

DURHAM BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Proclamation

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH | 2026

- WHEREAS,** Durham County recognizes that early support is critical to promoting lifelong mental wellbeing, and that identifying signs of mental health challenges in children and youth allows families, schools, and communities to intervene early and provide the care and resources needed for healthy development; and
- WHEREAS,** mental health is a fundamental component of overall health and wellbeing, and by joining together to increase public awareness and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health treatment, we can enhance the lives of individuals and families experiencing mental health challenges; and
- WHEREAS,** Durham County recognizes the importance of equipping the community with resources such as HEART that responds with compassion to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis, and offer support, connecting individuals to appropriate resources to promote safety and stabilization; and
- WHEREAS,** Justice Services Department leads and supports a range of initiatives—including Pretrial Services, Jail Transitions, Diversion programming, Specialty Courts, and Reentry programs—that reduce recidivism, promote stability, and help individuals successfully reintegrate into the community; and
- WHEREAS,** Durham County’s Jail Mental Health team provides essential screening, assessment, crisis intervention, and treatment to individuals housed in the Durham County Detention Center, ensuring that detainees experiencing mental health challenges receive timely, appropriate, and compassionate care; and
- WHEREAS,** the Stepping Up Initiative in Durham County brings together county leaders, justice partners, behavioral health providers, and community organizations to identify gaps, enhance resources, and ensure individuals with mental health and substance use needs receive appropriate care rather than unnecessary incarceration; and
- WHEREAS,** Durham County recognizes the essential role of the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), a collaborative partnership between law enforcement, detention center, behavioral health professionals, and community agencies that equips first responders with specialized training to safely and effectively support individuals experiencing mental health crises.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Dr. Mike Lee, Chair and on behalf of the Durham Board of County Commissioners, do hereby proclaim May 2026 as

“MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH”

in Durham County, North Carolina, and urge all citizens, government agencies, public and private institutions, businesses, faith communities, and schools throughout Durham, North Carolina to join in promoting awareness and understanding of mental health, reducing stigma, and recognizing the critical need for accessible and appropriate mental health services for all residents of Durham County.

This 11th day of May 2026.

Dr. Mike Lee Chair
Durham Board of County Commissioners

