

HealthyWomen is proud to support [Black Maternal Health Week \(BMHW\)](#) and is honored to help raise awareness and amplify the voices and needs of Black mamas everywhere.

Human rights, reproductive justice and birth justice frameworks are at the root of the BMHW activities. This year's theme set by the Black Mamas Matter Alliance (BMMA) is "Building for Liberation: Centering Black Mamas, Black Families and Black Systems of Care." It reflects the BMMA's work in centering Black women's scholarship, maternity care work and advocacy across the full-spectrum of sexual, maternal and reproductive health care, services, programs and initiatives.

It is well documented that the United States has a maternal health crisis and that Black mothers are disproportionately affected. In the U.S., an average of [700 women die from pregnancy-related complications each year](#). That is the highest rate in the world, which should not be occurring in the richest nation in the world. In 2020, Black women were disproportionately affected with a [mortality rate of 55.3 deaths per 100,000 live births](#), compared to 19.1 deaths per 100,000 live births and 18.2 deaths per 100,000 live births for white and Hispanic women, respectively. In 2019, the U.S. had an [overall infant mortality rate](#) of 5.6 per 1,000 live births, with a health disparity among Black babies whose mortality rate was almost double that at 10.8 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2018.

On Friday, April 8, the White House released a [proclamation](#) asserting the administration's commitment to building a healthcare system that is equitable and safe for Black families.

In order to initiate meaningful change in this area, Congress must act now and pass the [maternal health provisions from the Black Momnibus Act in the Build Back Better Act](#) and the [IMPROVE Act of 2022](#) to strengthen the [NIH IMPROVE Initiative](#). These bills will provide critical investments in improving quality of care as well as save lives and work to end racial and ethnic disparities in maternal health outcomes. These efforts will help address the critical needs and challenges facing too many moms in our country.

Visit BMMA to [learn more about Black Maternal Health Week](#) and take advantage of the [Social Media Toolkit](#) to promote awareness of this event.