

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF THE COUNTY OF DOUGLAS, COLORADO**

**RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING
May 2025 as Mental Health Awareness Month**

Whereas mental health is part of overall health and is something we all have; and

Whereas mental health conditions are common nationally and here in Colorado. In 2024 26% of Colorado adults (or 1.1 million) experienced a mental health concern, and 23% of Colorado youth (or over 100,000) ages 12-17 experienced at least one major depressive episode; and

Whereas approximately one-half of chronic mental health conditions begin by the age of 14 and three-quarters by age 24; and

Whereas long delays – on average 10 years, but sometimes decades – occur between the time symptoms first appear and when individuals get help, and less than half of adults and approximately half of youth experiencing a mental/behavioral health condition each year receive treatment; and

Whereas suicide ranked as the 8th leading cause of death in Colorado in 2023 and remains the number 1 cause of death among Colorado youth and young adults. Firearms are the leading method, and, in the time that it takes to read this resolution at least one person in the U.S. will have died by suicide; and

Whereas in the last Colorado Health Access survey in 2023, over 70,000 Douglas County adults, or 18.3%, reported poor mental health, meaning 14 or more days out of the last 30 days their lives were impacted due to poor mental health; and

Whereas the Douglas County Mental Health Collaborative (DCMHC) was established eleven years ago in 2014 under the leadership of the Board of County Commissioners to address mental health system gaps, and is currently represented by over 50 organizational members dedicated to system change and improvements in mental and behavioral health outcomes in Douglas County; and

Whereas the DCMHC is actively working on multiple strategies to strengthen the mental health network of care, fill gaps, and address the persistent stigma that surrounds mental health conditions and substance use disorders. DCMHC has aligned with behavioral health promotion and injury prevention priorities in the Douglas County Health Department's strategic plan, and participates in programming collaborations within the 23rd Judicial District; and

Whereas the DCMHC launched the Community Response Team program eight years ago in May 2017, and since then has served more than 7,500 unique individuals, prevented 1,430

unnecessary trips to the emergency department for mental health crisis, prevented 589 jail bookings, released 4,200 law enforcement officers back to service and has saved over \$10 million in Fire and Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Department and Jail costs alone. CRT serves the entire county every day of the week with 360 hours of service availability, and

Whereas the DCMHC launched The Care Compact in 2020 and the Youth Care Compact in 2024 to provide care coordination for children, youth, and their families as well as adults living with mental health conditions, substance use disorder, intellectual and developmental disability/delay and unmet basic needs. The Care Compact has served over 180 adults resulting in reductions in the use of crisis and emergency services. The Youth Care Compact has served 24 families and made 98 service connections.

Whereas Douglas County established the Mental Health Division within its Department of Human Services in 2024, further demonstrating its commitment to the mental wellbeing of its constituents; and

Whereas the Douglas County Board of County Commissioners has dedicated over \$6,000,000 of the County's \$68.2 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding to mental and behavioral health programming, including investments in Veterans' mental health services, strategies to address the revolving door of crisis for youth and families, suicide prevention, expansion of the Community Response Team and Care Compact programs, community education, men's mental health, and a funding contribution to implement the 9-8-8 crisis and support line; and

Whereas the DCMHC supports and encourages:

- Early identification and treatment, which can make a difference in successful management of mental illness and recovery
- Maintenance of mental well-being and learning the symptoms of mental illness in order to get help when it is needed
- Engagement of every citizen and community in ending the silence and stigma that for too long has surrounded mental illness and discouraged people from getting help; and
- Public education and civic activities, which can encourage mental health and help improve the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness.

NOW WHEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Douglas, Colorado do hereby proclaim May 1 through May 31, 2025 as Mental Health Awareness Month to shine a light on mental health conditions and fight stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for equitable access to care.

PASSED AND ADOPTED, this 22rd day of April 2025 in Castle Rock, Douglas County, Colorado.

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF
DOUGLAS, COLORADO**

BY: _____
ABE LAYDON, Chair

ATTEST:

BY: _____
Hayley Hall, Clerk to the Board