



Government of Bermuda
Ministry of Labour, Community Affairs and Sports

Ministerial Statement

By

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Minister of Labour, Community Affairs and Sports
The Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation updates

22nd May 2020

Mr. Speaker, I rise before this honourable house to report on the role the Department of Youth Sport and Recreation has and continues to play during these challenging times for our community.

Mr. Speaker, as the pandemic threatened our shores, the Premier made an early clarion call for us to do what we can to help the Island get through these uncertain times.

To that end **Mr. Speaker,** the Department of Youth Sport and Recreation answered the call. In keeping with its motto “Make It Happen”, many of the Departments staff made themselves available to assist Work Force Development with delivering on the Unemployment Benefits Project.

Mr. Speaker, the staff from the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation along with the team from Work Force Development and other Government Departments dedicated long hours and weekends to help get the benefit to those in need as quickly as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I must give credit where credit is due and recognize my colleague and Honourable member of this House, the Minister of Finance, the Hon. Curtis Dickinson, JP MP and his team who really drove this project and ensured that the benefit was paid out quickly to those in need.

Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of April, Bermuda was under Shelter in Place, with schools and day care facilities, closed. The normal programs of the Department could not take place including the after school care at schools and at our and community centers. The Department offered their facilities and staff to assist the Ministry of Education in providing an E Camp for Essential Workers. The camps are being held at the Sammy Wilson Central Zone Community Centre and Dellwood Middle School.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the E Camp was to provide child care for our Essential Workers such as medical personnel, supermarket/grocery store workers and others to ensure that they could continue working.

Mr. Speaker, the Department's Community Centre vans were also used to assist with transporting, essential workers who are employed by the Bermuda Hospital Board to go to and from work. The vans and drivers were available from 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. Monday through Sunday.

Mr. Speaker, as we move through the phased reopening of Bermuda the resources and work of the Department will change direction to meet the new normal. The Department is currently working on plans for the afterschool program, summer camps and the reopening of the Community Centers and their programs. This planning includes consultation with the Department of Health on best practices and protocols for minimizing the risk of COVID 19 transmission.

Mr. Speaker, the Department is also working with the National Sports Governing bodies on ensuring that their members are aware of the phased reopening of Bermuda and how that applies to Sports. We need to get Bermuda moving again as soon as it is safe to do so.

In closing **Mr. Speaker,** I would like to thank the staff at the Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation for continuously answering the call and for operating outside of the box. They definitely do "Make It Happen".

Thank you, **Mr. Speaker.**