

Dear colleagues,

It has been a year since Juneteenth became a federal holiday. It is celebrated annually on and around June 19 and will be observed this year on Monday, June 20.

The day is also sometimes referred to as Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, and Black Independence Day. For generations, Black families across the country have celebrated the day with community events, cookouts, music, storytelling, parades, and church activities.

Juneteenth is a portmanteau of “June and nineteenth” and commemorates the fulfillment of the Emancipation Proclamation when the last group of enslaved African Americans in the Confederate state of Texas first learned in 1865 that President Abraham Lincoln had intended them to be emancipated in 1863.

Did You Know...

- The 1863 Emancipation Proclamation was not enacted in all areas under Confederate control even when the Civil War ended?
- As a result, individuals enslaved in Texas were not considered free until June 19, 1865, when 2,000 Union troops arrived in Galveston Bay to enforce the law.
- The army announced that more than 250,000 enslaved people in Texas were free by executive decree.
- This day came to be known as “Juneteenth” by the newly freed people of Texas.

The Emancipation Proclamation did not end slavery in the United States, rather only in those states that were part of the Confederacy during the Civil War. The Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution ended chattel slavery in all states—both former Union and former Confederate—in December 1865.

For 157 years Juneteenth has maintained its significance as a mark of shameful oppression and violence, of struggle and sacrifice, and of survival and resilience. As our nation continues its long journey toward accountability, healing, and transformation, let us commemorate Juneteenth as a symbol of resistance, Black excellence, and an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to racial justice.

Celebrate Juneteenth

- [City Partnership Brings Juneteenth Celebration To Fertile Grounds, Olympia, on June 19 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.](#)
- [Juneteenth celebration at Morrill Meadows Park, Kent, on June 18, 2022 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.](#)
- [Annual Juneteenth and Community Health Fair at Rainier Beach, Seattle, on June 19 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.](#)