



# BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK *RESOLUTION GUIDE*

This resolution guide provides the tools and information needed to introduce, advance, and champion the BMHW resolution in their state.





## **ABOUT THE BLACK MAMAS MATTER ALLIANCE**

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**BMMA (Black Mamas Matter Alliance)** is a network of Black-led/Black women-led organizations and multi-disciplinary professionals, whose work is deeply rooted in reproductive justice, birth justice, and the human rights framework, to ensure that all Black Mamas have the rights, respect, and resources to thrive before, during, and after pregnancy. BMMA is the premier Black Maternal Health professional organization focusing on building the skills, convening, and mobilizing the global Black perinatal, maternal, and reproductive health workforce to END maternal mortality.

BMMA honors the work and historical contributions of Black women's leadership within their communities and values the need to amplify this work on a national scale. For this reason, BMMA does not have chapters. The alliance is composed of existing organizations and individuals.

**WE ARE THE *FOUNDERS*  
AND *LEADERS* OF THE  
*Black Maternal Health,*  
**RIGHTS, & JUSTICE MOVEMENT!****

# OUR GOALS

## CHANGE POLICY

Introduce and advance policy grounded in the human rights framework that addresses Black maternal health inequity and improves Black maternal health outcomes.

## CULTIVATE RESEARCH

Leverage the talent and knowledge that exists in Black communities and cultivate innovative research methods to inform the policy agenda to improve Black maternal health.

## ADVANCE CARE FOR BLACK MAMAS

Explore, introduce, and enhance holistic and comprehensive approaches to Black mamas' care.

## SHIFT CULTURE

Redirect and reframe the conversation on Black maternal health and amplify the voices of Black mamas

OUR **VISION** EXTENDS BEYOND MERE SURVIVAL - IT ENCOMPASSES THE FLOURISHING OF BLACK MAMAS **BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER PREGNANCY.**



# BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK

## WHAT IS BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK?

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Held annually on April 11th – 17th, founded and led by BMMA, **BMHW is a week-long campaign to build awareness, activism, and community-building to amplify the voices, perspectives and lived experiences of Black Mamas and birthing people.** The week is intentionally held during National Minority Health Month and begins on April 11th annually to join dozens of global organizations in marking this day as International Day for Maternal Health and Rights – an opportunity to advocate for the elimination of maternal mortality, globally. The activities and conversations hosted throughout the week intentionally center the values and practices of the birth and reproductive justice movements.

## GOAL OF BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK

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Black Maternal Health Week is a week of awareness, activism, and community-building aimed at amplifying the voices of Black Mamas, bringing visibility to Black-led maternal health initiatives, and centering the values and traditions of the reproductive and birth justice movements.

For BMMA we recognize maternal mortality as a global crisis that affects Black women not only here in the United States, but across the world. Since 2021, Black Maternal Health Week has been nationally recognized by the White House. The purpose of the campaign is to deepen the national conversation about Black maternal health so that public stakeholders understand how root causes -- like systemic racism -- act as drivers of maternal health inequities.

The campaign centers the voices, scholarship, work, and experiences of Black Mamas, Black birthing people, and their communities.

A primary goal of the campaign is to amplify the policy, research, and care solutions that are being harnessed within the communities most impacted by this issue. The campaign will also inform policymakers and community leaders on policy solutions and will showcase to the general public the power of organizing and the importance and necessity of maintaining space for Black leadership in this work.

# BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK

## BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK RESOLUTION

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In 2021, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution recognizing Black Maternal Health Week, which acknowledged the urgent need to address maternal health disparities. The resolution includes a call for addressing the systemic issues that contribute to the disproportionate rates of maternal morbidity and mortality among Black women. It emphasizes the importance of improving healthcare access, increasing the diversity of the healthcare workforce, and ensuring culturally competent care for Black birthing people.

The Black Maternal Health Week Resolution aims to:

1. Raise awareness about the disproportionate maternal health outcomes among Black women.
2. Promote solutions for improving maternal healthcare access, education, and outcomes for Black women.
3. Advocate for policy changes at the local, state, and national levels to ensure equitable and accessible maternal health care.
4. Support community-driven efforts and organizations working to improve Black maternal health.

The resolution also acknowledges the work of advocates, organizations, and individuals who are fighting for racial equity in maternal health care and encourages a coordinated effort to reduce disparities.

## BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH ISSUES

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- Black Maternal & Infant Mortality
- Social and Structural Determinants of Health for Black Birthing People
- Criminalization of Black birthing people and birthworkers
- Black Maternal, Reproductive, and Perinatal Workforce
- Black Maternal, Reproductive, and Perinatal Workforce
- Maternal Mental Health
- Postpartum Medicaid Expansion
- Data and Research
- Healthcare system and access



# INTRODUCING A BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH RESOLUTION IN YOUR STATE OR CITY

## WHAT IS A RESOLUTION?

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A resolution in the context of legislation **refers to a formal expression of the opinion or decision of a legislative body, such as a parliament, congress, or assembly.** It is a type of action taken by a legislative body to make a statement or take a position on a particular issue. It plays an important role in shaping the legislative agenda, reflecting the views of the legislative body, and sometimes guiding or influencing future actions. but it does not carry the force of law in the same way as a statute or law would.

### **Resolutions are often used to:**

- Express the opinion or stance of the legislature on an issue (e.g., a resolution condemning an event or action).
- Make procedural decisions or changes within the legislative body.
- Approve or set priorities for government action.
- Honor or commemorate significant people, events, or anniversaries.

## HOW DO I GET A RESOLUTION INTRODUCED AT THE STATE OR LOCAL LEVEL?

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To get a **resolution** introduced at the state or local level, the process typically involves working with elected officials, such as state legislators, city council members, or county commissioners. Please note states may follow different guidelines, rules, and processes so be sure to review and familiarize yourself with how the local government or state legislature works in your state. Here's a general step-by-step outline of how you might get a resolution introduced.

# INTRODUCING A BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH RESOLUTION IN YOUR STATE OR CITY

## 1. IDENTIFY THE RELEVANT LEGISLATIVE BODY

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- **State Level:** If you're looking to introduce a resolution at the state level, identify whether you want to work with the state legislature (i.e., the state house or senate) or a specific committee within the legislature.
- **Local Level:** If you're targeting local government, identify the relevant body, such as the city council, county board of commissioners, or town board.

## 2. WORK WITH AN ELECTED OFFICIAL

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- **Find a Sponsor:** Resolutions are typically introduced by elected officials. You need to find a legislator or council member who is willing to sponsor the resolution. This could be a state representative, state senator, or local official.
- **Build Support:** It's helpful to have support from other community members, organizations, or advocacy groups. You can demonstrate that the issue is of interest to the public or a specific constituency.
- **Contact the Legislator:** Reach out to the official to discuss the issue and propose the resolution. Be clear about your goals and why the resolution matters. Provide supporting evidence, data, and arguments to strengthen your case.

## 3. DRAFT THE RESOLUTION

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- **Research:** Before drafting a resolution, it's important to conduct thorough research on the issue you want to address. This research should help you clearly understand the problem, the context, and the potential solutions.
- **Work with the Sponsor:** Collaborate with the legislator or their staff to draft the resolution. You can suggest language, but the official will need to ensure it aligns with legislative practices and formats.
- **Get Legal Guidance:** Depending on the complexity, it may be necessary to consult with a legal advisor to ensure the resolution is written clearly and follows proper procedure.

# INTRODUCING A BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH RESOLUTION IN YOUR STATE OR CITY

## 4. GATHER SUPPORT AND LOBBY

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- **Mobilize Supporters:** Encourage others to contact their representatives and express support for the resolution. The more people you can rally, the stronger your case will be.
- **Attend Committee Meetings:** Many legislative bodies and local governments hold public meetings where resolutions are discussed. Attend these meetings to voice your support, or even to testify if public testimony is allowed.

## 5. INTRODUCE THE RESOLUTION

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- Once a legislator agrees to sponsor the resolution, they will introduce it formally to the body, whether it's a state legislature or a local council.
- **Follow the Process:** Each legislative body has its own procedures for introducing resolutions, including committee hearings, debates, and voting processes. Stay involved in these steps and follow up with the sponsor to ensure progress.

## 6. ADVOCATE FOR THE RESOLUTION

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- **Track Progress:** Stay engaged throughout the process. If the resolution is being debated in a committee, you can attend meetings to advocate for it.
- **Testify or Speak:** At public hearings or city council meetings, you may be able to testify in support of the resolution.

## 7. VOTING AND PASSAGE

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- After being debated and possibly amended, the resolution will be voted on by the full legislative body. If it passes, it will be officially adopted.
- In some cases, the resolution may need to be signed by the governor or mayor, depending on local rules.

# INTRODUCING A BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH RESOLUTION IN YOUR STATE OR CITY

## KEY TIPS

- **Be Persistent:** Legislative processes can be slow and sometimes frustrating. Keep following up and advocating for the resolution.
- **Work with a Coalition:** Building a coalition of supporters (community groups, organizations, etc.) can help demonstrate broader support for the resolution and increase its chances of success.

## BMHW STATE RESOLUTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED:

\*As of 2025\*

- California
- Louisiana
- Michigan
- New York
- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- Virginia

## BMHW STATE RESOLUTION TEMPLATE

The BMHW Resolution Template can be used as a model to develop your states resolution and input any maternal health issues that may be priority in your state.

CLICK [HERE](#) TO ACCESS THE RESOLUTION TEMPLATE

Black Maternal Health Week 2025 State Resolution  
[TEMPLATE]

Recognizing the designation of the week of April 11 through April 17, 2025, as the eighth annual "Black Maternal Health Week," founded by Black Mamas Matter Alliance, Inc. (BMAA), to bring national attention to the maternal and reproductive health crisis in the United States and the importance of reducing maternal mortality and morbidity among Black women and birthing persons.

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Black women in the United States are two to three times more likely than White women to die from pregnancy-related causes<sup>1</sup>;

Whereas Black women and people living in low-income and rural communities in the United States are the most likely to suffer from life-threatening pregnancy complications, known as "maternal morbidities,"<sup>2</sup>;

Whereas maternal mortality rates in the United States are—

- (1) among the highest in the developed world; with
- (2) 23.8 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2020, 32.9 in 2021<sup>1</sup>, 22.3 in 2022, and 18.6 in 2023<sup>1</sup>.

Whereas the United States has the highest maternal mortality rate among affluent countries, in part because of the disproportionate mortality rate of Black women;

Whereas, according to the 2025 CDC Report, in 2023 the U.S. Maternal Mortality rate decreased rate for White(14.5), Hispanic(12.4), and Asians(10.7) women but increased to 50.3 deaths per 100,000 live births for Black women<sup>1</sup>;

**[INSERT STATE MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE]**

Whereas Black women are 50 percent more likely than all other women to give birth to premature, low birthweight, and very low birthweight infants<sup>4</sup>;

Whereas the high rates of maternal mortality among Black women span across—  
(1) income levels;

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3  
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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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- For additional tools visit [blackmamasmatter.org](https://blackmamasmatter.org) to see our list of publications, articles, books, policy agenda, and toolkits.
- BMMA's Comprehensive, issues and values-based Policy Agenda, [Black Mamas Matter : In Policy and Practice](#)

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