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A resolution/ordinance by County Executive Abele, Supervisors Nicholson, Martin, Haas, Moore Omokunde, Johnson, Jr., and Shea, creating Chapter 108, Achieving Racial Equity and Health, in the Milwaukee County General Ordinance, by recommending adoption of the following:

**AN AMENDED RESOLUTION/ORDINANCE**

WHEREAS, according to Federal Reserve Economic Data, Milwaukee is one of the most racially-segregated metropolitan statistical areas in the United States (U.S) and, according to the 2019 County Health Rankings, Milwaukee County (the County) is ranked 71 out of 72 counties for health in the State of Wisconsin (the State); and

WHEREAS, according to the State Department of Health Services (DHS), in 2019, a white person in the County lives, on average, nearly 14 years longer than a black person; and

WHEREAS, the State DHS further reports that the infant mortality rate is nearly three times higher for black infants versus white infants in the County, at 14.2 deaths and 4.8 deaths per 1,000 births, respectively; and

WHEREAS, race is a social construction with no biologic basis, yet racism can produce an assigned societal value based on the way a person looks; and

WHEREAS, race is a consistent predictor of a person’s quality and length of life, in which black and brown communities have lower access to safe, quality:

- green spaces and recreation
- transportation
- healthcare and social services
- affordable housing
- education
- healthy food options
- clean drinking water
- financial security

; and

WHEREAS, structural, institutional, and individual racism are root causes of the racial disparities in the quality and length of life in the County; and

WHEREAS, structural racism is racial bias among interlocking institutions and across society, causing cumulative and compounding effects that systematically advantage white people and disadvantage black and brown people; and

46 WHEREAS, institutional racism includes policies, practices, and procedures that  
47 work better for white people than for black and brown people, often unintentionally and  
48 unconsciously; and

49  
50 WHEREAS, structural and institutional racism deplete the strength of the entire  
51 society through the inefficient use of human resources; and

52  
53 WHEREAS, the lack of an intervention to right the wrongs of the past means that  
54 health outcomes for black and brown communities have worsened and will continue to  
55 worsen until government, including the County, and other institutions across the county,  
56 identify and eliminate any inequitable policies, procedures, practices, and power  
57 structures; and

58  
59 WHEREAS, the County commits to supporting the Office on African American  
60 Affairs (OAAA) by ensuring it is strategically positioned within County government to  
61 assist with the development and institutionalization of racial equity tools to collaborate  
62 with departments to assess and transform policies, procedures, practices, and power  
63 structures to help the County become a place where all citizens are thriving; and

64  
65 WHEREAS, OAAA has led the normalization of conversations about race and  
66 racism at all levels of County government to facilitate institutional change and has  
67 created a Racial Equity Ambassador program to begin transforming institutional  
68 operations, as prescribed by the model from the Government Alliance on Race and  
69 Equity; and

70  
71 WHEREAS, in a unanimous decision by the Milwaukee County Board of  
72 Supervisors and the County Executive, in May 2019 (File No. 19-397), the County was  
73 the first governing jurisdiction in the U.S. to declare racism a public health crisis;  
74 however, the County must not only have a challenge statement in its legislation, but  
75 must also have a commitment to addressing the challenge, which is contained herein;  
76 and

77  
78 WHEREAS, while there is no epidemiologic definition of "crisis," the health  
79 impacts of racism clearly exemplify the definition proposed by experts, which is that the  
80 "problem must affect large numbers of people, it must threaten health over the  
81 long-term, and it must require the adoption of large-scale solutions;" and

82  
83 **WHEREAS, at the April 4, 2020, meeting of the Committee on Economic and**  
84 **Community Development, the Director of Audits, Audit Services Division, Office**  
85 **of the Comptroller, presented the findings from File No. 20-205, an audit titled**  
86 **"Pulling Back the Curtain: A Look at Milwaukee County's Workforce through**  
87 **Racial and Gender Equity Lenses from 2009 to 2019;" and**  
88

89 WHEREAS, the audit, among several summary findings, found that there is  
90 a significant gap between the pattern and practice in the County and the vision  
91 outlined in the proposed Ordinance outlined below, and that there has been little  
92 progress on racial equity in employment at the County over the last decade; and  
93

94 WHEREAS, the audit found evidence to support its finding that “the racial  
95 make-up of the County's workforce has seen minimal overall change since 2009”,  
96 including:

- 97 • Black or African American employees had the lowest average  
98 salary in three out of four years studied in the audit. In 2019,  
99 Black or African American employees comprised 50 percent of  
100 the County workforce earning in the bottom third of salaries and  
101 only 11 percent of the top 100 earners while being 31 percent of the  
102 County workforce.
- 103
- 104 • Hispanic or Latino employees saw the smallest growth in  
105 earnings since 2009 at 12 percent while the countywide average  
106 was 16 percent

107  
108 ; and  
109

110 WHEREAS, with this ordinance, the County resolves to commit to the long-term  
111 priority of achieving racial equity and by assessing and revamping policies, procedures,  
112 practices, and power structures using a racial equity lens to take down the barriers that  
113 may exist for black and brown individuals and communities so that everyone in the  
114 County can thrive; and  
115

116 WHEREAS, the Committee on Health and Human Needs, at its special/virtual  
117 meeting of April 17, 2020, recommended adoption as amended of File No. 20-174  
118 (vote 5-0); now, therefore,  
119

120 BE IT RESOLVED, to transform Milwaukee County (the County) government,  
121 employees at all levels will first focus on solutions related to the following topics, which  
122 directly address power structures and institutional practices contributing to racial health  
123 disparities of County residents:  
124

- 125 • **Diverse and Inclusive Workforce:** County leadership, management, and staff will  
126 reflect the diversity of its residents to better represent the experiences and ideas of  
127 the people it serves. The County resolves to build a collaborative, supportive,  
128 respectful workplace environment that increases the participation and contribution of  
129 all employees.  
130

- 131 • **Employee Perspective:** To enhance the health of County residents, County  
132 government should strive to ensure that services meet everyone’s needs.  
133 Thousands of County employees directly serve residents each day and their  
134 perspectives should be more intentionally considered to continually improve the  
135 equity of policies, procedures, practices, and power structures.
- 136 • **Customer-Focused Design:** A “customer” is defined as an individual who  
137 currently uses or could use County services; customers may include County  
138 residents, visitors to the County, or County employees. Government services  
139 should meet the needs of its customers. Redesigning what, where, and how  
140 services are provided to meet customer needs should be undertaken with  
141 customer participation. Defining customer populations and including those  
142 customer groups in the design and decision-making of services will help ensure  
143 that government services are meeting the needs of those using, or who could be  
144 using, County services. To this end, the County must focus on purposeful and  
145 meaningful community engagement on the front-end and throughout the process  
146 of decision making, which will produce more appropriate and equitable power-  
147 sharing between experts working in the government and the customers of County  
148 services.
- 149 • **Improved Performance and Equitable Practice:** County government must  
150 improve the quality of the data it collects and the analysis of that data to better  
151 understand the impact of services on customers. It is not enough to assume that  
152 a service is producing its intended outcome; the County should use qualitative  
153 and quantitative data to assess impact and continuously improve where services  
154 are falling short in order to improve the quality of life for all residents.
- 155 • **Fiscal Health:** Over the past decade, the County has cut between \$20 and \$30  
156 million annually due to the structural deficit and has accumulated hundreds of  
157 millions of dollars in deferred maintenance. Because of decisions made decades  
158 ago and the restrictive authority given to local governments to generate new  
159 sources of revenue, the County and municipal governments are forced to make  
160 decisions about cuts to services and repairs each year that can impact the health  
161 of County residents. The County must find sustainable revenue sources and  
162 continue to pursue organizational efficiencies so the County government can  
163 make meaningful investments to advance racial equity.

164  
165 ; and  
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167 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, every employee is responsible for the  
168 implementation of this resolution/ordinance, and developing skills and capacities to  
169 create and maintain a culture in which employees recognize and respect the diverse  
170 values, beliefs, and behaviors in the workforce and the community they serve; and  
171

172 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, to address systemic racism affecting County  
173 residents, County government commits to engaging municipalities and institutions within  
174 the County to prioritize racial equity to address structural racism producing disparate  
175 population health outcomes; and  
176

177 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by achieving racial equity, the County will  
178 eliminate health and opportunity gaps along racial lines, and will increase the success of  
179 all groups by distributing resources justly across all communities; and

180 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors  
181 hereby creates Chapter 108 “Achieving Racial Equity and Health” of the Milwaukee  
182 County Code of General Ordinances by adopting the following:

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## AN ORDINANCE

186

The County Board of Supervisors of the County of Milwaukee does ordain as follows:

187

188 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 108 “Achieving Racial Equity and Health” of the Milwaukee  
189 County Code of General Ordinances is hereby created as follows:

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191 108.01 – Achieving Racial Equity and Health.

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193 Racism has been and is a public health crisis in Milwaukee County. According to  
194 the County Health Rankings, Milwaukee County is, and has consistently been, one of  
195 the lowest-ranked counties for health in Wisconsin and, according to Federal Reserve  
196 Economic Data, Milwaukee County is one of our nation's most racially segregated  
197 areas. According to 2019 statistics, a white person lives, on average, nearly 14 years  
198 longer than a black person and the infant mortality rate is nearly three (3) times higher  
199 for black infants compared to white infants. Race is a social construction with no  
200 biologic basis, yet racism may produce an assigned societal value based on the way a  
201 person looks that has resulted in race being a consistent predictor of a person's quality  
202 and length of life. With this ordinance, Milwaukee County government declares its  
203 commitment to achieving racial equity by identifying and eliminating any racism in its  
204 institutional policies, procedures, practices, and power structures for black and brown  
205 individuals and communities so everyone in Milwaukee County can thrive.

206

207 108.02 – County Strategic Priority, Mission, Vision, and Values.

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209 1. The institutionalization of racial equity in the County's mission, vision, values, and  
210 services are of the utmost priority. Milwaukee County government declares that:

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a. Racism has been, is, and will continue to be, a public health crisis until  
race is no longer a predictor of quality or length of life in Milwaukee  
County.

b. The vision of the County be: “By achieving racial equity, Milwaukee is the  
healthiest county in Wisconsin.”

c. The mission of the County be: “We enhance the quality of life in  
Milwaukee County through great public service.”

d. The values guiding the culture of the County workforce be:

i. Respect. We work with and for others.

ii. Integrity. We do the right thing.

iii. Excellence. We never stop improving.

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108.03 – Guiding Framework and Strategic Objectives to Achieve the County’s Vision.

1. Milwaukee County adopts the “Health and Equity Framework,” adapted from the Wisconsin Population Health Institute’s model, as its guiding framework for addressing the root causes of institutional and systemic racism. The framework first directs that influencing the “Power to Make Change” is the most sustainable and transformational way to affect racial equity and health in the County population. The second key area that the framework directs focus to is “Institutional Practices,” which entails identifying and eliminating any racial biases in governmental practices. By addressing these two causal areas of racial and health inequities, Milwaukee County will make huge strides in advancing its vision of achieving racial equity and being the healthiest county in Wisconsin.



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2. To this end, Milwaukee County government declares that it will achieve the following objectives, which directly affect “Power to Make Change” and “Institutional Practices”:

a. Diverse and Inclusive Workforce:

1. Milwaukee County leadership, management, and staff will reflect the demographics (including, but not exclusively racial) of Milwaukee County.
2. Milwaukee County will have an inclusive workplace culture where differences are welcomed, where different perspectives are heard, and where individuals feel a sense of safety and belonging.

- 246                                   3. Employees will understand what skills and experience are expected  
247                                   to advance to the next level and will have opportunities to gain  
248                                   those skills and experiences.
- 249                   b. Employee Perspective:
- 250                                   1. Milwaukee County leaders and management will regularly consult  
251                                   and problem solve with a racially diverse representation of frontline  
252                                   staff to inform equitable policy, process, and customer service  
253                                   delivery decisions.
- 254                   c. Customer-Focused Design:
- 255                                   1. Milwaukee County will determine **what** services we offer and how  
256                                   money is spent based on robust, diverse public participation.
- 257                                   2. Milwaukee County will determine **where** services are offered based  
258                                   on robust, diverse public participation.
- 259                                   3. Milwaukee County will determine **how** services are offered based  
260                                   on robust, diverse public participation.
- 261                   d. Improved Performance and Equitable Practice:
- 262                                   1. Milwaukee County will monitor and evaluate the impact and equity  
263                                   of all services on customers and will use data to continuously  
264                                   improve.
- 265                                   2. Milwaukee County will be held accountable by external partners  
266                                   and community members for progress and results on the strategic  
267                                   plan.
- 268                   e. Fiscal Health:
- 269                                   1. Milwaukee County will secure additional revenue and achieve cost  
270                                   savings each year to be able to cover existing operating costs.
- 271                                   2. Milwaukee County will identify and implement mechanisms to make  
272                                   investments into strategic priorities to achieve the objectives  
273                                   outlined above.
- 274                   3. Milwaukee County declares that it will, at a minimum, use racial equity tools to  
275                                   evaluate the impact of decisions on black and brown communities for the  
276                                   following enterprise-wide areas:
- 277                                   • The budget
- 278                                   • Processes, policies, and procedures
- 279                   4. Milwaukee County declares that it will continue to offer trainings to support racial  
280                                   equity work at all employee levels.
- 281                   5. Milwaukee County declares that every informational and action report that is  
282                                   submitted to the County Board will incorporate the impact on the vision and  
283                                   connection to racial equity and the strategic objectives.
- 284                   6. Milwaukee County declares that it will create and maintain an external website  
285                                   dedicated to racial equity and health work at the County.
- 286                   7. Milwaukee County declares that it will create and maintain an intranet site  
287                                   dedicated to racial equity and health work at the County.
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108.04 – Key Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities.

1. The County directs that the stakeholders below will carry out the described roles and responsibilities in support of the successful execution of the strategic objectives outlined in this ordinance:
  - a. County Leaders, Managers, and Staff: Leaders are accountable for the success of the objectives outlined above to advance racial equity in Milwaukee County. Furthermore, every employee is responsible for the implementation of this resolution/ordinance and developing skills and capacities to create and maintain a culture in which employees recognize and respect the diverse values, beliefs, and behaviors in the workforce and the community they serve.
  - b. Office on African American Affairs: The Office provides guidance, education, research, and technical assistance to support the County vision and strategic planning priorities.
  - c. Strategic Plan Advisory Council: Milwaukee County declares that it will create a Strategic Plan Advisory Council. The Advisory Council shall provide both input on and support for the implementation of solutions designed to advance Milwaukee County’s vision of achieving racial equity and becoming the healthiest county in Wisconsin. The Advisory Council shall consist of eleven (11) representatives:
    - i. One (1) chairperson, who must be a Milwaukee County employee and shall be nominated by the County Executive and approved by the County Board Chairperson.
    - ii. Three (3) County Board Supervisors selected by the County Board Chairperson.
    - iii. One (1) Elected Official from the District Attorney’s Office, the Chief Judge’s Office, the Clerk of Courts, or the Milwaukee County Sheriff’s Office, who will be nominated by the County Executive and approved by the Chairperson of the County Board of Supervisors; in the event that none of these elected officials serve on the Advisory Council, their seat will be filled by an additional external partner, following the same rules as outlined in 108.04 (1)(c)(viii).
    - iv. One (1) Elected Official from the Register of Deeds Office, the Office of the Comptroller, the Office of the County Clerk, or the Office of the Treasurer, who will be nominated by the County Executive and approved by the Chairperson of the County Board of Supervisors; in the event that none of these elected officials serve on the Advisory Council, their seat will be filled by an additional external partner, following the same rules as outlined in 108.04 (1)(c)(viii).
    - v. The Director of the Office on African American Affairs.
    - vi. Two (2) Department Directors selected by the County Executive.



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vii. One (1) non-supervisory Racial Equity Ambassador selected by the Office on African American Affairs and approved by the Ambassador’s Department Director.

viii. One (1) community member, who will be nominated by the County Executive and approved by the Chairperson of the County Board of Supervisors.

The composition of the Advisory Council shall be assembled with diversity at the front of mind.

The Advisory Council shall convene at least once each quarter, or four times annually. In addition to monitoring the County’s progress toward realizing the objectives outlined in the County’s strategic plan, the Advisory Council shall provide input and support for overcoming obstacles encountered by County employees working to advance the plan.

As appropriate, the Advisory Council shall provide input on the refinement and implementation of the strategic plan. Recommendations for significant changes to the plan (for example, changes to wording of the objectives, or reallocating employee time or County resources to achieve the objectives) shall require a written recommendation to both the County Executive and the County Board Chair for consideration and approval.

The Director of Strategic Planning and the County Board Chairperson’s Chief of Staff or their designees shall jointly prepare the agenda and materials for the meetings. One or both of individuals shall (co-)facilitate each meeting.

**SECTION 2.** The provisions of this Ordinance shall become effective upon passage and publication.