



**EXECUTIVE ORDER
OF
MAYOR ALEX B. MORSE**

An Executive Order Declaring Racism and Police Violence as matters of Public Health that Constitute a Public Health Emergency

WHEREAS, Racism is a threat to public health and safety, and is a paramount social determinant of health, shaping access to the resources that create opportunities for health, including public safety, housing, education and employment, and is a persistent barrier to health equity for the people of Holyoke;

WHEREAS, Racism has for centuries influenced our housing policies that have led to people of color being overwhelmingly subjected to poor housing conditions that negatively affect their health;

WHEREAS, Racism within our nation's labor policies has led to people of color being overrepresented in at-risk jobs, endangering their health and well-being, especially during the coronavirus pandemic;

WHEREAS, Systemic and Overt Racism is a documented significant stressor to communities of color, negatively impacting health outcomes;

WHEREAS, by definition, a public health issue is something that hurts and kills people "or impedes their ability to live a healthy, prosperous life;"

WHEREAS, the disproportionate level of violence inflicted on persons of color by the police in the United States is a direct violation of an individual's ability to live a healthy, prosperous life;

WHEREAS, Racial Justice is the proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Alex B. Morse, by virtue of the power vested in me as Mayor of Holyoke, do hereby order and direct as follows:

I, Alex B. Morse, Mayor of Holyoke, hereby declare that Racism and Police Violence are matters of Public Health that constitute a Public Health Emergency.

In recognition of this fact, I am taking the following actions as Mayor, and request that the City Council and all city agencies direct the necessary resources to dismantle Systemic Racism within our city through the development of policies, programs, and outreach, including but not limited to;



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CITY OF HOLYOKE

- A. The creation of a Racial Equity Public Health Professional position within the Holyoke Board of Health with the directive of collecting and reviewing data on the disparity of public health outcomes for people of color, and developing public health plans with community partners to address those challenges.
- B. The establishment of a Citizen Police Advisory Committee to the Mayor that shall consist of 11 members from the City of Holyoke, and who will be empowered and entrusted to advise the Mayor on matters of racial justice within policing. The advisory board, through their self-elected Chair, will have authority to request information from the Holyoke Police Department and all departments within City Hall to inform them of their recommendations to the Mayor. These recommendations will lay the groundwork for future directives for the combatting of systemic racism within the city.
- C. The recognition of June 19th as “Juneteenth Independence Day,” as a paid day off for City employees in Holyoke, with an official recommendation to the Holyoke City Council to codify the day as an annual holiday.
- D. Support through advocacy and funding; studies that explore the effectiveness of interventions that may decrease reliance on law enforcement, including decriminalization, increased investment in social determinants of health, and community-based alternatives that promote public safety, such as violence intervention and restorative justice.
- E. Advocacy at the state and federal level for policies and funding opportunities that directly combat systemic racism; such as the elimination of legislative provisions that shield law enforcement officers from investigation and accountability, otherwise known as qualified immunity.

I hereby order every City cabinet, department, agency, and office to take all necessary steps to implement this Executive Order, including through the allocation of funding and other resources in a manner consistent with applicable law.

The provisions of this Order are severable and if any provision, or portion thereof, should be held to be unconstitutional or otherwise invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality or invalidity shall not affect the remaining provisions that shall remain in full force and effect.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately. This Executive Order and the provisions herein shall remain in effect unless superseded or otherwise changed by Executive Order.

SIGNED THIS 17th DAY OF JUNE, 2020

Alex B. Morse, Mayor