

Celebrating & Acknowledging Juneteenth

What is Juneteenth?

The national holiday of Juneteenth observes the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. The holiday also notes the culture and progress of African Americans, as well as their significant and unforgettable history.

On June 17th, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act, officially declaring June 19th as a Federal holiday.



[Image source: Juneteenth National Independence Day Act \(arkansasonline.com\)](https://arkansasonline.com)

Juneteenth, June 19th, is the anniversary of General Order Number 3, given by Union Army General Gordon Granger. The announcement proclaimed emancipation for enslaved African Americans in Texas. The most highlighted excerpt of his speech read, “The people of Texas are informed in accordance with a Proclamation of the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free.” This involves an absolute equality of rights and property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor.” This announcement held so much significance because Texas was the last of the Confederacy states that still had slavery, thus completely exterminating America’s previous and dark ways.

Flag Symbolism



JUNE 19, 1865

Flag designer L.J. Graf chose the colors red, white, and blue to symbolize that the enslaved people and their descendants were Americans.

The star in the middle represents the Texas star while the bursting star around it symbolizes new freedom on the horizon.

Ways to Celebrate

Juneteenth is one of the oldest celebrated holidays in America and there are many different ways to celebrate it to bring honor to those who were enslaved.

- Attend local parades and festivals
- Eat delicious soul food like catfish and red soda water
- Educate your community, family, or coworkers on the holiday's importance and milestones since the emancipation
- Shop at local Black-owned businesses and restaurants

Fun Fact



There are many other variations of the Juneteenth flag. These colors are derived from the Pan-African flag and are used to pay homage to enslaved African Americans whose lineage goes back to Africa.