

MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

PROCLAMATION NO. 29

Proclaiming September 2025 as Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in Multnomah County, Oregon.

Multnomah County Finds:

- A. Each September, Suicide Prevention Awareness Month reminds us that hope is not passive — it is created through deliberate action. This year's theme, "Creating Hope Through Positive Action," reflects our collective commitment to change the narrative on suicide. At Multnomah County, we recognize that every effort, no matter how small, can make a difference. Our prevention work continues year-round, rooted in the belief that lives can be saved through connection, compassion, and community.
- B. In FY25, our county tragically lost 22 youth to suicide. These are not just numbers — they are lives, families, and futures. Twenty-two too many. Each loss reinforces the urgent need to ensure that all young people feel seen, supported, and valued. Suicide remains the third leading cause of death among youth ages 10–24, and the 11th leading cause overall in the United States.
- C. Suicide is a complex public health crisis, shaped by social, cultural, and systemic factors. In Multnomah County, youth of color continue to experience disproportionate risk. LGBTQIA2S+ youth — particularly transgender youth — face heightened vulnerabilities, with suicide attempt rates nearly 12 times higher than their cisgender peers. Youth experiencing housing instability, abuse, foster care involvement, or poverty also face significantly increased risk. Creating hope for these communities requires targeted, culturally responsive actions.
- D. Our team's leadership with the Black Youth Suicide Prevention Coalition ("BYSPC") has continued, and this year BYSPC held a town hall with over 50 participants learning and sharing about how mental health and suicide prevention and culture align. In addition, the Behavioral Health Division applied for and received a small grant from the Association of Community Mental Health Programs to learn about and grow prevention initiatives internally that will utilize the Zero Suicide Framework model.
- E. While we celebrate progress, persistent disparities remind us that hope must be made real through equity. Suicide impacts people of all ages. Adults grappling with financial stress, health challenges, or relationship loss also carry invisible burdens. In addition to those individual burdens, the daily impacts of structural racism, the intensifying effects of climate


change, and the affordable housing crisis all contribute to ongoing mental health stressors across our community.


- F. The Multnomah County Behavioral Health Prevention Team leads programs that promote resilience and reduce isolation, such as gambling prevention, suicide prevention, and behavioral health education. Programs like Get Trained to Help equip community members with the skills to support someone in crisis — reminding us that action can be as simple as reaching out, listening, or showing up.
- G. In today's world, where crises can feel unrelenting, creating hope becomes an act of resistance. Compassion fatigue, burnout, and despair can weaken our capacity to care. But suicide prevention is not the work of a few; it is a community-wide commitment. Every conversation, every safe space, every brave act of empathy contributes to a culture of healing. Together, we can dismantle stigma and build a future where mental wellness is prioritized and supported.
- H. Our vision is bold: **Zero suicides**. Every strategy, policy, and investment should move us closer to that goal. It may seem distant, but it is not impossible. Hope lives in partnerships, in advocacy, and in the unshakeable belief that one life lost is one too many.
- I. We also honor and uplift the people doing this work every day — our workforce. Creating hope includes caring for our caregivers. The mental, emotional, and physical toll on frontline workers is real. From clinicians and educators to peer support specialists and public servants; those who care for others must also be supported with intentional resources and rest.
- J. Youth-centered initiatives remain essential, but our work must expand beyond age lines. To create lasting hope, we must strengthen the adults who shape youth environments - families, schools, communities. Bridging youth and adult wellness efforts is not only strategic, it's necessary for building a more resilient Multnomah County.
- K. Today, we are proud to be co-sponsoring Suicide Prevention Awareness Month with District 1 Commissioner Moyer.


Multnomah County Proclaims:

The month of September 2025 is proclaimed to be Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in Multnomah County, Oregon. All county residents are encouraged to increase awareness of individuals who may be struggling with challenges in their lives and "Create Hope Through Positive Action." Even the smallest efforts help create hope, and hope helps prevent suicide. There are resources to help you and those around you.

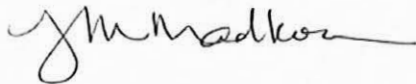
ADOPTED this 3rd day of September, 2025.


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