



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE ORDER #299

Relating to a Proclamation that the Juneteenth Flag Be Flown over the East Wing of the Wisconsin State Capitol Building

WHEREAS, slavery was a legal institution that served as a tool of oppression and exploitation for nearly 250 years, with the first enslaved Africans arriving into the British colonies approximately 150 years before the nation's founding;

WHEREAS, while the Emancipation Proclamation was issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, due to a lack of enforcement, slavery continued in Texas until the arrival of Major General Gordon Granger to Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865, more than two years later, freeing the more than 250,000 people who had continued to be enslaved there;

WHEREAS, since 1865, June 19 has become known as Juneteenth and is one of the oldest and most popular annual commemorations of the true end of slavery in the U.S.;

WHEREAS, with the signing of the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act in 2021, Juneteenth became an official federal public holiday in the U.S.;

WHEREAS, in 2009, Wisconsin became the 32nd state to formally recognize Juneteenth, although legislation to recognize the day in Wisconsin was first introduced by State Senator Spencer Coggs and State Representative Marcia Coggs in 1987;

WHEREAS, on June 19, 2020, the Juneteenth Flag was raised over the Wisconsin State Capitol building for the first time in state history, and this year, the state will celebrate Juneteenth by raising the Juneteenth Flag over the Wisconsin State Capitol for the seventh year in a row;

WHEREAS, the Juneteenth Flag features a star to represent Texas, the Lone Star State, and the navigational use of stars in the Underground Railroad to reach freedom; a nova, or new star, representing a new beginning and the freedom of African Americans; the curve on the flag dividing the red and blue colors representing a "new horizon" and a future of "opportunities and promise" for Black Americans; and red, white, and blue colors, reflective of the colors present on the U.S. flag reminding us that the people who were enslaved were Americans and that they and their descendants shall be "forever free;"

WHEREAS, though systemic racial disparities continue to permeate national institutions, culture, and vast areas of life, Juneteenth is a reminder that liberation has, and will forever be, a collective struggle and that even in America's darkest hours, the human spirit cannot be silenced, and freedom will triumph; and

WHEREAS, on Juneteenth, the people of Wisconsin are called upon to reflect on the state and nation's history; celebrate the resilience, steadfast advocacy, and sacrifices of Black Americans; and embody Wisconsin's state motto, "Forward," to be leaders in the ongoing pursuit of justice, equality, and freedom for all.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, TONY EVERS, Governor of the State of Wisconsin, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the Laws of the State, hereby:

1. Order that the Juneteenth Flag shall be flown over the East Wing of the State Capitol Building, beginning on **Wednesday, June 17, 2026**, and ending at sunset on **Sunday, June 21, 2026**.
2. Authorize state buildings and any jurisdiction of the State of Wisconsin to fly the Juneteenth Flag on the same dates, for the purpose of recognizing Juneteenth.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this seventeenth day of June in the year of two thousand twenty-six.

TONY EVERS
Governor

By the Governor:

SARAH GODLEWSKI
Secretary of State