

SUMMARY REPORT

DECLARING RACISM A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS IN CONNECTICUT

One of the greatest barriers to achieving health equity is the historical and contemporary relationship between racism and health. Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis offers a clear path to intentionally acknowledging and addressing disparities and inequities.

2020-2021

In 2020, Health Equity Solutions began a petition demanding an intentional anti-racist focus in policymaking in the state of Connecticut. It gained more than 1,000 signatures from residents across 130+ towns in CT.

Sign The Petition

To achieve health equity in the United States, we must confront and dismantle racism. Institutional, interpersonal, and internal racism has no place in a world where we want to have healthy and thriving adults. In CT, we must unite and stand up against racism in all its forms. The first step starts with each one of us making the decision to be anti-racist and demand that decision-makers, policymakers, and leaders are intentionally anti-racist.

Join us today in our call to action for intentional racial equity in our laws, policies, and ways of being in CT!

First Name*

Last Name*

Email Address*

City

State

Choose one...

Zip Code

1183 Signatures

HEALTH EQUITY SOLUTIONS

Dismantling Racism in CT

22 Connecticut towns/cities have declared!

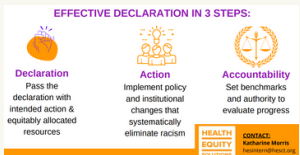
- Signed petition
- Declared racism a public health crisis

- Bloomfield
- Bridgeport
- Colechester
- Easton
- Glastonbury
- Hamden
- Hartford
- Manchester
- Meriden
- Middletown
- New Britain
- New Haven
- New London
- Old Saybrook
- Simsbury
- South Windsor
- Stratford
- West Hartford
- West Haven
- Westport
- Windham
- Windsor

Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation

Soon after, HES started to engage with local residents to declare racism a public health crisis in CT municipalities. Thanks to the work of residents and grassroots organizations, 22 towns/cities and the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation passed resolutions.

To support these efforts, HES amplified our social media presence and provided CT residents and leaders (local & state) with tools such as template emails, talking points, guidance on reaching out to elected officials, and next steps for towns and cities after a declaration has been made.



A BIG WIN FOR CT!

In 2021, the Connecticut General Assembly passed a bill declaring racism a public health crisis for the state of Connecticut.

This bill, now P.A. 21-35, also created the Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health. The Commission will create and implement a strategic plan to name and address goals for achieving health equity in Connecticut.

SUMMARY REPORT

In the fall of 2021, HES reached out to the 22 towns that declared racism a public health crisis to learn more about the resolutions passed in these town, the progress they've made, and the challenges they've faced in putting the resolution into action.

TELL US WHAT YOU'VE DONE: SURVEY RESULTS

SURVEY POPULATION

4 out of 22 towns responded to the survey

SEPT 2021

JAN 2022

QUESTIONS ASKED

01 What influenced the decision to Declare Racism a Public Health Crisis in your town/city?

02 What were the major priorities/goals outlined in your resolution?

03 Can you describe the progress made thus far in implementing your priorities/goals?

04 Can you describe any challenges faced in putting these priorities into action?

05 How have you kept elected officials engaged in this work? How were they held accountable in moving forward with the goals outlined in your declaration?

06 What is next for your town regarding the resolution? Can you identify concrete goals for the next 1-5 years?

07 What steps/practices would you recommend to other towns/cities looking to declare racism a public health crisis?

COMMON THEMES

- Personal experience
- A catalyst event
- Engaging with town members
- Working with HES

- 1 town reported their goals
- A commission, coalition, or group was formed to put goals outlined in the resolution to action
- No action, yet

- Opposition to resolution
- Resolution viewed as an endpoint
- No active implementation of recommendations, yet
- More work is needed to hold officials accountable

- **Up next:** Starting DRPHC Commissions & Identifying goals
- **Recommendations:** Involve more residents & develop specific actions to back resolutions

QUOTES

"We were influenced by: *Momentum built by HES, New Haven REACH Coalition advocacy to initiate this declaration.*"

"A shooting that involved a State Police Officer and a young Black man from another town."

"Improve the quality of the data our city collects and the analysis of that data, as it is not enough to assume that an initiative is producing its intended outcome, qualitative and quantitative data should be used to assess inequities in impact and continuously improve."

"There is a group of people, loud people, who do not feel this is an issue at all."

"Since submitting the report of recommendations, there has been little action and next steps are unclear, despite advocacy efforts to push for next steps."

"A local coalition will likely work on related initiatives outlined in the initial set of recommendations."

"Get people to tell their stories publicly and do not give up."

IMPLEMENTING EQUITY IN CT

Check out the "[Racial Equity - Getting the Results Guide](#)" by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity. It is a step by step guide for implementing racial equity at the local level.

HES recognizes that this is long-term work and will continue to share tools and work with the Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health to identify and achieve health equity goals for CT. **Reach out to share your thoughts: info@hesct.org**