56	21	
NOVEMBER							
DECEMBER							
TOTAL	89	50	11	0	76	31	



Magistrate Division of The Judiciary - Magistrate Court No. 3 Magistrate Sandradee Gardiner - Family Division

Month of January, 2019

Type of Case	Number of New Files	Number of Cases Heard	Number of Cases Adjourned	Number of Cases Completed	Number of Warrants Issued	Number of Warrants Cancelled
CHILD SUPPORT	34	108	48	58	2	2
CUSTODY OF CHILD	1	5	3	2	0	0
ACCESS	2	9	5	4	0	0
LEGAL SEPARATION	11	16	10	5	1	0
ARREARS	29	98	40	48	10	3
SPOUSE SUPPORT	3	7	5	1	1	0
VARIATION OF ORDER INCREASE	1	7	4	2	1	0
VARIATION OF ORDER DECREASE	6	13	3	5	5	0
VARIATION OF ORDER EXTENSION	0	0	0	0	0	0
ORDER TO VACATE THE MATRIMONIAL HOME	2	2	2	0	0	0
PROTECTION ORDER	8	16	8	8	0	0
TOTAL	97	281	128	133	20	5

Month of February, 2019

Type of Case	Number of New Files	Number of Cases Heard	Number of Cases Adjourned	Number of Cases Completed	Number of Warrants Issued	Number of Warrants Cancelled
CHILD SUPPORT	38	117	47	64	6	3
CUSTODY OF CHILD	1	10	4	6	0	1
ACCESS	6	10	2	8	0	0
LEGAL SEPARATION	11	21	9	12	0	0
ARREARS	11	94	43	44	7	5
SPOUSE SUPPORT	1	5	4	1	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER INCREASE	2	7	7	0	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER DECREASE	8	14	2	12	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER EXTENSION	1	1	1	0	0	0
ORDER TO VACATE THE MATRIMONIAL HOME	5	6	3	3	0	0
PROTECTION ORDER	11	18	10	8	8	0
TOTAL	95	303	131	158	13	9

Month of March, 2019

Type of Case	Number of New Files	Number of Cases Heard	Number of Cases Adjourned	Number of Cases Completed	Number of Warrants Issued	Number of Warrants Cancelled
CHILD SUPPORT	28	58	23	31	4	0
CUSTODY OF CHILD	1	5	2	2	1	0
ACCESS	3	5	3	2	0	0
LEGAL SEPARATION	10	13	3	10	0	0
ARREARS	27	86	37	43	6	1
SPOUSE SUPPORT	2	2	2	0	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER INCREASE	2	6	3	3	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER DECREASE	3	3	1	2	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER EXTENSION	3	4	1	3	0	0
ORDER TO VACATE THE MATRIMONIAL HOME	3	4	1	3	0	0
PROTECTION ORDER	3	17	9	7	1	0
TOTAL	82	203	85	106	12	1

Month of April, 2019

Type of Case	Number of New Files	Number of Cases Heard	Number of Cases Adjourned	Number of Cases Completed	Number of Warrants Issued	Number of Warrants Cancelled
CHILD SUPPORT	36	86	40	45	1	4
CUSTODY OF CHILD	3	8	6	2	0	0
ACCESS	5	7	2	5	0	0
LEGAL SEPARATION	11	17	7	10	0	0
ARREARS	41	88	41	45	2	4
SPOUSE SUPPORT	6	8	5	3	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER INCREASE	2	4	1	2	1	0
VARIATION OF ORDER DECREASE	4	7	1	4	2	0
VARIATION OF ORDER EXTENSION	1	1	1	0	0	0
ORDER TO VACATE THE MATRIMONIAL HOME	0	1	1	0	0	0
PROTECTION ORDER	4	18	9	9	0	0
TOTAL	113	245	113	126	6	8

Month of May, 2019

Type of Case	Number of New Files	Number of Cases Heard	Number of Cases Adjourned	Number of Cases Completed	Number of Warrants Issued	Number of Warrants Cancelled
CHILD SUPPORT	23	60	26	33	1	0
CUSTODY OF CHILD	1	9	9	0	0	0
ACCESS	3	5	1	4	0	0
LEGAL SEPARATION	9	17	11	6	0	0
ARREARS	48	95	35	54	6	2
SPOUSE SUPPORT	1	8	5	3	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER INCREASE	2	4	1	2	1	0
VARIATION OF ORDER DECREASE	3	3	2	1	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER EXTENSION	0	1	1	0	0	0
ORDER TO VACATE THE MATRIMONIAL HOME	1	1	1	0	0	0
PROTECTION ORDER	6	10	3	7	0	0
TOTAL	97	213	95	110	8	2

Month of June, 2019

Type of Case	Number of New Files	Number of Cases Heard	Number of Cases Adjourned	Number of Cases Completed	Number of Warrants Issued	Number of Warrants Cancelled
CHILD SUPPORT	47	165	37	40	3	0
CUSTODY OF CHILD	1	3	2	1	0	0
ACCESS	6	10	8	2	0	0
LEGAL SEPARATION	13	18	9	9	0	0
ARREARS	11	56	30	22	4	0
SPOUSE SUPPORT	3	3	1	2	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER INCREASE	0	3	1	2	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER DECREASE	3	8	5	3	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER EXTENSION	0	0	0	0	0	0
ORDER TO VACATE THE MATRIMONIAL HOME	3	5	2	2	3	0
PROTECTION ORDER	2	6	5	1	0	0
TOTAL	90	277	100	85	10	0

Month of July, 2019

Type of Case	Number of New Files	Number of Cases Heard	Number of Cases Adjourned	Number of Cases Completed	Number of Warrants Issued	Number of Warrants Cancelled
CHILD SUPPORT	30	73	27	43	3	5
CUSTODY OF CHILD	4	5	3	2	0	0
ACCESS	1	5	5	0	0	0
LEGAL SEPARATION	5	18	10	8	0	0
ARREARS	46	96	50	40	6	2
SPOUSE SUPPORT	0	3	1	2	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER INCREASE	1	5	5	0	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER DECREASE	3	7	3	4	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER EXTENSION	3	5	4	1	0	0
ORDER TO VACATE THE MATRIMONIAL HOME	0	2	0	2	0	0
PROTECTION ORDER	3	18	12	6	0	0
TOTAL	95	237	120	108	9	7

Month of August, 2019

Type of Case	Number of New Files	Number of Cases Heard	Number of Cases Adjourned	Number of Cases Completed	Number of Warrants Issued	Number of Warrants Cancelled
CHILD SUPPORT	28	71	28	42	1	0
CUSTODY OF CHILD	4	8	1	3	1	0
ACCESS	3	10	1	9	0	0
LEGAL SEPARATION	8	18	7	11	0	0
ARREARS	19	73	39	32	2	2
SPOUSE SUPPORT	3	7	2	5	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER INCREASE	1	4	1	3	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER DECREASE	2	3	1	2	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER EXTENSION	1	2	0	2	0	0
ORDER TO VACATE THE MATRIMONIAL HOME	2	3	2	1	0	0
PROTECTION ORDER	5	15	7	7	1	0
TOTAL	73	214	92	117	5	2

Month of September, 2019

Type of Case	Number of New Files	Number of Cases Heard	Number of Cases Adjourned	Number of Cases Completed	Number of Warrants Issued	Number of Warrants Cancelled
CHILD SUPPORT	35	62	30	29	3	0
CUSTODY OF CHILD	4	8	5	3	0	0
ACCESS	5	7	2	5	0	0
LEGAL SEPARATION	6	11	5	6	0	0
ARREARS	27	66	34	30	2	2
SPOUSE SUPPORT	0	1	1	0	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER INCREASE	5	4	2	2	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER DECREASE	1	0	0	0	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER EXTENSION	1	1	0	1	0	0
ORDER TO VACATE THE MATRIMONIAL HOME	0	0	0	0	0	0
PROTECTION ORDER	6	10	8	2	0	0
TOTAL	90	170	87	78	5	2

Month of October, 2019

Type of Case	Number of New Files	Number of Cases Heard	Number of Cases Adjourned	Number of Cases Completed	Number of Warrants Issued	Number of Warrants Cancelled
CHILD SUPPORT	7	15	5	10	0	0
CUSTODY OF CHILD	0	1	0	1	0	0
ACCESS	3	3	0	3	0	0
LEGAL SEPARATION	2	6	1	4	1	0
ARREARS	17	29	19	9	1	0
SPOUSE SUPPORT	0	0	0	0	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER INCREASE	0	2	2	0	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER DECREASE	11	2	2	0	0	0
VARIATION OF ORDER EXTENSION	0	0	0	0	0	0
ORDER TO VACATE THE MATRIMONIAL HOME	0	0	0	0	0	0
PROTECTION ORDER	1	8	0	8	0	0
TOTAL	41	66	29	35	2	0

Magistrate Division of The Judiciary - Magistrate Court No. 5 Magistrate Derrence Rolle Davis

Criminal

DATE: 1st NOVEMBER, 2018DATE: 28th NOVEMBER, 2018

FIRST PLEAS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ.	GUILTY PLEAS/ SENTENCED	PERSONS FOUND GUILTY/ SENTENCED	PERSONS ACQUITTED & DISCHARGED	WITHDRAWN CASES	COMPLETED CASES
5	10	4	94	2	15	7	12	36

Civil

DATE: NOVEMBER, 2018

NEW MATTERS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ. MATTERS	JUDGEMENTS	WITHDRAWN MATTERS	COMPLETED MATTERS
63	12	12	76	52	12	14

Criminal

DATE: 3rd DECEMBER, 2018DATE: 17th DECEMBER, 2018

FIRST PLEAS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ.	GUILTY PLEAS/ SENTENCED	PERSONS FOUND GUILTY/ SENTENCED	PERSONS ACQUITTED & DISCHARGED	WITHDRAWN CASES	COMPLETED CASES
1	3	2	29	1	2	0	0	5

Civil

DATE: DECEMBER, 2018

NEW MATTERS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ. MATTERS	JUDGEMENTS	WITHDRAWN MATTERS	COMPLETED MATTERS
16	6	5	40	8	0	8

Criminal

DATE: 14th JANUARY, 2019DATE: 30th JANUARY, 2019

FIRST PLEAS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ.	GUILTY PLEAS/ SENTENCED	PERSONS FOUND GUILTY/ SENTENCED	PERSONS ACQUITTED & DISCHARGED	WITHDRAWN CASES	COMPLETED CASES
23	10	3	64	14	21	3	6	32

Civil

DATE: JANUARY, 2019

NEW MATTERS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ. MATTERS	JUDGEMENTS	WITHDRAWN MATTERS	COMPLETED MATTERS
60	5	-	73	32	6	25

Criminal

DATE: 12th FEBRUARY, 2019DATE: 28th FEBRUARY, 2019

FIRST PLEAS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ.	GUILTY PLEAS/ SENTENCED	PERSONS FOUND GUILTY/ SENTENCED	PERSONS ACQUITTED & DISCHARGED	WITHDRAWN CASES	COMPLETED CASES
25	7	6	74	3	5	6	4	6

Civil

DATE: FEBRUARY, 2019

NEW MATTERS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ. MATTERS	JUDGEMENTS	WITHDRAWN MATTERS	COMPLETED MATTERS
52	7	8	110	20	5	15

Criminal

DATE: 2nd MARCH, 2019DATE: 29th MARCH, 2019

FIRST PLEAS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ.	GUILTY PLEAS/ SENTENCED	PERSONS FOUND GUILTY/ SENTENCED	PERSONS ACQUITTED & DISCHARGED	WITHDRAWN CASES	COMPLETED CASES
20	12	4	112	8	12	20	3	38

Civil

DATE: MARCH, 2019

NEW MATTERS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ. MATTERS	JUDGEMENTS	WITHDRAWN MATTERS	COMPLETED MATTERS
92	17	10	122	67	5	102

Criminal

DATE: 3rd APRIL, 2019DATE: 30th APRIL, 2019

FIRST PLEAS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ.	GUILTY PLEAS/ SENTENCED	PERSONS FOUND GUILTY/ SENTENCED	PERSONS ACQUITTED & DISCHARGED	WITHDRAWN CASES	COMPLETED CASES
20	11	10	87	12	10	12	2	15

Civil

DATE: APRIL, 2019

NEW MATTERS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ. MATTERS	JUDGEMENTS	WITHDRAWN MATTERS	COMPLETED MATTERS
112	20	12	138	86	8	110

Criminal

DATE: 1st MAY, 2019DATE: 31st MAY, 2019

FIRST PLEAS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ.	GUILTY PLEAS/ SENTENCED	PERSONS FOUND GUILTY/ SENTENCED	PERSONS ACQUITTED & DISCHARGED	WITHDRAWN CASES	COMPLETED CASES
15	10	7	57	4	5	3	5	10

Civil

DATE: MAY, 2019

NEW MATTERS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ. MATTERS	JUDGEMENTS	WITHDRAWN MATTERS	COMPLETED MATTERS
62	14	8	85	32	2	53

Criminal

DATE: 4th JUNE, 2019DATE: 28th JUNE, 2019

FIRST PLEAS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ.	GUILTY PLEAS/ SENTENCED	PERSONS FOUND GUILTY/ SENTENCED	PERSONS ACQUITTED & DISCHARGED	WITHDRAWN CASES	COMPLETED CASES
30	6	1	61	20	7	4	7	39

Civil

Date: June, 2019

NEW MATTERS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ. MATTERS	JUDGEMENTS	WITHDRAWN MATTERS	COMPLETED MATTERS
80	12	10	92	57	5	60

Criminal

DATE: 2nd JULY, 2019DATE: 31st JULY, 2019

FIRST PLEAS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ.	GUILTY PLEAS/ SENTENCED	PERSONS FOUND GUILTY/ SENTENCED	PERSONS ACQUITTED & DISCHARGED	WITHDRAWN CASES	COMPLETED CASES
42	9	5	79	8	11	5	6	32

Civil

DATE: JULY, 2019

NEW MATTERS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ. MATTERS	JUDGEMENTS	WITHDRAWN MATTERS	COMPLETED MATTERS
72	20	12	100	82	10	97

Criminal

DATE: AUGUST, 2019

DATE: AUGUST, 2019

FIRST PLEAS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ.	GUILTY PLEAS/ SENTENCED	PERSONS FOUND GUILTY/ SENTENCED	PERSONS ACQUITTED & DISCHARGED	WITHDRAWN CASES	COMPLETED CASES
34	4	2	44	13	5	3	2	21

Civil

DATE: AUGUST, 2019

NEW MATTERS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ. MATTERS	JUDGEMENTS	WITHDRAWN MATTERS	COMPLETED MATTERS
52	15	1	77	48	7	89

Criminal

DATE: 3rd SEPTEMBER, 2019DATE: 27th SEPTEMBER, 2019

FIRST PLEAS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ.	GUILTY PLEAS/ SENTENCED	PERSONS FOUND GUILTY/ SENTENCED	PERSONS ACQUITTED & DISCHARGED	WITHDRAWN CASES	COMPLETED CASES
12	2	1	74	4	4	1	2	18

Civil

DATE: SEPTEMBER, 2019

NEW MATTERS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ. MATTERS	JUDGEMENTS	WITHDRAWN MATTERS	COMPLETED MATTERS
47	12	6	62	32	9	65

Criminal

DATE: 1st OCTOBER, 2019DATE: 31st OCTOBER, 2019

FIRST PLEAS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ.	GUILTY PLEAS/ SENTENCED	PERSONS FOUND GUILTY/ SENTENCED	PERSONS ACQUITTED & DISCHARGED	WITHDRAWN CASES	COMPLETED CASES
17	4	2	68	12	3	4	2	9

Civil

DATE: OCTOBER, 2019

NEW MATTERS	W.O.A ISSUED	W.O.A CANCELLED	ADJ. MATTERS	JUDGEMENTS	WITHDRAWN MATTERS	COMPLETED MATTERS
67	5	12	100	69	12	46

Milestones

Judicial Education

The Bahamas Judicial Education Institute was established to fulfill the increasing need for education and training of judicial officers and their staff so as to enhance the delivery of justice in The Bahamas. The Institute is mandated to provide structured, judiciary specific programs throughout the course of the legal year for the judiciary.

The Institute which had its beginnings as an Education Committee (comprised of Justices Gray-Evans, Turner, Winder, Fraser, Grant-Thompson and Stewart as well as Registrar Darville-Gomez) has now been commissioned as a fully functioning Judicial Education Institute.

During the year the Institute engaged in three signature events:

- *On January 8, 2019, a One Day Training Seminar was held at the British Colonial Hilton, just prior to the opening of the new legal year. The Keynote Speaker was Miss Tracey Robinson, Senior Lecturer of the Faculty of Law at UWI and former President of the Inter American Commission on Human Rights. Miss Robinson spoke on Establishing Gender Protocols for the Judiciary. Other speakers included, Chief Justice Brain Moree QC, Court of Appeal Justices, Neville Adderley, Jon Isaacs and Sir Michael Barnett, Justices Bernard Turner, Ian Winder and Deborah Fraser and DPP Gavin Gaskin. A wide range of topics relevant to all tiers of the judiciary were canvassed. Judges of the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court, the Industrial Tribunal, Registrars and Magistrates were in full attendance.*

- *On June 20 and 21, 2019, a joint training program was held with the Bahamas Bar Association at the Baha Mar Resort. The featured speaker on the judicial program was Justice of Appeal Roy Jones who spoke on dealing with no case submissions. The sessions focused on the health and wellness of judicial officers and financial matters.*

- *On September 20 and 21, 2019, the BJEI, with the assistance of the Judicial Education Institute of Trinidad & Tobago, hosted a judicial writing seminar for judicial officers and judicial research counsel. Justice Gregory Smith of the Court of Appeal of Trinidad and Tobago facilitated the 2-day workshop titled "Clarity in Judgment Writing" which saw wide participation by the Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court, the Industrial Tribunal, Registrars and Magistrates.*

A full program for the legal year 2020 has been planned by the Institute and promises to be even more impactful than the past year.

The BJEI is headed by the Chief Justice, Mr. Brian Moree QC and managed by a Board of Directors selected by the Chief Justice. The current Board Members are Justice Ian R. Winder (Chairman), Justice Deborah Fraser, Justice Cheryl Grant Thompson, Justice Keith Thompson, Registrar Camille Darville-Gomez, Magistrate Ancella Evans and Nicoya Neilly (Administrator).

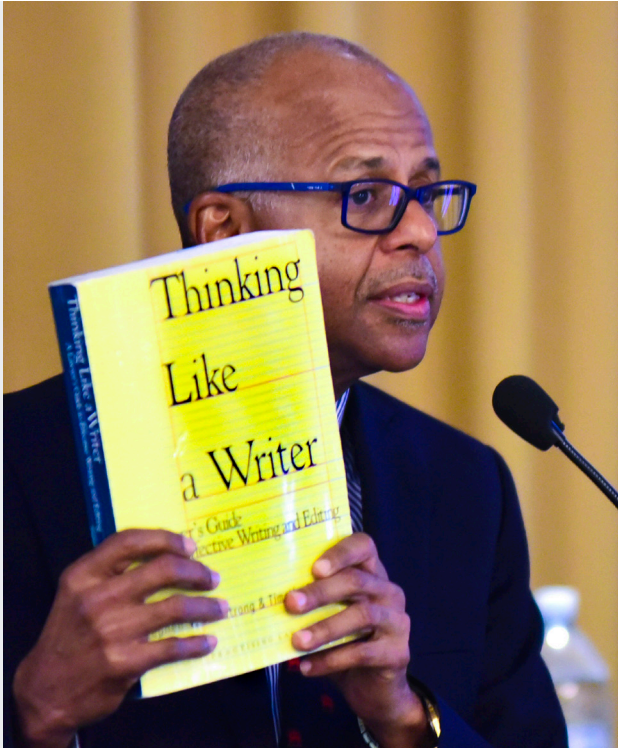
Judicial Education Institute

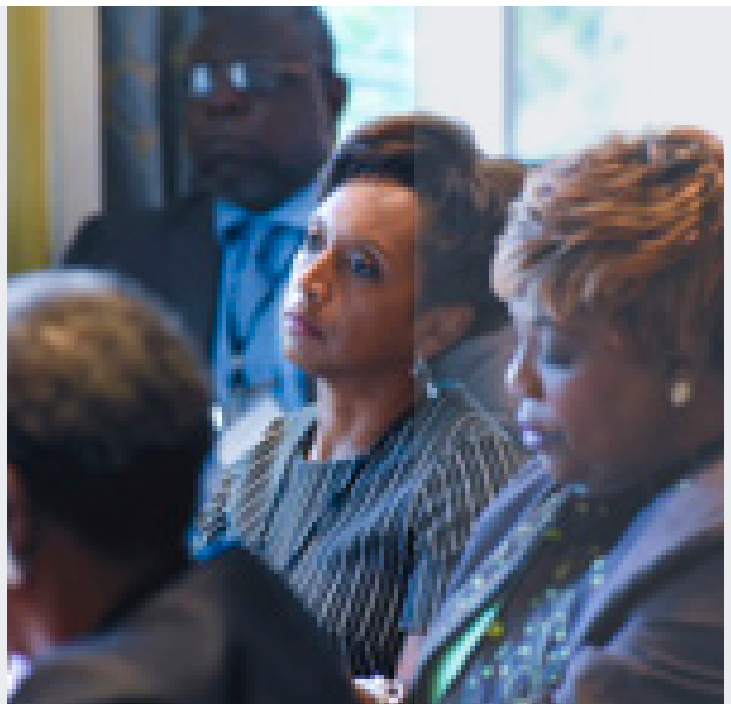


Judicial Education Committee



*Judges at JEI Conference, September 2019,
British Colonial Hilton Hotel*







Judicial Education Institute, January 2019, British Colonial Hilton Hotel, Guest Speaker Ms. Tracey Robinson



Judicial Education Committee



Magistrate Charlton Smith, Deputy Commissioner for Trinidad, Magistrate Kara Turnquest-Deveaux.



**Members of the
Judiciary delegation
to Trinidad meet with
senior members of
the *Trinidad & Tobago
Police Force.***



CAJO Conference 2019



Appearing in the front row, from left to right, are: The Honourable Mr Justice Brian Moree QC, Chief Justice of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, The Honourable Mr Justice Anthony Smellie QC, Chief Justice of The Cayman Islands, The Honourable Dame Janice M Pereira DBE, Chief Justice of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, The Honourable Mde Justice Yonette Cummings-Edwards CCH, OR, Chancellor (Ag) of The Co-operative

Republic of Guyana, The Honourable Mme Justice Sabitadevie Nanhoe-Gangadin, Judge of the High Court of Justice of The Republic of Suriname, The Honourable Mr Justice Mauritsz de Kort, Vice President of the Joint Court of Justice of Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten and of Bonaire, Saint Eustatius and Saba.

Appearing in the back row, from left to right, are: The Honourable Mr Justice Bryan Sykes OJ, CD, Chief Justice of Jamaica, The Honourable Mr Justice Adrian Saunders, President of the Caribbean Court of Justice, The Honourable Mr Justice Kenneth Benjamin, Chief Justice of Belize, The Honourable Mr Justice Ivor Archie ORTT, Chief Justice of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, The Honourable Sir Marston Gibson KA, Chief Justice of Barbados.

The 6th Biennial Conference of the Caribbean Judicial Officers (“CAJO”) was held in Belize City, Belize from October 31 through November 2, 2019 under the theme “Judicial Integrity – The Pathway to Public Trust and Confidence”. The Honourable Chief Justice Mr. Brian M. Moree attended the regional Heads of Judiciaries meeting the day prior to the start of the Conference. The Association, made up of judges, registrars, magistrates and other judicial

officers across the Caribbean, engaged in fund raising efforts including the sale of wrist bands and hosting a conference dinner to solicit donations in support of the hurricane relief efforts for The Bahamas. The Registrar, Camille Darville Gomez was elected to serve on the Management Committee of the CAJO for the next two years succeeding the Honourable Mr. Justice Ian Winder who had been elected in September 2017. See photograph below.



Financial Information Budget



COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS

DRAFT ESTIMATES OF
REVENUE & EXPENDITURE

2019/2020

***[Head 008] Office of The Judiciary
(Supreme And Magistrates Courts)***

ITEM NO.	TITLE OF ITEM	PROVISIONAL ACTUAL EXPENDITURE	EXPENDITURE (PROVISIONAL)	APPROVED ESTIMATES	ESTIMATES	PRELIMINARY FORECAST ESTIMATES	PRELIMINARY FORECAST ESTIMATES
		2017/2018 \$	JUL - MAR 2018/2019 \$	2018/2019 \$	2019/2020 \$	2020/2021 \$	2021/2022 \$
PERSONAL EMOLUMENTS							
21110EE	Wages & Salaries (In Cash)						
211101	Salary-Permanent/ Pensionable	9,035,080	6,171,717	7,434,538	7,754,746	7,987,827	8,117,168
211102	Salary-Contract Workers	1,072,503	677,642	2,445,700	1,836,650	1,836,650	1,836,650
	Wages & Salaries (In Cash)	10,107,583	6,849,359	9,880,238	9,591,396	9,824,477	9,953,818
21120EE	Allowances						
2112101	Honoraria	27,481	6,450	30,900	30,900	49,900	49,900
2112102	Overtime-Monthly Employees (General)	0	1,885	1,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
2112103	Housing Allowances	568,298	593,484	1,000,000	838,000	838,000	838,000
2112104	Scarcity Allowances	468,686	275,584	565,000	439,000	439,000	439,000
2112106	Educational Allowances	0	0	100,000	70,000	100,000	102,500
2112107	Technical Allowances	0	0	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,075
2112112	Transport & Mileage Allowances	82,708	73,838	145,000	145,000	145,000	148,625
2112115	Responsibility Allowances	364,188	193,706	350,000	263,000	263,000	263,000
2112116	Acting Allowances	18,916	16,134	16,500	16,500	16,500	16,913
2112133	Official Entertainment Allowances	11,317	6,909	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,250
2112199	Other Allowances	49,745	41,924	50,000	50,000	50,000	51,250
	Allowances	1,591,339	1,209,914	2,271,400	1,885,400	1,934,400	1,942,513
	Personal Emoluments	11,698,922	8,059,273	12,151,638	11,476,796	11,758,877	11,896,331

22000EE	Use of Goods & Services						
22111EE	Domestic Travel & Subsistence						
2211101	Air Transport of Persons Within The Bahamas	0	64,207	49,100	70,000	73,100	76,355
2211103	Mileage Within The Bahamas	6,200	3,800	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,150
2211110	Subsistence for Travellers Within The Bahamas	21,630	25,192	20,000	72,000	75,100	77,355
	Domestic Travel & Subsistence	27,830	93,199	75,100	148,000	154,200	159,860
22112EE	International Travel & Subsistence						
2211201	Air Transport of Persons Outside The Bahamas	0	5,882	25,000	50,000	52,500	55,125
2211210	Subsistence for Travellers Outside The Bahamas	14,180	23,127	20,000	50,000	52,500	55,125
	International Travel & Subsistence	14,180	29,009	45,000	100,000	105,000	110,250
22210EE	Rent						
2221101	Rent - Living Accommodation (General)	93,280	57,000	106,000	126,000	126,000	126,000
	Rent	93,280	57,000	106,000	126,000	126,000	126,000
22410EE	Supplies & Materials						
2241201	Office Supplies & Stationery	0	11,041	23,200	70,000	73,500	77,176
2241205	Food, Ice & Drinking Water	0	3,722	6,240	50,400	63,420	66,591
2241206	Publications	5,760	3,751	6,400	11,800	12,070	12,514
2241211	Cleaning & Toilet Supplies	0	2,223	10,200	51,000	43,050	45,203
2241212	Computer Software Supplies & Solutions	535	49	800	22,000	23,100	24,256
2241213	Clothing & Clothing Supplies	0	177	13,600	15,000	15,750	16,537
2241299	Other Supplies & Materials	1,821	318	2,500	14,600	16,380	17,199
	Supplies & Materials	8,116	21,281	62,940	234,800	247,270	259,476

[Head 008] Office of The Judiciary (Supreme And Magistrates Courts)

ITEM NO.	TITLE OF ITEM	PROVISIONAL ACTUAL EXPENDITURE	EXPENDITURE (PROVISIONAL)	APPROVED ESTIMATES	ESTIMATES	PRELIMINARY FORECAST ESTIMATES	PRELIMINARY FORECAST ESTIMATES
		2017/2018 \$	JUL - MAR 2018/2019 \$	2018/2019 \$	2019/2020 \$	2020/2021 \$	2021/2022 \$
22510EE	Services						
2251101	Printing & Duplication Service	0	8,752	19,000	38,000	39,900	41,895
2251102	Advertising & Public Notices	11,597	833	68,000	10,000	16,000	16,000
2251104	Professional Services (Audit, Accounting)	0	0	1,000	1,000	1,050	1,131
2251107	Workshops, Conferences, Seminars, Meetings & Exhibits	6,822	979	11,000	18,000	19,950	20,948
2251108	Tuition, Training, In-service Awards, Subsistence	14,656	0	10,000	10,000	20,000	20,000
2251109	Licencing & Inspection of Vehicles	760	560	4,000	4,590	4,590	4,695
2251110	Postage, Postal Mechines & Services	0	0	0	150	158	165
2251115	Consultancy Services	0	0	4,000	4,200	4,410	4,520
2251128	Fees & Other Charges	33,177	4,077	8,121	21,527	22,603	23,510
2251129	Staff Engagement	0	3,295	7,720	15,000	15,750	16,538
2251203	Freight & Express	0	0	0	5000	525	525
2251302	Building Maintenance	2,244	1,667	5,000	50,000	73,500	77,175
2251322	Office Furniture Upkeep	0	0	1,000	2,000	2,100	2,205
2251337	Operation of Facilities or Other Services	157,023	108,002	200,000	62,000	264,600	272,318
2251399	Other Contractual Services	0	0	1,000	1,050	1,103	1,131
	Services	226,279	128,165	339,841	238,017	486,239	502,756
22610EE	Minor Capital Repairs						

2261201	Transportation Equipment Upkeep	11,427	2,814	10,000	19,000	22,050	23,152
	Minor Capital Repairs	11,427	2,814	10,000	19,000	22,050	23,152
22710EE	Operational Expenses						
2271001	Operational Expenses	310,982	340,130	600,000	355,560	573,500	577,175
	Operational Expenses	310,982	340,130	600,000	355,560	573,500	577,175
22810EE	Special Financial Transactions						
2281105	VAT Expenses	402	120	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,025
2281151	Judicial Service Commission Operational Expenses	0	475	3,000	3,000	3,150	3,308
	Special Financial Transactions	402	595	4,000	4,000	4,150	4,333
	Use of Goods & Services	692,496	672,193	1,242,881	1,225,377	1,718,409	1,763,002
27000EE	Social Benefits						
27200EE	Social Assistance Benefits						
2721108	Legal Aid	539,640	230,808	600,000	550,000	550,000	600,000
2721109	Victim Care Fund	355,173	20,278	500,000	550,000	550,000	562,500
	Social Assistance Benefits	894,813	251,086	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,162,500
	Social Benefits	894,813	251,086	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,162,500
	OFFICE OF THE JUDICIAL (SUPREME AND MAGISTRATES COURTS) TOTAL EXPENSES	13,286,231	8,982,552	14,494,519	13,802,173	14,577,286	14,821,833

The Accounting Officer For This Head Is The Registrar

Farewell Retirements

Retirements



The Hon. Mr. Justice Milton A. Evans retired from the Supreme Court on **28 February 2019.**

Mr. Justice Evans, was born in Nicholl's Town, Andros, The Bahamas on 5 January 1960. He is a graduate of The Government High School and The College of The Bahamas.

After completing College, he worked in the Civil Service from 1979 to 1982 attached to the Supreme Court of The Bahamas, during which time he served as Clerk to Mr. Justice Sir Denis Malone for a year, and for the remainder of the time, as Senior Clerk in the Registrar's Office. In 1982 he commenced



studies at the University of the West Indies but continued to work summers with the Supreme Court until 1987.

In 1986 he received his Bachelor of Laws Degree with Honors from the University of the West Indies and his Certificate of Legal Education from the Norman Manley Law School in 1988 and was called to The Bahamas Bar in October 1988. From 1988 to 1993 he was in private practice and was involved in both criminal and civil litigation and corporate law.

In 1993 he joined the Office of the Attorney General and served as crown counsel, Assistant Director and Deputy Director of Legal Affairs. As part of his duties, he was required to provide advice and guidance to various Government agencies and gained expertise in Administrative and Constitutional Law having conducted most of the major civil litigation matters for the Government from 1997 to 2003.

Mr. Justice Evans served as managing partner at Evans & Co until his appointment as Justice of the Supreme Court on 16 August 2011.

He is married to Patrice Evans (formerly Ramsay) and they have three (3) children. They are members of Abundant Life Bible Church. His hobbies include reading, singing, drama and chess.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Milton A. Evans is currently a Justice of the Court of Appeal.

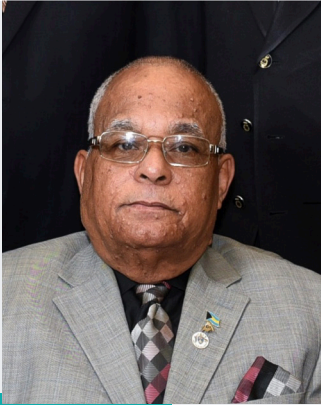
Mrs. Bettymae Lookie

Chief Executive Secretary

Date of Appointment: 8 April 1974

Date of Retirement: 8 February 2019

Retirements



Mr. Vernon Adderley

Marshal

Date of Appointment: 1 October 2005

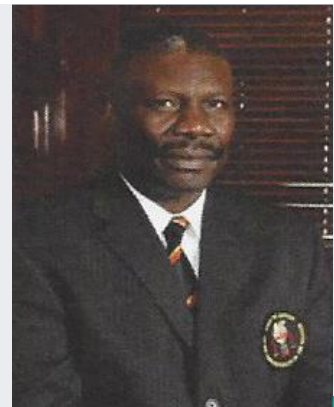
Date of Retirement: 15 February 2019

Mr. Frederick Mackey

Marshal

Date of Appointment: 1 October 2005

Date of Retirement: 15 February 2019



Mr. Garnet McGregor

Marshal

Date of Appointment: 1 October 2005

Date of Retirement: 15 February 2019



Retirements



Mr. Cephias Moncur

Marshal

Date of Appointment: 1 October 2005

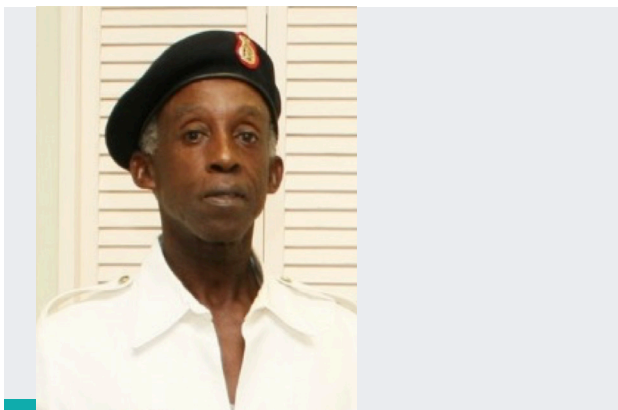
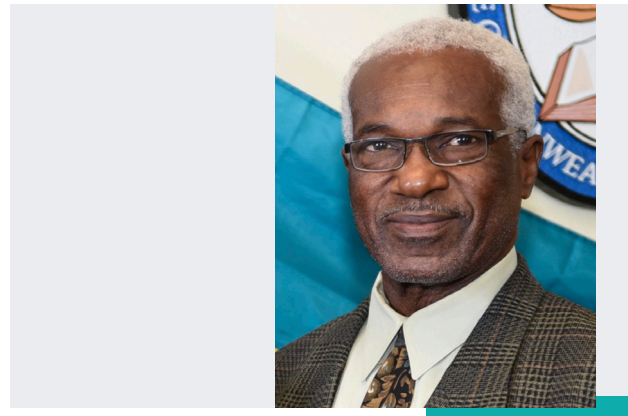
Date of Retirement: 15 February 2019

Mr. Pertlin Moss

Marshal

Date of Appointment: 1 October 2005

Date of Retirement: 15 February 2019



Mr. Archie White

Marshal (Northern Region)

Date of Appointment: 1 October 2005

Date of Retirement: 15 February 2019

Retirements



Mr. Allan Fawkes

Marshal

Date of Appointment: 2 March 2007

Date of Retirement: 15 February 2019

Mr. Errol Miller

Marshal (Northern Region)

Date of Appointment: 3 May 2010

Date of Retirement: 15 February 2019



Mrs. Rocelia Wrigh

Executive Secretary

Date of Appointment: 21 May 1982

Date of Retirement: 30 June 2019

Retirements



Mrs. Leona Rodgers

Senior Executive Secretary

Date of Appointment: 23 March 1999

Date of Retirement: 16 September 2019

Mr. Harold Strachan

Maintenance Superintendant

Date of Appointment: 2 April 1989

Date of Secondment to Judiciary: June 2015

Date of Retirement: 5 October 2019



Farewell In Memoriam



Mr. Mario Knowles

Mr. Mario Knowles, Assistant Secretary, passed away on Thursday, 31st January 2019.

Mario received his early education from St Francis Catholic School, Aquinas College and he matriculated at Sojourner Douglass College where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice. He had plans to become an Attorney, however due to physical challenges, he had a change of plans.

Mario began his public service career in the Office of the Judiciary on the 16th day of June,

1980. He took an immense pride in his career and individuals who met Mario can attest to his level of professionalism in the execution of his job. Mario was constantly smiling. His personality was accompanied with unique joy and he possessed an exuberant spirit. He was a stylish dresser, the colors coordinated and everything had to match.

In addition to his profession, Mario maintained a spiritual connection with God and he was a faithful member of St. Joseph Catholic faith where he was christened and confirmed. When asked how he was doing, he articulated in a strong voice, *"I AM BLESSED"*.

Mario is survived by his mother, Maria, with whom he had a very close relationship. She afforded him multiple exposures about the world when they travelled together. He is also survived by his grandmother, grandaunt and three adopted brothers.



Ernest Rahming

Retired P/Sgt.823 Ernest Rahming, Marshal of the Court, in Marsh Harbour, Abaco, died on 2 September 2019.

Marshal Rahming was born in Black Point, South Andros on 13 March 1957. At the age of three (3), his parents relocated to New Providence and he began his primary education at The Bahamas Academy of Seventh-day Adventist. He completed his high school education at the A F Adderley Senior High School.

In 1974, Ernest enrolled into the Police College and served as a Police Officer in New Providence, Ragged Island, Cat Island,

North Andros, Grand Bahama and Abaco. After retiring from the Royal Bahamas Police Force, Ernest was appointed to the Office of the Judiciary on 3 August 2010 as a Marshal, and assigned to the Magistrate's Court in Marsh Harbour, Abaco.

As a young boy, Ernest sold wholesale straw bags produced by his mother and assisted his father with the family fruit stand business. As a young man, he loved hunting, cooking and playing the accordion.

Ernest was actively involved in the community of Abaco and recently became the Vice-President of the Abaco Diabetic Association.

He is survived by his wife Yvonne, 2 sons, 4 daughters and 8 grandchildren.



*Ms. Telcina (a.k.a. Telzena)
Hamilton*

Ms. Telcina (a.k.a. Telzena) Hamilton, Chief Clerk, died on Tuesday, 15 October 2019.

Miss Hamilton received her education at Oakes Field Primary and Aquinas College. After high school, she took a keen interest in fashion. She received her first degree in Art, Dressmaking and Fashion Design from St Mary of the Woods College in Indiana, USA and obtained her second degree in Los Angeles, California. In addition to sewing, she studied hospitality at the Bahamas Hotel Training College and attained her third degree in Hotel Management. Miss Hamilton worked in hospitality at the British Colonial Hotel and in banking at Barclay's Bank.

In June of 1986, she entered the Public Service and joined the staff at the Office of the Judiciary where she served until her passing. "Hami" as she was affectionately known, was the first Bahamian female Bailiff. After a few years, she was assigned to the Magistrates' Court Civil & Domestic Registry as Cashier/Registry Clerk until 2018 when she was assigned to the Criminal Registry.

"Hami" was dedicated, responsible and hard working. She had a reserved but jovial nature and was quick to smile when she saw someone she knew.

"Hami" is survived by her three sons Bashard, Jon Edward and Bashawn, 2 grandchildren and 1 sister, Judy Hamilton.

In Memoriam: Former Staff



Cyprianna Deveaux

Mrs. Cyprianna Deveaux, passed away on Tuesday, 4 December 2018.

She was born on the 29 November 1948 in Nassau, New Providence and was affectionately called "Cyp". After completing High School, Cyp relocated to Freeport, Grand Bahama with her father, Garnet Levarity. She worked many jobs including the Holiday Inn and BORCO.

She joined the Office of the Judiciary in 1993 and retired in 2013 after serving 20 years in the Court system. "Cyp" received many awards from her job and she was known for her bright smile.

She had a love for family and friends and most of all, baking, especially the Christmas fruit cake.



Genevive Munroe

Mrs. Genevive Munroe, passed away on Friday, 8 February 2019. Genevive was born on 6 March 1956 on Current Island, Eleuthera and grew up in a strict but loving Christian home.

Upon completing her education, she moved to New Providence where she began working with ZNS. She later joined the Public Service and started working at the Sandilands Rehabilitation Centre as a Janitress and then joined the Office of the Judiciary.

Genevive served as a Janitress, Messenger, Receptionist and Registry Clerk during her tenure with the Office of the Judiciary, in both the Supreme and Magistrate Courts.

In _____ she transferred to the Registrar General's Department where she remained until her death. She enjoyed ministering to others and lending a helping hand when needed. She was the Chaplain of the Centreville PLP Constituency Office and was concerned with the development and growth of her community.



Carl Johnson

Mr. Carl Johnson, Maintenance Superintendent, passed away on Saturday, 9 March 2019.

Mr. Johnson was born on 30 December 1949 and received his early education at Columbus Primary and went on to complete his education at Western Jr and Sr. He was employed as Head Cook at the Holiday Inn, Paradise Island where he worked for 10 years, followed by 10 years as a Technician at The Bahamas Telecommunications Corporation (BaTelCo).

Mr. Johnson eventually discovered his purpose and developed a skill as a professional painter. Consequently he was hired by the Ministry of Works and later promoted to Maintenance Superintendent.

In _____ he was administratively posted with the Office of the Judiciary as the Officer in Charge of Maintenance, under the Director of Court Services, until his retirement in 2014. After retirement Mr. Johnson formed and operated Carl & Sons Painting & Maintenance Company until his passing.



Virgill McPhee

Retired P/Cpl.69 & Reservist Sgt.74 Virgill McPhee Sr. passed away on Wednesday, 25 September 2019.

Virgill was born on 21 November 1954 in Deep Creek, South Andros. He attended South Andros All Age School and completed his education at the A F Adderley Evening Institute. Virgill was one of the first groups of Bahamians to work at the Oil Infirmary in Freeport now known as the Freeport Oil Company. After 9 months he returned to Nassau and was accepted on the Royal Bahamas Police Force and placed in the Fire Branch.

In 2005, Virgill was assigned to the Office of the Judiciary as a Court Security Officer/Marshal until his retirement from the RBPF in 2009. He loved photography and always brought his camera to office training days, luncheons, socials, official functions and for the Annual Report Committee.

He was known and loved as the unofficial official court photographer.

Acknowledgements

The Annual Report Committee is Chaired by the Honourable Madam Justice Cheryl Grant-Thompson, Deputy Registrar Ms. Carol Misiewicz, Deputy Registrar Constance Delancy, Deputy Chief Magistrate Andrew Forbes, Office Manager Mrs. Bathsheba Algreen, Human Resource Manager, Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor, Human Resource Clerk Ms. Sharece Davis, Ms. Grien Carey.

The Judiciary wishes to thank the talented and hardworking staff of The Bahamas Government Printing Department, especially Mr. Stephen Collins, Mr. David Knowles of Prophoto, and Mr. Justin Cancino of Starboard Softworks, Ltd.

NOTES



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