



**CITY OF WEST PALM BEACH  
EXECUTIVE ORDER 2020-13**

**Task Force for Racial and Ethnic Equality**

**WHEREAS**, the recent tragic deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshard Brooks, and Breonna Taylor have sparked subsequent acts of non-violent and violent protests across the country and have exposed deeply entrenched systemic racism in our country; and

**WHEREAS**, national inequities and recent incidents have ignited national outrage and challenged the public's confidence and trust in our system of policing and criminal justice which has also fueled a movement for change; and

**WHEREAS**, communities of color are disproportionately affected throughout the criminal justice system, with national data showing that from the point of arrest through potential conviction and sentencing, members of communities of color are significantly more likely than the white population to not have their murders solved; to be pulled over for a traffic violation; to be jailed and imprisoned at a higher rate; and to be sentenced to longer terms of imprisonment; and

**WHEREAS**, decades of racial and ethnic discrimination in real estate, lending practices, and federal housing policies have made stable housing and homeownership difficult to obtain for minorities; and

**WHEREAS**, as noted by the CDC, the COVID-19 pandemic further highlights racial inequities across the United States and Florida in health care. COVID-19 and other emergencies demonstrate that disparities in times of crisis are reflective of disparities in times of prosperity and that communities must actively work to reduce structural inequities to ensure that no community is more vulnerable than another based on immutable factors such as race or ethnicity; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of West Palm Beach must create a culture in which racial and ethnic disparities are openly acknowledged and addressed; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of West Palm Beach, working with citizens, the private sector and faith-based organizations must and will continue to address the challenges of achieving racial, ethnic and cultural equity across the City; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of West Palm Beach must create equal opportunities in the areas of healthcare, real estate and housing, economic development, criminal justice and education.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Keith A. James, Mayor of the City of West Palm Beach, Florida, by the authority vested in me pursuant to Chapters 166, Florida Statutes, and the City of West Palm Beach Charter and Code of Ordinances, do hereby order:

**Section 1. Establishment:** The City of West Palm Beach Mayor's Task Force for Racial and Ethnic Equality ("Task Force") is hereby established as an advisory task force. The mission of the Task Force is to identify and help address issues of racial/ethnic equity through education about racial and ethnic inequities, research of best practices, and issuance of policy/funding recommendations to address racial/ethnic inequity in the City of West Palm Beach.

Section 2.

**Composition and Appointments:** The Mayor's Task Force may consist of up to eleven members, including two co-chairs. All members of the Task Force shall be appointed by the Mayor and shall serve at the Mayor's pleasure. The Task Force shall include representatives as following:

1. one member designated by the Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce;
2. one member designated by the Executive Director of the Black Chamber of Commerce;
3. one member designated by the Executive Director of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce;
4. one member representing the Mayor's Office;
5. one member of the law enforcement community;
6. one member representing the State Attorney's Office;
7. one member representing the Public Defender's Office; and
8. other members as appointed by the Mayor.

In addition, I, hereby, establish five subcommittees of the Mayor's Task Force for Racial and Ethnic Equality. All members of the subcommittee shall be appointed by and shall serve at the pleasure of the Mayor. Each subcommittee may consist of up to seven members. The subcommittees will be fact-finding committees. Each subcommittee will be assigned and shall investigate, study and report its findings to the Task Force. Each subcommittee shall be assigned one of the following five topic areas: (i) criminal justice, (ii) health, (iii) real estate and housing, (iv) finance, banking and industry, and (v) education (including workforce development). Each subcommittee will research and identify the following:

1. opportunities to learn and raise awareness of the history of systemic patterns of racial and ethnic inequities within the City; and
2. best practices to address systemic patterns of racial and ethnic disparities; and
3. policy and funding sources available to address systemic patterns of racial and ethnic inequity.

Section 3.

**Charge and Process:** The Task Force is hereby ordered to undertake the following projects in the following order of priority;

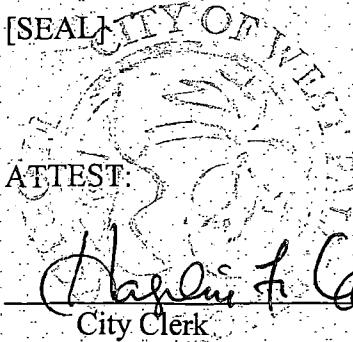
1. Identify best practices and make recommendations on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust;
2. Identify racial and ethnic disparities in healthcare, economic development, criminal and civil justice systems, policing practices, housing, and education with a focus on:
  - a. What racial and ethnic disparities exist;
  - b. Why the racial and ethnic disparities exist;
  - c. Making recommendations regarding ways to reduce these disparities and to promote effective crime reductions while building public trust; and
  - d. Identifying what knowledge and research are needed to eliminate the disparities.
3. Create a platform to build resources to help people talk, learn and teach our City's history of racial and ethnic injustices.

The Task Force shall be advisory to the Mayor and make recommendations on the first project by September 30, 2020. Preliminary recommendations on Projects 2 and 3 shall be submitted to the Mayor by December 30, 2020. The deadlines established by this Executive Order shall not be construed to limit the Task Force from providing additional recommendations to the Mayor as may be requested. The Task Force shall meet as needed and at least monthly. Meetings of the Task Force will be public and shall be held virtually for the duration of the COVID-19 related

state of emergency and for so long thereafter as the Task Force deems practicable. The Task Force shall ensure notice of the meetings is received in all districts of the City of West Palm Beach in order to encourage public participation.

The Task Force shall receive administrative and staff support from the Mayor's Office.

Section 4. **Effective Date:** This Executive Order shall take effect immediately upon signing and shall continue in full force and effect until June 30, 2021 unless extended by the Mayor.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Keith A. James', is written over a horizontal line. Below the signature, the text 'Keith A. James, Mayor' and 'Dated: July 7, 2020' is printed.

Keith A. James, Mayor  
Dated: July 7, 2020

CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
Approved as to form and legality  
By: KLR