

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-X

A RESOLUTION AFFIRMING THAT RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

Whereas, racism results in a structured absence of opportunity and the assigning of a person's societal value based solely on physical characteristics, such as skin color, which creates unfair disadvantages for some individuals and communities, while simultaneously creating unfair advantages for other individuals and communities, therefore preventing societies as a whole from achieving their full potential; and

Whereas, throughout the history of the United States systemic racism has manifested by acts of discrimination and oppression directed towards immigrant populations and disproportionately towards black, indigenous, and people of color communities in our country resulting in fear, anxiety, trauma, terror, and long-term physical and mental health impairments, as well as causing economic oppression for the targets of racism and acts thereof, their communities, and subsequent generations; and

Whereas, the United States Office of Disease Prevention recognizes that racial discrimination negatively impacts health outcomes; and

Whereas, people across the country have risen to protest against systemic racism and the resulting historic economic, environmental, and social injustices occurring towards people of various races and ethnicities, which continues to disproportionately affect the Black community; and

Whereas, systemic racism throughout the public and private sectors of society creates disparate outcomes in many areas of life that result in disparities in family stability, healthcare, physical and behavioral health, mental wellness, education, employment, economic development, public safety, criminal justice, incarceration, juvenile delinquency, and housing that disproportionately affects Black Americans and people of color; and

Whereas, systemic racism creates disparate outcomes in many areas of life such as housing, education, employment, economic opportunity, public safety, the criminal justice system, and physical and behavioral health; and further has led to geographic segregation that disproportionately exposes the Black community and people of color to lead poisoning, poor air quality, inadequate nutrition, and under-resourced recreational and healthcare facilities; and

Whereas, the City Council acknowledges the historic grievances held by Black Americans and the various forms of injustice that people of color have experienced for generations and further recognizes the opportunity for our City to participate in the healing process with members for our Black and Latino communities and other communities of color by acknowledging past transgressions; and

Whereas, the City Council acknowledges that systemic racism was manifested throughout the history and development of our community and region resulting in the forced dislocation of local Native American settlements in its earliest forms and in a latter form by the implied geographic

segregation of communities of color, causing disparities of access and service to be felt by these residents due to their race, color, level of education or income, educational and recreational disparities, and other such deficiencies consistent with systemic racism; and

Whereas, the City Council recognizes and respects the value of all human life and dignity, without prejudice to anyone, and further acknowledges that employee conduct requires continuous support, training, monitoring, evaluation and a careful balancing of all interests to ensure equity of access, services, and treatment for all persons, including people of color and regardless of race or ethnicity;

Whereas, across the nation, communities are coming together to address the urgent and ongoing impacts of racism on the health of our communities; and

Whereas, a growing body of literature shows that social determinants — otherwise known as the conditions in which are born and in which we live, work and play — are key drivers of health inequities; and

Whereas, policies, programs and activities of the City of Salem affect our community today and will continue to affect our community in the future, through its built environment, transportation infrastructure, locations of parks and recreation facilities, and climate action strategies; and

Whereas, our own systems, policies, practices and programs are based on a dominant culture; and

Whereas, it is the policy of the City of Salem *to eliminate discrimination based on race, religion, color, sex, marital status, familial status, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and source of income*, as encompassed in Salem Revised Code Chapter 97.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALEM, OREGON,
RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Racism is a public health crisis and further acknowledges evidence of such throughout the historic development of our city.

Section 2. The lives and experiences of Black People and people of color living in Salem matter.

Section 3. This City Council endorses the continued implementation and use of policies and practices for employee conduct and equitable treatment of all people and honors, by adoption of this Resolution, the common humanity of all people, regardless of race or ethnicity.

Section 4. Building on the City of Salem's commitment to making our community welcoming and safe for everyone, the City of Salem declares that racism is a public health crisis and commits to actively participating in the dismantling the remnants of racism in Salem by:

1. Employing an equity lens in engagement and planning processes to ensure the resulting product represents the needs of everyone in our community

2. Assessing and revising City department policies, procedures, and ordinances to ensure racial equity and accessibility are core elements.
 - 2.1. Ensure hiring practices provide greater opportunities for people of color
 - 2.2. Ensure diversity of race, age and gender within advisory boards and commissions
 - 2.3. Support community efforts to amplify issues of racism and engage with communities of color
3. Supporting Salem's Human Rights Commission and strengthening alliances with other organizations that are confronting racism and engaging actively and authentically with communities of color wherever they live.
4. Building on our learning opportunities for elected officials and employees, with a plan to provide broader training and conversation throughout the organization in 2021
5. Committing to actively participate in dismantling systemic racism and its impacts within City and endorsing policies and practices for employee conduct and equitable treatment of all people.

Section 5. The City Council will continue to, through its goodwill, dialogue, and decision-making efforts and powers, support policies that are consistent with the principles of equity of access, services, and treatment of all people regardless of race, color, or ethnicity.

Section 6. This resolution does not create any legal cause of action or modify any existing rights.

Section 7. This resolution is effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED by the City Council this ____ day of _____, 2021.

ATTEST:

City Recorder

Approved by City Attorney: _____