

MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

PROCLAMATION NO. 27

Proclaiming August 2025 as Black Business Month in Multnomah County, Oregon.

Multnomah County Finds:

- A. For generations, Black businesses have made critical contributions to America's economy. Since the late 1700's, free and enslaved Black people have opened barbershops, tobacco shops, shoemaking shops, and other small businesses. Black business expanded during the "golden age" of 1900-1930. There was a wave of Black-owned businesses stemming from Jim Crow Laws segregating African Americans and forcing them to build communities separate from whites. Despite these businesses being targeted, set on fire, and vandalized, these businesses continued to rebuild and employ others.
- B. August 3rd is National Black Women's Equal Pay Day. In 2024, Black women earned only 66 cents for every dollar earned by white men, leading to a potential loss of nearly \$1 million over a 40-year career. This disparity is attributed to factors like occupational segregation, lack of pay transparency, and discrimination.
- C. Historically, Black communities have endured systematic racism, inequality, wage gaps, and violence. In 1921, one of the worst racially motivated attacks in U.S. history, the Tulsa Race Massacre, destroyed the Black-owned district of Greenwood in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Greenwood District was nationally recognized as "Black Wall Street," for its affluent African American community. The series of riots robbed Black families in Greenwood of their lives, businesses, community, and the legacy they could have left behind.
- D. Here in Multnomah County, 94 acres of land in the Albina neighborhood was taken from the Black community. This area was home to Portland's Black arts, culture, and nightlife and was taken to make room for building the I-5 freeway and Emmanuel Hospital expansion. This robbed the Black community of businesses.
- E. Despite these challenges, Black-owned businesses are a vital part of the U.S. economy, and their continued growth has the potential to create jobs, wealth, and economic opportunity for the Black community.
- F. Black or African American majority-owned firms employed roughly 1.6 million workers in 2022. Almost 26% of Black business owners were in the healthcare or social services sector.
- G. In 2024, the Black Business Association of Oregon identified 530 Black-owned businesses in Oregon. Notably, 38% of these businesses are located within 3 miles of Martin Luther King Boulevard in Multnomah County.

