



# CITY OF SALEM

585 Liberty St SE  
Salem, OR 97301

## Staff Report

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File #: 21-24

Version: 1

Date: 1/25/2021

Item #: 5.c (3.2b)

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**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**THROUGH:**

**FROM:** Steve Powers, City Manager

**SUBJECT:**

Resolution affirming racism as a public health crisis

Ward(s): All Wards

Councilor(s): All Councilors

Neighborhood(s): All Neighborhoods

Result Area(s): Safe Community; Welcoming and Livable Community.

**ISSUE:**

Shall City Council adopt Resolution No. 21-3 affirming racism as a public health crisis?

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt Resolution No. 21-3 affirming racism as a public health crisis.

**SUMMARY:**

Resolution No. 21-3 affirms that racism is a public health crisis and finds:

- Racial discrimination negatively impacts health outcomes;
- Racism disproportionately impacts the long-term physical and mental health of Black people and people of color, and;
- Racism 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 people and people of color

**FACTS AND FINDINGS:**

Resolution No. 21-3 determines that racism is a public health crisis and the lives and experiences of

Black people and people of color living in Salem matter. Further, that 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 the resolution, the common humanity of all people, regardless of race or ethnicity.

The Resolution also provides that the City shall:

- Employ an equity lens in engagement and planning processes to ensure the resulting product represents the needs of everyone in our community;
- Support the Human Rights Commission and strengthen alliances with organizations that are confronting racism;
- Build on learning opportunities for elected officials and employees; and
- Commit to actively participate in dismantling system racism and its impacts within the city, and endorse policies and practices for employee conduct and equitable treatment of all people.

## **BACKGROUND:**

At the January 11, 2021 City Council meeting, Council adopted Councilor Leung's motion to direct staff to bring back a resolution for Council's consideration to declare racism as a public health crisis. The draft resolution was presented to City Council at its January 19, 2021 work session.

Courtney Knox Busch  
Strategic Initiatives Manager

Attachments:

1. Resolution No. 21-3.