



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Division
Town of Arlington

Juneteenth was recognized as a federal holiday on June 17, 2021, when President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act into law. Please note that all Arlington municipal offices will be closed on Monday June 20th, in observance of the holiday on the 19th.

What is Juneteenth?

Juneteenth, originally called Emancipation Day and sometimes called Freedom Day, commemorates June 19th 1865, the day Gordon Granger, a general in the Union army, arrived in Galveston, Texas with the proclamation that announced the end of slavery in Texas. Black Texans have historically celebrated the day since the 1800's. The Texas diaspora, the migration of Texans throughout U.S. cities, spread the holiday across the country. Juneteenth celebrations are a time for communities to come together to celebrate with food, parades, pageants and music and to reflect on the past as well as what freedom means today and the future. In the words of activist and author Angela Davis: "today on Juneteenth, the day we celebrate the end of slavery, the day we memorialize those who offered us hope for the future and the day when we renew our commitment to the struggle for freedom."

Further Learning

Read [On Juneteenth](#) by Pulitzer Prize winning Harvard Historian Anette Gordon Reed or listen to her discuss the holiday on [WBUR](#).

The Emancipator, the first abolitionist newspaper in the United States, has returned. You can read a [short piece](#) by Kimberly Atkins Stohr about what Juneteenth reveals about community, faith, and thriving — then and now.

You can check out this [blog post](#) on how to honor and acknowledge the holiday if you are not black.

For younger community members, PBS has a short introductory video on the holiday, [Juneteenth: All About the Holidays](#).





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Local Events

The Arlington Juneteenth event at RepHAIrations has been cancelled. Please consider supporting this local black owned business while they are closed for a family emergency. We encourage you to attend events in our local communities this weekend & beyond.

Friday June 17th

Juneteenth Boston

3pm-5pm

March starting at 120 MLK Blvd &
ending at the Blair Lot in Nubian Square
Roxbury, MA 02119

King Boston

Embrace Ideas Festival Block Party

3-8 pm

4 Palmer St

Roxbury, MA 02119

Celebrate the end of the festival with live music
from some of the cities best turntablists &
BIPOC-owned food trucks

Saturday June 18th

The Emancipator Juneteenth Celebration

5 pm -7 pm

Slades Bar and Grill

958 Tremont St

Boston, MA 02120

Free multimedia community event featuring live
performances centered around themes of
freedom, emancipation and resistance

Community Movie Night Fundraiser

Memorial Park

55 Harrison Street

Reading MA

Events and speakers start at 6 pm movie showing
of Hidden Figures at 9pm

Cambridge Library Central Square Branch

45 Pearl Street, Cambridge

12-2 pm

Presentation by storyteller Valerie Stephens,
live music performance by Albino Mbie Band,

Sunday June 19th

Juneteenth Brookline

10- 2 pm

10 am: Freedom March starts at the Florida
Ruffin Ridley School and finishes at the
Brookline Avenue Playground with a celebration

Blkfreedom.org Virtual Event

1 pm Eastern

A documentation of a national exploration of the
U.S. Constitution in "We The
People" through the eyes of historic museums
and anthropologists from across the U.S.

Juneteenth Celebration at the Longfellow House

7-9:30 pm

105 Brattle St

Cambridge, MA

A free evening of poetry, music and film

Malden Core

11-1 Flag raising, performances, activities

1-3 Community cook out

Free and open to all!

Local Events

Tuesday June 21st

Juneteenth Story Times at the Cambridge Library

Tuesday 21st- 10:30 am at Collins Branch

Journey to Juneteenth- and Beyond storytelling performance at O'Neill (3:30pm) and Boudrea (6:30 pm) Branches, 4 pm Valente Branch

GlobeDocs Presents: 'Saves, Servants and Specialty Acts'

Virtual event 5-5:45 pm

Film historian Charles Woods demonstrates how Black Identity is largely dictated by The White Imagination

Concord Public Library

10:30-11:30

Acclaimed Children's Author Ray Anthony Shepard will read from his newest book, Runaway: The Daring Escape of Ona Judge, a picture book biography of Ona Judge, a young enslaved woman who escaped the family of George Washington.

Wednesday June 22

GBH: The State of Race: Black Joy

In person 5:30-7:30 pm GBH Studio at Boston Public Library Branch in Copley Square

Virtual 6-7 pm

Program is free, reservations required

Conversation between Boston Globe's Culture Columnist Jeneè Osterheldt & Boston Poet Laureate Porch Olayiwola highlighting Black Joy with performance by hip hop artist Oompa

Juneteenth at the Museum of Fine Arts

Monday June 20th

10:00 a.m- 5:00 p.m., MFA Boston

Courtesy of Citizens, admission to the MFA will be free for all Massachusetts residents on June 20 in honor of Juneteenth. The day will be filled with performances curated by SIDE Presents, art making, and talks in the latest exhibition "Touching Roots: Black Ancestral Legacies in the Americas." This exhibition traces narratives of Blackness across the Atlantic world by bringing together work from artists—many from New England—who absorbed and reinterpreted African artistic practices, sacred customs, and cultural expressions.

*"Struggle is a never ending process.
Freedom is never really won, you earn
it and win it in every generation."*

—Coretta Scott King

For additional information please contact the
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