

MOTION

NO. M-26-270

CITY HALL: July 9, 2026

BY: COUNCILMEMBER WILLARD

SECONDED BY: COUNCILMEMBER MORRELL

A **MOTION** establishing a task force to provide counsel and advice to the City Council and certain City departments regarding consideration for the prenatal-to-three population, to coordinate actions, align family-focused climate strategies, and ensure that City policies and services protect expectant families and young children from climate-related risks.

WHEREAS, the Council recognizes the need to establish an early childhood and climate resilience task force to coordinate actions, align family-focused climate strategies, and ensure that City policies and services protect expectant families and young children from climate-related risks; and

WHEREAS, according to 2022 data from the Urban Institute, children in families below the poverty line are three times more likely to have poor health outcomes compared to those in higher-income families; and

WHEREAS, according to 2024 U.S. Census data, 22.6% of the population of New Orleans lives below the poverty line; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2010 report from the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, young children are more biologically sensitive to most adverse exposures than adolescents and adults; and

WHEREAS, exposure to extreme heat affects children across their lifespan, with prenatal heat exposure being linked to increased risk of premature birth, and exposure during

infancy causing sleep deficits, according to the Harvard University Center on Developing Child;
and

WHEREAS, the annual statistical probability of extreme heat impacting New Orleans is 100%, with an average of 56 days per year with a temperature over 90 degrees Fahrenheit, according to the 2010 Fourth National Climate Assessment; and

WHEREAS, according to the American Lung Association's 2025 *State of the Air* report, "air quality in the New Orleans metro area has worsened. After ten consecutive years of being among the cleanest in nation for levels of daily particle pollution, New Orleans experienced increased levels of the pollutant, along with increased ozone smog"; and

WHEREAS, children living in areas with poor air quality are one and one-half times more likely to develop asthma before age five, according to data published by the American Lung Association in 2023; and

WHEREAS, according to the Harvard University Center on the Developing Child, prenatal exposure to air pollution can disrupt healthy neurodevelopment, and is associated with lower scores for cognitive development at ages one and three; and

WHEREAS, the Council recognizes that poverty, exposure to adverse environmental conditions, extreme heat and air quality all have health consequences for expecting families and young children; and

WHEREAS, the Council recognizes that these vulnerabilities merit consideration in the City's planning processes; and

WHEREAS, the City will publish a Heat Action Plan, an updated Hazard Mitigation Plan and an updated Climate Action Plan within the next 24 months, and the Council supports

the inclusion of considerations for the prenatal-to-three population, including expectant families and young children, in these plans; **NOW, THEREFORE**

BE IT MOVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, that the Prenatal-to-Three Task Force is hereby established as an advisory committee of the Council pursuant to section 3-127 of the Home Rule Charter; and

BE IT FURTHER MOVED, that the Task Force shall provide counsel and advice to the City Council, Office of Sustainability, and Department of Health and Human Services regarding considerations for the prenatal-to-three population in the heat, hazard mitigation and climate action plans for the City of New Orleans; and

BE IT FURTHER MOVED, that the Task Force shall consist of nine members who shall be appointed by the Council from nominations submitted by the following entities on or before August 20, 2026:

A. One representative from each of the following entities:

1. Department of Health and Human Services;
2. Office of Coordination and Emergency Management;
3. Office of Sustainability;
4. New Orleans Public Library;
5. Agenda for Children, Inc.; and
6. TrainingGrounds, Inc.

B. One nominee selected by each councilmember serving as the chair of the following Council committees:

1. Community Development Committee;
2. Climate Change and Sustainability Committee; and

3. Quality of Life Committee.

BE IT FURTHER MOVED, that each member of the Task Force shall have experience working in local offices with planning and implementation duties or have experience, formally or informally, with parents of young children or workers who care for children; and may be individuals with current caregiving responsibilities for children between birth and age three years; and

BE IT FURTHER MOVED, that in the event nominations are not timely submitted, the Council Vice President shall make nominations for any remaining vacancies in the membership of the Task Force; and

BE IT FURTHER MOVED, that the Task Force shall:

1. Review existing citywide climate-related plans (heat, hazard mitigation, and climate action) to identify strengths and weaknesses in prenatal-to-three population; and
2. Engage stakeholders and the community to understand gaps between plans and community needs; and
3. Develop specific recommendations to advance prenatal-to-three action in future plan and policy development, such as creation and dissemination of accessible communications to families to prepare for and respond to climate events, expansion of disaster services targeted for families with young children, and creation of climate-safe infrastructure that has direct benefits to families; and

BE IT FURTHER MOVED, that the Task Force shall call its first meeting within 30 days after the motion appointing members is adopted. The Task Force may provide an initial

report to the Council within 90 days after its first meeting and shall provide a final report to the Council within 12 months after its first meeting.

BE IT FUTHER MOVED, that the Clerk of Council shall deliver certified copies of this motion to the Office of Intergovernmental Relations; Dr. Jennifer Avegno, Deputy Mayor, Department of Health and Human Services; Darrick Hesson, Director, Office of Coordination and Emergency Management; Meagan Williams, Deputy CAO—Sustainability, Office of Sustainability; Emily Painton, Executive Director, New Orleans Public Library; Jen Roberts, Executive Director, Agenda for Children, Inc.; and Melanie Richardson, Executive Director, TrainingGrounds, Inc.

THE FOREGOING MOTION WAS READ IN FULL, THE ROLL WAS CALLED ON THE ADOPTION THEREOF, AND RESULTED AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS: Green, Harris, King, McCarron, Morrell, Willard - 6

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: Hughes - 1

AND THE MOTION WAS ADOPTED.

THE FOREGOING IS CERTIFIED
TO BE A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY



CLERK OF COUNCIL

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