

Grenada earns over EC\$2m in work permit fees

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THE Grenada government earned more than EC\$2 million (\$5.02 million) from the issuance of work permits last year, labour commissioner Sparkle Grenade Courtney has said.

She said while 890 permits had been handed out to foreign nationals, the department will be introducing a new format for processing working permits in 2025.

'At the Department of Labour, we administer the work permit programme and for the past year, we processed so far 890 work permits in varying sectors...such as construction, tourism and hospitality, the yachting sector, professional services, at a value of over two million dollars,' she said.

Improving and streamlining

'This is a revenue activity for the government of Grenada,' she said, noting that last year, the focus was also on the legislative processes that govern the work permit process with a view to improving and streamlining them in 2025.

The Estimate of Revenue and Expenditure for 2024 shows that in 2023, the government earned EC\$1,879,387 (\$4,719,178.49) through work permits and projected it would earn EC\$2,027,022 (\$5,089,892.94) in 2024 and EC\$2,151,065 (\$5,401,367.41) in 2025.

Courtney said in 2025, plans include digitalising the work permit process to ensure the process is quicker, more accessible and in keeping with the policy position of the cabinet to digitalise government services.

The Labour Commissioner also disclosed that towards the end of last year, the department began a series of consultations with key stakeholders to bring them up to date with the proposed changes and amendments to the work permit process.

Important feedback

'We serve the business community, we serve government ministries and departments, we serve the religious community, we serve the promoters, we serve a wide cross-section of the society; and therefore to improve the process, we need to hear from our stakeholders...we started a series of consultation with them, bringing to them the process changes and amendments to the act...and seeking their feedback,' she said.

'We have already started to receive significant and important feedback that will inform a new and improved work permit

process in 2025,' she said while explaining that the department is conducting this process together with the Guyana-based Caribbean Community (Caricom) Secretariat, given the Caricom Single Market and Economy (CSME) that allows for the free movement of goods, skills, labour and finances across the region.

'Caricom will be introducing free movement which will also affect the work permit process. And this means that some categories of persons in Caricom will no longer be required to have work permits to seek employment in Grenada,' she said.

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