



TERMS OF REFERENCE

**THE NATIONAL YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL
OF JAMAICA**

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OVERVIEW

Jamaica in former years has to some extent supported and encouraged youth participation and engagement. However, such thrust, although productive, has yielded limited levels of involvement, in the form of advocacy and leadership at the local level. It is with this view that the Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information has decided to follow through with the establishment of the National Youth Advisory Council of Jamaica (NYACJ). The NYACJ is one structure geared towards the fulfilment of the Goal VI of the CARICOM Youth Development Goals (CYDGs), and Goal V the National Youth Policy 2019-2030 which seeks to ensure and enhance youth participation in all levels of decision-making, programme implementation, and oversight. The NYACJ is being coordinated with the intent to facilitate dialogue between young people and the Government of Jamaica (GOJ) Ministries, Departments and Agencies. This thrust will by all means, provide support to the Government in mainstreaming youth issues into national policies and programmes actions. It is the intent that our youth will not only lead from behind (at the local level), but will assist the Government in enabling the national goals.

Goal

Provide support to the GOJ in mainstreaming youth issues into national policies and development strategies;

Objectives

The NYACJ is designed to ensure that youth are made equal and valuable partners through an avenue of full participation in the decision-making processes. To this end, the NYACJ will:

1. Develop partnerships between the GOJ and young people that will foster the integration of youth views, priorities and programmes to address youth needs, concerns and requirements;
2. Provide support to the MOESYI in planning and executing the annual National Youth Parliament Leadership Workshop and Sitting and Projects;
3. Monitor and evaluate projects targeting and involving young people;
4. Promote and conduct research on youth development;
5. Attend workshops, meetings and conferences organised by the GOJ and its partners as assigned by the MOESYI;
6. Act as a hub of information concerning youth, towards updating member organisations on opportunities and initiatives in various sectors of government for youth development.

MEMBERSHIP & APPOINTMENT

The NYACJ shall comprise a minimum of fourteen (14) and not more than twenty (20) young persons between the ages of 18-27 who have demonstrated exceptional potential in their achievements and their drive to make a contribution to their communities.

1. The council shall be appointed by the Minister responsible for Youth under the Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information on the recommendation of a Selection Committee established under this TOR.
2. The appointment of members of the Council other than the ex-officio members shall be evidenced by issuance of instrument in writing, and such instrument shall state the period of office of the member which shall not exceed two years.

Duration & Timeframes

The members of the NYACJ shall be appointed for a term of two years in their respective offices. The objectives and expected outcomes of the Council cannot be met during the tenure of one term, therefore the renewal of the Council every two years will be paramount to its long-term success.

Chairmanship of the Council

Two Co-Chairpersons shall be appointed by the State Minister responsible for Youth on the advice of the Youth Division.

STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL

The NYACJ shall consist of the following executive and functional subdivisions: The Council, the Executive Council, and Standing Committees Division.

1. The **Council** shall comprise all Youth Advisors duly appointed to the Council by the Minister and includes Ex-Officios as technical advisors. The Council shall be responsible for regulating functions of executive council and standing committee in pursuant of the NYACJ Mandate.
2. The **Executive Council** shall comprise the Co-Chairpersons and Portfolio Officers serving as Standing Committee Chairpersons as appointed by the Council. The Executive Council holds joint responsibility for daily operations of the Council under the directives of the Council. The executive council makes recommendations to the Council for its good governance.

- a. The Secretariat Portfolio officer serving as Chairperson for the Secretariat Standing Committee shall be the General Secretary of the Council.
3. The **Standing Committees** shall be chaired by Executive Council officers holding respective committee portfolio areas except in the case of the Ethics/Disciplinary Committee where an ex-officio shall be the chair. The Standing Committee shall be planning and consultative in nature and from time to time assist in the Coordination and Implementation of NYACJ Business.
 - a. All Standing Committees set up by the NYACJ Council shall be under the control of and make reports to the Council through their Committee Chairpersons.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

In exercise of its Functions Goals & Objectives, the NYACJ shall have the following roles and responsibilities:

1. The NYACJ shall convene meetings at least once in every two months to deliberate youth issues, concerns and requirements, and to identify policy and programme strategies for proposal to the Minister of Education and Youth.

N.B. Other youth and/or subject matter experts may be invited to these meetings to provide input in the deliberations.
2. The NYACJ shall meet with the Minister and or the State Minister of Education and Youth once each quarter, or as otherwise advised, to report and deliberate youth matters toward fulfilment of objectives stated;
3. The NYACJ shall recommend the assignment of each member to a government Ministry or portfolio for input coordination on policies, programmes and projects carried out by respective ministries;
4. The NYACJ shall be responsible for the technical Coordination of the National Youth Parliament of Jamaica (NYPJ)
5. Ex-officio members of the NYACJ shall serve for the period of their engagement in their respective positions;
6. Ex-officio members may be consulted by the MOESYI to guide and assist with handover exercises and the work of subsequent Council Members;
7. The NYACJ will issue a communiqué at least quarterly, or more frequently if necessary, with the intention of advising and updating the public on progress towards the achievement of its objectives.

KEYS SUCCESS FACTORS

Incumbent to the Success of the NYACJ in achieving its mandate;

1. Clear and visible support from the Minister through attending scheduled meetings;
2. Buy-in of from members of the Council through member input and consensus on various youth issues;
3. Compliance to code of conduct and work plan for assigned duties and work;
4. Support from Central Government via Ministries to facilitate the technical participation of the Council in relevant governance processes affecting youth development.

EX-OFFICIO TO THE COUNCIL

The NYACJ shall have Ex-Officio Officers assigned to the Council by virtue of holding another office or former office and shall serve as subject matter experts to inform the decision making process and thereby assist in the good governance of the Council.

1. Ex-officio shall act as technical advisor lending his or her expertise to the Council and its Committees.
2. Ex-officio are non-voting members of the Council who shall not vote nor count towards quorum.
3. There shall be no more than two (2) ex-officio officers to the Council, such officers shall be
 - a. Programme Development Specialist assigned to the Council
 - b. Former Youth Advisors or external subject matter experts assigned by the Council after consultation and ratification by the Minister on the Advice of the YAPD.

SCOPE OF WORK

The NYACJ will be expected to achieve its objectives through the execution of a Biennial Work Plan.

1. The work plan shall be developed in consultation with the assigned Ex-Officio coordinating officer from the Youth & Adolescents Division of the Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information
2. The Biennial Work Plan shall be reviewed by the Council annually and put for ratification by the Minister on the advice of the Youth & Adolescents Division
 - a. Approved Biennial Work Plan shall be updated in the Appendix of this TOR

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

The NYACJ shall have power to regulate its own meeting proceedings. The council shall convene meetings bimonthly as scheduled in its work plan to carry out the business of the council.

Notice of Meetings

1. Notices of regularly scheduled council meetings shall be communicated at least 24 hours before meetings.
2. Meeting Papers and Agenda shall be circulated 12 hours prior to meetings

Proceedings at Meetings

1. The Co-Chairman shall preside at meetings of the Council, determining between them who will chair at each, and suppose such persons are absent from a meeting, the members of the Council present shall elect one of their number to preside at the meeting.
2. The quorum of the Council shall constitute four seventh (4/7) it's voting members excluding ex-officios.
3. The decisions of the Council shall be reached by a majority of votes and, the Chairperson or other person presiding at a meeting shall have a casting vote in any case in which the voting is equal.
4. All members of the committee shall have equal status during decision-making.
5. Where there is no recorded objection, the decision of the majority shall stand as the official position of the committee.
6. Members having dissenting opinions may have their issue duly recorded
7. Meeting should be documented in the form of Minutes/Meeting report and action sheet;
8. Meeting minutes should be signed by either Co-Chairperson prior to submission to the YAPD;
9. Meeting minutes are due to the YAPD as per schedule outlined in the work plan/action plan in the connected appendix.
10. Priority areas, actions and timelines for execution discussed in Quarterly meetings with the Minister must be included in subsequent reports to the YAPD.
11. Discussion and documentation produced within or by the Council should be held confidential and not disseminated externally without the permission of the Minister of State responsible for the Youth Portfolio.
12. Where there is no clear procedure outlined by this TOR in respect of meeting proceedings, the Robert's Rules of Order shall be the procedural rules that govern the meetings.

Meeting Expectations

It is expected that the Council will conduct all meeting in an orderly manner and adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Attend meetings regularly and execute assigned tasks and participate in the decision-making process.
2. Meetings should begin on time;
3. All comments/explanations are addressed through the Chair;
4. All members are expected to participate;
5. Members do not interrupt each other;
6. Members are expected to listen and respect the opinions of others;
7. Members should aim to reach a consensus;
8. Clarify any misunderstanding that may arise;

Ministerial Meetings

Unless otherwise agreed upon by the MOESYI/NYACJ and NYACJ/ the Minister and or the State Minister, the NYACJ Ministerial Meeting Schedule must be guided as follows:

1. Meetings shall be convened via video conferencing each quarter unless otherwise indicated.
2. Meetings with the Minister must be confirmed one week in advance of stipulated dates
3. Meeting papers, that is the agenda, minutes of the last meeting, quarterly report of NYACJ activities for the period must be conveyed.

REPORTING STRUCTURE

The NYACJ shall maintaining the reporting framework described in the chart hereunder:



MONITORING & EVALUATION

The Council will be monitored and evaluated based on the Work-plan agreed to at the inception of the Council. Monitoring of the work plan will be on-going, with evaluation being conducted bi-annually to ensure that the Council adequately meets its objectives.

Performance standards and targets will be set and agreed upon the acceptance of the Finalised Work plan - due (TBA).

PERMANENT & SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Establishment of Standing Committees

There shall be seven major permanent committees also known as standing committees of the NYACJ to assist with the proper execution of the NYACJ mandate. The permanent and special committee are as follows:

1. Secretariat
2. Budget & Finance
3. Parliamentary Oversight Coordination Committee
4. Policy Review & Research Committee
5. Public Relations Committee
6. Disciplinary/Ethics Committee

Standing Rules for Composition & Meetings of Permanent/Standing Committees

All issues and policy matters shall fall into the appropriate permanent committee (and consequent special) jurisdiction/portfolio area.

1. Meetings of each Standing Committee shall be presided over by a Youth Advisor as appointed by the NYACJ Council; and in his/her absence, a Deputy Chair who may be a member of the Council as stipulated by respective committee regulation or most senior member of that committee present and selected by the Committee. Standing Committees shall have the following composition:
 - a. Comprise no less than 5 members excluding the chairperson appointed by the Council on the recommendation of committee chairpersons.
 - b. Members appointed to respective committees shall have demonstrated experience, interest and or some exposure to committee portfolio area
2. Notwithstanding the basic composition of all standing committees, the Ethics/Disciplinary and Policy Review & Research committee shall include the following individual:
 - a. the assigned Youth Officer to the Council from the Youth Division
 - b. a Representative from the Minister/State Minister Office

- c. a former Youth Advisory Council Member
 - d. a Lawyer (with arbitration experience)
 - e. any other officer from the Youth Division
3. All Standing Committees must be formed at most two months into a new council shall meet or may convene at least once per quarter for the period of the Council.
 4. The Committee Chairperson must present all major decisions reached by the said committee through the chairperson of Council which must be approved by a simple majority of votes shall notify the Ministry.
 5. Emergency meetings of the Committee shall be called by the secretary on the instructions of the Committee Chairperson or at the written request of at least three members of the Committee.
 6. At least forty-eight (48) hours' notice must be given before the holding of ordinary meetings of the Committee and twenty-four (24) hours' notice for an emergency meeting.
 7. Minutes of the proceedings of meetings shall be kept and submitted to the Council's Secretariat for filing
 8. The quorum shall constitute five ninths (5/9) of the total active membership of the Committee

The Secretariat Committee:

The committee shall comprise of:

1. A Youth Advisor duly appointed by the Council shall serve as chairperson and deputy chairperson.
2. County Leaders from the National Youth Parliament
3. Any other such members as prescribed by the standing rules on composition

The Secretariat Committee shall be responsible for:

1. Coordinating the administrative functions of the Council to ensure all minutes, resolutions, decisions, notices and correspondences are distributed to all or relevant members of the Council, the Ministers/State Minister's office, the YADP and other relevant parties.
2. Coordinating the effective communication and management of the Council records
3. Organising and the planning of council meetings and internal trainings

The Parliamentary Oversight Committee:

The committee shall comprise of:

4. A Youth Advisor duly appointed by the Council shall serve as chairperson.
5. County Leaders from the National Youth Parliament
6. Any other such members as prescribed by the standing rules on composition

The Parliamentary Oversight Committee shall be responsible for:

1. Assisting the YAPD with coordination of the National Youth Parliament orientation and capacity building training session
2. Assisting the YAPD with planning and coordination of the Annual Sitting of the National Youth Parliament
3. Assist with the planning, organizing and coordination of National Youth Parliament County Projects

Policy Review & Research Committee

The Policy Review & Research Committee shall be responsible for:

1. Receiving, reviewing and submitting any proposed amendments or resolutions to this TOR submitted by the Council, the executive Council or any member of the Council.
Adjudicating on all matters relating to the interpretation of this TOR on the direction of the Council.
2. The drafting of proposed positions papers, parliamentary submissions, technical reviews of national policies, government papers, strategies etc. on the direction of the Council.

The Budget & Finance Committee

The function and duties of the budget and finance committee include:

1. Develop a two year budget for the NYACJ based on the Council's Work Plan and Action Plan to be submitted to the council for approval
2. Develop an annual operating budget for the NYACJ to be submitted to the council for approval
3. Monitor all the income and expenditure of the council to ensure that it is in keeping with budgetary allocations
4. Prepare Monthly Reports regarding the status of the council's accounts
5. Prepare a report for each meeting of the national council
6. Perform other such functions as determined by the Council

The Ethics/Disciplinary Committee

The Ethic Disciplinary Committee shall be responsible for:

1. The consideration, investigation, and adjudication of complaints made against members of the NYACJ based on breaches of the code conduct or other breaches of the TOR.
2. The committee shall be constituted as stipulated by the Standing Rules for Composition and Meetings of Standing Committees

3. If a complaint is brought against any member of the disciplinary committee then such individual shall be recuse from the sitting of the Disciplinary Committee to hear that issue
 - a. Such member shall be replaced in accordance with rules on composition of standing committees
4. The committee shall exercise jurisdiction over matters brought before the Disciplinary Committee include but are not limited to:
 - a. contravention of the Code of Conduct
 - b. breach of NYACJ rules, regulations, procedures or policies
 - c. procedural misconduct in administration of post or duties
 - d. Indiscipline or inappropriate conduct during the occupation of post/position which is deemed to amount to serious misconduct.
 - e. misrepresentation related to or defamatory statements in respect of the omissions or slanderous mischaracterisation sufficiently grave to amount to serious misconduct
 - f. breach of any duty imposed by this TOR
 - g. Any complaints brought up against any member as relates to NYACJ affairs.
5. All complaints must be written whether in letter form or by way of petition and must be sent to the Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee.
6. Subject to the rules of natural justice, the individual or the member organization against which the complaint is brought must be made fully aware of the case being brought against him/her, furnished with a notice of the complaint, and given a fair opportunity to respond to the matter.
7. Upon receipt of any official complaint the Disciplinary Committee shall investigate the complaint to ascertain its validity and adjudicate on the matter
 - a. The investigation and adjudication on the matter should be completed within 60 days from the date of receipt.
 - b. The committee can invite persons to be witnesses or to submit written statements and/or recorded oral submissions.
 - c. The committee shall submit a report, the decision arrived at and the disciplinary action recommended to the Council for approval by simple majority and further ratification by the Minister.
8. The Ethics/Disciplinary Committee may employ one or more or the following actions:
 - a. issue a written caution
 - b. require statement/apology on the matter
 - c. suspend or restrict privileges
 - d. issue a declaration of the state of affairs
 - e. issue a mandate to take a particular course of action
 - f. any other action which it deems proportionate to the offence by reference to it nature, magnitude, context, duration and disposition of the member in dispute
 - g. Once the course action has been approved by the council then the decision should be communicated to the party/parties in question in the earliest possible time, such time not exceeding a week.

COMPOSITION & FUNCTION OF YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL SELECTION COMMITTEE

The National Youth Advisory Council of Jamaica Selection Committee is mandated to select young persons who have demonstrated exceptional potential in their achievements and their drive to make contributions to their communities.

Membership of the Selection Committee

There shall be a selection committee appointed by the Minister/State Minister responsible for Youth under the Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information responsible for the selection and recommendation of suitable candidates to be appointed as Youth Advisor.

1. The NYACJ Selection Committee shall be chaired by the Snr. Director of the Youth and Adolescents Policy Division.
2. The Committee shall comprise no more than eleven (11) persons appointed by the Minister as specified hereunder:
 - a. Snr. Director of the Youth and Adolescents Policy Division
 - b. Youth Officer – Programme Development Specialist
 - c. Two Youth Representative – Male & Female
 - d. Youth Services of HEART NSTA representative
 - e. NYACJ Chairperson
 - f. Private Sector representative
 - g. Civil Society representative

TERMINATION

Notwithstanding the powers of the Ethics/Disciplinary Committee, Members of the Council are subject to automatic dismissal for committing one of the following acts:

1. Conviction of criminal offense and or intentional tort offense- fraud, defamation, financial wrongdoing, embezzlement etc.
2. Failure to attend two consecutive meetings of the Council without notice or cause;
3. Failure to comply with reporting performance standards as stipulated in the work plan (Appendix B) and TOR;
4. An axiomatic breach of confidentiality
5. Failure to participate in required or mandated activities of the Ministry, the Council and the Youth Parliament without notice or cause
6. Comply with code of conduct (Appendix A).

Procedure for Automatic Termination of a Member

1. Automatic termination shall be executed by the Minister/State Minister and or Youth Division by way of an Ex-Officio and or the NYACJ in Council.
2. Issuance of an official letter and request for the return of his/her Instrument of Office.
3. Automatic Dismissal proceedings shall be concluded with the name and photo of the Terminated NYACJ member being published via print and social media

AMENDMENT

This TOR may at any time be amended, altered or added to by a resolution, moved, seconded, and third by any member or permanent official of the council at a general or special council meeting.

1. Any resolution thirded for the alteration or amendment shall be committed to the Policy & Research Committee for review, study and or further recommendation.
 - a. The Policy & Research Committee shall return resolutions containing proposed amendments within three weeks of its receipt unless by way of notice to the council require an extension
2. A notice of the resolution containing the proposed amendment shall be sent by the Council's General Secretary to all members of the council at least 3 weeks before a meeting to debate and vote on proposed changes to the TOR.
3. A two-third majority of vote by the council shall be required to adopt any amendment put for ratification by the Minister on the advice of the YAPD
 - a. The Council shall then forward the adopted resolution to the Minister requiring ratification and notifying the YAPD via Senior Director Youth
4. The Minister may veto an adopted amendment for ratification by the NYACJ noting reservation
 - a. A supermajority majority (3/4) veto override shall be required to resubmit the originally adopted resolution a second time for ratification of the amendment by the Minister.
 - b. or the Council may consider reservation and adopt a modified mutually agreeable resolution which shall be forwarded to the Minister for ratification
5. Where the Minister double veto a NYACJ veto override, the NYACJ shall require an absolute majority to maintain and resubmit the originally adopted resolution a third (3rd) time for ratification
or the Council may section
6. An absolute veto by the Minister shall be required to reject a third (3rd) resubmission of the originally adopted resolution for ratification
7. Where the Minister makes an absolute veto, the NYACJ may opt to negotiate reservations to the proposed adopted amendment resolution.
8. Where ratification to this TOR has given by the Minister the NYACJ shall forthwith circulate the newly ratified TOR.

CODE OF CONDUCT

It is the intent of this section to protect the integrity of Youth Advisory Council of Jamaica and the Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information by prescribing best practice for the good conduct of its members and restrictions against conflicts of interest and unethical practices.

All members of the NYACJ shall at all times conduct themselves in a manner representative of the high level of trust that has been placed in their leadership. Members shall constantly strive to promote:

1. **Honesty:** All members shall uphold the strictest level of honesty with their peers, colleagues, the Ministry, and the public at large.
2. **Respect:** All members shall at all times demonstrate respect for their peers and the public.
3. **Leadership:** Each member shall conduct him/herself at all times in a manner that promotes youth interest with dignity to ensure public confidence in the integrity of the council. Each member, by personal example and by admonition to colleagues whose behaviour may threaten the nobility of the Council, shall watchfully guard the responsibility of his office and the responsibilities and duties placed on him by the Council.
4. **Stewardship:** All officers of the Council are entrusted to perform their duties with integrity.
5. **Responsibility:** Each member will perform his or her duties with the utmost professionalism.
6. **Accountability:** Each member shall uphold and abide by the conditions set out in the Terms of Reference. Failure to do so will lead to suspension or termination of membership.
7. **Inclusivity:** Each member will respect all cultures, ethnicities, religions, gender and people of any age. No member will segregate another individual based on any of these criteria stated.
8. **Confidentiality:** Information shared with members of the Council that deals with private matters is to remain confidential. Minutes of Executive Meetings will be made available upon request to the appropriate persons.
9. **Participation:** Each member is expected to participate where necessary in events or activities associated with the portfolio.
10. **Decorum.** All members shall present themselves as model youth.
11. **Misuse of Offices:** No member of the Council shall take advantage of the official capacity of his/her Office for personal gain or advantage, including any act beneficial to any person in whose welfare he or she has interest.
12. **Malicious Act:** No member of the Council shall participate in any malicious act that may cause injury to either the image or property of the Ministry.

13. **Bribery:** No member shall be involved in any agreement to accept a bribe or any gift, donation, or token that may be considered as a bribe.

Failure to comply with the code of conduct outlined above will lead to probation or termination from the NYACJ.

Appendix B

Preliminary Action Plan (TBD)

Action Plan / Item												
Assist in the oversight of the Youth Parliament												
Youth Parliament Trainings (TBD)												
Support in the planning of Youth Parliament investiture ceremony												
Sitting of Youth Parliament												
Assist in the recruitment of the Youth Parliament members												
Selection of members												
Create a Database of Policies with Youth related matters – Locally and Regionally												
Support the implementation of the Youth Programmatic Inventory												
Conducting policy information sessions with various youth groups												

Appendix C

SCOPE OF WORK (TBC)

The NYACJ will be expected to achieve its objectives through its assigned tasks.

Appendix D

Meeting Schedule 2025 (TBC)

Unless otherwise agreed upon by the MOESYI/NYACJ and NYACJ/ Office of the State Minister, the NYACJ Meeting Schedule is as follows:

Meetings will be hosted via an online platform which will be communicated, at 5:00pm (TBC) unless indicated

Appendix E

Council Members 2025 (TBC)