

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
2020 Legislative Session

Resolution No. CR-66-2020

Proposed by Council Members Harrison and Hawkins

Introduced by Council Members Harrison, Hawkins, Turner, Ivey, Streeter, Taveras,
Glaros, Franklin, Davis, Dernoga and Anderson-Walker

Date of Introduction July 14, 2020

RESOLUTION

1 A RESOLUTION concerning

2 The Declaration of Racism as a Crisis of Public Health, Public Safety and Economic Welfare
3 For the purpose of asserting that Racism is a Crisis of Public Health and Public Safety and
4 Economic Welfare because of its effect on the entire Prince George’s County community.

5 WHEREAS, Systemic Racism is defined as organized systems, within societies, which
6 cause avoidable and unfair inequalities in power, resources, capacities, and opportunities across
7 racial or ethnic groups; and

8 WHEREAS, Systemic Racism is so institutionalized and commonly accepted in our laws,
9 rules, policies, behaviors, attitudes and practices that it establishes and imposes statistically
10 significant perpetual hardship, baseless, spurious and capricious state sanctioned disadvantages
11 and even shortened life spans on persons of color, including but not limited to Black, Native
12 Americans, and Latino when compared to white citizens and residents of the United States and
13 Prince George’s County. Moreover, Institutionalized Racism perpetuates inequity among racial
14 and ethnic groups, which is the common denominator in the disproportionate use of lethal force,
15 by law enforcement against communities of color; and

16 WHEREAS The Crisis of Systemic Racism warrants urgent strategic concerted and
17 decisive action among all public agencies and all stakeholders to uniformly sanitize our beloved
18 County; and

19 WHEREAS, the Prince George’s County Council further recognizes the historical context of
20 Racism as the Black community of Prince George’s County has endured the fallout of historical
21 slavery, having had the largest population of enslaved persons in the state of Maryland, leading
22 into abolition and where the number of enslaved African people were greater than all other free

1 persons combined; and

2 WHEREAS, the origination of institutions within Prince George's County were designed,
3 postured and purposed according to the horrific ideal of human ownership for profit, ever since
4 impacting social determinants of health, which also defined housing policies, educational access, and
5 disgorged income generation and transfer from within Black families, from the establishment of North
6 Brentwood (the earliest incorporated Black community in Prince George's County) to the integration
7 of our school system in 1972, a full 18 years, after *Brown v. Board of Education*; and

8 WHEREAS, studies have examined institutional Racism as a core social determinant of
9 health, revealing that the historical and continued negative impact of Racism on health and well-
10 being through implicit and explicit biases, institutional structures, and interpersonal relationships
11 is clearly detrimental; and

12 WHEREAS, institutional Racism impacts health and undergirds health disparities via
13 several recognized pathways: (1) reduced access to employment, housing and education and/or
14 increased exposure to risk factors (e.g., avoidable contact with police); (2) adverse
15 cognitive/emotional processes; (3) chronic stress, impaired mental health and concomitant
16 development of chronic health conditions; (4) diminished participation in healthy behaviors (e.g.,
17 sleep and exercise) and/or increased engagement in unhealthy behaviors; and (5) physical injury
18 as a result of racially-motivated violence; and

19 WHEREAS, institutional Racism impacted housing policy, tax policy and economic
20 opportunities, observed both across the country and within Prince George's County. As observed
21 during the economic crisis of 2008, where banks purposely gave people of color subprime
22 mortgages. Approximately 54 percent of Blacks and 47 percent of Latinos living, in Prince
23 George's County, received subprime loans compared with about 17 percent of Whites, even
24 when people of color qualified for prime mortgages. Black neighborhoods with high-income
25 were 42% more likely and Hispanic/Latino neighborhoods with high-income were 159% more
26 likely, than the borrowers in non-Hispanic White neighborhoods to go into foreclosure. This
27 resulted in devastating rates of foreclosures and significant loss of wealth that continues to
28 impact families, over 10 years later; and

29 WHEREAS, the same disparities, fueled by institutional Racism, are observed in economies
30 where minority-owned businesses are found to pay higher interest rates on loans. They are also
31 more likely to be denied credit. Further, minority-owned firms are found to have less than half

1 the average amount of recent equity investments and loans than non-minority firms even among
2 firms with \$500,000 or more in annual gross receipts. Minority-owned businesses also receive
3 substantially fewer capital investments at startup and in the first few years of existence than non-
4 minority firms.

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Council of Prince George's
6 County, Maryland, that Prince George's County Council declares that Systemic Racism is a
7 Crisis infecting the Public Health, Public Safety, Economy and Prince George's County in its
8 entirety. Therefore, Prince George's County Council commits to creating a realizable
9 construction of systemic reforms to meaningfully transition Prince George's County such that the
10 metaphorical seeds of equity we plant for this purpose are accompanied with safeguards, to
11 ensure that they are nourished, protected, and supported to impact systemic change.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prince George's County Council commits to
13 establishing a Racial Equity Task Force to deactivate systemic and structural Racism in Prince
14 George's County and to establish a refreshed system for realizable equity for health, peace,
15 economic enrichment, and justice considerate of every person and every perspective, yet with
16 undeniable recognition of and careful considerations for communities of color, regardless of
17 disparate pathways through and to the Americas.

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prince George's County Council will work to
19 create policy and legislation, which will foster a livable, fair and equitable community that is free
20 of unfair, bias and race-based practices concerning educational opportunities, housing, hiring and
21 promotions, access and delivery of healthcare, predatory lending, delivery of law enforcement
22 and judicial services, environmental impact, minority business opportunities, minority economic
23 expansion, access to funding and capital, nutritious food accessibility in response to food deserts
24 (characterized as areas/communities that lack access to full service supermarkets providing
25 affordable fresh and healthy foods) and recreation and leisure facilities.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prince George's County Council expresses support
27 for policies that effectively reduce and eradicate implicit bias, advances diversity, cultural
28 competency, fairness, and equity in all County Government Operations and regulated activities.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prince George's County Council expresses support
30 for policies that effectively focus on the mental health of County public safety officials and
31 residents with an emphasis on persons in mental crisis and avoids the criminalization of

1 substance addiction and/or mental illness.

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prince George's County expresses support for
3 incarceration diversion processes and programs.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prince George's County Council expresses support
5 for policies and programs that are rooted in trauma-informed care, that identify ways to reduce
6 trauma, de-escalate mental health crises, facilitate appropriate access to health care, identify the
7 symptoms of trauma, reduce mental re-traumatization and respond to community-based calls-for-
8 service.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prince George's County Council expresses support
10 for a review of County public safety recruitment and training processes to ensure that the intent
11 and application are fair, unbiased and are utilizing the most advanced institutionalized training
12 methods.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prince George's County Council expresses support
14 for the creation of a County law enforcement officers' use-of-force register/database, where
15 residents can access individual police officer's prior use-of-force history and outcomes.

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prince George's County Council expresses support
17 for a use-of-force oversight body to oversee, monitor, and investigate all use-of-force complaints
18 in Prince George's County.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prince George's County Council expresses support
20 for a County public safety Leadership Mentoring Program, to assist with the training and
21 promotion of future managers, by fostering fair, unbiased, and standardized access to
22 promotional opportunities and promotional information, for more appropriate career tracking and
23 development.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prince George's County Council expresses support
25 for policies banning chokeholds and strangleholds, de-escalation, warning before shooting,
26 exhaustion of all alternatives before shooting, duty to intervene, banning shooting at moving
27 vehicles, comprehensive reporting, and the use-of-force continuum, to ensure that each member
28 of the community is treated fairly and without bias.

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Adopted this 21st day of July, 2020.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE
GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY: _____
Todd M. Turner
Council Chair

ATTEST:

Donna J. Brown
Clerk of the Council