

Introduced by: Councilmember Searcy

First Reading: September 29, 2021  
Second Reading: October 6, 2021  
Effective Date: October 6, 2021

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND**  
**ORDINANCE NO. 2021-41**

## **RECOGNIZING JUNETEENTH AS AN ANNUAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND A PAID CITY HOLIDAY**

WHEREAS, Black people have experienced oppression and suppression since they were stolen from their homes and brought to the United States of America over 400 years ago; and

WHEREAS the first enslaved Africans were brought as captives to what is now the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1619; and

WHEREAS, Black people were bought and sold as slave labor for 250 years and suffered unspeakable acts of violence; and

**WHEREAS** Black people have endured violent slavery, Jim Crow era laws and lynching, the Civil Rights era, modern day lynching, institutional and systemic racism, and anti-Blackness within their communities and workplaces; and

WHEREAS for a Black person in this country, navigating life does not come with the same privileges experienced by white people. Everyday tasks may result in a racist interaction; and

**WHEREAS** in the workplace, Black staff may experience racism, yet these occurrences can be difficult to substantiate, and Black employees are often forced to seek alternate employment, accept the labels “aggressive” or a “troublemaker”, and endure the racism silently; and

**WHEREAS** the Black community has experienced displacement due to gentrification, redlining, gaslighting, career suppression, police brutality, racial profiling, discrimination, and the psychological trauma of these experiences; and

**WHEREAS** to demonstrate the Black community is an integral part of our nation and the City of Takoma Park, it is the responsibility of City government to engage in genuine gestures of appreciation of the Black community; and

**WHEREAS** it is the charge of elected officials to ensure the physical and emotional safety and the equitable treatment of Black people in the City of Takoma Park as a workforce and community; and

1        WHEREAS Black people are faced with the moral and economic conflict of supporting  
2        government institutions that have perpetuated systemic racism, at a time the nation  
3        is still grieving and outraged over the repeated murders of Black people; and  
4

5        WHEREAS June 19<sup>th</sup> marks a significant opportunity to renew our collective commitment  
6        towards healing and dismantling anti-Black racism within the workplace and  
7        community. June 19<sup>th</sup> is Juneteenth, the oldest nationally celebrated  
8        commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States of America; and  
9

10      WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln first issued the Emancipation Proclamation effective  
11      January 1, 1863, freeing the enslaved people in the South and such order was  
12      ignored by southern slave owners; and  
13

14      WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas to enforce the  
15      president's order, freeing the enslaved two and a half years after it was first decreed.  
16      This day has since come to be known as Juneteenth; and  
17

18      WHEREAS, the City Council of Takoma Park, Maryland recognizes the history of racism in our  
19      country and how it has led to many current-day disparities in education, job  
20      attainment, housing, and healthcare, as well as disproportionate incarceration rates  
21      for Black people; and  
22

23      WHEREAS, forty-six percent of Takoma Park residents are non-white, and national disparities  
24      by race in education, job attainment, income, housing, and healthcare are also  
25      reflected in Takoma Park census data; and  
26

27      WHEREAS, on June 18, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden proclaimed June 19<sup>th</sup> as Juneteenth  
28      Day of Observance, to celebrate the emancipation of Black Americans and commit  
29      to eradicating systematic racism that still undermines our ideals and collective  
30      prosperity; and  
31

32      WHEREAS, as an initial step the City of Takoma Park formally recognizes and apologizes for  
33      the atrocities Black people have suffered in this nation and is committed to restoring  
34      trust, deconstructing institutional and systemic racism, and working towards a more  
35      just future for the Black community in Takoma Park and the nation; and  
36

37      WHEREAS, City staff are encouraged to spend time self-educating on anti-Black racism and the  
38      negative impacts of white supremacy with fifty eight percent of City staff  
39      identifying as people of color; and  
40

41      WHEREAS, City staff and residents are encouraged to support Black-owned businesses and  
42      community organizations on Juneteenth. The intention of the day will be to grieve,  
43      listen, learn, engage, and heal; and  
44

45      WHEREAS, essential employees who work on Juneteenth will receive a deferred holiday; and

1 WHEREAS, the City Council encourages the community to participate in anti-Black racism  
2 trainings, in collaboration with Black community members, leaders, and voices on  
3 workplace culture, public safety, mental health, housing, income inequality,  
4 economic development, and prosperity.

5  
6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAKOMA  
7 PARK, MARYLAND:

8  
9 SECTION 1. Title 4, Personnel, Chapter 4.04.320 Holiday Leave, of the Takoma Park Code, is  
10 amended to include the following:

11 4.04.320 Holiday leave.

12 A. The following days shall be recognized as legal holidays for which compensation will be  
13 made:

- 14 1. New Year's Day;  
15 2. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday (January 15, 1986, and every year thereafter).  
16 3. Washington's Birthday (third Monday in February);  
17 4. Memorial Day (last Monday in May);  
18 5. Juneteenth (June 19)  
19 6. Independence Day (July 4);  
20 7. Labor Day (first Monday in September);  
21 8. Veterans Day (November 11);  
22 9. Thanksgiving Day (fourth Thursday in November);  
23 10. Friday after Thanksgiving Day (November 24, 1989, and the fourth Friday in November  
24 every year thereafter);  
25 11. Christmas Eve [1/2 day];  
26 12. Christmas Day.

31  
32 SECTION 2. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

33  
34 Adopted by the Council of the City of Takoma Park, Maryland, by roll-call vote on this 6th day of  
35 October, 2021, as follows:

36  
37 AYES: Stewart, Kovar, Dyballa, Kostiuk, Seamens, Smith, Searcy  
38 NAYS: None  
39 ABSENT: None  
40 ABSTAIN: None

41  
42 **Explanatory Note**

43 Additions to the existing language of the *Takoma Park Code* are shown by underlining.  
44 Deletions to the existing language of the *Takoma Park Code* are shown by ~~strikeout~~.