

How did the American civil rights movement affect Juneteenth celebrations? ▾

Juneteenth, official name of federal holiday **Juneteenth National Independence Day**, also called **Emancipation Day**, **Freedom Day**, **Jubilee Day**, **Black Independence Day**, and **Juneteenth Independence Day**, holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States, observed annually on June 19.



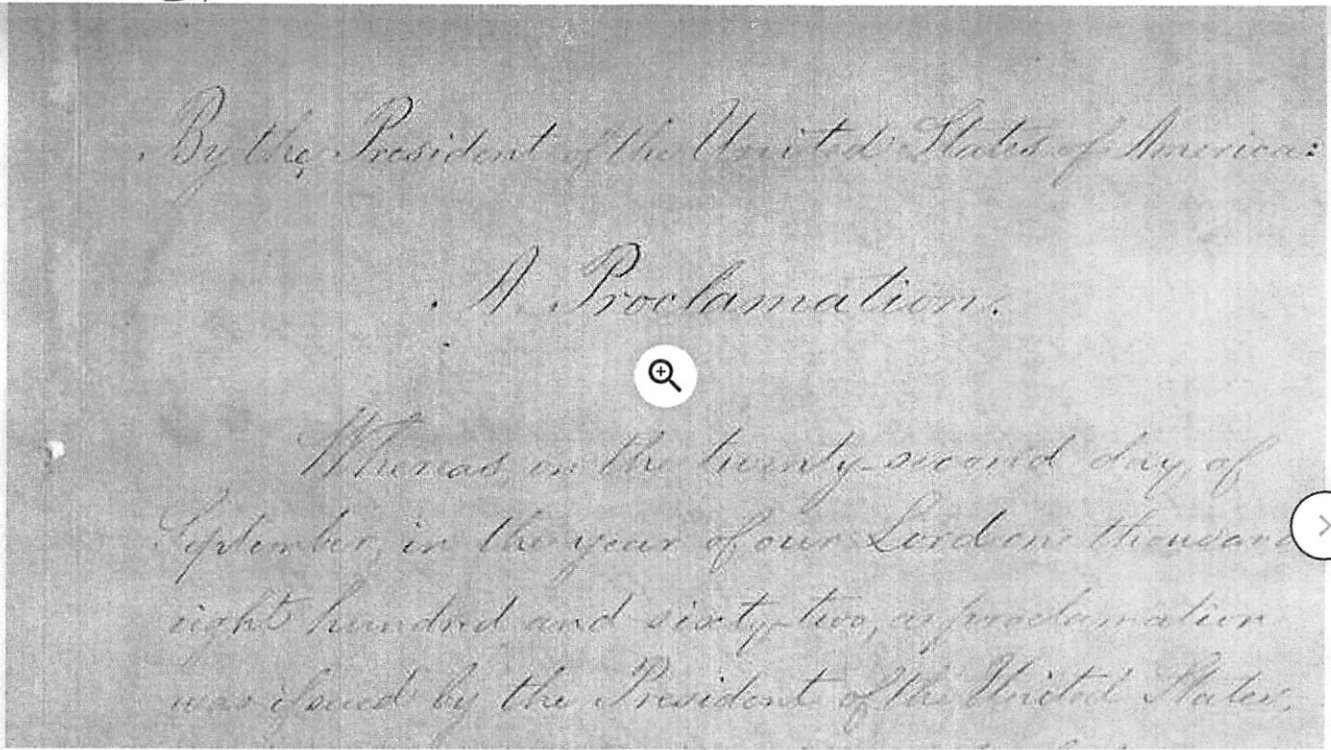
Juneteenth: All your questions, answered

Discover the history of Juneteenth, a federal holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States.

Image: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

[See all videos for this article](#)

In 1863, during the American Civil War, Pres. Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared more than three million slaves living in the Confederate states to be free. More than two years would pass, however, before the news reached African Americans living in Texas. It was not until Union soldiers arrived in Galveston,



Emancipation Proclamation

Emancipation Proclamation, 1863.

Image: NARA

The following year, on June 19, the first official Juneteenth celebrations took place in Texas. The original observances included prayer meetings and the singing of spirituals, and celebrants wore new clothes as a way of representing their newfound freedom. Within a few years, African Americans in other states were celebrating the day as well, making it an annual tradition. Celebrations have continued across the United States into the 21st century and typically include prayer and religious services, speeches, educational events, family gatherings and picnics, and festivals with music, food, and dancing.