

IN THE COUNTY LEGISLATURE OF JACKSON COUNTY, MISSOURI

A RESOLUTION declaring April 27th as Start by Believing Day in Jackson County, Missouri and recognizing the Metropolitan Organization Countering Sexual Assault for fifty years of combating sexual offenses and supporting victims.

RESOLUTION NO. 22251, April 27, 2026

INTRODUCED BY Jalen Anderson, County Legislator

WHEREAS, Jackson County, Missouri is committed to fostering a safe, supportive, and equitable community for all residents; and,

WHEREAS, Sexual Assault Awareness Month is observed each April to raise public awareness about sexual violence and to educate communities on prevention and support for survivors; and,

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault (MOCSA) has served Jackson County for nearly 50 years as the region's only comprehensive rape crisis center, providing free and confidential services to thousands of individuals each year; and,

WHEREAS, MOCSA's mission is to improve the lives of those impacted by sexual abuse and assault and to prevent sexual violence in our community; and,

WHEREAS, MOCSA provides critical, survivor-centered services including a 24-hour crisis line, hospital advocacy, and law enforcement advocacy to ensure survivors are supported during some of their most vulnerable moments; and,

WHEREAS, MOCSA offers legal advocacy and court support, counseling services for survivors and their families, and ongoing care that promotes healing, stability, and empowerment; and,

WHEREAS, MOCSA delivers education programming to youth across public, private, and charter schools throughout Jackson County, equipping young people with the knowledge and skills to build healthy relationships and prevent violence; and,

WHEREAS, MOCSA engages in community-wide prevention efforts across neighborhoods and coalitions to address the root causes of violence and create safer, more connected communities; and,

WHEREAS, MOCSA's Sexual Assault Free Environment (SAFE) training partners with local bars, restaurants, and hospitality spaces across Jackson County to equip staff with tools to recognize, interrupt, and prevent harm; and,

WHEREAS, sexual violence remains a significant and underreported issue, with the majority of assaults being committed by someone known to the victim, highlighting the importance of community awareness, prevention, and support; and,

WHEREAS, the Start By Believing campaign encourages communities to respond to disclosures of sexual violence with belief, compassion, and support, recognizing that a survivor's first disclosure experience can significantly impact their healing and willingness to seek help; and,

WHEREAS, Jackson County recognizes that supporting survivors and preventing sexual violence is a shared responsibility, and that trusted adults, community members, and institutions all play a vital role in creating a culture of safety and accountability; and,

WHEREAS, Jackson County would also like to honor St. Lukes Health system and their Forensic Nursing Team along with the Kansas City, MO Police Department, for their ongoing partnerships with MOSCA; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Jackson County Legislature does hereby proclaim Monday, April 27, 2026, as Start By Believing Day in Jackson County, Missouri, and encourages all residents to stand with survivors, promote awareness, and commit to building a community free from sexual violence.

Effective Date: This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its passage by a majority of the Legislature.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Bryan Coush
County Counselor

Certificate of Passage

I hereby certify that the attached resolution, Resolution No. 22251 of April 27, 2026, was duly passed on April 27, 2026 by the Jackson County Legislature. The votes thereon were as follows:

Yeas 6 Nays 0
Abstaining 0 Absent 0
Excused 3

4.27.2026
Date

Mary Jo Spino
Mary Jo Spino, Clerk of Legislature