

# STATE OF ILLINOIS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

## Proclamation

*WHEREAS, the State of Illinois, along with the World Health Organization and the United States Breastfeeding Committee, acknowledge the benefits of breastfeeding for infants and their parents; and,*

*WHEREAS, promoting and supporting all human milk-feeding families regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, education level, socioeconomic status, or any other factor that makes every family and community unique; and,*

*WHEREAS, racial disparities in breastfeeding rates persist in Illinois and throughout our country; and,*

*WHEREAS, research shows that Black parents in our state, and nationwide, initiate breastfeeding or continue exclusively breastfeeding through six months at much lower rates; and,*

*WHEREAS, Ware et al. (2023) found breastfeeding initiation may reduce early infant death in the United States by 33 percent; and,*

*WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive human milk feeding as the most developmentally appropriate nourishment for infants for the first six months of life, to continue human milk feeding until two years of age for optimal infant health, growth, and development; and,*

*WHEREAS, breastfeeding plays an important role in managing the double burden of malnutrition by providing food security, reducing inequalities, and providing immunologic protection for Illinois' youngest people; and,*

*WHEREAS, understanding racial equity in breastfeeding must be prioritized to address systemic injustices that prevent Black families from achieving their full breastfeeding potential and contribute to racial disparities in birth outcomes, pregnancy-related morbidity rates, and pregnancy-related mortality rates, making it essential to highlight the unique challenges facing Black families; and,*

*WHEREAS, this week, the State of Illinois applauds organizations that are committed to promoting diversity in the lactation field and joins them in working towards racial equity in breastfeeding and in parent and child health;*

*THEREFORE, I, JB Pritzker, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim August 25-31, 2024, as **Black Breastfeeding Week**.*

*In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.*

*Done at the Capitol in the City of Springfield,  
this TWENTY-NINTH day of JULY, in  
the Year of Our Lord, two thousand and  
TWENTY-FOUR, and of the State of Illinois,  
two hundred and FIFTH.*



*Alexi Giannouli*  
SECRETARY OF STATE

*JB Pritzker*  
GOVERNOR