



Ministry of Labour
Levels 5 & 6, Tower C, International Waterfront Centre,
#1A Wrightson Road, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
Telephone No: (868) 625-8478
Email: labour-communications@gov.tt Website: labour.gov.tt

October 12, 2020

Media Release

COVID-19 not an excuse to employ children below age 16

The Ministry of Labour wishes to remind all parents, guardians and employers that even in the midst of the COVID-19 Crisis, the employment of children below age 16, including migrant children, is illegal in Trinidad and Tobago. With the re-opening of schools in September 2020, the Ministry wishes to emphasize that every child has a right to an education and thus no child under 16 years should be denied this opportunity.

According to Part XIV; *Employment of Young Persons* of the Children's Act, Chap 46:01, Act 12 of 2012, Section 105 states that "A child under the age of sixteen years shall not be employed or work in any public or private undertaking or in any branch thereof, other than an undertaking, owned and controlled by members of the same family; and any person who employs any such child, commits an offence." This offence carries penalties for parents and employers up to \$25,000 - and three (3) years imprisonment.

The Ministry of Labour empathizes with parents or guardians who are experiencing economic challenges posed by the COVID-19 Pandemic and therefore takes this opportunity to remind them that Child Labour **should not** be an option to circumvent challenges and that there are support services available to every citizen of Trinidad and Tobago.

Information about these services can be provided by the Labour Inspectorate Unit of the Ministry of Labour and various organizations of the National Steering Committee for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour.

Report Child Labour to:

- The Labour Inspectorate Unit, Ministry of Labour:
299-0300 option 3 or **Email:** labour.inspector@gov.tt
- ChildLine: 131 or 800-4321
- Counter Trafficking Unit: 800-4288
- Occupational Safety and Health Authority and Agency (OSHA): 623-6742





Ministry of Labour
Levels 5 & 6, Tower C, International Waterfront Centre,
#1A Wrightson Road, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
Telephone No: (868) 625-8478
Email: labour-communications@gov.tt Website: labour.gov.tt

- Children's Authority of Trinidad and Tobago: 996
- Welfare Grants and Psychosocial Support Services: Ministry of Social Development and Family Services: 800-1673.
- Psychological Counseling for children: ChildLine: 131 or 800-4321.
- Report Hazardous Work by minors (16-18years) to: The Occupational Safety and Health Authority and Agency (OSHA): 623-OSHA (6742).
- Report Child Trafficking to: The Counter Trafficking Unit: 800-4288.
- Report Child Abuse to: The Children's Authority: 996.

The national community is also being urged to become active participants by supporting the thrust towards the protection and well-being of children within their communities. SPOT IT and REPORT IT! The Labour Inspectorate Unit of the Ministry of Labour and members of the National Steering Committee for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour, continue to work hand-in-hand to raise awareness about Child Labour in Trinidad and Tobago in order to safeguard and secure the future of our nation; our children.

Even during crisis, it is illegal to employ children below age 16 years in Trinidad and Tobago. Act according to the law and allow children to enjoy their rights to an education and childhood.

For further information, please contact:
Corporate Communications Unit
Ministry of Labour
International Waterfront Centre
Tower C, Level 6, 1A Wrightson Road, Port of Spain
Tel: 625-8478 exts. 1203/1316 Fax: 623-1404
Email: labour-communications@gov.tt

- END -

