

# Proclamation

January is National  
Birth Defects  
Awareness Month!

## National Birth Defects Awareness Month, January 2022

Whereas, birth defects are common, costly, and critical;

Whereas, birth defects affect an estimated **[enter number here]** infants in **[enter your state here]** each year;

Whereas, birth defects are a leading cause of death in the first year of life, associated with one in **[enter number here]** infant deaths in **[enter your state here]**;

Whereas, birth defects can occur in any family regardless of race, ethnicity, health history, or economic status;

Whereas, affordable, accessible, and culturally responsive healthcare is needed to address unmet health needs, delays in receiving appropriate care, and inability to get preventive services;

Whereas, access to care varies on the basis of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, sex, disability status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and residential location;

Whereas, absence of health insurance coverage increases the likelihood individuals will have poor health status, be diagnosed with a condition later, and die prematurely;

Whereas, access to regular preconception and prenatal care addresses steps which can reduce the chance that a child will be born with a birth defect, such as taking a daily vitamin with folic acid before and during pregnancy, becoming up to date with vaccinations, caring for your body and mind, and avoiding the use of alcohol or drugs during pregnancy;

Whereas, early identification of a child with a birth defect coupled with early intervention services typically improves the child's quality of life.

NOW, THEREFORE, I **[enter name here]**, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF **[YOUR STATE HERE]**, DO HEREBY PROCLAIM JANUARY 2022 AS NATIONAL BIRTH DEFECTS AWARENESS MONTH.