

WHEREAS; sickle cell disease, also known as sickle cell anemia, refers to a group of inherited disorders that affect the production and longevity of red blood cells; and

WHEREAS; the body of an individual with sickle cell disease produces abnormally shaped red blood cells that resemble a crescent or sickle, and these cells do not live as long as typical round red blood cells, leading to anemia; and

WHEREAS; these abnormally shaped red blood cells, or sickle cells, have the potential to block blood vessels and impede blood flow, resulting in vaso-occlusive crises, which can cause severe pain, organ damage, and other life-threatening complications that often lead to hospitalization; and

WHEREAS; sickle cell disease is a chronic condition that can affect any organ, and research indicates that affected individuals may experience a variety of severe complications, including stroke, infections, pulmonary hypertension, and a shorter life expectancy than the general population; and

WHEREAS; an individual with the disease is born with two sickle cell genes, one inherited from each parent, and an individual with only one sickle cell gene is considered to have a sickle cell trait that may be passed down; and

WHEREAS; sickle cell disease affects approximately 100,000 people in the U.S., including many Wisconsinites, and that both sickle cell disease and sickle cell traits occur disproportionately among Black or African American populations; and

WHEREAS; the National Institutes of Health has been working on innovative genetic therapies that could someday cure sickle cell disease, and in 2023, the United States Food and Drug Administration approved two milestone cell-based gene therapies for the treatment of sickle cell disease patients 12 years and older, and in the years since, patients have seen relief; and

WHEREAS; increased awareness of sickle cell disease is necessary to support research into potentially curative therapies that can improve the quality of life for affected individuals while also offering substantial savings on medical costs over their lifetime; and

WHEREAS; this month, the state of Wisconsin joins individuals with sickle cell disease and their families, along with dedicated medical professionals, advocates, and organizations, in spreading awareness of sickle cell disease and embracing hope that advancements in science and medicine will soon lead to improved treatments and health outcomes for affected individuals and an ultimate cure;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,
do hereby proclaim September 2026 as

SICKLE CELL 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 26th day of August 2026.

TONY EVERS, Governor

By the Governor:

SARAH GODLEWSKI, Secretary of State