

1 [National Mental Health Awareness Month - May 2023]

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3 **Resolution recognizing May 2023 as National Mental Health Awareness Month in the**
4 **City and County of San Francisco.**

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6 WHEREAS, Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, one in every five adults in the United
7 States reported experiencing mental illness; and

8 WHEREAS, 19% of people experiencing homelessness in San Francisco cite alcohol,
9 drug use, or mental health issues as the primary cause of their homelessness, and 23% cite
10 these as their primary barriers to employment; and

11 WHEREAS, 52% of people experiencing homelessness in San Francisco report
12 experiencing drug or alcohol abuse issues, 38% report experiencing post-traumatic stress
13 disorder (PTSD), and 36% report experiencing psychiatric or emotional conditions; and

14 WHEREAS, Over 1 million Americans have died of fatal overdoses since 1999; and

15 WHEREAS, Suicide rates in the United States have increased 36% since 2000, making
16 it the 11th leading cause of death in the United States and the second leading cause of death
17 in youth ages 15-24; and

18 WHEREAS, Nearly 99% of those who died of suicide have an underlying mental
19 illness; and

20 WHEREAS, Most mental health issues are preventable and treatable with early care
21 and intervention; and

22 WHEREAS, There is still a prevalent stigma associated with mental health that makes
23 it difficult for those affected to seek help; and

24 WHEREAS, Mental health is often less prioritized and less accessible in health care
25 systems; and

1 WHEREAS, African Americans and Latinos access mental health services at about
2 one-half the rate of Caucasian Americans and Asian Americans at about one-third the rate;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic and orders to “shelter in place’ caused both a
5 psychological and economic depression that negatively affected the mental health and
6 stability of many people, especially those already suffering from mental illness and substance
7 use disorders; and

8 WHEREAS, A broad body of research links social isolation and loneliness to poor
9 mental health; and

10 WHEREAS, Existing mental illness among adolescents was exacerbated by the
11 pandemic, and school closures limited access to key mental health resources; and

12 WHEREAS, 20% of high school students report experiencing serious thoughts of
13 suicide, and 9% have made an attempt to take their own lives; and

14 WHEREAS, San Francisco has many dedicated community-based providers that offer
15 culturally competent and bilingual resources to serve at-risk communities; and

16 WHEREAS, Raising awareness about mental health and removing the stigma
17 encourages a safe environment for people to seek treatment; and

18 WHEREAS, President Barack Obama proclaimed May National Mental Health
19 Awareness Month in 2013 to bring nationwide attention to this significant issue; and

20 WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors has twice declared May to be National Mental
21 Health Awareness Month in the City and County of San Francisco, in Resolutions on file with
22 the Clerk of the Board in File Nos. 150502 and 200467; now, therefore, be it

23 RESOLVED, The San Francisco Board of Supervisors recognizes the efforts to bring
24 awareness to mental health and to commit more resources to accessible services; and, be it

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1 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors recognizes and designates the
2 month of May 2023 as National Mental Health Awareness Month in the City and County of
3 San Francisco.

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