



2nd GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA PROTOCOL CONFERENCE

22-24 April, 2026

“PROTOCOL: UNLOCKING THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF SERVICE”

Wednesday 22nd April, 2026

OPENING CEREMONY

9:00 a.m.- 9:45 a.m.

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Timothy Simmonds, Head Public Relations and Media

Remarks by:

- ❖ Ambassador Cheryl Spencer, Acting Permanent Secretary
- ❖ Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith, JP.

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

Entertainment: Poetry Performance

Mrs Sihle (Sih Breeze) Cunningham

Coffee Break

9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

SESSION 1

Protocol Essentials for Public Service

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Lead Presenter:

Ambassador Franz Hall

This session will demystify Protocol, highlighting its practical role in supporting government functions.

Key Topics:

- What is Protocol and why it matters in day-to-day government operations
- Jamaican context: precedence, ceremonies and institutions
- Simple dos and don'ts for official conduct
- Protocol as a tool for order, respect, and projecting a positive national image
- Case examples: how breaches of protocol have impacted government or diplomatic outcomes

SESSION 2**Diplomatic Protocol Made Simple**

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 a.m.

Lead Presenter:**Ms Desreine Taylor**

This session will provide non-diplomatic staff with enough awareness to handle engagements with dignitaries and diplomats confidently.

Key Topics:

- **Greetings and Introductions** - Interacting with members of the Diplomatic Corps; Forms of Salutations
- **Table of Precedence** (how it affects seating, greetings, order of speaking)
- **Hosting local or foreign dignitaries:** practical courtesies, common mistakes to avoid
- **Jamaican representation abroad:** role of Missions and Honorary Consuls
- **Examples of successful diplomatic hosting** e.g., high-level visits, role play etc

Simulation:**Podcast with Ms Desreine Taylor & Ms. Tricia Dunkley****LUNCH**

12:30p.m. – 1:30p.m.

SESSION 3

State Protocol in Practice

2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Lead Presenter: **Ambassador Sandra Grant Griffiths, CD, JP**

This session will strengthen competence in the various elements of State Protocol, including the use of national symbols and supporting national events.

Key Topics:

- National symbols and their correct usage (Flag, Anthem, Coat of Arms)
- Precedence at state functions and official ceremonies
- Dress codes explained (formal, semi-formal, cultural attire)
- Toasts, salutations, and appropriate forms of address

SESSION 4

Protocol Fundamentals for Official Travel for Government Officials

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Lead Presenter: **Ambassador Shorna-Kay Richards**

This session will explain and clarify procedures and expectations around official travel, the roles of various officers and draw the distinction with personal travel.

Key Topics:

- Passport and visa formalities – departure and arrival protocols
- Courtesies provided by Missions abroad (incl. Honorary Consuls)
- Cultural sensitivity and dress expectations abroad
- Do's and don'ts when representing Jamaica overseas
- Practical tips for avoiding travel-related embarrassment (e.g., baggage, gifts, timing)

Simulation: **Podcast with Ms Desreine Taylor & Ms Tricia Dunkley**

SESSION 5

Effective Communication with Dignity and Respect

9:00a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Lead Presenter:

Ms. Fae Ellington, CD

This session will highlight the role of dignified communication in upholding protocol standards, fostering respect across cultures and hierarchy and strengthening the professional image of government.

Key Topics:

- Core principles of dignified and respectful communication
- Correct forms of address and cultural sensitivity
- Speech protocols, addressing audiences and oral exchanges
- Public speaking for public officials addressing various audiences (e.g. bilateral, multilateral and other international settings.)
- Managing difficult conversations without loss of face
- Upholding professionalism in public and ceremonial context
- Common pitfalls to avoid in official communication
- Managing tone, language, and body language when under stress or provocation

Coffee Break

15 minutes

SESSION 6

Protocol in Practice: Formal Dining and Table Etiquette

10:45p.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Lead Presenter:

Ms. Jacqui Tyson

This session will demonstrate correct table etiquette in both Jamaican and international settings. Identify key aspects of protocol for official meals, including seating, service, and toasts. Manage dining situations with confidence, including cross-cultural dining norms and how to avoid common mistakes that could undermine Jamaica's image at official functions.

Key Topics

- The Protocol of the Dining Table

- Why table etiquette matters
- The dining table as an extension of protocol and soft power
- **Place Settings & Seating Arrangements**
 - Formal place settings explained (utensils, glasses, napkins)
 - How to read a table setting and use items in the correct order
 - Seating hierarchy at formal banquets, business engagements and luncheons
- **Dining Etiquette**
 - Arrival and seating etiquette
 - Napkin protocol: placement, timing, and signals
 - Correct use of cutlery, glasses, and service order
 - Handling tricky foods (soups, bread rolls, fish with bones, etc.)
 - When to begin eating and how to pace with hosts and dignitaries
- **Toasts, Speeches, and Salutations**
 - How to propose, respond to, or join in a toast
 - Appropriate gestures and body language at the table
 - Cultural and religious considerations in drinking customs (alcohol vs. non-alcohol alternatives)
- **Cross-Cultural Awareness in Dining**
 - Jamaican traditions vs. international expectations
 - Common global differences (e.g., chopsticks in East Asia, hand-eating in parts of Africa/India, slurping tea in China, etc.)
 - Respecting dietary restrictions, religious practices and cultural norms
- **Common Pitfalls to Avoid**
 - Overfamiliarity at the table, phone use, picking your teeth, etc
 - Handling accidents discreetly (spills, dropped utensils)
 - Overindulgence in alcohol or food at events and official functions

LUNCH

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

SESSION 7

The Future of Protocol: Adapting to New Norms

2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Lead Presenter:

Ambassador Franz Hall

This session will examine how globalization, technology, and social change are reshaping the practice of protocol. Participants will explore how to balance tradition with emerging realities such as the digital environment, inclusivity, and shifting generational expectations, ensuring that Jamaican protocol remains relevant, modern and respected.

Key Topics:

- **Protocol in the Digital Age:** etiquette for virtual and hybrid meetings; digital precedence and speaking order; managing time zones and screen etiquette.
- **Changing Hospitality Norms:** sustainable and ethical gifting, health-conscious menus, and evolving expectations for official entertainment.
- **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** gender-sensitive language, accommodating persons with disabilities, and projecting diversity in protocol practice.
- **Generational Shifts:** managing informal communication styles while upholding respect; navigating social media and instant messaging in official settings.
- **Resilience and Adaptability:** lessons from COVID-19 on virtual ceremonies, distanced events, and the importance of flexible yet dignified protocol.

Friday 24th April 2026

SESSION 8

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

This session will be used to organise participants into their working groups and finalise preparations for the simulation exercise. A number of participants will have been pre-selected at random to assume specific roles—such as Chief of Protocol, Event Coordinator, or Cabinet Minister — affording them the benefit of the two preceding days

to research their responsibilities, anticipate challenges, and arrive fully prepared to lead their respective teams.

Coffee Break

15 minutes

GROUP SESSION 9

1 0:15 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Group Simulation:

Planning and Hosting an Official Event

Building on the preceding days' learning, participants will be divided into working groups and tasked with planning and executing an official event attended by senior representatives of the Government of Jamaica and visiting foreign dignitaries. Each group will take ownership of a distinct facet of the exercise—from protocol and programme design to logistics, guest management, and ceremonial detail—translating theory into practice under realistic conditions

Practical Elements:

- *Drafting invitations & RSVPs*
- *Provision of airport and transportation courtesies.*
- *Seating and flag placement*
- *Protocol for greetings, introductions and salutations*
- *Opening with the National Anthem*
- *Managing the flow of a ceremonial programme (e.g. with Master of Ceremonies)*

SESSION 10

Wrap-Up Session

This brief session will end the three days of presentations, questions and answers and simulations. Participants will have the opportunity to mingle with presenters and each other and take this into lunch.

LUNCH

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.



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