

# Employee Frontline

June 2021 A newsletter from the Washington State Employee Assistance Program



## Honoring Juneteenth



(primary sources include the [Washington State History Museum](#) and [National Museum of African American History and Culture](#) websites)

On June 19<sup>th</sup> we celebrate Juneteenth, to commemorate the actual ending of the practice of chattel slavery in our country. Also known as “Emancipation Day” and “Freedom Day”, Juneteenth has long been celebrated among the African American community, but it is a history that has been marginalized and still remains largely unknown to the wider public. On June 19, 1865, Union soldiers landed at Galveston, Texas – the westernmost state in the former Confederacy -- and [brought the news](#) to the last state in the nation that was still unaware that the Civil War had ended and all enslaved people were now free. This news didn’t come to the enslaved African Americans in Texas until two and a half years after President Lincoln signed the [Emancipation Proclamation](#) on January 1, 1863. To recognize the significance of Juneteenth as our country’s second independence day, in May our state designated [Juneteenth as an official state holiday](#), beginning in 2022.

Some common ways to celebrate Juneteenth include: family gatherings and reunions, cookouts, public readings of the Emancipation Proclamation, parades and festivals. Traditionally, red foods are consumed, such as red velvet cake, strawberry pie and strawberry soda, to honor the bloodshed and resilience of the enslaved. For some additional ideas about how to commemorate Juneteenth, here are some resources to explore:

- [Listen to Laura Smalley](#), a formerly Enslaved person in Texas, describe what it was like to hear the news about freedom on that first Juneteenth in 1865
- [Listen to a reading of the Emancipation Proclamation](#) and [learn more about the history of the Proclamation](#)
- [Take a video tour of the Slavery and Freedom collection](#) at the National Museum of African American History and Culture, which includes items such as [Nat Turner's bible](#) and freedom papers of [free African Americans](#)
- Learn more about Juneteenth: [watch the Roots’ “I Am A Slave” animated music video](#) about the end of slavery, from the TV show black-ish or [take a deeper dive into the history](#) at [BlackPast.org](#)
- [Attend a free Juneteenth celebration](#) at the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma, on June 19th from 10 am - 5 pm
- Get out in nature – go to a state park for free: [Juneteenth has been designated as a “Discover Pass free day”](#) so on Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup> you can explore Washington state parks and recreation lands for free.
- Read about the Great Migration of African Americans out of the South, in award-winning [The Warmth of Other Suns](#) by Isabel Wilkerson (she also wrote [Caste](#))
- [Research your family’s history](#) with help from the [Black Heritage Society of Washington State](#) and [honor the tradition of early Juneteenth celebrations](#) when Black Texans gathered to try to locate missing relatives, and then marked the day by holding family reunions.
- View a free webinar about [the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre](#) and [other events](#) that many of us didn’t learn about in school
- [Attend a free Juneteenth virtual literary festival](#) offered by the New York Public Library on June 14-19
- With your kids, read a book about Juneteenth [from this list](#)

## Honoring Pride Month



(primary source is the [Library of Congress website](#))

June is [Pride Month](#), when we recognize and celebrate the LGBTQ+ community and specifically honor [the 1969 Stonewall Uprising](#), which was a tipping point in the Gay Liberation Movement. The six-day Uprising began on June 28, 1969 when the police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in Manhattan, and the patrons along with the local LGBTQ+ community resisted and protested. The first Pride march was held in 1970, on the one year anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising. In addition, since 2015 we celebrate another monumental event in June: on June 26, 2015, the landmark U.S. Supreme Court ruling, [Obergefell v. Hodges](#), declared that same-sex marriage was legal. Over time, the day of recognition has grown to a month long celebration which now includes pride parades, picnics, parties, workshops, memorials, symposia and concerts.

Here are some of the ways we can honor and celebrate Pride Month this year:

- [Attend the free Seattle Virtual Pride celebration](#), on June 26-27th from 11 am-5 pm. Check out [the schedule](#) and [share a story](#) about your resilience
- [Attend a free virtual workshop on June 9<sup>th</sup>](#) to learn how to create a safe workplace for LGBTQ+ co-workers, based on the [Safe Zone Project](#)
- [Read first-hand accounts of the Stonewall protests](#)
- [View a timeline](#) of the legalization of same sex marriage in the U.S.
- Check out [the Library of Congress' collection on LGBTQ+ history](#), from the [stories of LGBT veterans](#) to the [Walt Whitman papers](#)
- [Visit the exhibit "Crossing Boundaries: Portraits of a Transgendered West"](#) at the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma -- this exhibit highlights the stories of transgender people in the West, spanning the time period of 1860 to 1940 and illuminating four central themes: visibility, identity, acceptance, and history.
- [Read about 13 LGBTQ+ heroes](#) you didn't learn about in history class
- Read one of the [Stonewall Book Award winners](#)
- Check out these [tools to support LGBTQ equality and inclusion](#)
- [View iconic photos from when same-sex marriage was legalized](#)
- [Get inspired by viewing one of the 70,000 stories of hope and resilience](#) told through the [It Gets Better Project](#)
- [Attend a free virtual Pride Seder](#), a ritual that chronicles and celebrates the liberation of LGBTQ people, much like the Passover Seder, which retells the story of the liberation of the Jewish people.
- [Bring stories about LGBTQ+ strength and resilience](#) to a classroom near you

**Please remember that the EAP is here to support you – don't hesitate to reach out to us, at 1-877-313-4455 or [online](#).**



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