

Chapter 64

(House Bill 227)

AN ACT concerning

State Government – Legal and Employee Holiday – Juneteenth National Independence Day

FOR the purpose of establishing Juneteenth National Independence Day as a State legal holiday and State employee holiday; repealing the requirement that the Governor declare a certain day as Juneteenth National Freedom Day; and generally relating to Juneteenth National Independence Day.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – General Provisions
Section 1–111
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

BY repealing
Article – General Provisions
Section 7–411
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – State Personnel and Pensions
Section 9–201
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2015 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

Preamble

WHEREAS, The holiday of “Juneteenth” celebrates the notification on June 19, 1865, to the last slaves, in the state of Texas, that President Abraham Lincoln had signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth has come to symbolize for many African Americans the triumph of the human spirit over the cruelty of slavery; and

WHEREAS, On June 17, 2021, the United States Congress enacted legislation declaring Juneteenth National Independence Day to be a legal public holiday; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is celebrated annually in more than 205 cities, commemorated in 49 states, and designated as a paid state holiday in Texas, New York, Virginia, Washington, Illinois, Massachusetts, and Oregon; and

WHEREAS, When the Maryland legislature passed a resolution on November 1, 1864, freeing all slaves in the State, Baltimore was the African American capital of the United States, with the 30,000 free blacks in Baltimore City and 5,400 slaves in the State making up 13 to 15 percent of the population of the State; and

WHEREAS, It is important to the descendants of those free blacks and slaves, to all other African American citizens of Maryland, and to all citizens of Maryland regardless of their racial or ethnic background that this important moment in our country's and our State's history be formally recognized within the State; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – General Provisions

1–111.

(a) In this Code and any regulation or directive adopted under it, “legal holiday” means:

(1) January 1, for New Year's Day;

(2) (i) January 15, for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday; or

(ii) if the United States Congress designates another day for observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, the day designated by the United States Congress;

(3) February 12, for Lincoln's birthday;

(4) the third Monday in February, for Washington's birthday;

(5) March 25, for Maryland Day;

(6) Good Friday;

(7) (i) May 30, for Memorial Day; or

(ii) if the United States Congress designates another day for observance of Memorial Day, the day designated by the United States Congress;

(8) **JUNE 19, FOR JUNETEENTH NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DAY;**

(9) July 4, for Independence Day;

[(9)] (10) the first Monday in September, for Labor Day;

[(10)] (11) September 12, for Defenders' Day;

[(11)] (12) (i) October 12, for Columbus Day; or

(ii) if the United States Congress designates another day for observance of Columbus Day, the day designated by the United States Congress;

[(12)] (13) November 11, for Veterans' Day;

[(13)] (14) the fourth Thursday in November, for Thanksgiving Day;

[(14)] (15) the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, for American Indian Heritage Day;

[(15)] (16) December 25, for Christmas Day;

[(16)] (17) each statewide general election day in the State; and

[(17)] (18) each other day that the President of the United States or the Governor designates for general cessation of business.

(b) Except as otherwise expressly provided in the Code, a legal holiday shall be observed on:

(1) the date specified in subsection (a) of this section; or

(2) if that date falls on a Sunday, on the next Monday after that date.

[7-411.

The Governor annually shall proclaim June 19 as Juneteenth National Freedom Day.]

Article – State Personnel and Pensions

9-201.

In this title, “employee holiday” includes:

(1) January 1, for New Year's Day;

(2) January 15, for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, unless the United States Congress designates another day for observance of that legal holiday, in which case, the day designated by the United States Congress;

(3) the third Monday in February, for Presidents' Day;

(4) May 30, for Memorial Day, unless the United States Congress designates another day for observance of that legal holiday, in which case, the day designated by the United States Congress;

(5) **JUNE 19, FOR JUNETEENTH NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DAY;**

(6) July 4, for Independence Day;

[(6)] (7) the first Monday in September, for Labor Day;

[(7)] (8) October 12, for Columbus Day, unless the United States Congress designates another day for observance of that legal holiday, in which case, the day designated by the United States Congress;

[(8)] (9) November 11, for Veterans' Day;

[(9)] (10) the fourth Thursday in November, for Thanksgiving Day;

[(10)] (11) the Friday after Thanksgiving Day, for American Indian Heritage Day;

[(11)] (12) December 25, for Christmas Day;

[(12)] (13) each statewide general election day in this State; and

[(13)] (14) each other day that the President of the United States or the Governor designates for general cessation of business.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2022.

Approved by the Governor, April 12, 2022.