****

**Template City Resolution**

**Declare Racism a Public Health Crisis**

**Add Local Data to this Resolution**

The draft city/county resolution below includes examples racist policies/practices, information about how racist policies/practices are connected to disparities in health and social outcomes, and example of disparities in social and health outcomes.

Before sharing with partners and city leaders, consider looking into disparities in social and health outcomes specific to your city/county. Local data is indicated below in **orange**. You can gather local information in your community health needs assessment for this information, or download a [Health Equity Report Card for your county](https://salud-america.org/health-equity-report-card/). In the Report Card, you’ll visually see local maps, gauges, and data that reveal the very inequities that are driving health disparities in your community. Data cover housing, transportation, education, food, environmental issues, socioeconomic status, and more.

**A Template City/County Resolution to Declare Racism a Public Health Crisis (with a Commitment to Action)**

[RESOLUTION/PROCLAMATION NO.]

[DATE]

[SPONSORS]

DRAFT [RESOLUTION/PROCLAMATION] Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis in [CITY/COUNTY]

**WHEREAS,** [CITY/COUNTY MISSION]

**WHEREAS,** Black, Indigenous, Latino and other people of color face economic injustice, social deprivation, and health inequities because racist policies, regulations, and laws created opportunity for some and barriers for others; and

**WHEREAS,** structural racism refers to the totality of ways in which societies foster racial discrimination through mutually reinforcing systems of housing, education, employment, earnings, benefits, credit, transportation, media, health care, and criminal justice that in turn reinforce discriminatory beliefs, values, and distribution of resources; and

**WHEREAS,** the American Public Health Association finds racism to be a barrier to health equity and has named racism a driving force of how the social determinants of health are distributed. The social determinants of health—defined as the social, environmental, and economic factors that influence health, including employment, housing, education, access to health care, nutritious food, and public safety—are known to impact life-long health outcomes beginning even before birth; and

**WHEREAS,** racism operates on systemic, institutional, and interpersonal levels, all of which operate throughout time and across generations. For example, within the past 100 years, racism was embedded in the following housing and transportation policies:

* segregating public housing;
* investing in suburbs for whites only;
* zoning that separates single-family homes from multifamily dwellings;
* requiring minimum lot sizes or square footage to build in certain neighborhoods;
* enforcing discriminatory mortgage lending practices, known as “redlining”;
* destroying low-income, minority neighborhoods for highways connecting white-majority suburbs to urban areas;
* destroying low-income, minority neighborhoods in the name of urban renewal;
* defunding transit;
* funding mortgage interest deductions; and

**WHEREAS,** the non-partisan National Partnership for Women and Families has found that in the United States, health and racism are inextricably linked, creating a harmful impact on individuals and communities of color, including unequal access to quality education, employment, livable wages, healthy food, stable and affordable housing, and safe and sustainable communities; and

**WHEREAS,** racist practices resulted in inequitable, depressed communities, which continue to negatively impact:

* educational achievement for Black and Latino residents, who are more likely to live in areas with underperforming school systems;
* access to nutritious food for Black and Latino residents, who are more likely to live in areas with an abundance of fast food and without grocery stores;
* economic security for Black and Latino residents, who are more likely to live in neighborhoods with less access to traditional banking institutions and high numbers of payday lenders;
* rates of environmentally-based health problems for Black and Latino residents, such as lead poisoning and asthma due to living in neighborhoods with older buildings and greater proximity to pollution causing industries, resulting in rates of chronic diseases, including asthma, which are significantly higher in communities of color;
* rates of infant and maternal mortality for Black mothers and children, due to living in geographical areas with less access to healthcare, and resulting in mortality rates higher than that for White infants; and

**WHEREAS,** on average, white households have nearly seven times the wealth of Black families and five times the wealth of Latino families; and

**WHEREAS,** across the nation’s 100 largest metropolitan areas, low-income renters face higher housing- and transportation-cost burdens than middle-income renters, but fewer opportunities, thus face worse child development and health and reduced earnings as adults; and

**WHEREAS,** [%] of Black and [%] of Latino renters in [CITY/COUNTY] spend more than 30% of their household income on housing, as compared to [%] of white homeowners, and [%] of Black and [%] of Latino residents in [CITY/COUNTY] live in census block groups where transportation costs are 23% or more of household income.

**WHEREAS,** people of color face reduced salary for the same work and reduced rates of promotion despite similar performance evaluations. Among people employed full-time in [CITY/COUNTY], white males earn nearly [#] as much as Latino females; and

**WHEREAS,** in [CITY/COUNTY], the average median household income is [$] for Black households and [$] for Latino households, compared to [$] for non-Latino whites; and

**WHEREAS,** in [CITY/COUNTY], [%] of Black and [%] of Latino residents live in poverty, as compared to [%] of whites.

**WHEREAS,** in [CITY/COUNTY], [%] of Latino residents 25 or older have less than high schooleducation attainment, as compared to [%] of whites.

**WHEREAS,** Latinos are [%] of the population in [CITY/COUNTY] but account for [%] of residents aged 25 and up that don’t have a high school diploma; and

**WHEREAS,** in [CITY/COUNTY], [%] of Latino and [%] of Black residents 25 or older have a bachelor’s degree or higher, as compared to [%] of whites.

**WHEREAS,** in [CITY/COUNTY], [%] of Black and [%] of Latino residents do not have health insurance coverage, as compared to [%] of whites.

**WHEREAS,** in [CITY/COUNTY], [%] of Latinos and [%] of Black residents delayed health care in the past 12 months because of cost, compared to [%] for whites; and

**WHEREAS,** across all [CITY/COUNTY] public schools, an average of [%] of Black students and [%] of Latino students experienced suspension, as compared to [%] of white students; and

**WHEREAS,** Black residents make up [%] of the total number of people involved in [#] recorded incidents of officer use of lethal force, but make up less than [%] of the [CITY/COUNTY] population.

**WHEREAS,** the police brutality and murders against Black citizens across the United States, including recent victims George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade and countless others, including, [NAME(S)] in [YOUR CITY/COUNTY], have contributed to an environment that is persistently unsafe for our Black communities, serving to uphold both systemic inequities and psychological burdens that worsened this public health crisis; and

**WHEREAS,** more than 100 studies have linked racism to negative health outcomes, including research supporting that the cumulative experience of racism throughout one’s life can induce chronic stress and increase susceptibility to chronic health conditions that lead to otherwise preventable deaths. The American College of Physicians has found that Blacks in particular are at risk of being subjected to discrimination and violence against them because of their race, endangering them and even costing them their lives. The U.S. National Institutes of Health reports that multiple studies suggest that experiences of racism or discrimination raise the risk of emotional and physical health problems, including depression, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and even death. The American Psychological Association, the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Family Physicians have declared hate crimes a public health concern. The Surgeon General of California found that racism is a risk factor for toxic stress, a root cause of some of the most harmful, persistent and expensive health challenges facing our nation; and

**WHEREAS,** experiencing racism can increase stress hormones and lead to activation of the immune and inflammatory systems; changes in brain structure; elevation of blood pressure and blood sugar; and changes in how genes are read, which are associated with increased risk for numerous mental and physical chronic health conditions, like heart disease, cancer, asthma, stroke, Alzheimer’s, diabetes and suicide. Without buffering care, experiencing racism can alter/impair several regions of the brain and inhibit the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for attention, judgement and impulse control, and increase risk for learning and behavior problems, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, chronic absenteeism, dropping out of high school, and involvement in the criminal justice system; and

**WHEREAS,** in [CITY/COUNTY], the teen birth rate1 for teenagers aged 15-19 is [#] per 1,000 Latino females and [#] per 1,000 Black females, compared to [#] per 1,000 white females; and

**WHEREAS,** in [CITY/COUNTY], the infant mortality rate is [#] per 1,000 Black births, compared to [#] for white births; and

**WHEREAS,** in [CITY/COUNTY], [%] of Latinos and [%] of Black adults were diagnosed with diabetes, as compared to [%] of whites; and

**WHEREAS,** as of [DATE], [#] of cities have passed resolutions declaring racism a public health crisis and have committed to specific actions to dismantle racism; and

Be it [RESOLVED/PROCLAIMED] by the [CITY Councilors/COUNTY Commissioners] of [CITY/COUNTY]:

1. That we publicly acknowledge that the effects of structural racism are a public health crisis in [CITY/COUNTY], and we publicly commit to advocate for racial justice as a core element of policies, programs, and procedures; and
2. That we call upon all city and county elected officials and departments to continue, with urgency, the review of policies and procedures for the purposes of eradicating implicit and explicit racial bias and develop instead policies and procedures that build racial equity; and
3. That City/County departments should involve underserved communities in the initiation, drafting, and implementation of policy solutions to local issues related to health equity, through community-based participatory research, inclusive and representative community engagement, participatory budgeting, or public deliberation; and
4. That City/County departments should make government protocols and decisions available to the community, and ensure that policies include clear roles, responsibilities, and evaluation processes to hold government responsible for successful implementation; and
5. That City/County departments should prevent biased policy decision-making and implementation through protocols that require equity analysis o through staff training on equity, bias, and cultural sensitivity; and
6. That City/County departments should ensure racially and economically mixed neighborhoods through land-use planning, housing regulations, rental assistance programs, or school siting policies; and
7. That City/County departments should prevent housing and job displacement from driving racial and income segregation by enacting land use or affordable housing finance regulations; and
8. That City/County departments should expand the coverage and frequency of public transportation, especially in poor areas; and
9. That City/County departments should promote racially equitable economic and workforce development; and
10. That City/County departments should work with schools to confront negative stereotypes and reduce racial prejudice and discrimination through school policies and curricula that educate children about the harms of historical oppression and the value of equality and inclusion; and
11. That City/County departments should ensure equal and unbiased law enforcement and criminal justice through policies on policing practices and through training, legal system protocols, and sentencing guidelines.