

# JUNETEENTH

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## Importance

Juneteenth is a holiday commemorating the emancipation of formerly enslaved African Americans, which is celebrated on the third Saturday in June. The name comes from the combination of June and the 19th which is the date Major General Gordon Granger issued General Order No.3 proclaiming freedom for slaves in Texas.

In 2021 President Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Act into law making it a federal holiday, which is the first new federal holiday since Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was established in 1983.

## History

President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, which freed the formerly enslaved individuals, in Texas and rebellious parts of the Southern states of the Confederacy. Enforcement was inconsistent until Granger's order took place due to the lack of the Union Troop's presence when the Civil War Ended.

The proclamation did not completely end slavery as there were still slave states in the Union. Slavery was still legal in Delaware and Kentucky.

The ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution abolished slavery nationwide in December of 1865.

Originally known as "Jubilee Day", Juneteenth was established on June 19, 1866, and was organized to celebrate the newly freed African Americans.



# Traditional Celebrations

## Readings of the Emancipation Proclamation

Reading works such as *Invisible Man* written by Ralph Ellison and *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou who was also a poet, dancer, singer, and activist.

Signing songs such as “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” written by Wallace Willis, and “Lift Every Voice and Sing”, which is often referred to as the Black National Anthem written by NAACP leader James Weldon Johnson in 1990.

Red foods and drinks are a major way of commemorating Juneteenth. Eating red foods like red cake, barbecue, punch, and fruit was passed down from the enslaved Yoruba and Kongo brought to Texas in the 19th century, from present-day Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, Benin, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Family parties, parades, festivals, cookouts, and street fairs in which Soul Food and other African American-influenced foods are served.

# Ways to Show Support

Support Black-owned businesses; The African American Chamber of Commerce - PA, NJ, DE has an online Business Directory here at:  
<https://membership.aachamber.com/list>

Visit Museums to learn more about African American History & Juneteenth

Try Juneteenth Recipes:

<https://www.africanbites.com/juneteenth-recipes/>

Try Soul Food Recipes:

<https://thesoulfoodpot.com/soul-food-sunday-dinner-ideas/>

The African American Museum in Philadelphia, is hosting Liberation Rising: Juneteenth Block Party and Free Museum Day

<https://www.aampmuseum.org/calendar.html>

The Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia has a weekend of programs with special exhibits:

<https://www.amrevmuseum.org/>

Philadelphia's Please Touch Museum is hosting family-friendly Juneteenth programs:

<https://www.pleasetouchmuseum.org/visit/signature-events/>