

COLUMBIA COUNTY

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2025 National Suicide Prevention Month Proclamation for Columbia County, Oregon

WHEREAS, in Oregon, suicide was the 8th leading cause of death in 2023 (National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention);

WHEREAS, the age-adjusted rate for suicide in Oregon (19.4 per 100,000) was significantly higher than the United States rate (14.1 per 100,000) in 2023 (Oregon Health Authority);

WHEREAS, suicide was the second leading cause of death for people ages 10-14 and 25-34 and among the top four causes of death for all age groups 10-44 years of age in 2022 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention);

WHEREAS, in the U.S., 49,316 people died by suicide in 2023, which is about one death every 11 minutes (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention);

WHEREAS, in Oregon, 888 people died by suicide in 2023 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention);

WHEREAS, it is estimated that more than 5.9 million people in the U.S. are survivors of suicide loss (National Council for Suicide Prevention);

WHEREAS, in 2023, males died by suicide nearly four times more than females (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention);

WHEREAS, veterans in Oregon had a significantly higher suicide rate than the general state population in 2021 (Oregon Health Authority);

WHEREAS, firearms accounted for approximately 55% of all suicide deaths in 2023 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention);

WHEREAS, in Oregon, rural counties had significantly higher suicide rates than urban counties between 2018 and 2021 (Oregon Health Authority);

WHEREAS, 91% of adults surveyed in the U.S. think suicide can be prevented at least some of the time (American Foundation for Suicide Prevention);

WHEREAS, Columbia County ranked 17th in suicide deaths among Oregon Counties in 2024;

WHEREAS, in 2024, Columbia County Law Enforcement responded to 262 behavioral health calls, 92 suicide attempts, 236 suicide threats, and 107 overdoses; and during the same period, Fire and

Emergency Medical Services responded to 193 behavioral health calls, 68 suicide attempts, and 151 overdoses;

WHEREAS, suicide is a public health concern that affects many in our community, and if you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text the 988 Lifeline, a free resource available 24/7/365;

WHEREAS, the Columbia County Board of Commissioners wish to express gratitude for the ongoing efforts and partnerships within Columbia County and reaffirm our commitment to aligning effective suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention strategies including Columbia Health Services' ASIST and QPR Trainings, Columbia County Public Health's Safe Home Initiative, Columbia Community Mental Health's (CCMH) Crisis Line (503-782-4499), and the Columbia County Medical Examiner/CCMH/Columbia County Chaplain partnership to provide support and post-care intervention to survivors and families during death-related events.

WHEREAS, suicide is preventable,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we, the Columbia County Board of Commissioners, do hereby proclaim September 2025 as World Suicide Prevention Month and designate September 10, 2025, as Suicide Prevention Day in Columbia County, Oregon.

Dated this 10th day of September 2025, in St. Helens, Oregon.

Kellie Jo Smith, Chair

Casey Garrett, Commissioner

Margaret Magruder, Commissioner