



PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION NO. 41
Answered on 2 October 2026
Second Meeting 2026-2027 Session – Third Sitting

**PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION
ASKED BY**

MR. ROY TATUM
ELECTED MEMBER FOR RED BAY

TO

THE HON. ISAAC RANKINE MINISTER
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT & INNOVATION

QUESTION:

Can the Honourable Minister say how does the Government determine whether its social assistance programmes are improving the lives and circumstances of recipients and their families?

ANSWER:

Mister Speaker, I rise today to address this Honourable House in response to the Parliamentary Question submitted by the Member from Red Bay regarding how the Government determines whether its social assistance programmes are improving the lives and circumstances of recipients and their families.

I thank the Member for Red Bay for this important question.

The Ministry of Social Development determines the effectiveness of its social assistance programmes through a combination of assessments and reviews, service-delivery data, and analysis of whether the assistance being provided is addressing the immediate needs and circumstances of Caymanians in need of support.

However, Mister Speaker, I want to be equally clear that while my Ministry of Social Development and Innovation collects a considerable amount of data on the services delivered through the

Department of Financial Assistance and the Department of Children and Family Services, we recognise that there is more work to be done in systematically measuring longer-term outcomes.

Mister Speaker, there is an important distinction between measuring what services Government provides and measuring what changes in a person's circumstances as a result of that intervention. For example, Mister Speaker, approximately 1,800 households, representing approximately 3,000 individuals, currently receive critical financial assistance to help meet basic needs such as rent, food and utilities, at a cost of approximately \$3 million per month.

The information available to the Ministry indicates that, without this assistance, approximately 600 persons would face an imminent risk of housing insecurity or homelessness; approximately 670 persons would face imminent food insecurity; approximately 160 persons would be without electricity; and approximately 94 persons would be without running water in their homes.

Those figures demonstrate the immediate protective role of Government's financial assistance programmes. They tell us whether we are helping to keep a roof over someone's head, food on the table and essential utilities connected.

But, Mister Speaker, Government also wants to be able to measure what happens beyond the immediate intervention.

Are individuals and families becoming more stable? Where circumstances permit, are recipients moving towards greater self-reliance? Are we helping people overcome barriers to employment and economic participation? Are families experiencing greater housing and food security? And, over time, are our interventions contributing to improved social mobility and quality of life?

Those are the types of outcomes that the Ministry intends to measure more systematically.

As my Chief Officer, Mrs. Nellie Pouchie, recently explained before the Public Accounts Committee, there remains work to be done across Government in developing the measurement tools and reporting practices necessary to produce reliable and meaningful outcome data.

The Ministry is therefore enhancing the reporting capabilities within the Department of Financial Assistance's client management system. This work is intended to allow us to make better use of the significant amount of data already being collected and to develop stronger indicators around areas such as stability, self-reliance and social mobility.

This approach is consistent with the Government's Strategic Policy Statement, particularly our commitment to healthy and empowered people with an improved quality of life for all ages.

It is also consistent with the wider Government transition towards outcome-based budgeting, which will increasingly require Government entities to demonstrate not simply what was spent or what services were delivered, but what difference that expenditure made in the lives of the people we serve. Mister Speaker, our objective is therefore twofold.

We must continue providing assistance to people who genuinely need it today, while at the same time developing better ways of determining whether our programmes are helping individuals and families achieve greater security, stability, independence and dignity over time.

That is the direction in which the Ministry is moving, and I believe it will ultimately allow this Honourable House and the Caymanian public to better assess the effectiveness and value of our social development programmes.

Thank you, Mister Speaker.