



Statement by

the Hon. Minister of Caymanian Employment and Immigration

on the Intended Amendment to the Caymanian Protection Act
(2022 Revision) in Regard to Advertising Requirements

Second Meeting of the 2026-2027 Session of Parliament

Mr. Speaker, I rise to advise this Honourable House and the people of the Cayman Islands of an adjustment the Government intends to make to the job advertising requirements associated with work permit applications.

When the Immigration (Transition) (Amendment and Validation) Act, 2025 was developed, one of the objectives was to strengthen the process for identifying Caymanians and other persons already legally and ordinarily resident in the Cayman Islands who may be available and qualified to fill a vacancy before an employer seeks to employ a work permit holder. Strengthening this process was prioritised in order to maximize opportunities for Caymanians to be hired in the

first instance, and to be trained and promoted up to more senior positions throughout their careers.

Accordingly, following the commencement of the Act, employers have been required to advertise a vacancy for 21 days through the WORC Jobs Portal and in a local newspaper or other prescribed media before submitting a work permit application. This requirement was intended to provide greater transparency around available employment opportunities and to ensure that Caymanians have a meaningful opportunity to see and apply for vacancies.

However, when legislation no longer serves the purpose for which it was created, and when research, evidence and stakeholder engagement demonstrate that a change is necessary, our responsibility as legislators is to listen, to act and, where necessary, to amend the law.

We have heard from employers about the administrative and financial challenges associated with the current advertising process. We have also heard from job seekers about the importance of ensuring that genuine employment opportunities are accessible and that the system operates efficiently and transparently.

Importantly, our engagement has also produced a change in position from employers themselves. During our initial consultations, employers expressed reluctance to commit advertising funds directly to Government. Following further

discussions and continued engagement, employers have now indicated that they would prefer an arrangement where the required advertising contribution is paid directly to Government.

That is precisely why consultation matters.

One of the clearest areas of feedback has been the requirement surrounding employment advertisements under the Caymanian Protection Law.

The legislation was created with an important objective: to ensure that Caymanians have a fair opportunity to access employment opportunities. That principle remains fundamental. However, our responsibility is also to ensure that the mechanisms we use to achieve that objective remain effective, practical and fit for purpose.

Based on the research, evidence and feedback received through our stakeholder engagements, it has become clear that the current advertising requirements need to be reconsidered.

The Government has listened.

Mr. Speaker, I made a commitment to listen to employers, to listen to job seekers and to make the changes necessary to improve our employment system. I intend to keep that commitment.

When our Ministry and its departments are guided by research, facts and the experiences of the people we serve, and that evidence demonstrates that a particular provision of legislation is no longer fit for purpose, our responsibility is not simply to acknowledge the problem.

Our responsibility is to come to this Honourable House and change it.

That is what this amendment represents.

We are not abandoning the protection of Caymanians. We are strengthening the employment framework by ensuring that the legislation reflects today's labour market, today's technology and the realities faced by employers and job seekers.

It is our policy that Employers will continue to advertise vacancies on the WORC Jobs Portal for at least 21 days. They must also still meet the recruitment and reporting requirements, including showing that Caymanian applicants were given fair consideration; Caymanians also can exercise their ability to rebut employer comments regarding any unsuitability observations, allowing decision makers to be better informed of both employer and jobseeker viewpoints.

Accordingly, Government intends to amend the legislation so that the statutory advertising requirement will be centred on the WORC Jobs Portal. Employers will be required to post the relevant vacancy on the Portal, where it will remain advertised for 21 days before the relevant work permit application can be submitted.

We recognise that not every jobseeker uses the internet. WORC will provide in-person help to search and apply for vacancies at various districts and we are considering that the Government will transition to producing a weekly printed

listing of jobs that are being advertised on portal, continuing to provide a printed alternative but directing the Caymanian job seekers towards the job portal and employment services teams.

To support this approach, Government will implement a modest fee associated with publishing an advertisement on the WORC Jobs Portal. Importantly, this fee will not only support the operation of the Portal, but will also be used to facilitate the printed publication of a consolidated list of vacancies advertised on the Portal.

This means that employers will no longer be required to separately arrange and pay for an individual newspaper advertisement for each vacancy. Instead, the Government will use the revenue from the Portal advertising fee to ensure that the vacancies being advertised on the Portal are also made available to the public through a printed newspaper.

Mr. Speaker, this approach is intended to strike an appropriate balance. It reduces the administrative and financial burden on employers while ensuring that Caymanians continue to have access to employment opportunities through both a centralised online platform and a traditional printed medium.

The WORC Jobs Portal will provide a single, centralised location where Caymanians can search for available employment opportunities, while the publication of the consolidated vacancy list in a local newspaper will provide an additional avenue through which persons can identify available jobs.

Mr. Speaker, The objective remains the same: to ensure that Caymanians have meaningful access to employment opportunities while creating an employment system that is efficient, transparent and responsive to the needs of our economy.

This Government listened and will continue to listen.

We will continue to engage with employers, employees, job seekers and other stakeholders.

And where the evidence tells us that the law needs to change, we will have the courage and responsibility to make that change.

Mr. Speaker, this is about keeping our legislation fit for purpose, keeping our commitments to the people we serve, and ensuring that our employment system works for Caymanians and for the businesses that contribute to the strength of our economy.

The Ministry will continue to engage with employers, Caymanian job seekers and other stakeholders as these changes are developed and implemented, and will monitor the effectiveness of the revised arrangements to ensure that the system continues to meet its intended objectives.