

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 260350)

RESOLUTION

Recognizing April 11 – 17, 2026, as “Black Maternal Health Week” in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, The tenth annual national Black Maternal Health Week – themed “*Rooted in Justice & Joy*”, will be held April 11 – 17, 2026. The week fosters awareness, activism, and community building intended to deepen the national conversation about Black maternal health in the United States; and

WHEREAS, According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Black women in the United States are 3 to 4 times more likely than white women to die from pregnancy-related causes and are twice as likely to suffer from life-threatening pregnancy complications, known as “maternal morbidities;” and

WHEREAS, The high rates of maternal mortality among Black women span across income levels, education levels, and socioeconomic status; and

WHEREAS, From 2022 to 2023, Black women were the only group to see an increase in pregnancy related fatalities. Black women are also now 3.5 times more likely to die from pregnancy related causes. This has increased from 2019 when the likelihood was 2.5 times that of white women; and

WHEREAS, Non-Hispanic Black women made up 43% of live births in Philadelphia and accounted for 73% of the pregnancy-related deaths from 2013 to 2018 as compared to non-Hispanic white women who made up 26% of Philadelphia births and accounted for 19% of pregnancy-related deaths; and

WHEREAS, Black women have historically had the highest maternal mortality rates due to a combination of effects from institutional racism that have resulted in susceptibility to certain health conditions and lack of access to quality prenatal care; and

WHEREAS, Birth Justice Philly, an initiative of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, is a nationally recognized model for addressing maternal morbidity and mortality at the local level,

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uniquely integrating maternal mortality review, City-level severe maternal morbidity surveillance, and community-driven action through Organized Voices for Action (OVA) to advance equity and improve outcomes for Black birthing people and families; and

WHEREAS, Events for Black Maternal Health week will be held locally by the Oshun Family Center. Oshun provides racially concordant care to members of the Black community that are impacted by postpartum mood changes, birth, and racial trauma. Oshun works with allies, legislators, lawmakers, hospitals, educators, and the community to shift from raising awareness to becoming action-oriented regarding the Black maternal mortality rate; and

WHEREAS, The Council of the City of Philadelphia would also like to recognize Once Upon a Preemie, Inc. Once Upon a Preemie is a leader in health and racial equity, education for perinatal and neonatal healthcare professionals, advocacy, and family empowerment solutions. Centering around the lived experience of Black preemie families, Once Upon a Preemie has advocated for equitable and family centered care for Black preemie families everywhere; and

WHEREAS, Maternity Care Coalition (MCC) works to improve the health and well-being of pregnant women and parenting families and enhance school readiness for children ages 0-3. To achieve a more equitable and just future, MCC works at the individual, community, and policy levels. MCC centers children and their families by supporting, referring, educating, researching, and advocating; and

WHEREAS, A Home From Shana Foundation has done invaluable work to end the cycle of traumatic childbirth and its aftermath by giving mothers the opportunity to have healthy pregnancies, safe and respectful childbirth experiences, and to birth healthy babies, with programs focused on housing and education. Through their core values of collaboration, innovation, integrity, and compassion, A Home From Shana Foundation has been a leader in Black Maternal Health advocacy; and

WHEREAS, Linked Family Services, founded in 2018 as Hearts of Gold Mentoring PA, has evolved from a grassroots mentoring initiative into a prevention-driven, family-centered organization committed to reducing family stress and preventing child welfare involvement by increasing access to essential support and advancing maternal wellness through culturally grounded, trauma-informed practices; and

WHEREAS, CocoLife.black has created a safe and affirming space for mothers who are expecting, navigating postpartum, or coping with loss, while advancing a community-empowered model of care that centers healing, addresses intergenerational trauma and persistent health inequities, strengthens families through education and holistic support, building a sustainability in the doula workforce, and has made meaningful impact through collaboration with legislators, families, health plans, health systems, and community-based organizations to improve maternal health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, The Council of the City of Philadelphia would also like to recognize the Pennsylvania Black Maternal Health Caucus founded in October 2023 in the Pennsylvania

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General Assembly by State Representative and Philadelphia Delegation Chair Morgan Cephas, State Representative Gina H. Curry, and State Representative La'Tasha D. Mayes for their tireless and collaborative work to boldly address the disturbing trends of Black maternal mortality and morbidity in our Commonwealth.

WHEREAS, Representative Cephas and the PA Black Maternal Health Caucus have championed over \$30 million in funding for maternal health initiatives in the state and advanced the Pennsylvania MOMNIBUS, passing legislation to address maternal health disparities, including requiring Medicaid coverage for doula services, establishing a Doula Advisory Board, and enhancing perinatal and postpartum education for mental health; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby recognizes April 11 – 17, 2026, as “Black Maternal Health Week” in the City of Philadelphia.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the sixteenth day of April, 2026.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Gilmore Richardson

Sponsored by: Council President Johnson, Councilmembers Phillips, Thomas, Jones, Landau, Lozada, Brooks, Harrity, O'Rourke, Driscoll, Squilla, Bass and Ahmad