

Politics & Government

Montclair Mayor, Council: 'Racism Is A Public Health Crisis'

Montclair Proclamation: Minorities in New Jersey are less likely to have health insurance and more likely to suffer from chronic diseases.



Eric Kiefer, Patch Staff P

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Montclair's mayor and town council took a symbolic stance against institutional racism during their Tuesday meeting, labeling it a "public health crisis" in a proclamation. (Shutterstock)

MONTCLAIR, NJ — Montclair's mayor and town council took a symbolic stance against institutional racism during their Tuesday meeting, labeling it a "public health crisis."



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Read the full text of the mayor/council's proclamation below.

Mayor Sean Spiller said it's important to keep racial justice in mind when it comes to COVID-19 vaccinations, especially in communities with large populations of minorities, where reports indicate that a lower number of residents are getting vaccinated.

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"Certainly some of that is [related to] access," Spiller said, adding that there are other factors that come into play, such as a "long history" of fear surrounding vaccinations in the United States.

"We've all got to do our part to make sure this vaccine gets into all of our communities," Spiller said.

- See related article: [Here's The Plan To Fix New Jersey's 'Racist' Infant Mortality Gap](#)
- See related article: [Racism Is A Public Health Crisis, NJ Experts Say](#)
- See related article: [Coronavirus Is Exposing Racial Gaps In NJ, Advocates Say](#)

MONTCLAIR PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, New Jersey's racial minorities are less likely to have health insurance and more likely to suffer from many chronic diseases, including obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and cancer; and

WHEREAS, an overarching goal for Healthy New Jersey 2020 is to achieve health equity, eliminate disparities, and improve health for all people; and

WHEREAS, racial health inequities are not due to genetic or biological differences

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WHEREAS, a growing body of literature shows that social determinants of health – the conditions in which an individual lives, learns, works, and plays – are key drivers of health inequities; and

WHEREAS, disparities among social determinants of health negatively impact minorities due to barriers in housing, employment, health, economic, educational, and other opportunities. These disparities contribute to poor physical and mental health of racial and ethnic minorities; and

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

WHEREAS, in order to be effective in instituting change, we must start within our local communities by addressing racism, a root cause, that contributes to disparities among social determinants of health and health inequity.

NOW THEREFORE, the Mayor and Council of the Township of Montclair, hereby affirm that racism is a public health crisis that results in physical and mental health disparities.

Based upon this affirmation, the Township of Montclair will actively participate in dismantling racism by:

- Engaging with the Mayors Wellness Campaign to implement evidence-based policies and programming that address racial health inequities.
- Declaring racism and its public health manifestations to be a public health crisis.
- Engaging actively with historically marginalized communities in problem identification and policy creation.
- Building and strengthening partnerships with other organizations that are confronting racism and encouraging other local, state, regional, and national entities to recognize racism as a public health crisis.

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