

# City of Philadelphia



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

(Resolution No. 260405)

## RESOLUTION

Recognizing April 2026 as Arab American Heritage Month and celebrating the heritage, culture, and contributions of Arab Americans in the City of Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, The United States celebrates and declares April as Arab American Heritage Month where for over a century, Arab Americans have made valuable contributions to every aspect of American society; in medicine, law, business, technology, civic engagement, government, and culture, while generously sharing their traditions and values to neighbors and friends; and

WHEREAS, The Arab American Institute estimates that there are 3.7 million Arab Americans nationwide, with approximately 35,000 to 75,000 in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, Philadelphia is home to many Arab American communities, notably in the Northeast where its residents are largely immigrants and refugees from Arab countries. In 1892, Saint Maron Lebanese Church in South Philadelphia was founded by Lebanese immigrants, establishing an enclave in the neighborhood for the Lebanese diaspora that exists to this day. Kensington is also home to a strong Arab population, particularly the Palestinian community; and

WHEREAS, In 1898, *Al-Hoda*, the first ever Arabic-language newspaper in the U.S., was published in Philadelphia, representing the rich emblematic history of the City's Arab community. Today, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, Arabic is one of the fastest growing languages in the country; and

WHEREAS, "The Book of Khalid" written by Ameen Rihani in 1911, is the first Arab American novel to record of Arab immigration to the "Little Syria" community of Lower Manhattan in New York and is a powerful narrative of our country's ability to strengthen ties with the Arab world; and

WHEREAS, Arab Americans have brought with them their resilient family values, strong work ethic, dedication to education, and diversity in faith and creed that have added strength to our democracy; and

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*RESOLUTION NO. 260405 continued*

WHEREAS, There is a need for public education, cultural awareness, and policies that are both culturally and politically correct when describing, discussing, or addressing the impacts of being Arab American in all facets of American society, including geographical discourse and international policy; now; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the City of Philadelphia recognizes April as Arab American Heritage Month, celebrating the heritage and culture of Arab Americans in Philadelphia.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this Resolution be presented to Lisa Volta-Zalloum, Executive Director of Al-Bustan Seeds of Culture, as further evidence of the admiration and respect of this legislative body.

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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 twenty-third day of April, 2026.

Kenyatta Johnson  
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum  
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Landau

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Landau, Gauthier, Lozada, O'Rourke, Driscoll  
and Squilla