



## Illinois Heartland Library System

---

MEMO TO: IHLS Executive Committee  
FROM: Leslie Bednar  
DATE: February 11, 2022  
RE: Juneteenth Holiday

### **Juneteenth declared both an Illinois and Federal Holiday in 2021**

Governor JB Pritzker signed legislation declaring June 19, 2021, Juneteenth, an official state holiday. To commemorate the abolition of slavery throughout the United States and its territories in 1865, Juneteenth will be recognized as National Freedom Day in Illinois.

The day was recognized as a federal holiday on June 17, 2021, when President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act into law.

### **History of Juneteenth**

Juneteenth's commemoration is on the anniversary date of the June 19, 1865, announcement of General Order No. 3 by Union Army general Gordon Granger, proclaiming freedom for slaves in Texas, which was the last state of the Confederacy with institutional slavery.

Juneteenth (officially Juneteenth National Independence Day and also known as Jubilee Day, Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, and Black Independence Day) is a federal holiday in the United States commemorating the emancipation of African American slaves. It is also often observed for celebrating African American culture. Originating in Galveston, Texas, it has been celebrated annually on June 19 in various parts of the United States since 1865.

### **Recognizing the day as an official Holiday for Illinois Heartland Library System**

Recognizing Juneteenth is a Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiative and most importantly a step to positive change out of the respect for African American Communities. We are holding DEI educational classes, creating awareness of disparities, and making an impact for change with our member libraries. This is an opportunity to practice what we preach. It will demonstrate IHLS's commitment in change with evidence we are earnestly trying to make a change and create awareness within our own organization.

### **Adoption as an official Holiday**

The federal and state proclamations occurring after the IHLS Board approved the FY2022 calendar. The Board has the authority to add this holiday in FY2022, to recognize the holiday on Monday, June 20, 2022. The Reaching Across Illinois Library System does not plan to recognize

---

IMAGINING TOMORROW ~ DELIVERING POSSIBILITIES TODAY!

---

this holiday in FY2022. Several IHLS member public libraries have adopted Juneteenth as a holiday.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions.