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Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Emergency

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The City of Chelsea has issued a declaration that racism constitutes an emergency and a public health crisis. In response, the City will work to institute change within municipal departments, support community-driven responses, and advocate at the state and federal level for policies and funding to directly combat systemic racism. Read the full text of the declaration here ([pdf](#)).

DECLARATION OF RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, racism is threat to public health and safety, and is a paramount social determinant of health, shaping access to the resources that create opportunities for health, including public safety, housing, education and employment, and is a persistent barrier to health equity for all residents of Chelsea; and

WHEREAS, in addition to having an independent influence on the social determinants of health, racism in and of itself has been proven to have broad-reaching and direct negative impacts on individual health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, structural and systemic racism and the resulting health disparities more adversely affect the physical, mental and overall health of persons of color; and

WHEREAS, racial justice is the creation and proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunity, treatment, and outcomes for all people regardless of race; and

WHEREAS, in order to be effective in instituting the change required to achieve racial justice, we must start within our local communities by addressing racism that contributes to disparities among social determinants of health; and

WHEREAS, all agencies of City government must commit to addressing the impact that racism has had on the lives of all of our neighbors as well as its impact on the overall health of our City and to taking concrete steps to eliminate structural racism in education, housing, public safety, health care and other areas of society; and

WHEREAS, all Chelsea residents are welcome to join in this work to create a City where all residents live fulfilling lives free of racism, poverty, violence and other systems of oppression; and

WHEREAS, the Chelsea City Council approved on June 29, 2020 an Order expressly requesting that the City declare by Executive Order racism as a Public Health crisis in order to highlight the need for imminent attention to this work;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Thomas G. Ambrosino, City Manager of the City of Chelsea, Massachusetts, do hereby declare that, in the City of Chelsea, racism constitutes an emergency and a public health crisis. And, in recognition of this declaration, I hereby commit to the following:

1. That the City of Chelsea will work to institute changes in our policies and practices across all municipal departments to address institutional racism and the impacts of racism on the social determinants of health;
2. That, in identifying the problems and solutions to systemic racism, the City will engage historically marginalized communities and fully support community-driven responses;
3. That, when solutions are identified that the community believes will empower them to tackle systemic barriers to justice and racial equity, the City will support and fund such solutions; and
4. That, in addition to its local efforts, the City will advocate at the state and federal level for policies and funding opportunities that directly combat systemic racism.

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