

# STATE of WISCONSIN



## OFFICE of the GOVERNOR

# Proclamation

*WHEREAS*; from pregnancy to childbirth to postpartum and beyond, ensuring the health and wellness of all mothers and babies in Wisconsin is a priority for the state; and

*WHEREAS*; despite advances in medical science and technology, pregnancy-related complications and deaths continue to occur at high levels in Wisconsin, with social determinants of health, mental health challenges, violence, and substance use disorders as significant contributors; and

*WHEREAS*; state and national health data identify that disparities in maternal health and health outcomes persist along racial lines and that Black mothers in Wisconsin are more likely than their white, non-Hispanic peers to die from complications of pregnancy and childbirth; and

*WHEREAS*; these disparities in health outcomes are not the consequence of individual habits or poor choices and can only be rectified through increased access to quality maternal healthcare and education, particularly in communities of color and among other historically underserved populations; and

*WHEREAS*; the need to improve the state's maternal care systems has never been greater, and initiatives to support positive outcomes for all mothers and babies across the state, including postpartum care and maternal and infant mortality preventative measures, are underway; and

*WHEREAS*; a 2020 study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that, with some limited exceptions, approximately 30 percent of maternal deaths occur between 43 and 365 days after giving birth; and

*WHEREAS*; according to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, two-thirds of all pregnancy-related deaths in Wisconsin occur beyond the current 60-day postpartum coverage window; and

*WHEREAS*; in addition to supporting efforts to expand postpartum Medicaid coverage in Wisconsin from 60 days to 12 months, Wisconsin is proud to have a longstanding multidisciplinary Maternal Mortality Review Team tasked with reviewing all maternal deaths, developing prevention recommendations and strategies, and increasing public and professional awareness of the incidence of pregnancy-related deaths; and

*WHEREAS*; this month, the state of Wisconsin joins maternal health advocates, organizations, medical professionals, families, and researchers across the state in increasing public and professional awareness of maternal health issues, supporting the state's mothers and babies, promoting initiatives to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality, and eliminating existing disparities in access to maternal healthcare and health outcomes;


NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,  
do hereby proclaim January 23, 2024, as

## MATERNAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

throughout the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance  
to all our state's residents.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have  
hereunto set my hand and caused the  
Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin  
to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in  
the City of Madison this 6th day  
of February 2024.

  
TONY EVERS  
GOVERNOR

By the Governor:

  
SARAH GODLEWSKI  
Secretary of State