

NOTICE OF MOTION

Proclaiming April 11 to 17, 2026, as Black Maternal Health Week in the City of Toronto

Moved by: Councillor

Amber Morley

Michael Thompson

Seconded by: Councillor

SUMMARY:

Toronto is home to a vibrant and diverse Black community that faces unique socio-economic and cultural challenges. From the 2021 Census, 10% of Torontonians identify as Black. In our city, Black maternal health is often overlooked due to limited data on maternal health outcomes, systemic anti-Black racism, and a lack of targeted public initiatives. [Research](#) shows that Black pregnant people experience higher rates of stillbirths, and poor maternal and infant outcomes, such as preterm birth, preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, hypertension, and congenital heart disease, compared to white individuals. For example, a [study](#) from McGill University found that 8.9% of Black women gave birth to preterm babies between 2004 and 2006, compared to 5.9% of white women. This data stresses the need for targeted interventions and support to address disparities.

Even with a universal healthcare system, Black women face health disparities due to systemic anti-Black racism and social inequalities. A 2023 [study](#) revealed that many Black women in Toronto feel dismissed, ignored, and neglected by healthcare providers. To improve Black maternal health, the healthcare system and other frontline providers must train service providers on anti-Black racism, specific to the care of Black childbearing women, and increase the number of Black service providers in perinatal settings.

Building on the momentum of its inaugural year, the Black Maternal Health Collective Canada (BMHCC) will bring together healthcare leaders, policymakers, community advocates, families and allies to advance equitable maternal health outcomes for Black communities.

This year's theme, "From Awareness to Accountability: The Role of Families, Allies & Systems in Black Maternal Health," calls for collective action across institutions and communities to address longstanding disparities in maternal health experienced by Black women and families in Canada.

Toronto Black Maternal Health Week, April 11 to 17, 2026, takes place during Black Maternal Health and Reproductive Justice Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness of the systemic challenges affecting Black women's reproductive health and advocating for solutions.

This commitment is in line with the City of Toronto's broader work to deepen cultural and systemic change and deliver better outcomes for Black Torontonians, such as the development of a renewed [10-year Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#). With this proclamation,

we commit to collaborating and advocating with partners for improvements to Black maternal health equity. The City of Toronto also commits to providing equitable and welcoming spaces for Black parents and families in Toronto through existing City programs and services, including raising awareness on this important issue.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. City Council formally declare April 11 – 17, 2026, as Black Maternal Health Week in the City of Toronto.

Date: March 25, 2026