

Salt Lake County's Health Literacy Month Proclamation

WHEREAS, health literacy is defined as the degree to which individuals have the ability can find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others (personal health literacy); and the degree to which organizations enable individuals to find, understand and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others (organizational health literacy); and

WHEREAS, health literacy is essential for individuals to make informed health decisions, effectively navigate the healthcare system, and manage their health; and

WHEREAS, health literacy empowers individuals to understand medical information, follow treatment plans, and engage in preventive health practices; and

WHEREAS, inadequate health literacy has been associated with poorer health outcomes, increased hospitalizations, and higher healthcare costs; and

WHEREAS, addressing overwhelming health literacy needs can reduce healthcare costs, improve the accessibility, quality, safety, and patient satisfaction of healthcare, and improve the health and quality of life for millions of Utahns; and

WHEREAS, public schools, librarians, healthcare professionals, insurance providers, public health professionals, community organizations, social workers, and employers play a critical role in improving health literacy through clear communication, education, accessible health information, and routinely teaching and using health literacy interventions, such as plain language and teach-back; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services includes health literacy in one of its overarching Healthy People 2030 goals to "Eliminate health disparities, achieve health equity, and attain health literacy to improve the health and well-being of all."; and

WHEREAS, October is recognized nationally as Health Literacy Month, providing an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of health literacy and to promote actions that improve health communication and outcomes;

Now, Therefore, I Jenny Wilson, Mayor of Salt Lake County, do hereby proclaim the month of October as Health Literacy Month in Salt Lake County. I call upon all librarians, healthcare professionals, educators, employers, and community organizations to work together to improve health literacy, enhance communication, and ensure that all individuals have the tools and knowledge to make informed health decisions.