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PRODUCTIE 16

IRION: TAX REFORM MEETING is stimulating discussion

PHILIPSBURG--Finance Minister Ardwell Irion said on Wednesday that his meeting with Parliament on tax reform on Monday is garnering the attention he was hoping for - stimulating discussions in the community.

"I see that the meeting of Parliament this week, [that-Ed.] the real estate topic was especially one that was very popular recently and I

realise that our plan is actually working - it was also to cause a discussion in the community, as also part of the tax reform was to meet stakeholders to have discussions and where the community also discuss with their representatives in Parliament going forward."

He defended his position to not impose any property tax on local residents, but insisted that non-residents

who benefit must pay their fair share.

Irion was sent an electronic article where a realtor gave his position on the issue, and Irion was able to gauge the responses. He said residents primarily felt that it was time that non-residents pay their fair share of taxes.

"When I first came back home from college, I specifically asked a realtor also, as I was looking to buy a

home, why the housing market is so expensive and he said we can sell a house for US \$250,000, but if there is a demand from outside of St. Maarten from the US and Canada where persons are going to pay double the price than what the locals are going to pay, we are going to go where the demand is. So why shouldn't they [non-residents - Ed.] pay their fair share?" Irion asked.

"I believe that everyone on the island should be paying their fair share. Residents and non-residents - and this is one way that we were looking to make sure that they [non-residents] also pay their fair share."

As it relates to sustainable tax reforms, Irion said a report was received from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in April 2021. The mission reviewed various tax-reform ideas, including the introduction of a general consumption tax broadening the general tax base and reducing tax rates and introducing a financial transaction tax replacing the current tax system.

"The mission recommends enforcing the existing current property tax and introducing taxing of casinos and winnings. Since receiving this report my staff and my cabinet have continued discussion on the subject regarding the real estate or the property tax.

"In our discussions with the TWO [Temporary Work Organisation] the possibility of differentiating between residents and non-residents as it pertains to taxing properties was highlighted and it was confirmed that making a distinction and treating the groups differently within the scope of the proposed tax is possible and is actually being done in Bonaire, for example, where there is no tax on immovable properties for residents for their

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Payroll support portal to open Sept. 7-30

PHILIPSBURG--Businesses will be able to apply for St. Maarten Stimulus and Relief Plan (SSRP) payroll support for the months of August and September when the portal opens on September 7.

Finance Minister Ardwell Irion said the portal will close on September 30. He said also that the process started on Wednesday this

week to payout payroll support for the months of May, June and July.

The minister said there had been a backlog for income and unemployment support and efforts are being made to iron these out this week so that this can also be paid out.

He reminded that SSRP ends in September as it is only budgeted to Septem-

ber 2021.

Payroll support is to support businesses that are facing revenue losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic and to assist in the prevention of layoffs. Eligible employers receive payroll support for their employees. This Payroll Support Plan is to ensure job retention and create a buffer for the increasing economic impact.

DH 3/9 Sept 12021

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UNEMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

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Login to Unemployment Portal
(<http://forms.ssrp.sx/form.aspx?v=yEnEr20Y5j>)

COVID-19 Unemployment Support

With no formal unemployment insurance, and only limited social assistance and anti-poverty measures, the capacity of the government of St. Maarten to cushion the impact of unemployment and reduced incomes in low-income households is constrained at a time of increased demand for social assistance to support consumption smoothing. Fiscal space to strengthen the social protection system is likely to remain limited over the medium term in light of the significant hurricane budget deficits that still exist.

In collaboration with the World Bank, the Ministry of VSA developed a scenario model to estimate the impact of the COVID-19 virus on St. Maarten's unemployment. If

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Download the full Stimulus & Relief Plan
(<https://www.ssrp.sx/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SSRP-RELIEF-STIMULUS-PLAN-ST.-MAARTEN-CONDENSED-APRIL-20-2020.pdf>)
PDF (800kb)

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payroll support isn't provided to assist in reducing mass lay-offs, the model projects unemployment for approximately 5000 persons within the next 3 months.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (HTTPS://WWW.SSRP.SX/TRAININGS/) NEWS (HTTPS://WWW.SSRP.SX/NEWS/)

In addition to the established social assistance which will continue to be provided a COVID-19 specific Unemployment Support Program has been developed. In a scenario in which payroll support is provided further limiting and reducing lay-offs, ANG 1150 will be provided to persons who become unemployed due to COVID-19.

The St. Maarten Development Fund is the executing entity.



Request Chamber Excerpt Online
(<http://www.chamberofcommerce.sx//>)

How much COVID-19 Unemployment Support am I eligible for?

What are the criteria for eligibility for COVID-19 Unemployment Support?

How can I apply for COVID-19 Unemployment Support as a result of COVID-19?

What if I can't prove unemployment as a result of COVID-19?

When can I start applying for "COVID-19 Unemployment Support"?

What if I don't have a valid local bank account number?

Application Steps

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Step 1: Prepare Documents



Provide digital copies of the following documents:
(<https://www.ssrp.sx/>)

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ([HTTPS://WWW.SSRP.SX/TRAININGS/](https://www.ssrp.sx/trainings/))

SUPPORT ▾

1. Valid St. Maarten ID or Passport
2. Your ORIGINAL Dismissal Letter (on Company letterhead with Company Stamp)
3. Your last pay slip.

RESOURCES ▾

NEWS ([HTTPS://WWW.SSRP.SX/NEWS/](https://www.ssrp.sx/news/))

Q (SEARCH) (F) (FACEBOOK) (TWITTER) (LINKEDIN)

If you do not have a digital copy of the above documents, please use a scanner or your mobile phone to take a photo of said documents. Ensure that the quality of the documents (scanned, digital and photo images) are legible and clearly identifies the information required.

Step 2: Online Form

Once you have obtained all of your digital documents (Step 1), please proceed to complete the online form, whereby document upload instructions will follow.

Complete Online Form (<http://forms.ssrp.sx/form.aspx?v=yEnEr20Y5j>)

By signing and submitting the application, the applicant hereby acknowledges and accepts that all information provided is truthful and accurate and is used to determine applicant's employment and income status due to COVID-19. The provided information cannot be deduced as the Government's acknowledgement of compliance by the (former) employer to the Civil Code (Labor Laws), Dismissal Ordinance or any other legislation. Consequently, no rights may be derived and no liability is accepted by Government for losses arising from the application.

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SUPPORT ▾

RESOURCES ▾ NEWS ([HTTPS://WWW.SSRP.SX/NEWS/](https://www.ssrp.sx/news/))



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- Income Support
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- COVID-19 Unemployment Support
(<https://www.ssrp.sx/unemployed/>)
- Tax Extension
(<https://www.ssrp.sx/payrollsupport/t>)
- News (<https://www.ssrp.sx/news/>)

SOAB gives positive report for
SSRP income, unemployment
programmes
(<https://www.ssrp.sx/2020/10/06/s>
gives-positive-report-for-ssrp-
income-unemployment-
programmes/)
OCTOBER 6, 2020

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(<https://www.facebook.com/SXMGOV/>)

(<http://www.sintmaartengov.org/Pages/c>)

REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE PREPARED
(<https://www.ssrp.sx/2020/04/05/>
APRIL 5, 2020

MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF
PARLIAMENT SALARY
REDUCTION
(<https://www.ssrp.sx/2020/04/05/>
and-members-of-parliament-
salary-reduction/)
APRIL 5, 2020

