

## Montgomery

## County Council

##### *From the Office of Councilmember Will Jawando June 8, 2020*

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**Council will introduce resolution identifying racism as a public health crisis on June 9**

*Full Council supports the legislative measure spearheaded by Councilmember Jawando*

ROCKVILLE, Md., June 8, 2020—At its meeting on Tuesday, June 9, the Montgomery County Council will introduce a resolution, spearheaded by Councilmember Will Jawando and sponsored by the full Council, declaring racism a public health crisis.

In a memo to the Council, Councilmember Jawando noted that racism causes persistent discrimination and inequitable outcomes in many areas of life. An emerging body of research, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, has found that racism itself is a social determinant of health.

Disparities in health outcomes have been amplified during the Covid-19 pandemic, as African Americans have the highest number of recorded cases and deaths. This is true across the United States, in the state of Maryland and in Montgomery County, where African Americans account for 25 percent of the deaths, despite being 19 percent of the County’s population.

According to the national COVID Racial Data Tracker, African Americans have been nearly twice as likely to die of Covid-19 than would be expected based on their share of the population. According to an NPR article that analyzed national statistics, “In four states, the rate is three or more times greater,” and further, “In 42 states plus Washington D.C., Hispanics/Latinos make up a greater share of confirmed cases than their share of the population. In eight states, it’s more than four times greater.”

The Council is committed to assessing and eliminating the effects of racial and ethnic disparities on policies, education, economic and health outcomes in Montgomery County, and has a demonstrated track record of promoting racial equity, social justice and inclusions in all aspects of County government. This commitment is exemplified in the development and execution of the Racial Equity and Social Justice Act, the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, the Law Enforcement Trust and Transparency (LETT) Act, Policing Advisory Commission, the Community Policing Law, and the Remembrance and Reconciliation Commission.

The Council staff report on this resolution can be viewed [here](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2020/20200609/20200609_3-5.pdf).

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