
SENATE BILL 5641

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

By Senators Fortunato and Nobles

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing African heritage week; amending
2 RCW 1.16.050; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The last full calendar week in July of
5 each year shall be known as African heritage week. This is designated
6 as a time for people of this state to commemorate the contributions
7 of Americans of African heritage to the history and heritage of
8 Washington state and the United States.

9 **Sec. 2.** RCW 1.16.050 and 2021 c 295 s 2 are each amended to read
10 as follows:

11 (1) The following are state legal holidays:

12 (a) Sunday;

13 (b) The first day of January, commonly called New Year's Day;

14 (c) The third Monday of January, celebrated as the anniversary of
15 the birth of Martin Luther King, Jr.;

16 (d) The third Monday of February, to be known as Presidents' Day
17 and celebrated as the anniversary of the births of Abraham Lincoln
18 and George Washington;

19 (e) The last Monday of May, commonly known as Memorial Day;

1 (f) The nineteenth day of June, recognized as Juneteenth, a day
2 of remembrance for the day the African slaves learned of their
3 freedom;

4 (g) The fourth day of July, the anniversary of the Declaration of
5 Independence;

6 (h) The first Monday in September, to be known as Labor Day;

7 (i) The eleventh day of November, to be known as Veterans' Day;

8 (j) The fourth Thursday in November, to be known as Thanksgiving
9 Day;

10 (k) The Friday immediately following the fourth Thursday in
11 November, to be known as Native American Heritage Day; and

12 (l) The twenty-fifth day of December, commonly called Christmas
13 Day.

14 (2) Employees of the state and its political subdivisions, except
15 employees of school districts and except those nonclassified
16 employees of institutions of higher education who hold appointments
17 or are employed under contracts to perform services for periods of
18 less than twelve consecutive months, are entitled to one paid holiday
19 per calendar year in addition to those specified in this section.
20 Each employee of the state or its political subdivisions may select
21 the day on which the employee desires to take the additional holiday
22 provided for in this section after consultation with the employer
23 pursuant to guidelines to be promulgated by rule of the appropriate
24 personnel authority, or in the case of local government by ordinance
25 or resolution of the legislative authority.

26 (3) Employees of the state and its political subdivisions,
27 including employees of school districts and those nonclassified
28 employees of institutions of higher education who hold appointments
29 or are employed under contracts to perform services for periods of
30 less than twelve consecutive months, are entitled to two unpaid
31 holidays per calendar year for a reason of faith or conscience or an
32 organized activity conducted under the auspices of a religious
33 denomination, church, or religious organization. This includes
34 employees of public institutions of higher education, including
35 community colleges, technical colleges, and workforce training
36 programs. The employee may select the days on which the employee
37 desires to take the two unpaid holidays after consultation with the
38 employer pursuant to guidelines to be promulgated by rule of the
39 appropriate personnel authority, or in the case of local government
40 by ordinance or resolution of the legislative authority. If an

1 employee prefers to take the two unpaid holidays on specific days for
2 a reason of faith or conscience, or an organized activity conducted
3 under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious
4 organization, the employer must allow the employee to do so unless
5 the employee's absence would impose an undue hardship on the employer
6 or the employee is necessary to maintain public safety. Undue
7 hardship shall have the meaning established in rule by the office of
8 financial management under RCW 43.41.109.

9 (4) If any of the state legal holidays specified in this section
10 are also federal legal holidays but observed on different dates, only
11 the state legal holidays are recognized as a paid legal holiday for
12 employees of the state and its political subdivisions. However, for
13 port districts and the law enforcement and public transit employees
14 of municipal corporations, either the federal or the state legal
15 holiday is recognized as a paid legal holiday, but in no case may
16 both holidays be recognized as a paid legal holiday for employees.

17 (5) Whenever any state legal holiday:

18 (a) Other than Sunday, falls upon a Sunday, the following Monday
19 is the legal holiday; or

20 (b) Falls upon a Saturday, the preceding Friday is the legal
21 holiday.

22 (6) Nothing in this section may be construed to have the effect
23 of adding or deleting the number of paid holidays provided for in an
24 agreement between employees and employers of political subdivisions
25 of the state or as established by ordinance or resolution of the
26 local government legislative authority.

27 (7) The legislature declares that the following days or weeks are
28 recognized as provided in this subsection, but may not be considered
29 legal holidays for any purpose:

30 (a) The thirteenth day of January, recognized as Korean-American
31 day;

32 (b) The twelfth day of October, recognized as Columbus day;

33 (c) The ninth day of April, recognized as former prisoner of war
34 recognition day;

35 (d) The twenty-sixth day of January, recognized as Washington
36 army and air national guard day;

37 (e) The seventh day of August, recognized as purple heart
38 recipient recognition day;

39 (f) The second Sunday in October, recognized as Washington state
40 children's day;

1 (g) The sixteenth day of April, recognized as Mother Joseph day;
2 (h) The fourth day of September, recognized as Marcus Whitman
3 day;
4 (i) The seventh day of December, recognized as Pearl Harbor
5 remembrance day;
6 (j) The twenty-seventh day of July, recognized as national Korean
7 war veterans armistice day;
8 (k) The nineteenth day of February, recognized as civil liberties
9 day of remembrance;
10 (l) The thirtieth day of March, recognized as welcome home
11 Vietnam veterans day;
12 (m) The eleventh day of January, recognized as human trafficking
13 awareness day;
14 (n) The thirty-first day of March, recognized as Cesar Chavez
15 day;
16 (o) The tenth day of April, recognized as Dolores Huerta day;
17 (p) The fourth Saturday of September, recognized as public lands
18 day; ((and))
19 (q) The eighteenth day of December, recognized as blood donor
20 day; and
21 (r) The last full calendar week of July, recognized as African
22 heritage week.

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