

*Copy and paste this email template about racism as a health crisis:*

Dear Washington State Department of Health,

Systemic racism has an adverse impact on the health outcomes of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color). Black and African American mothers are up to four times more likely to die due to pregnancy related complications. Infant mortality occurs twice as likely for Black and African American babies. Black and African American men are twice as likely to be killed by police. Black and African American adults are five times more likely to be imprisoned. Black and African American children are six times more likely to have or have had an incarcerated parent. Racism results in toxic stress and trauma which causes increased likelihood for high blood pressure, heart disease, PTSD, depression, anxiety, and early death. Racism is a public health crisis.

Some Washington State public health institutions have taken steps to address racial inequities in public health by providing inclusive, affirming and trauma-informed environments and approaches for patients, training staff in providing culturally competent services and providing data on how BIPOC in our communities are impacted by crises such as COVID-19, but we can do more.

Washington State has the opportunity to be an agent of change. We implore you to do the right thing by joining other states in declaring racism as a public health crisis. Attention, intervention, and resources need to be allocated to properly address the negative health impacts that BIPOC are experiencing in our communities. We must work together to address racism wherever it exists. We can't solve a problem if we don't label it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kitsap County Community Member,

[Insert name]