

**TOWNSHIP OF WILLINGBORO
RESOLUTION 2022 – 140**

**RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING WILLINGBORO TOWNSHIP AS A
STIGMA-FREE ZONE FOR MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS**

WHEREAS Willingboro Township is committed to establishing the township as a Stigma-Free Zone supporting efforts for Mental Health Awareness; and

WHEREAS the National Institute of Mental Health reports that nearly one in five or roughly 53 million Americans live with a mental illness, and 1 in 6 youth ages 6 - 17 experience a mental health disorder each year, but only half receive treatment; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, 36.7% of students reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness; nearly 19% of high school students had seriously considered attempting suicide; and

WHEREAS suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among high school-aged youth ages 14-18; in 2018, a total of 48,344 persons of all ages died from suicide, and where suicide was the 10th leading cause of death overall in the United States; and

WHEREAS the stigma associated with the disease of mental illness is identified as the primary reason individuals fail to seek the help they need to recover from disease; and

WHEREAS, when severe mental illness goes untreated or under-treated, it can lead to alcohol or substance abuse, dropping out of school, unemployment, homelessness, or suicide; and

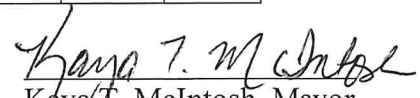
WHEREAS, raising awareness of mental illness is an effective way to reduce the stigma associated with the disease and encourage those who are affected to seek services and support; and

WHEREAS, Willingboro Township is committed to creating public interest and open dialogue about stigmas, raising awareness of the disease of mental illness, and creating a culture wherein residents who have the disease of mental illness feel supported by the community and feel free to seek treatment for the disease without fear of a stigma so that recovery can begin; and

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THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Council of the Township of Willingboro assembled in the public session this 6th day of September 2022, that Willingboro Township, In the County of Burlington, State of New Jersey, is hereby designated as a Stigma-Free Zone.

Councilmember	Motion	2 nd	Yea	Nay	Recuse	Abstain	Absent
Councilman Anderson			X				
Councilwoman Perrone			X				
Councilwoman Worthy	X		X				
Deputy Mayor Whitfield		X	X				
Mayor McIntosh			X				


Kaya T. McIntosh, Mayor

Attest:


Brenda Bligen, MBA
Acting Township Clerk