

# State of North Carolina

**JOSH STEIN**  
GOVERNOR

**JUNETEENTH**

**2026**

**BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

## **A PROCLAMATION**

**WHEREAS**, Juneteenth has been celebrated annually since June 19, 1866, to mark the abolition of sanctioned slavery in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring that as of January 1, 1863, all enslaved people in the rebellious areas would be thenceforward and forever free, changing the nature of the Civil War; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to freeing enslaved people held in Confederate States, the Emancipation Proclamation enabled African Americans to enlist in the Union Army as U.S. Colored Troops; and

**WHEREAS**, it took almost three more years of conflict and loss to bring about the end of the Civil War, and the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution in December 1865, to officially end slavery in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, the news of freedom disseminated gradually throughout the nation; on June 19, 1865, two months after the official surrender of the Confederacy at Appomattox, Union Soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, and issued General Order No. 3 announcing freedom to some of the last enslaved people in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2026, America celebrates the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence marking the freedom of the United States, though not all Americans were truly free; and

**WHEREAS**, despite more than 150 years since the abolition of slavery, there remain economic, institutional, and social barriers for Black people in America; and

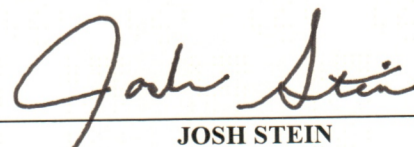
**WHEREAS**, on this anniversary each year, organizations and individuals throughout North Carolina and our nation celebrate African American history, heritage, culture, and freedom with events and ceremonies that reflect the power of community, family, art, and tradition in the face of oppression; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Carolina General Assembly established in 2008 the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission to preserve, protect, and promote African American history, art, and culture for all people in addition to stewarding NC Freedom Park in Raleigh, dedicated to the African American fight for freedom; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of North Carolina encourages people to observe Juneteenth as an opportunity to reflect, rejoice, and work in community toward a brighter future as we continue to address racial injustices in our society today;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, JOSH STEIN, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim June 19, 2026, as “**JUNETEENTH**” in North Carolina and commend its observance to all residents.



  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**JOSH STEIN**  
Governor

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this twenty-sixth day of May in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-sixth and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fiftieth.