

Ms. Patrice De Sormeaux and Ms. Carlene Williams
Directors
Works Credit Union Co-operative Society Limited

July 3, 2025

Ms. Charmaine Mc Millan
The Commissioner for Co-operative Development
Ministry of Youth Development and National Service
Co-operative Development Division
Level 3, AMBA Building,
St. Vincent Street
PORT OF SPAIN

Attention: Mr. Jerome Chambers, Executive Manager

Subject: Request for Urgent Review of Suspension Action Initiated Against the President of Works Credit Union

Dear Ms. Mc Millan,

We write in our capacities as Directors of the Board of Works Credit Union Co-operative Society Limited to formally request your urgent intervention in relation to a suspension action initiated by the Supervisory Committee against the sitting President of the Society, Ms. Dawn de Souza.

On July 2, 2025, correspondence was issued by the Secretary of the Supervisory Committee, Ms. Liza Sampson, to the Board of Directors - excluding the President - advising that suspension proceedings had commenced against her. The correspondence further stated that a Special General Meeting would be convened within thirty (30) days to present the reasons for the suspension to the membership and to allow them to decide whether the suspension should be upheld.

Upon review of the circumstances and the Bye-Laws of the Society, we respectfully submit that the actions taken by the Supervisory Committee are procedurally flawed and without proper authority.

1. Improper Interpretation of Supervisory Committee Powers

The Supervisory Committee appears to rely on **Bye-Law 22.2(iv)**, which states:

"By the unanimous vote of all its members, if it deems such action to be necessary to the proper conduct of the affairs of the Society, suspend or reinstate any Board or Committee member(s), and shall have convened a Special General Meeting within thirty (30) days to act on such suspension. The members present at that Meeting may by a majority vote, sustain such suspension and remove such Board or Committee member(s) or reinstate such member(s)."

While this provision allows the Committee to impose a suspension in urgent or exceptional circumstances, it clearly anticipates that the final decision rests with the membership at a Special General Meeting. Importantly, it does not override the expectation of fair process before a suspension is enforced - particularly for elected officers.

In this instance, the President was suspended without any opportunity to respond. The clause cannot reasonably be interpreted as granting the Committee unchecked authority to impose a suspension without observing the basic principles of natural justice. Doing so effectively prejudices the matter and presents the membership with a decision to ratify an action already taken, rather than to genuinely consider it.

2. Suspension Without Prior Hearing Breaches Natural Justice

The Supervisory Committee suspended the President without first giving her an opportunity to respond to any concerns. While Bye-Law 22.2(iv) permits the Committee to suspend a Board or Committee member by unanimous vote, it does not authorize such action without following fair process. It is our understanding that the President was not afforded a chance to respond before the suspension took effect.

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The Committee further indicated that a Special General Meeting would be convened within thirty (30) days to discuss the suspension and to seek the membership's approval to uphold it. However, this approach is fundamentally flawed. **Bye-Law 12.6(v)** clearly states:

"No person may be present or vote at any meeting of the Society when any matter is being decided in which he has a direct or indirect interest."

As the subject of the suspension, Ms. de Souza is prohibited from attending the very meeting where her case will be discussed and decided upon. As a result, the membership will be asked to make a determination without hearing her side of the story, which is fundamentally unfair and contrary to the principles of natural justice.

3. Governance Risks and Right of Appeal

We also raise concern over the governance and legal risks associated with Board decisions made during this suspension period, especially as a reconvened Board meeting is scheduled for **July 3, 2025 at 3:00pm**. The timing of the suspension raises concerns that the action may have been intended to exclude the President from participating in critical deliberations.

Finally, **Bye-Law 5.4(k)** provides members the right to appeal where there has been a denial of a fair hearing or where the procedures followed are contrary to the principles of natural justice. We believe that threshold has been met.

Request for the Commissioner's Intervention

In light of the foregoing, we respectfully request that your Office:

1. Review the legality of the suspension action taken by the Supervisory Committee;
2. Issue guidance or direction as to the proper process for initiating suspension or disciplinary action against elected officers; and
3. Suspend the effect of the suspension action until a proper and fair hearing is held in accordance with the Bye-Laws.

Please find attached the correspondence issued by the Supervisory Committee for your review.

We thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and remain available to provide any further information you may require.

Co-operatively yours,



Patrice De Sormeaux
Director



Carlene Williams
Director

CC: The Supervisory Committee, Works Credit Union
The Board of Directors, Works Credit Union