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Jamaica Electoral Office to Add 272 Temporary Card Renewal Center in Bid to Make Voting More Convenient

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JAMAICA -- The Electoral Office of Jamaica (EOJ) is taking several steps to make the national Voter Identification (ID) Card Renewal Exercise easier and more convenient for electors.

Speaking at a recent Jamaica's Government Information Service, Think Tank, Deputy Director of Elections, Earl Simpson, said that 272 temporary card-renewal centers will be established to operate alongside the 73 constituency offices.

There will be extended opening hours, with the constituency offices to operate from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Thursday, and from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Fridays. The renewal centres will be opened from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday to Thursday and

from 9:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m. on Fridays.

All constituency offices and voter ID renewal centres will be open on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., until further notice.

“We have currently recruited over 220 temporary workers, who will assist us in the ID card renewal process,” said Mr. Simpson.

“These temporary persons are currently being trained, along with our permanent staff, to collect the data for the ID card renewal process. They will be trained in all areas of the exercise that we plan to do and how to use the systems that we will be using to identify the elector,” he added.

The EOJ is also making provision for persons who are unable to visit a centre due to incapacity.

“For electors who are unable, by themselves, to reach any of the constituency offices or ID card renewal centres, all you need to do is to ask a relative or someone that is close to you to collect a form from one of our constituency offices. Then make a request to the Returning Officer to have your renewal done at your home or wherever you are located,” said Mr. Simpson.

As it relates to the replacement of lost cards, Director of Elections, Glasspole Brown, said that while the cost is normally \$2,000, “the elector who loses his or her card and can wait until the renewal exercise is complete, can get a new card free of cost”.

The cost will also be applicable if the elector requires the card before the new voter IDs are issued.

The renewal exercise will begin November 4, and holders of cards issued 2015 and earlier are advised to visit any EOJ constituency office or voter ID card renewal centre to begin the process.

While all voters will be identified by fingerprint, persons are being advised to take along their existing voter ID cards to help make the process faster.

Persons with cards issued between 2016 and 2019 do not have to visit an EOJ office, as their cards will be reprinted. Those persons will be notified when the cards are ready.

The EOJ has advised that the exercise will cost approximately \$600 million and the first phase is expected to last for three months, after which an evaluation will be conducted.