

PUBLIC ENTITY NEWSLETTER



Uplift, Defend, Transform: Celebrating Social Work Month 2026

Throughout March, the Social Services Unit of the Community Development and Culture Department and ZJCN marked Social Work Month with community events designed to highlight their vital role and services.

This year's theme of "Uplift, Defend, Transform" reflects the depth and diversity of social work. It represents the many facets of a profession that goes far beyond a single issue or service area, with social workers dedicating time to creating meaningful, lasting change while supporting the overall well-being of the community.



An open house was hosted at the Water Rock Center, alongside a pop-up event in Windwardside at Breadline Plaza. These events created welcoming spaces for residents to connect directly with the team, learn more about the support available, and build stronger relationships within the community.



With the closing of Social Work Month, we extend our appreciation to the teams at the Social Services Unit and ZJCN for their continued hard work and dedication. If you need to reach out to a social worker, please contact them via socialwork@sabagov.nl or 416 3053.

A key focus this month was also raising awareness and addressing common misconceptions about social work. The team launched a campaign to clarify their roles, and emphasize that social services are accessible to people from all walks of life. They also highlighted important aspects of their profession, including counseling services and the strict ethical standards they uphold, such as client confidentiality.



Public Entity Saba appoints Head of Cabinet

Public Entity Saba has recently appointed Devi van Groningen, formerly Head of Legal Affairs, as Head of the Cabinet. This addition comes at a pivotal moment, as the Cabinet will, amongst other tasks, assist with the transition between governors and the onboarding of the new Governor who will take office in July 2026.

What is the Cabinet of the Governor?

The main role of the Cabinet is to assist the governor with his or her governor tasks, of which there are numerous. The Head of the Cabinet is a strategic advisor of the governor, and department head of the staff within the cabinet. The department falls under the Island Secretary.

Before having a head of the cabinet, the cabinet was already involved with governor's tasks through the Assistant to the Governor, Lucia Woods. These include the issuing of event permits and operational licenses, naturalizations, certificates of good conduct, and planning meetings with the governor.

Head of the Cabinet - Good governance

Last year, the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Affairs made funds available to strengthen governors' cabinets of Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba, and for projects on good governance and integrity, which are a responsibility of the governor. Unlike the other islands, Saba did not have a head of the cabinet and advising of the governor has been a shared responsibility throughout the organization.



The first year in this role is partially dedicated as a quartermaster phase, with some projects having already begun. This has included the implementation of the integrity plans with the recently appointed quartermaster for integrity, and a project with special BZK funding for the strengthening of the boards of foundations and government companies on island. This program, in cooperation with crMLINK, will first take inventory, including compliance scans and interviews, to gain insight into the current situation for organizations. Educational training will then follow based on the gaps identified, with the goal of assisting boards to address limited capacity, role divisions and reporting obligations. Another project will be focused on democratic education, together with the Island Registrar.

The role will take further shape in the coming year, and will include topics such as:

- The national and a local good governance agenda
- Administrative decision-making
- Protocol
- Representation for visiting delegations
- General strategic topics
- Cabinet affairs
- Government companies, from the shareholder role
- Integrity
- Role of governor in the Island Council and the Executive Council
- Powers of the governor
- Democracy and citizenship
- Elections

For any questions, please reach out to devi.van.groningen@sabagov.nl



Working Together Towards a Safe and Respectful Work Environment

With various steps being made towards an integrity framework at Public Entity Saba, we also wish to encourage the wider community to build awareness on social safety and what that means for an organization. This information is not only meant for PES, but can be applicable for other organizations such as private businesses, NGOs, schools, etc.

It is possible that employees might sometimes be confronted with undesirable behavior: **Bullying, Discrimination, (sexual) Harassment and Aggression.** Such behavior is often the result of a lack of *social and psychological safety* within an organization.

Social safety refers to the extent to which employees feel respected, accepted, and protected against undesirable behavior, and feel free to be themselves, to speak up, and to collaborate, without fear of negative consequences. In the workplace, social safety means, for example, that:



- Everyone feels treated with dignity and equality and can speak up;
- Managers actively contribute to an open and safe culture;
- There are clear standards, codes of conduct, and reporting procedures;
- Employees can report concerns, mistakes, or misconduct without fear of retaliation.

Social safety is not only about the absence of incidents, but above all about a culture of trust, respect, and accountability.

Psychological safety refers to the extent to which employees feel free—and therefore experience no fear—to be themselves at work, to make mistakes, and to speak up to colleagues, even when those colleagues have a different opinion, role, and/or identity. Speaking up includes expressing differing opinions and ideas, as well as holding one another accountable for undesirable behavior. It is about openness within clear boundaries and professional standards.



In the workplace, a psychologically safe environment means, for example, that employees feel able to:

- Express their opinions, even when they differ;
- Ask questions or request help;
- Report mistakes and learn from them;
- Give and receive feedback;
- Discuss concerns or risks openly.

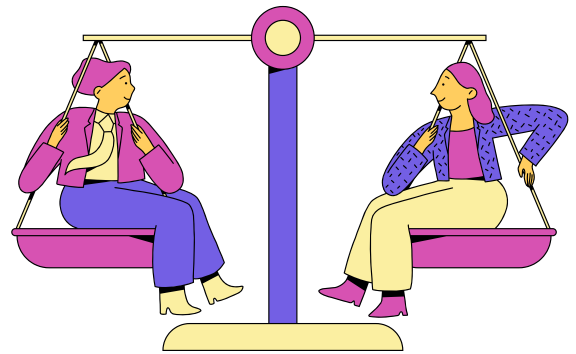
How can you contribute to a socially and psychologically safe working environment?

1. Address behavior directly

- **Speak up:** If you observe unsafe behavior such as: gossip, inappropriate jokes, or bullying, address the person involved directly.
- **Lead by example:** Be aware of your own behavior, communication style, and the influence you have on the working atmosphere.
- **Report unsafe situations:** Identify and report unsafe situations or undesirable behavior immediately, even if it does not affect you personally.

2. Promote respectful communication

- **Listen actively and openly:** Create space for different opinions and perspectives so everyone feels heard.
- **Ask questions before acting.**
- **Be inclusive:** Involve colleagues in conversations and decision-making, regardless of their role or background.
- **Respect boundaries:** Accept that everyone has different boundaries and respect them.



3. Build psychological safety

- **Make mistakes discussable:** View mistakes as learning opportunities rather than failures. This lowers the threshold for openness.
- **Show empathy:** Pay attention to colleagues' well-being. Ask how someone is doing, especially if you notice they are not feeling well.
- **Appreciate feedback:** Accept and value it when others address you about your behavior.
- **Give a compliment occasionally:** A compliment is more than a kind remark; it is a form of recognition—I see you and what you do. When someone receives a compliment, they feel valued and heard.

How do you give a compliment?

Giving a good compliment starts with being sincere. Only say something you truly mean, because authenticity makes your words more powerful. Be specific by clearly explaining what you appreciate instead of using general phrases like “good job.” Finally, make it personal: look the person in the eye and use their name. A personal and thoughtful compliment makes people feel seen and valued.

LET'S TAKE TIME TO
Compliment
EACH OTHER



Airport Upgrades Planned for 2026

Over the past year, there have been several projects completed at the airport, including upgrading of the taxiway edge lighting, with more upgrades planned and started already for 2026. While some of these improvements are visible, many take place behind the scenes to ensure that daily flights, emergency services, and nighttime medical evacuations can continue safely.

For 2026, the tower windows have been replaced ahead of the hurricane season to help strengthen the tower's resilience. An emergency escape staircase was also installed at the tower, serving as an important additional safety option.



During the first half of the year, the runway shoulders will be resurfaced and a paved air taxi route will be created to allow helicopters to move directly to the helipad, improving operational efficiency.

Alongside infrastructure improvements, the airport continues to invest in staff training and development. Airport personnel participate in online training programs through Airports Council International (ACI), strengthening knowledge in airport operations, safety, and security practices. Further training initiatives will continue throughout 2026.

Looking ahead, the upcoming Mount Scenery project will involve unique helicopter operations, whereby a Skycrane helicopter is expected to be temporarily based at our airport for several weeks to support the project. These operations are outside the airport's normal helicopter activity and require additional planning and coordination. The airport is working closely with the Ministry of Defense and other partners to ensure that the operations are conducted safely. The project represents a rare and historical operation for Saba.

Due to the Mount Scenery project and the runway shoulder works, portions of the parking lot may need to be used for the temporary storage of construction materials and equipment. This may result in parking shortages and the airport asks for the public's patience and understanding during this period while these important improvement projects are carried out.

Together, these efforts help ensure that the airport continues to operate safely, efficiently, and reliably for our island.

Upcoming Events

- **.BQ Cybersecurity Convention**
April 7
Eugenius Johnson Center, Windwardside
KPCN
- **SSS School Games (Saba)**
April 11 & 12
Department of Public Health & Sports
- **Art in the Park**
April 12
Harry L. Johnson Museum
Saba Tourist Bureau

Art in the Park

ART WORKSHOPS



LIVE PAINTING | SUSAN TENHOLT | \$15

Join Susan for a relaxing and creative outdoor painting session. Participants will walk around the park to find a plant, view, or scene that inspires them and paint it from life. This workshop focuses on observing nature and capturing simple still life or scenery in the moment.



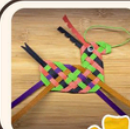
HANDMADE PAPER | KELSEY PIKE | \$15

Join Kelsey Pike for a hands-on handmade paper workshop. Turn recycled materials into 10-20 unique sheets using simple tools while learning the full process from pulp to press. Leave with your own sustainable paper and the skills to keep creating at home.



ACRYLIC PAINT | MARY THIELMAN | \$15

Spend creative time with Mary Thielman and explore acrylic painting on an 8 x 10 canvas. You'll learn simple techniques while creating your own unique artwork. All materials are provided, making it perfect for beginners and art lovers alike.



WEAVING | MARIE DE SABA | \$15

Join Marie Petit for a creative afternoon outdoors! Adults can try bird weaving, crafting delicate woven birds, while kids aged 10 and up can have fun making reindeer weavings. Bring your imagination and enjoy a hands-on art session in the park.

