

BOROUGH OF LEONIA
BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
Date: June 1, 2020 **RESOLUTION NO. 2020-124**

Council	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Fusco						
Davis						
Flaim						
Grandelis						
Terrell						
Ziegler						
Mayor Zeigler						

Resolution Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Leonia has a demonstrated track record of promoting racial equity, inclusion and diversity in all aspects of its municipal government; and,

WHEREAS, racism is a social system with multiple dimensions: individual racism that is internalized or interpersonal; systemic racism that is institutional or structural, and is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks; and,

WHEREAS, racism unfairly disadvantages specific individuals and communities, while unfairly giving advantages to other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources, and the Borough of Leonia’s collective prosperity depends upon the equitable access to opportunity for every resident regardless of the color of their skin; and,

WHEREAS, racism causes persistent discrimination and disparate outcomes in many areas of life, including housing, education, employment and criminal justice; and an emerging body of research demonstrates that racism itself is a social determinant of health; and,

WHEREAS, communities of color, working class residents, and those that suffer from disabilities, are more likely to experience poor health outcomes as a consequence of their social determinants of health — health inequities stemming from economic stability, education, physical environment, food and access to health care systems; and,

WHEREAS, a contemporary example of such disparity is highlighted by the coronavirus data in the United States, which shows that African-American COVID-19-related deaths

in the U.S. have occurred at more than twice the level of COVID-19-related deaths of Caucasian patients;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Leonia that the Borough of Leonia does hereby declare racism to be a public health crisis, and that the Mayor and Council shall also;

1. Promote equity through all policies approved by the Mayor and Council.
2. Enhance educational efforts aimed at understanding, addressing and dismantling racism and how it affects the delivery of human and social services, economic development and public safety.
3. Continue to advocate locally and through the New Jersey State League of Municipalities, New Jersey Conference of Mayors and all other appropriate associations for relevant policies that improve health in communities of color.
4. Support local, state, regional, and federal initiatives that advance efforts to dismantle systemic racism.
5. Further work to solidify alliances and partnerships with other organizations that are confronting racism and encourage other local, state, regional and national entities to recognize racism as a public health crisis.
6. Support community efforts to amplify issues of racism and engage actively and authentically with communities of color wherever they live.
7. Promote and support policies that prioritize the health of all people, especially people of color by mitigating exposure to adverse childhood experiences.
8. Encourage racial equity training among all community partners, vendors and contractors.
9. Call upon Bergen County Executive Tedesco and the Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders to declare racism as a public health crisis and to enact equity in all policies in the County of Bergen.
10. Call upon Governor Murphy, State Senate President Sweeney, and State Assembly Speaker Coughlin to also declare racism as a public health crisis and to enact equity in all policies of the state of New Jersey; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to Governor Murphy, Senate President Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Coughlin, Senator Weinberg, Assemblywoman Huttel, Assemblyman Johnson and Bergen County Executive Tedesco, for their review and potential action.