

Office of the Director of Communications & Public Affairs
Phone: (876)754-0030/619-6017/564-0071
Fax: (876)754-3601
Email: information@mns.gov.jm



Ministry of National Security
NCB North Tower
2 1/2 Oxford Road
Kingston 5
Jamaica

August 10, 2018

Stringent Vetting Process for Jamaican Citizenship – Pica

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA), Andrew Wynter, says persons who apply for Jamaican citizenship have to undergo a stringent vetting process.

“In Jamaica...it’s not a free for all. You have to bring in your police records, we check with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and other international agencies. On the local scene, we carry out internal investigations to satisfy ourselves that persons are fit and proper to be granted citizenship of this country,” he pointed out.

The PICA CEO was responding to questions regarding the process after a ceremony held at the Police Officers’ Club, St. Andrew, on August 9 to grant Jamaican citizenship to 32 persons.

The men and women hail from countries such as Syria, Nigeria, India, Sri Lanka, Cuba, the United Kingdom, Suriname, Canada and Myanmar.

Mr. Wynter indicated that the length of time taken to become a Jamaican citizen depends on the category of applicant.

“If you are applying by registration or naturalisation or marriage, it can take some time. It will take up to a maximum of two years providing that we have all the information and depending on the findings of the investigations,” he explained.

“The shortest is the Jamaican by descent. The Constitution provides that any descendant of Jamaicans is entitled to citizenship,” he continued.

Citizenship by descent, as the name implies, means that the applicant must be the descendant of a Jamaican, no matter how many generations removed.

PICA has indicated that foreigners of Jamaican descent constitute one of the largest categories of applicants for citizenship.

An agency of the Ministry of National Security, PICA is responsible for the processing of applications for citizenship as well as for the renunciation and reinstatement of citizenship.

