

**A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING FREEDOM FROM
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT**

WHEREAS, the City of Dallas seeks to enhance the public welfare by declaring that freedom from domestic and family violence is a fundamental human right; and

WHEREAS, world leaders and leaders within the United States recognize that domestic violence is a human rights concern; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations has recognized domestic violence as a human rights issue; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women has stated that “violence against women is the most pervasive human rights violation,” and that responses to violence should recognize human rights as a premise and further urged the United States to reassess laws and policies for protecting domestic violence survivors; and

WHEREAS, more than one in three women and more than one in four men in the United States will experience rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their lives, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control; and

WHEREAS, children are adversely affected by violence in the home, whether they are physically or verbally abused themselves or simply witness the violence; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Council on Family Violence found that more than one in three Texas women (38%) have experienced intimate partner violence in their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, the Dallas Police Department Domestic Violence Unit reported 14,036 family violence calls resulting in 1,277 aggravated assaults, 17 murders. The unit investigated 12,011 DV cases, of which 90 were robbery offenses, 110 sexual assault offenses, 154 violations of protective orders, and 3,944 arrests; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the DFW metroplex had 38 domestic violence homicides, the most of any metro-area in the state of Texas, and further, Dallas County has the highest per capita female murder rate in the state at 1:62,752, according to the Texas Council on Family Violence; and

WHEREAS, the 2013 Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance Point-in-Time Homeless Count found 2,972 people living on Dallas streets or in shelters. 24% of the homeless population was children, and 14% of the adult population listed domestic violence as their reason for homelessness; and

WHEREAS, local police and sheriff's departments, courts, cities, counties, social services agencies, and other local government entities constitute the first line of defense against domestic and family violence; and

WHEREAS, police and sheriff's departments, courts, cities, counties, social service agencies, and other local government entities incur significant monetary costs due to domestic and family violence; and

WHEREAS, survivors of domestic and family violence experience physical injuries, long-term psychological damage, financial instability, difficulty finding safe housing and other challenges, some of which directly or indirectly relate to services provided by the City; and

WHEREAS, the Dallas Domestic Violence Task Force was created by community leaders, including members of the Dallas Police Department, Dallas County and Municipal Court Judges, the Dallas County District Attorney's Office, leaders of various non-profit groups, and community leaders, in order to help identify and implement improvements in a coordinated system for response to acts of domestic and family violence in the City; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Constitution provides that a crime victim has the "right to be reasonably protected from the accused throughout the criminal justice process"; and

WHEREAS, the recognition that domestic and family violence are human rights issues will raise public awareness and encourage domestic and family violence education in communities, the public and private sectors, and within governmental agencies; **Now, Therefore,**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DALLAS:

Section 1. That the City Council joins world leaders and leaders within the United States in recognition of domestic violence as a human rights concern and declares that the freedom from domestic and family violence is a fundamental human right.

Section 2. That this resolution shall serve as a declaration assuring the residents of the City that the City government bears a responsibility to secure this human right on behalf of all of its residents.

Section 3. That the Dallas Domestic Violence Task Force shall continue to identify the gaps and barriers in the City's service delivery to survivors of domestic violence and provide annual executive summaries over the next three years on the challenges faced by survivors of domestic violence and recommendations on how to improve delivery of services to those survivors by participating members of the general and executive task force committee agencies, non-profit organizations and government partners.

Section 4. That all City departments, offices, and courts shall cooperate with the Dallas Domestic Violence Task Force in the compilation of its reports.

Section 5. That the City is committed to respond diligently to acts of domestic and family violence, and that all of the City's departments shall incorporate the principles embodied in this resolution into their policies and practices.

Section 6. That this resolution shall serve as a charge to all local agencies to incorporate these principles into their policies and practices.

Section 7. That a copy of this resolution shall be sent to the Dallas County District Attorney, the Dallas County Sheriff's Department, the Dallas Police Department, the Dallas County Courts, City departments, and other local agencies as necessary to comply with this resolution.

Section 8. That this resolution shall take effect immediately from and after its passage in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the City of Dallas, and it is accordingly so resolved.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

WARREN M.S. ERNST, City Attorney

By Chris Bowers
Assistant City Attorney

APPROVED BY
CITY COUNCIL

OCT 21 2015

Lucas A. Pineda
City Secretary