



## PRESS RELEASE

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Attention: All News Editors

# Health Ministry Implements Comprehensive Accountability Framework

- **MOU signed with Public Health Bodies to strengthen governance**

**Kingston, Jamaica; Monday, June 22, 2026:** The Ministry of Health & Wellness on Friday (June 19) officially implemented a comprehensive Accountability Framework aimed at strengthening governance, financial management, procurement oversight, and performance accountability across Jamaica's public health sector. The framework was first announced by Minister of Health & Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, CD, MP, during his recent Sectoral Presentation in Parliament.

Speaking at the signing ceremony with Regional Health Authorities, Health Professional Councils, Boards, and other public health bodies, Dr. Tufton emphasized that the framework represents more than an administrative exercise. *"Today marks an important moment in the evolution of Jamaica's public health system. We have gathered not merely to sign a document, but to reaffirm a commitment to accountability, transparency, responsible stewardship, and service excellence across every institution that forms part of the public health ecosystem,"* he said.

The Minister noted that while recent assessments and reviews of the Ministry and its agencies identified several achievements and areas of progress, they also revealed administrative and accountability gaps that require urgent attention. *"The Accountability Framework we are implementing is not punitive in nature. It is corrective, developmental, and transformational. Its purpose is to strengthen institutions, improve performance, and build greater public confidence in the governance of the health sector,"* Dr. Tufton stated.

### Strengthening Financial Accountability

As part of the framework, all Regional Health Authorities will be required to bring their financial statements and reports tabled in Parliament fully up to date within the next 12 months. Health Professional Councils will also be required to submit corrective action plans and eliminate at least 10% of outstanding financial reporting deficiencies during the same period. The Ministry itself has committed to ensuring that its appropriation accounts remain current and compliant with the Financial Administration and Audit Act.

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### **Procurement Reform and Transparency**

For the next 12 months, all direct contracting above statutory thresholds, except for the National Health Fund, which will require independent validation. Boards will also be required to approve certified procurement plans, and no financial commitment will receive support outside an approved plan. Additionally, compliance with the Government of Jamaica's E-Procurement Platform will become mandatory across the sector.

### **Zero Tolerance for Statutory Deduction Breaches**

The Minister also announced a zero-tolerance policy regarding the management of statutory deductions, including income tax, education tax, and National Housing Trust contributions. Executives who authorize or facilitate breaches will face disciplinary action and, where applicable, statutory surcharges. While existing arrears will be addressed responsibly, no new statutory liabilities will be permitted.

### **Improving Performance and Capacity**

To strengthen organizational effectiveness, all agencies will transition fully to the Performance Management and Appraisal System (PMAS) within the next year, with a target of assessing at least 70% of organizational functions under the system. The Ministry will also undertake a coordinated recruitment drive to fill critical fiduciary, governance, and management positions, with a goal of filling at least 70% of identified vacancies within 12 months.

### **Enhanced Oversight and Legislative Review**

The Accountability Framework also includes measures to strengthen governance and oversight mechanisms throughout the sector. A comprehensive review of the legislative framework governing public health institutions, including the Health Services Act and the University Hospital of the West Indies Act, will be undertaken. The review will be informed by recommendations from recent assessments and aligned with the objectives of Vision for Health 2030.

Additionally, Internal Audit Units across the sector will submit reports directly to the Ministry, which will use the findings to guide quarterly oversight meetings with Board Chairpersons and monitor compliance more effectively.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness will provide regular public updates on the implementation of the framework over the next 12 to 18 months and will continue working with its agencies and stakeholders to build a stronger, more responsive, and more accountable healthcare system for all Jamaicans.

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