

Juneteenth

Fact Sheet and Observance Recommendations

A Brief History of Juneteenth

The 1865 date is largely symbolic. The Emancipation Proclamation, issued by President Abraham Lincoln, had legally freed slaves in Texas on January 1, 1863, almost 2½ years earlier. Even after the general order, some slave masters withheld the information from their enslaved people, holding them enslaved through one more harvest season. Texans celebrated Juneteenth beginning in 1866 with community-centric events, such as parades, cookouts, prayer gatherings, historical and cultural readings, and musical performances. Over time, communities have developed their own traditions. Some communities purchased land for Juneteenth celebrations, such as Emancipation Park in Houston, Texas. As families emigrated from Texas to other parts of the United States, they carried Juneteenth celebrations with them.

On January 1, 1980, Juneteenth officially became a Texas state holiday. Al Edwards, a freshman state representative, put forward the bill, H.B. 1016, making Texas the first state to grant this emancipation celebration. Since then, 49 other states and the District of Columbia have also commemorated or recognized the day. Juneteenth officially became the 11th federal holiday on June 17, 2021, and Juneteenth National Independence Day is the first holiday to be added to the list of federal holidays since the recognition of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday in 1983.

What is Juneteenth?

The official name of federal holiday **Juneteenth National Independence Day**, also called **Emancipation Day**, **Freedom Day**, **Jubilee Day**, **Black Independence Day**, and **Juneteenth Independence Day**.

How is Juneteenth celebrated?

Juneteenth celebrations in the United States typically include prayer and religious services, speeches, educational events, family gatherings and picnics, and festivals with food, music, and dancing. The day is also celebrated outside the United States and is used to recognize the end of slavery as well as to celebrate African American culture and achievements.

How did the American civil rights movement affect Juneteenth celebrations?

Juneteenth celebrations in the United States declined in the 1960s, overshadowed by the civil rights movement. However, the holiday began to regain its importance in 1968 when the Poor People's Campaign, originally led by Martin Luther King, Jr., held a Juneteenth Solidarity Day. Interest in Juneteenth continued to increase in the following decades, and the first state-sponsored Juneteenth celebration was held in Texas in 1980.

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Observing Juneteenth

Juneteenth: Sunday, June 19, 2022 | Federal Holiday Observed Monday, June 20, 2022

Webinars /Lunches / News:

1. Duquesne University “Celebrating Juneteenth” <http://www.duq.edu/juneteenth>
2. Duquesne University “Grab n Go Lunch” June 20th, 12 Noon @ Center for Excellence in Diversity and Student Inclusion
3. [Pennsylvania Juneteenth Coalition](#) Multimedia galleries including photographs, videos and audio
4. CMU’s Juneteenth Freedom Day Keynote and Celebration: <https://www.cmu.edu/dei-office/events/juneteenth-2022.html>

Charitable Recommendations:

1. Allocate United Way contributions to local organizations supporting Black and Brown Youth.
2. Give to Museums Preserving and Celebrating Black History and Arts.
3. Donate to Bail Funds to address pretrial injustices for persons awaiting trial for non-violent offenses.
4. Contribute to scholarship funds at your institution or locally that provide access and opportunity for Black and Brown college students.

Local Events:

1. <https://www.visitpittsburgh.com/juneteenth-freedom-day/>

Pittsburgh will celebrate the [Western Pennsylvania Juneteenth Homecoming Celebration](#) **June 17-19, 2022** in Point State Park and Market Square! This free, family-friendly event is a Celebration of all Cities and Boroughs in Allegheny County.

2. ['From Slavery to Freedom' garden tour](#), an extension of [Heinz History Center's](#) *From Slavery to Freedom* exhibition.
3. The [August Wilson African American Culture Center](#) is also hosting a [series of lectures](#) on June 12, 14 and 15 featuring guest speakers Dr. Anthony Browder and Professor Ashra Kwesi.

Opportunities for Reflection:

Books:

[Act of Justice: Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and the Law of War](#)

[After Slavery: Race, Labor, and Citizenship in the Reconstruction South](#)

[On Juneteenth](#)

[Juneteenth: The Story Behind the Celebration](#)

[The New Jim Crow](#)

[Welcome - Juneteenth: Commemorating Freedom - LibGuides at Duquesne University](#)

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Articles:

[How Your Organization Can Recognize Juneteenth](#)

[The Truth About Juneteenth](#)

[A Year of Emancipation](#)

Transparently Share Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives:

Use this day to be open with your workforce about any current or upcoming DEI initiatives you have in the works, whether its unconscious bias training, equitable compensation reviews, or inclusive hiring practices. Share a demographic breakdown of your current staff and acknowledge those areas where you fall short and plan to do better.