

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON**

PROCLAMATION NO. 2023-076

Proclaiming September 2023 as Infant Mortality Awareness Month in Multnomah County, Oregon.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

1. Multnomah County is committed to reducing infant mortality and improving the health outcomes of Black and Indigenous parents and babies through respectful community-clinical practices and interventions and has formally acknowledged racism as a public health crisis.
2. September is Infant Mortality Awareness Month, an initiative that supports and inspires people from around the nation to take action in support of the goal to improve the health and well-being of women, people capable of birth, infants, children and families.
3. Infant Mortality Awareness Month is an initiative intended to celebrate infants living beyond their first year of life.
4. Racial inequities in infant mortality rates persist among Black/African American and Native/Indigenous communities in Multnomah County and are the result of barriers in healthcare, support, employment, and community settings as well as racial and ethnic discrimination within health care systems; statistically, Black/African Americans are the only ethnic group where parental education and income do not serve as protective factors against infant mortality.
5. Multnomah County recognizes the benefits doulas and lactation counselors provide in improving birth outcomes and reducing the risk of infant mortality; significantly reducing the likelihood of preterm birth and low birth weight all while combatting the effects of racism on health during the perinatal period; and increasing breastfeeding initiation and longevity by providing educational, physical, and emotional support during pregnancy, birth, and postpartum for all birthing people.
6. Multnomah County commits to exploring how to ensure access to community based doula and lactation support for all residents regardless of insurance by building on the strengths and wisdom of our communities; raising up needed changes to support health for babies, birthing people, and caregivers of babies; and the importance of reducing racial disparities in healthcare and birth outcomes for babies.
7. National Infant Mortality Awareness Month provides opportunities for our community to get involved and support Multnomah County Health Department Parent Child Family Health, Healthy Birth Initiatives, Future Generations Collaborative, and our partners in Multnomah County; and the opportunity to encourage government agencies, community-based organizations, healthcare systems and academic institutions to work together to engage in equity efforts in their communities to eliminate disparities and overall reduce infant mortality in our County.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Proclaims:

September 2023 as **Infant Mortality Awareness Month** in Multnomah County, Oregon, in recognition and celebration of the importance of each child born in our community celebrating their first birthday and living healthy and rewarding lives.

ADOPTED this 7th day of September, 2023.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

Jessica Vega Pederson, Chair

REVIEWED:
JENNY M. MADKOUR, COUNTY ATTORNEY
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By _____
Jenny M. Madkour, County Attorney

SUBMITTED BY: Valdez Bravo, Multnomah County Health Department Director