



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

**Ministry of Social Development and Family Services**



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Wednesday, 19 January 2022

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Priority: **HIGH**

### **MSDFS provides Sign Language Sessions to 36 Organisations**

*Port-of-Spain* --- In commemoration of Deaf Awareness Week and International Sign Language Day, the Ministry of Social Development and Family Services, through its Disability Affairs Unit, hosted a series of online awareness and sign language sessions over the period September 20, 2021 to November 5, 2021. The sessions provided the opportunity to raise awareness of the challenges and needs of the Deaf and Hard of hearing community and also promote inclusion, accessibility and integration of persons who are deaf and hard of hearing into our society.

The sessions were held in collaboration with the Caribbean Sign Language Centre and targeted approximately thirty-six (36) organizations, including frontline and other staff members of the financial, information and communication sectors, and Ministries and Government Agencies. The participants were exposed to “Deaf Culture”, which among other things highlighted social beliefs, behaviours and literary traditions of the Deaf and Hard of hearing community. In addition, participants learnt the alphabet and numbers in Sign Language, as well as, to sign words germane to each sector.

Participants were able to take advantage of opportunities for discussion at the end of each session, in the form of an interactive question and answer segment. Numerous participants expressed interest in learning more signs, while others explained how the session aided in reducing the discomfort they previously encountered when interacting with a person who is Deaf or Hard of hearing.

It is envisioned that these training workshops will assist to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities.

The Ministry expects to host two more sessions to train additional frontline staff.

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**For more information:**

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