



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA
Ministry of Economy and Labour

YEAR END REVIEW 2022



BUILDING A BETTER
ECONOMY FOR ALL



The Ministry of Economy and Labour continues to work tirelessly to secure Bermuda's economic success. By implementing effective policy solutions, we support families in need, protect those in the workplace, provide opportunities for Bermudians to find gainful employment, and increase economic activity through local and international strategies. In short, the Ministry is focused on promoting jobs, protecting Bermudians, and responding to the needs of the economy.

Throughout the past year, Departments within this Ministry have worked to ensure that we:



- ☑ **Provided social protections for those in need;**
- ☑ **Advanced Bermuda's economic growth and development initiatives in support of Bermuda's economic recovery;**
- ☑ **Provided support to jobseekers positioning them to take advantage of opportunities in the world of work; and**
- ☑ **Preserved jobs and implemented laws that support progress in the workplace.**



I. ENSURED SOCIAL PROTECTIONS WERE PROVIDED FOR THOSE IN NEED

The Ministry of Economy and Labour:

- 1. Ensured adequate social protections were in place in place** by providing over \$47 million in grant funding to support the people of Bermuda who required Financial Assistance services. For the fiscal year 2021/22, the average number of recipients of Financial Assistance services totalled 2,226. The recipients are: 1,036 pensioners; 776 persons with disabilities; 210 persons with low earnings; and 204 able-bodied unemployed.
- 2. Extended the Supplemental Unemployment Benefit (SUB)** to November 2022 offering financial support to those in need who did not qualify for financial aid through the Department of Financial Assistance programme.
- 3. Continued to progress Financial Assistance Reform initiatives** which include:



- ▶ **Increasing eligibility and benefits for financial assistance recipients**
- ▶ **Increasing eligibility and benefits for families seeking child day care allowance**
- ▶ **Creating a scheme to provide short-term support to individuals facing sudden financial hardships**



II. **ADVANCING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN SUPPORT OF BERMUDA'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

The Ministry of Economy and Labour has implemented the following initiatives designed to advance Bermuda's economic recovery:

- 1. Continuing the Economic Investment Certificate and Residential Certificate policy** enabling a person to reside in Bermuda after investing a minimum of \$2.5 million. To date, the Minister has approved 27 Economic Investment Certificate applications, and the 71 persons holding an Economic Investment Certificate have generated over \$369 million through direct investment in the Bermuda economy.
- 2. Extended the Temporary (1-year) Residency Certificate,** which has seen 1,139 applications approved with 163 extensions granted. As of November 2022, 259 Work from Bermuda Certificate holders remain on the island.
- 3. The Repatriation and Mixed Status Families amendments** to the Bermuda Immigration and Protection Act 1956 have resulted in 188 applications for Permanent Residency Certificates and Bermudian Status.
- 4. Maintained support of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).** As of November 2022, Bermuda Economic Development Corporation had provided \$6.1 million in support to 334 SMEs. This support comprised of \$3.1 million in loans, \$1.8 million in grants, and \$1.2 million in guarantees.



- 5. Published a position paper on the challenges of an ageing population and developed a roadmap** for a consultative process. An implementation strategy will be used to increase the working population to a level needed to offset the adverse effects of Bermuda's trending low birth rate and expanding elderly population.

- 6. A dedicated Project Management Office (PMO)** was established in June 2022 to ensure the successful implementation of all the initiatives under the Economic Recovery Plan (ERP), working to monitor, track, report and lend assistance where required. The ERP, which combines fiscal responsibility with a clear path to growth, employment, and greater economic development, is advancing well, with 80% of the 31 policy initiatives on track and some having already demonstrated positive results.

- 7. The office of the Uptown Development Authority (UDA)** was officially opened in September 2022. The interim project team has been in discussions with the Economic Development Department and the Bermuda Business Development Agency on the Approved Residential Schemes (ARS) and the how to connect developers and investors with opportunities in North-East Hamilton.



III. PROVIDED SUPPORT TO JOBSEEKERS POSITIONING THEM TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES IN THE WORLD OF WORK

The Ministry of Economy and Labour:

- 1. Continued implementation of the Reemployment Strategy** to get people back to work. The Department of Workforce Development worked with employers to reduce current unemployment, prevent future unemployment, and facilitate the ease of finding employment. A hospitality recruitment drive held in December 2022 at the Hamilton Princess and Beach Resort provided over 130 individuals seeking careers in this sector the ability to meet with employers to discuss potential employment opportunities.
- 2. Implemented through the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), the Ministry of Economy and Labour's Youth Employment Strategy (YES)** aimed at facilitating greater opportunities and educational pathways for all young Bermudians. In 2022 the DWD obtained additional funding to support new programme initiatives to address youth unemployment.





The Department of Workforce Development executed the following initiatives as a result of the Youth Employment Strategy:

- a. Facilitated a third cohort of **the Graduate Training Programme**, which commenced in November 2022. This program provided a 10-week paid internship opportunity for 15 recent college and university graduates.
- b. **Provided a total of \$350,000 in Scholarships** to support 25 Bermudians to attend local educational programmes and overseas tertiary education. This demonstrates the importance of education and this Government's commitment to ensuring Bermuda's young people complete their respective courses of study.
- c. **Continued the College Summer Jobs Programme** with 81 participants and the **High School Jobs programme** with 52 participants.
- d. **Granted Apprenticeship Trainee Awards** to 52 Bermudians who received training and development in education, technical and vocational areas.
- e. Continued to publish **information on potential job opportunities for Bermudians** based on the Department of Statistics' Annual Employment Survey. The latest information can be found in Table 6 of [the Bermuda Job Market Employment Briefs](#), and Table 20 of [the 2021 Employment Survey Tabulation Set](#).



IV. PRESERVED JOBS AND IMPLEMENTED LEGISLATION AND POLICIES THAT SUPPORT PROGRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

The Ministry of Economy and Labour:

- 1. Extended the moratorium on new work permits** issued effective from August 1st for five months ending on December 31st, 2022. To ensure specific job opportunities were reserved for Bermudians, the closed category list included 44 occupational categories, and the restricted category list included 12.
- 2. Amended the Bermuda Immigration and Protection Act, 1956 to regularize the “unrestricted period of residence”.** This change prevents visitors from circumventing immigration control to minimize illegal residency and employment.
- 3. Committed to implementing a \$16.40 minimum wage,** one of the highest in the world. Establishing a comprehensive minimum wage is fundamental to ensuring we progress as a just and equitable society. It will ensure that all segments of our society have access to their basic needs and a fair day’s wage is paid for an honest day’s work. Implementing a wage floor will improve the lives of many workers, especially those in occupations with traditionally low pay levels.





The Ministry of Economy and Labour has taken the necessary steps to make the following policy and legislative changes. In 2023, we will:

- 1. Establish the Labour Relations Section as a Department within the Ministry of Economy and Labour** to provide enforcement of the Employment Amendment Act 2020, including the ability to ascertain whether an employer is complying with its obligation to provide a minimum hourly wage according to the Act.
- 2. Amend the functions of the National Training Board** by establishing a newly named Certification and Apprenticeship Board with a strategic focus on skilled trades, certifications, and apprenticeships. Increasing skilled trade workers will ensure that Bermudians have the expertise and skills essential to our economy.
- 3. Create the Workforce Development Advisory Board** to ensure better alignment and synergies across multiple industry sectors and bridge the gap between local employers and job seekers. The Board will advise the Minister enabling a better understanding of industry circumstances, demands and national training needed to improve and strengthen the skills of Bermuda's workforce.
- 4. Publish an Employment Act 2000 Guidance Booklet** to inform employees of their rights under the Employment Act 2000. The Guidance provides a comprehensive overview of the Employment Act 2000 and problem areas such as layoff, vacation leave entitlement and severance pay. The Booklet provides in-debt context that conveys beneficial information to readers, improving understanding of the legislation.



- 5. Publish an Independent Contractor Guidance** document to establish the basic framework of an employee-employer relationship and how this differs from an independent contractor work arrangement. This will assist employers by ensuring the decision-making process is consistent with the relevant legislation before hiring an individual as an independent contractor.

- 6.** Amend the law to establish a framework to ensure the equitable distribution to employees of tips, gratuities and service charges (“TGSCs”) in the workplaces and industry sectors where it applies. The proposed amendments seek to:
 - ▷ **Define TGSCs;**
 - ▷ **Provide for the equitable distribution of TGSCs to employees where it applies;**
 - ▷ **Protect against the withholding of TGSCs by employers from employees;**
 - ▷ **Provide the necessary safeguards to ensure employees receive TGSCs where provided.**

The cumulative effect of the above policies and initiatives demonstrates the Government’s continued commitment to enabling all Bermudians to participate in the economy. Further, this Government has built upon past initiatives to strengthen Bermuda’s economy and will continue working toward establishing a sustainable and prosperous Bermuda for all.