



Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE MAYOR’S AFRICAN AMERICAN ADVISORY COUNCIL:

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WHEREAS, race is a social construction with no biologic basis; and

WHEREAS, racism is a social system with multiple dimensions: individual racism is internalized or interpersonal; and systemic racism is institutional or structural, and is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks, that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and African American community, unfairly advantages other individuals and African American community, and saps the strength of the whole social through the waste of human resources; and

WHEREAS, more than 100 studies have linked racism to worse health outcomes for African Americans including cancer, coronary heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, high infant and maternal mortality rates demonstrating that racism is the root cause of social determinants of health; and

WHEREAS, in Arkansas, the highest health disparities exist for African American and Hispanics, at every stage in the life course, and mortality rate for African American is higher than those of Whites with similar conditions; and

WHEREAS, the American Public Health Association (APHA) launched a National Campaign Against Racism; and

WHEREAS, Northwest Arkansas Council Diversity Report 2020 and Regional Strategic Plan 2018, and Walton Family Foundation Northwest Arkansas Quality of Life Survey Report 2019 states that “Fayetteville must address persistent disparities in health outcomes, and the social, economic, educational and environmental inequities that contribute to them”; and

WHEREAS, the Arkansas Minority Health Commission has adopted in 2020 the resolution “Public Health in Arkansas” and in 2019 the resolution “Arkansas Racial and Ethnic Health Disparity Study” and 2013 the resolution “Trends in Health Disparities: A Report for Arkansas” and in 2012 resolution “Health Status of African Americans and in 2012 resolution “Latino Health Report”; and

WHEREAS, public health’s responsibilities to address racism include reshaping our discourse and agenda so that we all actively engage in racial justice work; and

WHEREAS, while there is no epidemiologic definition of “crisis”, the health impact of racism clearly rises to

the definition proposed by Gales: “The problem must affect large numbers of people, it must threaten health over the long-term, and it must require the adoption of large scale solutions”; and

WHEREAS, structural racism has increased health and economic inequities for African American community, exacerbated further by the COVID-19 pandemic crisis; and

WHEREAS, the City of Fayetteville will develop a Racial Equity Action Plan and develop policies, practices and strategic investments to reverse racial inequities, eliminate institutional racism, and ensure that outcomes and opportunities for all people are no longer predictable by race; and

WHEREAS, being anti-racist means moving and speaking in ways that repair (not simply abandon) more than 500 years of racist policies and practices. Anti-racism means actively participating in dismantling racist systems and institutional practices, as well as addressing personal interpersonal acts of racism; and

WHEREAS, embodied anti-racist acknowledge that this history still lives and expresses itself through our bodies today; and

WHEREAS, the City of Fayetteville leadership is committed to ending racism and building an active, anti-racist culture in the City of Fayetteville.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS:

Section 1: That the City Council of the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas hereby declares racism is a public health emergency, the City of Fayetteville will recognize the severe impact of racism on the well-being of residents and city overall and allocate funding, staff, and additional resources to actively engage in racial equity in order to name, reverse, and repair the harm done to African Americans in this City, including the following actions:

1. The City will center the voices, work, and leadership of the communities most directly affected by said racism.
2. Collaboration between the Mayor’s African American Advisory Council, the City of Fayetteville Board of Health, and Board of Health Officer to identify health disparities and ways to positively affect health outcomes and the adoption of large-scale solutions to this public health crisis.
3. Provide support to the Fayetteville Mayor’s African American Advisory Council to conduct and implement an internal evaluation of all City policies and procedures to prioritize racial equity with specification on how policies translate into anti-racist action towards City employees, constituents, and community members.
4. Develop and implement a Racial Equity Strategic Action Plan.
5. Develop a comprehensive rapid response protocol to immediate needs and long-term work to address systemic inequities. This includes activating the City Board of Health, the Arkansas Department of Health, Washington County Health Unit, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Community Clinic, and other public facing departments to respond to community stress and trauma.
6. Advocate for relevant policies that improve health in African Americans, and supports local, state, and federal initiatives that advance social justice, while also encouraging individual advocacy to dismantle systemic racism.
7. Measure the effectiveness of City programming and the return on investment of public dollar allocations in the budget toward advancing racial equity and reporting these results annually.
8. Foster small business development, affordable housing and community-based infrastructure

serving lower income and minority citizens by working with our Community Development Block Grant resources. Attempt to reduce the number of lower income and minority citizens displaced by redevelopment of existing neighborhoods.

9. Commit to continue to increase funding public recreation resources, serving many lower income families.
10. Develop and implement an annual report with racially disaggregated data on the health of Fayetteville African Americans, including recommendations for actions to eliminate any disparities and improve overall health.
11. Build a workplace culture that promotes racialized repair, cross-cultural relationships, upholds the sacredness of caucus spaces for building community, and shifts the burden of addressing racism of African Americans.
12. Build and implement a comprehensive public safety system that address our criminal justice system that decentralizes African Americans criminalization rooted in the public health approach to keep African American community disproportionately impacted by community violence safe.
13. Support a ban on the use of chokeholds, strangleholds, and knees placed on the neck/head area on an individual as an acceptable practice for police officers absent a deadly force situation.
14. Support transparency with the community, and the City of Fayetteville will ensure officer misconduct and disciplinary history information will be provided to the public in accordance with the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.
15. Support the policy that recertification credentials may be denied for Fayetteville police officers if determined their use of deadly force was unwarranted by department policies and/or Arkansas criminal laws.
16. Support Fayetteville's City Council, Civil Service Commission, Mayor's African American Advisory Council, and the Police Chief's Advisory Council to assist the police department with accountability, transparency, and public trust.