

PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK
FEBRUARY 21 -27, 2021
AND
DAY OF BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS!
FEBRUARY 21, 2021

Whereas, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors declares **February 21 -27, 2021** as **People of African Descent Mental Health Awareness Week** and **February 21, 2021** as the **Day of Black Consciousness!** in Alameda County; and

Whereas, there is a need to support the healing and recovery process of all consumers, peers and family members struggling with mental health challenges and access to the delivery of welcoming, equitable and culturally affirming services, including but not limited to community defined practices offered by African American providers and other trusted community leaders; and

Whereas, culturally affirming approaches are essential to respond to the mistreatment African Americans experience in health care settings which are rife with practices tied to historical and systemic racism; and

Whereas, the American Medical Association (AMA) recognizes racism as a public health crisis. The organization recognizes how racism exacerbates health inequities that can be seen across health care systems and have a deleterious impact on the mental wellbeing of people of African descent. Opposing all forms of racism, AMA calls upon us to take steps to combat racism that blocks access to an equitable response and resources to address the mental health challenges African Americans encounter; and

Whereas, Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services' response to better address the health inequities specific to African Americans led to the development of a Steering Committee to support the Department's efforts—and the gathering of essential input from other stakeholders—to focus specific attention on attaining equitable resources and care for this target population; and

Whereas, Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services' effort to respond to these concerns, has been of the pioneering County Departments who honors and elevates the voices of the African American community by establishing an African American Steering Committee to support efforts to procure culturally responsive and affirming services, approaches, resources and tools that will enhance the restoration of mental health wellness across the African American community; and

Whereas, consumers, peers, family members, providers, spiritual leaders and all other interested stakeholders can participate in efforts to unite in a collective effort to replace disinformation about mental health, systemic racism, blame, fear, and violation of Black bodies thereby reducing stigma and health inequities across the African American community.

Therefore, this Board of Supervisors, County of Alameda, State of California proclaims **February 21 – 27, 2021** as **People of African Descent Mental Health Awareness Week** and **February 21, 2021** as the **Day of Black Consciousness!** and encourages all people in Alameda County to participate in this important cause.

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