

PROTOCOL GUIDELINES

FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
TRAVELLING OVERSEAS ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS



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OUTLINE



✓ Purpose and Objective

✓ Context: Understanding Official Travel

✓ Pre-Travel Support

- Travel Documentation
- Travel arrangements
- Accommodation & Ground Transportation
- Briefing Material
- Conduct and Appearance Abroad
- Financial arrangements
- Communication and Coordination
- Risk Management

✓ During Travel Support

✓ Post-Travel Responsibilities

✓ Common Pitfalls & Best Practices

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

Supporting excellence in official travel



Your Role is Critical

You are central to Jamaica's global representation — every trip reflects the professionalism of the Government.



First Impressions Matter

Poor logistics can undermine diplomatic outcomes. Strong preparation enables officials to focus on substance, not stress.



Objective

Common understanding of standards and appreciation of the highest levels of conduct in undertaking duties and in behaviours expected of government officials in their external representational functions.



CONTEXT: UNDERSTANDING OFFICIAL TRAVEL

More than just logistics



Representation of Jamaica's interests abroad



Engagement with governments, international organizations, and partners



Participation in meetings, negotiations, and official events



TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION

Ensure Everything is in Order



Passport Types

Official, Diplomatic, and Ordinary passports
Minimum 6 months validity required



Entry Requirements

Visa requirements vary by country
Apply early through MFAFT assistance



Health Requirements

Health certifications as applicable



TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION

Official and Diplomatic Passports



Grant of Official and Diplomatic Passports:

- Lies within the authority of the Ministry of National Security and Peace (MNSP).
- All requests are to be directed by the respective Permanent Secretary to the Permanent Secretary in the MNSP.
- The decision to request an official or diplomatic passport, other than for officers who are so granted based on their position or placement on the Table of Precedence, may take account of the level of the officer, frequency of official travel and the circumstances in the host country which may make it a challenge for the officer to receive appropriate facilitation for participation in the meetings.



VISA FACILITATION

MFAT Assistance for Official Travel



- MFAFT provides assistance to public officials and/or members of government delegations to acquire visas to represent the GOJ on official business—**visits, meetings, conferences, trade/roadshows, seminars and workshops.**
- Applicants should complete the visa applications online, where applicable, and submit the following documents:

VISA FACILITATION

MFAFT Assistance for Official Travel



REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- ✓ Invitation letter from host organization
- ✓ Cover letter requesting MFAFT assistance
- ✓ Proof of completed visa application
- ✓ 2 passport-size photos
- ✓ Travel itinerary
- ✓ Passport

PROCESSING TIMELINES

 MFAFT Internal	4 business days
 Spain (Schengen)	5 days
 Germany/Belgium	14 days each
 USA Embassy	5 days
 British High Commission	7–14 days
 Canadian High Commission	7–14 days
 Overseas Missions	Min. 4 weeks

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Efficiency and Protocol



Route & Timing

Select appropriate routes; consider rest and readiness for meetings



Policy Compliance

Ensure compliance with Government travel policies



Courtesies

Arrange airport assistance per Table of Precedence



Attire

Appropriate dress code for travel and official events.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS: COURTESIES

Overview



- Courtesies are the facilitation granted to government officials at ports of entry or departure, in destination or transit countries to support ease of travel.
- Courtesies are extended on the basis of an understanding between countries, and provided according to certain specifications set out by each.
- Where it concerns travel by Jamaican Government officials courtesies are granted:
 - ✓ Locally at Norman Manley and Sangster International airports.
 - ✓ Externally by the destination and transit countries, as determined by them.



TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS: COURTESIES

Overview



- The grant of courtesies is made in conjunction with the airport management which provides the accompanying officer for security reasons.
- For external travel, facilitation is determined by the receiving country. In Europe, the official is required to pay for the service, as this is often privatized.
- In the US, there is no fee requirement, but there is strict observance of the official and the time frame within which the request is to be made.



TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS: COURTESIES

Overview



- **For all countries, it is the Foreign Ministry that makes the request for the services through the Mission accredited to the respective country.**
- The point of contact for all requests for courtesies locally and for external travel is the MFAFT at: courtesies@mfaft.gov.jm



TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS: COURTESIES

Table of Precedence — Eligible Officials



Guided by the Table of Precedence, persons who hold the following positions in Government are eligible to receive courtesies in Jamaica and from Jamaican Missions when engaged in official travel overseas in locations where there is resident diplomatic or consular representation:

Governor-General, Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, Members of the Cabinet, President of the Senate, Speaker of the Houses of Representatives, Former Governors-General and Former Prime Ministers, Chief Justice, President of the Court of Appeal, Ministers of State, Widows/Widowers of Former Governors-General and Widows/Widowers of Former Heads of Government, Attorney General, Cabinet Secretary (Head of the Public Service), Auditor General, Director of Public Prosecutions, Chief of Defence Staff, Commissioner of Police

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS: COURTESIES

Table of Precedence — Eligible Officials



Currently, this facilitation is offered to Permanent Secretaries, although as a group they are not listed in the Table.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Extensions of Courtesies in Jamaica



- In order for Airport Courtesies to be granted locally, formal communication from a Ministry must be submitted to the Protocol Department at least 5 business days in advance. Required information:
 - Name and title of the VIP
 - Date of departure and arrival
 - Name of airline
 - Flight number
 - Time of flight arrival and departure
- In situations where a VIP is travelling with a small delegation, airport courtesies may be offered to the entire group.
- Special arrangements should be made for processing large VIP delegations.



Government VIP
Lounge NMIA

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Extension of Courtesies in Foreign Countries



- Missions overseas require timely notification of travel details.
- Formal notification must be submitted to the Protocol Department of the MFAFT at least 5 business days in advance Information required:
 - ❖ Flight itinerary
 - ❖ Bio-data page of passport for the eligible Government representative and all accompanying delegates
 - ❖ Relevant visa page/Residence permit, where applicable
 - ❖ Completed Travel Notification Form

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Extension of Courtesies in Foreign Countries



- Courtesies offered by the host country may include:
 - ❖ special security screening exemptions
 - ❖ use of VIP lounges
 - ❖ priority boarding assistance.
- Any required special assistance due to mobility issues should be indicated in a timely manner.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Extension of Courtesies in Foreign Countries (cont'd)



- Failure to abide by these timelines is likely to result in the request for the provision of courtesies by the authorities of the receiving State being declined.
- Airport courtesies are not normally extended for personal travel.
- Except for special circumstances, overseas Mission staff will not generally provide assistance for VIP arrivals after 10:00 pm, and departures before 7:00 am, bearing in mind the impact on staff.
- It is also the case that the Protocol Departments of many host countries themselves set standards for the period during which they extend courtesies.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Departure Process in Jamaica



- With the exception of a Head of State, VIPs are required to be present at the airport at **least one-and-a-half (1 ½) hours** prior o flight departure.
- The PAC Kingston Airport Limited (PACKAL) Customer Service Agent should be notified of the VIP's arrival at the airport. The VIP is met in the Ticketing Concourse by the PACKAL Customer Service Agent.
- The Customer Service Agent assists with check-in for the flight and escorts the VIP to the Government's VIP Lounge to comfortably wait until time for boarding.
- Once the flight commences boarding, the VIP is then fast tracked by the Customer Service Agent through the relevant processes and unto the boarding.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Arrival Process in Jamaica



- VIPs are met at the gate on arrival and are escorted to the Government's VIP Lounge to refresh and await the completion of the Immigration and Customs processes.
- Once processing is completed, the VIP is escorted from the VIP Lounge to their awaiting vehicle.



TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Temporary Visitor's Process



- Temporary Visitor's Passes are granted to persons who are accompanying Officials to bid farewell on departure or to greet on arrival.
- This request should be submitted to the MFAFT with the request for airport VIP courtesies.
- This facilitation is afforded at both the Norman Manley International Airport (NMIA), Kingston and Sangster International Airport (SIA) Montego Bay.



TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Temporary Visitor's Process



- When meeting an arriving VIP, the person to receive the pass is advised to arrive at the Airport (Security Centre), at least 45 minutes prior to flight arrival and is required to present valid photo identification.
- When seeing off a departing official, the person to receive the airport pass should arrive at the airport at least two (2) hours prior to the scheduled flight departure time.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Spouses and Family Members



- Customarily, the spouses and family members of principals would be entitled to receive the same level of courtesies as the principal, **only when travelling together.**
- To avoid any doubt, spouses and family members, when travelling without the principal officer, are not eligible for courtesies in their own right.



TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Armed Security Personnel



- Prior and timely notification and approval are required for carrying weapons and ammunition, by authorized security personnel, into all foreign territories.
- A Close Protection Officer (CPO) will not be permitted to use nor carry a weapon in the United States if not physically present with the Head of State.
- Therefore, if the Head of State is travelling to multiple locations, the CPO should be with the Head of State for all subsequent trips as he/she will not be permitted to travel with a weapon while not on active duty with the Head.
- Note: Canada and the United Kingdom do not permit the entry of armed CPOs.



TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Timely Transmittal of Travel Details



- Timeliness in the provision of travel information— travel itineraries of Ministers of Government is of critical importance.
- Ensure that Ministerial travel arrangements are forwarded to the Protocol Department at the earliest opportunity. Note: this information must be conveyed to Missions overseas, often in different time zones.
- Host country courtesies, including special security screening exemptions, can only be facilitated through the good offices of the authorities of the host countries.



- Certain jurisdictions, such as Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States, have instituted special security regimes which require the provision of pertinent bio-data information well in advance.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Attire



- When travelling to and from, while attending meetings, public officials must bear that in mind that they are representing the GOJ, and must address and comport themselves accordingly at all times, and in conformity with the standard of the meeting.
- Please note that, as an example, business casual, does not mean jeans but rather the absence of a tie, and in some cases a jacket for the male.



TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS CONT'D

Attire



- This area is important to perception and should be borne in mind in preparing the officials for duty travel.
- The informality of travel these days should not be an excuse for compromising dress standards when on duty travel. This is especially sensitive when officials are being received at ports by Protocol Officers of the receiving country.



HEALTH REQUIREMENTS



- Other requirements for entry into a country may include proof of vaccination.
- These can be ascertained from the guidelines provided by the organizers of the meetings, the website of the relevant country or from the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MHW) of Jamaica.
- The MHW provides vaccination services (for example: yellow fever) and medication (for example: malaria tablets) for official travel to public officers.
- Timely notification and consultation are encouraged.



ACCOMMODATION & GROUND TRANSPORTATION

Comfort, security, and seamless movement



ACCOMMODATION

- Proximity to meeting venues
- Security standards
- Access to business facilities
- Confirm early check-in/late check-out if required
- Secure all hotel bookings in advance through your office
- Transmit credit card details directly to hotel if needed



GROUND TRANSPORTATION

- Arrange airport transfers in advance
- Confirm transport for all official meetings
- Liaise with host country or Embassy where applicable
- Transportation not automatic — must be requested early
- Missions may only provide transport at arrival/departure
- Carry small currency denominations for porter tips

BRIEFING MATERIAL

Preparing the Official for Success



Country Background

Key issues, current events, and bilateral relationship context



Meeting Briefs & Talking Points

Clear objectives and prepared positions for each engagement



Profiles of Counterparts

Background on officials and dignitaries to be met



Clear Schedule

Detailed agenda with objectives, venues, and timing

CONDUCT AND APPEARANCE ABROAD

Respecting Diplomatic Norms



✓ Cultural Sensitivity

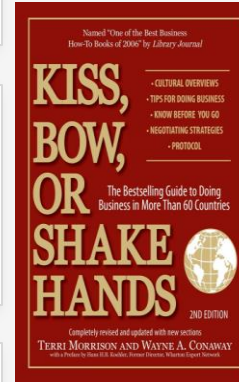
Respect local customs, traditions, and etiquette in every host country.

✓ Titles & Forms of Address

Use correct official titles and honorifics when addressing counterparts.

✓ Seating & Precedence

Respect seating arrangements and table of precedence at official functions.



CONDUCT AND APPEARANCE CONT'D

Respecting Diplomatic Norms



Dress Code

Appropriate attire for the region and event type — formal, cultural, or ceremonial.



Social Media Awareness

Exercise caution on social media during official engagements abroad.



CONDUCT AND APPEARANCE CONT'D

Respecting Diplomatic Norms



Gift Protocols

Follow established diplomatic norms for giving and receiving gifts.



CONDUCT AND APPEARANCE CONT'D

Respecting Diplomatic Norms



Gift Protocols

- Depending on the nature of the engagement, heads of delegation at senior level may engage in gift presentation/exchange.
- At other levels, it is not out of turn to take small craft items (pens, notebooks, trinket boxes, water bottles, etc) which are reflective of Jamaica to give to their colleagues, which helps with the promotion of Brand Jamaica.



CONDUCT AND APPEARANCE CONT'D

Respecting Diplomatic Norms



Gift Protocols

- It is reminded that the Government of Jamaica has a Gift Policy which provides guidance on the value of the gift that can be received.
- It is always a gracious act to send thank-you notes to partner and colleagues who may have hosted the representative/official (for training visits, study tours, bilateral meetings) or may have gone out of their way to provide assistance.



FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Managing Expenses Responsibly



Per Diem Allocations

Understand applicable daily allowances for each destination



Foreign Currency

Arrange foreign currency in advance; carry small denominations for tips



Reimbursable Expenses

Know which expenses are covered and maintain full documentation



Receipts & Records

Keep all receipts — required for expense reconciliation



Cost Recovery

MDAs must reimburse Missions for goods/services procured on their behalf with no budget allocation

COMMUNICATION & RISK MANAGEMENT

Stay connected | Plan for the unexpected



COMMUNICATION

-  Share full itinerary with all stakeholders
-  Maintain contact with embassies, high commissions, and honorary consuls
-  Ensure official is reachable while abroad
-  Prepare contingency contact list



RISK MANAGEMENT

-  Monitor travel advisories actively
-  Maintain emergency contacts and procedures
-  Prepare backup travel arrangements
-  Consider health and safety requirements for destination

COMMUNICATION & RISK MANAGEMENT

Embassies, High Commissions, and Honorary Consuls



COMMUNICATION & RISK MANAGEMENT

Embassies, High Commissions, and Honorary Consuls



- All public officers are encouraged to have in their possession, contact information for the nearest or superintending Jamaican diplomatic or consular Mission for the location which you are visiting.
- This information can be sourced from the website of the Foreign Ministry. This is important in the event of an emergency during travel or a situation which he or she cannot resolve immediately – contact is to be made to the nearest diplomatic or consular Mission of Jamaica.
- The traveling official should always have access to key contacts, and you should remain reachable to provide support if needed.

DURING TRAVEL & POST-TRAVEL

Ongoing support and closing the loop

DURING TRAVEL

-  Monitor flight status and changes
-  Be available to troubleshoot issues
-  Coordinate updates as needed

POST-TRAVEL

-  Expense reconciliation
-  Submission of reports if required
-  Filing of travel documents
-  Lessons learned for future improvement

COMMON PITFALLS & BEST PRACTICES

Learn from Experience | What Excellence Looks Like



PITFALLS TO AVOID

- ✗ Last-minute bookings
- ✗ Missing or incomplete documentation
- ✗ Poor communication between stakeholders
- ✗ Inadequate briefing materials
- ✗ Situations that embarrass the traveller or Government



BEST PRACTICES

- ✓ Attention to detail in all arrangements
- ✓ Proactive planning well ahead of travel dates
- ✓ Clear, timely communication with all parties
- ✓ Anticipate needs before they arise
- ✓ Commit to continuous improvement through lessons learned

THANK YOU

Questions & Discussion

