



1 **A RESOLUTION OF THE FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH TO DECLARE**
2 **RACISM A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS IN FULTON COUNTY, GEORGIA**

3 **WHEREAS**, the Official Code of Georgia (“the Code”) provides that the **Fulton County Board of Health** has
4 the authority pursuant to O.C.G.A. §31-3-4 to “[t]ake such steps as may be necessary to prevent and suppress
5 disease and conditions deleterious to health”;
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7 **WHEREAS**, the **Fulton County Board of Health**, in its vision, mission, and core values envisions that all people
8 are healthy and is committed to promoting and protecting the health of individuals, families, and communities,
9 regardless of race, color, creed, age, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability,
10 or national origin; and,
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12 **WHEREAS**, racism is rooted in systemic injustice that has led to health inequities, diminished access to care,
13 maltreatment of individuals, and the perpetuation of poor health outcomes and adverse social determinants of
14 health among Black people and people of color, which are conditions deleterious to health; and,
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16 **WHEREAS**, over 100 scientific studies demonstrate that racism, not race, is the cause of increased morbidity,
17 mortality and generally poor health outcomes, job loss, education and housing instability and disenfranchisement
18 among vulnerable and disparate minority populations; and,
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20 **WHEREAS**, the **Fulton County Board of Health** commissioned the Georgia State University through its
21 Georgia Health Policy Center (GHPC) to conduct a Community Health Assessment in Fulton County and to
22 assess disparities and barriers to achieving the Fulton County goal that All People Are Healthy; and,
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24 **WHEREAS**, the Community Health Assessment confirms, parallels, and builds upon the findings of the Georgia
25 Department of Public Health that Black residents of Fulton County have lower life expectancies than White
26 residents, are far more likely than people of other races to die prematurely, and are far more likely than people
27 of other races to die of heart disease or stroke; that Black and Hispanic residents are twice as likely to be in
28 poverty as their racial and ethnic peers; that infant and maternal mortality rates among Black families are two to
29 four times the rate of any other racial or ethnic group; and that Black residents are most impacted by HIV when
30 compared to their White and Asian counterparts; and,

1 **WHEREAS**, the American Psychological Association (APA) has cited studies finding that “[s]tressors more
2 frequently experienced by racial and ethnic minority groups, including racial discrimination, have been associated
3 with health status and health behaviors” (American Psychological Association, APA Working Group on Stress
4 and Health Disparities. (2017). Stress and health disparities: Contexts, mechanisms, and interventions among
5 racial/ethnic minority and low-socioeconomic status populations. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/pi/health->
6 [disparities/resources/stress-report.aspx](http://www.apa.org/pi/health-disparities/resources/stress-report.aspx), citing Ahmed, Mohammed, & Williams, 2007; J. S. Jackson, Knight, &
7 Rafferty, 2010).

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9 In fact, the APA, American College of Physicians, and the American Public Health Association have all determined
10 that the threat of hate crimes resulting in the death of Black people and people of color incites trauma, fear,
11 violence, chronic and acute mental stress and other negative impacts of discrimination which impact the general
12 health and wellbeing of the entire community (Johnson, Steven Ross, “Experts: hate crimes are a public health
13 issue,” Modern Healthcare, August 22, 2017); and,

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15 **WHEREAS**, the **Fulton County Board of Health** stands in support of the Hate Crimes Resolution adopted by
16 the Fulton County Board of Commissioners on June 17, 2020, and desires to ensure continuing collaboration
17 between the **Fulton County Board of Health** and Fulton County as these efforts continue; and,

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19 **WHEREAS**, the **Fulton County Board of Health** has partnered with Fulton County to advance a “Health in
20 All Policies” initiative to ensure that positive health outcomes for Fulton County citizens are considered in each
21 official action of the County; and

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23 **WHEREAS**, Fulton County Board of Commissioners Chairman Robb Pitts has established a Health Disparities
24 Taskforce to review and address health disparity issues in Fulton County and to provide effective health related
25 policy recommendations to his office for presentation to the Board of Commissioners for consideration and
26 incorporation into Fulton County policy that would positively impact health outcomes for County residents; and,

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28 **WHEREAS**, the **Fulton County Board of Health** desires to take a stand against racism in Fulton County,
29 and to join the American Public Health Association’s (APHA’s) efforts to enhance racial equality in public health
30 throughout the nation, including through the racial healing (#RxRacialHealing) initiative.

1 **NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED** that the **Fulton County Board of Health** finds that
2 racism is a public health crisis in Fulton County, Georgia.

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4 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the **Fulton County Board of Health** finds it necessary in order to achieve
5 its mission to prevent and suppress disease and conditions deleterious to health in the community, to identify,
6 address, and eradicate racism in public health, both in personal interactions and in policies, procedures, and
7 systems that perpetuate racial bias.

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9 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that it is the Policy of the **Fulton County Board of Health** that the understanding
10 that racism in public health is a cause of poor health outcomes must be a guiding principle of the agency.

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12 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the **Fulton County Board of Health** stands in support of all partners
13 and communities who are working in solidarity to apply long-term strategies and solutions that address the root
14 causes of racial injustice, and applauds the Fulton County Board of Commissioners and the County Manager of
15 Fulton County, Georgia, for their efforts to support hate crimes legislation, the establishment of the Health in All
16 Policies program, and the establishment of the Health Disparities Task Force.

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18 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the **Fulton County Board of Health** authorizes and directs the Executive
19 Director to consider and address racism and its impacts in those internal Board of Health programs, policies, and
20 operating procedures as s/he deems appropriate and necessary, and in the consideration of those partnerships
21 and initiatives s/he may create or join in the quest to protect and improve health outcomes for all people.

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23 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that it is the Policy of the **Fulton County Board of Health** to be and remain
24 committed to maintaining the Board of Health's Health Equity Workgroup, designed to examine the agency's
25 internal structure, policies, and procedures to ensure the **Fulton County Board of Health** operates as an anti-
26 racist and unbiased organization.

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28 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that it is the Policy of the **Fulton County Board of Health** to ensure the
29 hiring, training, and maintenance of a diverse public workforce to meet the public health needs of our local
30 communities.

1 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the **Fulton County Board of Health** shall be committed to disseminating
2 relevant and evidence-based data to aid our local communities, including racial disparities and disproportional
3 impacts, so that we and all of our partners may properly consider racism and racial disparities in making
4 data based and scientifically informed decisions regarding the health, wellbeing, and immediate needs of our
5 community members.

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7 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the **Fulton County Board of Health** shall seek and incorporate
8 collaboration with community partners and public health stakeholders and participate in advantageous national,
9 state, and local public health efforts designed to thwart racist public health policies, practices, and systems that
10 do a disservice to our community.

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12 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED,** that this Resolution shall become effective immediately, and that all resolutions
13 and parts of resolutions in conflict with this Resolution are hereby repealed to the extent of the conflict.

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15 **SO PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the **Fulton County Board of Health**, this 22nd day of July, 2020.

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17 **FULTON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH**

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Chair, Fulton County Board of Health


Secretary, Fulton County Board of Health

24 **Approved as to Form:**

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Attorney, Fulton County Board of Health