

# ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

# Proclamation

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## MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

**WHEREAS**, May is National Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to give recognition and pause for individuals experiencing the spectrum of symptoms and disorders related to mental health challenges and mental illness; and

**WHEREAS**, it is a time to foster well-being across the continuum of mental wellness to mental illness; and

**WHEREAS**, nationally, almost 20% of adult Americans experience mental illness, and 4.9% experience severe mental illness, and according to US News & World Report, last year 9.8% of adult Arlington County residents reported frequent mental distress in comparison to 13.5% overall in the state of Virginia; and

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic brought about unprecedented challenges for those already experiencing mental illness as well as for those who had previously been asymptomatic resulting in a four-fold increase in regional adults reporting the onset of depression and anxiety symptoms since 2019 and among regional Northern Virginia youth, one in ten reported contemplating suicide in 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, Arlington County has made tremendous strides to increase access to mental health care, by raising awareness through community outreach, and reducing barriers to those seeking help in times of psychiatric crisis; and

**WHEREAS**, by opening the 23-hour office-based Crisis Stabilization program at Arlington County's Crisis Intervention Center, community members can have their acute psychiatric needs met at a higher level of care in conjunction with our emergency services program by providing open-door access to acute psychiatric care through a trauma-informed, person-centered, and family-oriented approach to crisis intervention in a safe space where individuals in crisis are met with sensitivity and gentle care;

**NOW, THEREFORE I**, Christian Dorsey, Chair of the County Board of Arlington, Virginia, do hereby proclaim **May 2023**

## MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

and celebrate the opening of Arlington County's Crisis Intervention Center thus reaffirming the County's commitment to offer its citizens community-based access to mental health care with no wrong door in seeking help for psychiatric needs.



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Christian Dorsey  
Chair