

Approved as to Form and Legality



City Attorney's Office

## OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

**RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_ C.M.S.**

**INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER LOREN TAYLOR**

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**RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING MAY 2022 AS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH IN THE CITY OF OAKLAND, RECOGNIZING THE INCREDIBLE WORK OF OAKLAND'S MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS AND ESTABLISHING MENTAL HEALTH AS A PRIORITY IN THE CITY OF OAKLAND**

**WHEREAS**, mental illness is among the most common health problems faced by Californians, with nearly 1 in 6 California adults experiencing a mental illness of some kind, 1 in 24 adults having a serious mental illness that makes it difficult to carry out major life activities, and 1 in 13 children having an emotional disturbance that limits their participation in daily activities; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the National Institute of Mental Health, research shows that mental illnesses are common in the United States, affecting tens of millions of people each year. Estimates suggest that only half of people with mental illnesses receive treatment. Mental illnesses include many different conditions that vary in degree of severity, ranging from mild to moderate to severe; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2019, there were an estimated 51.5 million adults aged 18 or older in the United States with any mental illness (AMI). AMI is defined as a mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder. This number represented 20.6% of all U.S. adults; and

**WHEREAS**, behavioral health disorders, including major depression, schizophrenia, panic disorders, and obsessive-compulsive disorders affect many children and youth every year, indiscriminate of age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion or economic status; and

**WHEREAS**, 35 percent of young adults, ages 18 to 25, with any mental illness and 56 percent of young adults with a serious mental illness report a perceived unmet need for mental health services, rates that are higher than any other adult age groups; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-9 pandemic has caused many in our Oakland community to experience financial hardship and stress especially in low income communities and has led to an increase in mental health issues; and

**WHEREAS**, Mental Health Awareness Month raises awareness of trauma and the impact it can have on the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of children, families, and communities; and

**WHEREAS**, Mental Health Awareness Month was established in 1949 to increase awareness of the importance of mental health and wellness in Americans' lives, and to celebrate recovery from mental illness. Mental health is essential for a person's overall health. Prevention works, treatment is effective, and people can recover from mental disorders and live full and productive lives; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council recognizes that it is important the uplift mental health awareness month in order to support those who are suffering and encourage those who are undiagnosed or untreated to seek resources and much needed care; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council recognizes that many of members of our many diverse and under-resourced communities suffer from mental health conditions and need compassionate services from trained service providers, including the unsheltered community, veterans, BIPOC residents, and the LGBTQ community; and

**WHEREAS**, public education and civic activities can encourage mental health and help improve the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness; and it is important to maintain mental health and learn the symptoms of mental health illness in order to get help when needed; and

**WHEREAS**, individuals with mental health conditions and other behavioral health disorders can and do recover with clinical treatment and social supports, including medications, psychotherapies, psychosocial rehabilitation, counseling services, and peer support; and

**WHEREAS**, the average delay between symptom onset and treatment is 11 years. Early identification and treatment can make a difference in successful management of mental illness and recovery; and

**WHEREAS**, ineffectively addressed mental and behavioral health conditions negatively impact Oakland's efforts to reverse the trend of rising homelessness and move toward functional zero homelessness across the city (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK537064/>) given that 14 % of Oakland's homeless described mental health issues as the primary cause of their homelessness and 10 % described substance abuse issues as the primary cause of homelessness; and

**WHEREAS**, ineffectively addressed mental health conditions negatively impact Oakland's efforts to create more vibrant and equitable economic outcomes for all Oaklanders given that untreated mental illness is a leading cause of absenteeism and presenteeism resulting in lost earnings and productivity in the workplace which at a national level costs the United States economy over \$193 billion per year in lost earnings; and

**WHEREAS**, the US Department of Justice's (US DOJ) Division of Civil Rights published a report on April 22, 2021 on its investigation into the conditions and practices at Santa Rita Jail and John George Psychiatric Hospital, and into whether Alameda County's reliance on John George Psychiatric Hospital and sub-acute psychiatric facilities to provide mental health services to adults with mental health disabilities violates those individuals' right to receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs; and

**WHEREAS**, on May 18, 2021 the Council unanimously adopted Resolution 88653 on Alameda County to fully invest in implementing all of the recommendations contained in the April 22, 2021 report; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council recognizes that the more resources are needed from the City, County, State and Federal governments in order to address and treat the mental health conditions in our community and that every person and community can make a difference in helping end the silence and stigma that for too long has surrounded mental illness and discouraged people from getting help; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council recognizes that the practice of unequal health treatment suffered by many in our community and calls for improved access to much needed mental health and substance use disorder treatment services and more equitable insurance coverage; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council recognizes the importance of youth-serving institutions, such as schools, educational institutions, juvenile justice systems, substance abuse programs, primary care, foster care systems, and other organizations to provide mental health services to our youth; and

**WHEREAS**, there are many organizations in the City of Oakland who provide essential mental health services to our residents and are deserving of additional support to continue their essential work; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council recognizes the importance of the hard work of our mental health professionals who work tirelessly to provide vital services to Oakland residents; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council also recognizes that there are many local community organizations and individuals who provide wellness services such as yoga instructors and natural health practitioners who help relieve stress of our residents; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That the City of Oakland proclaims May 2022 as Mental Health Awareness month in the City of Oakland, recognizing the incredible work of Oakland's mental health professionals and community mental health service providers and establishing mental health as a priority in the City of Oakland.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - FIFE, GALLO, KALB, KAPLAN, REID, TAYLOR, THAO AND  
PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

ASHA REED  
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the  
City of Oakland, California