

City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 250999)

RESOLUTION

Recognizing November as National Restorative Justice Month and honoring the power of art, healing, and community through the collaborative efforts of The Barnes Foundation, Mural Arts Philadelphia, and Creative Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, National Restorative Justice Month is observed every November by The National Center on Restorative Justice (NCORJ) and the National Association of Community and Restorative Justice (NACRJ) to increase awareness of restorative justice practices and programs; and

WHEREAS, Both the NCORJ and the NACRJ have played leading roles in advancing education, research, and implementation of restorative practices throughout the United States. They define restorative justice as “both a set of practices and also a broad philosophy” that focuses on “identifying needs and repairing harm, active accountability, centering relationships and community, and voluntary participation”; and

WHEREAS, Restorative justice offers an alternative to traditional punitive systems and enables offenders to take responsibility for their actions while also empowering communities to engage in reintegration. Studies have shown that restorative justice practices can reduce recidivism by as much as 32 percent; and

WHEREAS, In Philadelphia, incarceration and experiences in the justice system negatively impact individuals, children, and families by causing strains on emotional wellbeing, economic stability, family structure, and community stability, leading to challenges that span across generations; and

WHEREAS, However, The City of Philadelphia has made significant progress in advancing criminal justice reform and reducing incarceration rates. According to the Philadelphia Prison Population Report as of September 2025, the city’s total prison population decreased by 56.1 percent, from a baseline of 8,082 individuals in 2015 to 3,544 individuals in September 2025; and

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WHEREAS, This decline reflects the efforts of the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia Department of Prisons, and numerous advocacy partners. They have worked to expand diversion programs, reduce the use of cash bail, and address probation detainees more efficiently; and

WHEREAS, Despite this progress, the data continues to show racial and economic disparities in incarceration, as Black Philadelphians comprise approximately 71 percent of the current prison population, demonstrating a further need for incarceration reform and a focus on restorative justice; and

WHEREAS, In Philadelphia, Mural Arts Philadelphia's Restorative Justice Program embodies the spirit of restorative justice through artistic avenues. The program supports justice impacted individuals through art education, mural design, and other community outreach. Participants develop artistic and vocational skills while creating public art that reflects their commitment to reconciliation; and

WHEREAS, In partnership with The Barnes Foundation, Mural Arts Philadelphia, and Creative Philadelphia, Councilmember At-Large Jim Harrity will host a new "Faces of Resilience" *Art in City Hall* exhibit. This collaborative exhibition celebrates the stories and portraits of individuals who have experienced the transformative power second chances; and

WHEREAS, National Restorative Justice Month offers an important opportunity to renew conversations about justice reform, uplift those directly impacted by incarceration, and celebrate initiatives that rebuild lives and restore communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby recognizes the month of November as "National Restorative Justice Month" in Philadelphia and honors The Barnes Foundation, Mural Arts Philadelphia, and Creative Philadelphia for their ongoing partnership in advancing restorative justice through art, education, and community engagement.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this Resolution be presented to The Barnes Foundation, Mural Arts Philadelphia, and Creative Philadelphia as a symbol of the profound respect and admiration felt by this legislative body and the citizens of Philadelphia for their dedication to healing, accountability, and the arts as pathways to justice...End

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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 thirteenth day of November, 2025.

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Harrity

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Harrity, Gilmore Richardson, Gauthier, Jones, Landau, Lozada, Brooks, O'Rourke, Driscoll, O'Neill, Bass and Ahmad