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# NEWS RELEASE

## Stand Up for Civility: Take the Civility First Durango Pledge

**Durango, CO:** The City of Durango's Community Relations Commission is officially launching a Civility First Durango Pledge Program the week of May 13<sup>th</sup>. The Community Relations Commission (CRC) is inviting businesses, organizations, and individuals to take the Civility First Durango Pledge and to display the Civility First Durango decal at their place of business. The decal communicates that all who live, visit, shop, and play in our City are welcome here. The traits of the Civility First Durango Program include: respect, fairness, compassion, consideration, kindness, responsibility, sincerity and acceptance.

"Businesses in Durango serve as the public face in our City and we hope they can help us bring awareness to the Pledge and what it stands for. To date, the Business Improvement District, Elwood Staffing, Alpine Bank, Buck Horn Limousine, Visit Durango, the Strater Hotel, Roll ebike, El Centro de Muchos Colores at Fort Lewis College, D&K Wagon Rides, and Express Employment are a few of the businesses and organizations that have already signed the Pledge," said Assistant City Manager Amber Blake.

"The work of the CRC centers on promoting diversity and acceptance through positive examples of mutual respect, and in so doing, we support Durango as a place for all. To us, the Pledge Program is a way to invite everyone to care about our community despite our differences. We are taking action to honor the dignity and rights of all; to support unity and justice; to create a healthy, sustainable community" said Community Relations Commission Chairperson Lexie Stetson-Lee.

In 2017 and 2018, the CRC initiated a listening tour and conducted informal public surveys at local events. Feedback received from respondents surveyed said that Durango is a great place to live and visit, but that more is needed to be done to address discrimination and to support civility.

"The CRC spent time researching civility initiatives in other communities and met with the Community Relations Commission in Farmington, New Mexico to learn about their Civility First Four Corners program," said Stetson-Lee.

With the knowledge gained, the CRC developed the Civility First Durango Pledge Program. The goals of the Pledge Program are to:

- Bring forth civility in how we communicate and treat one another across differences, demonstrating that Durango is not a place for hate;
- Support, promote, and link business and individuals with local organizations working to eliminate discrimination through education, diversity training, cultural events, and more.

“The Pledge is only one step in the process. The CRC is committed to linking those who take the Pledge with diversity training and education resources offered by community nonprofits. We want to thank these nonprofit organizations for their work, and we invite you to take the Pledge to begin a community process that bolsters civility,” said Stetson-Lee.

Businesses and individuals can take the Pledge online now. Visit: [DurangoGov.org/CRC](http://DurangoGov.org/CRC). The Civility First Durango Pledge can also be taken in person during regular business hours at the downtown Durango Welcome Center on Main Street the week of May 13<sup>th</sup>. A member of the CRC will be available from Noon to 1:00 p.m. at the Durango Welcome Center the week of May 13<sup>th</sup> to share more about the Civility First Durango Pledge Program.

### **Background**

The Community Relations Commission was established by City Council resolution to discourage all forms of discrimination and promote social harmony among residents and visitors to the City of Durango. The Commission, which serves in an advisory capacity to City Council, shared the Program concept with the City Council, who in turn gave approval to develop the Civility First Durango Pledge Program.

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