

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 2-21

**DESIGNATING JUNETEENTH AS AN OFFICIAL CITY HOLIDAY AND
RENAMING THE HOLIDAY FORMERLY KNOWN AS COLUMBUS DAY
TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY**

WHEREAS, the City of Philadelphia holds an integral place in our nation's founding as the birthplace of democracy, the Constitution, and the Declaration of Independence, where the following words were written: "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness";

WHEREAS, despite these words, the United States continued to be stained by the institution of slavery and racism;

WHEREAS, President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, ending slavery in the Confederacy, did not mean true freedom for all enslaved Africans;

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Granger issued an order informing the people of Texas "that in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free";

WHEREAS, the General's order established the basis for the holiday now known as Juneteenth, which is now the most popular annual celebration of emancipation of slavery in the United States;

WHEREAS, on June 19, 2019, Governor Tom Wolf designated June 19th as Juneteenth National Freedom Day in Pennsylvania;

WHEREAS, the City of Philadelphia is a diverse and welcoming city where, according to the 2018 American Community Survey, 40% of residents are Black;

WHEREAS, Juneteenth has a unique cultural and historical significance here in Philadelphia and across the country.

WHEREAS, Juneteenth represents the resiliency of the human spirit, the triumph of emancipation and marks a day of reflection;

WHEREAS, the need to acknowledge institutional and structural racism is needed now more than ever;

WHEREAS, the City of Philadelphia is committed to work for true equity for all Philadelphia residents, and toward healing our communities;

WHEREAS, the story of Christopher Columbus is deeply complicated. For centuries, he has been venerated with stories of his traversing the Atlantic and "discovering" the "New World". The true history of his conduct is, in fact, infamous. Mistakenly believing he had found a new

route to India, Columbus enslaved indigenous people, and punished individuals who failed to meet his expected service through violence and, in some cases, murder;

WHEREAS, over the last 40 years many states and cities have acknowledged this history by recognizing the holiday known as Columbus Day instead as Indigenous Peoples' Day. These jurisdictions include: Arizona, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin and Washington, D.C.;

WHEREAS, Black Lives Matter;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MAYOR JAMES F. KENNEY, Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, by the powers vested in me by the Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, do hereby ORDER as follows:

SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF JUNETEENTH AS A CITY HOLIDAY

June 19 of every year is designated a holiday for all City employees and shall be treated as such in accordance with the applicable Civil Service regulations and Administrative Board rules.

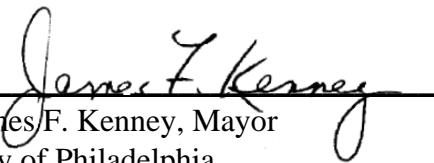
SECTION 2. RENAMING OF HOLIDAY

The City holiday celebrated on the second Monday in October, formerly known as Columbus Day, shall now be designated as Indigenous Peoples' Day.

SECTION 3. DIRECTIVE TO CITY OFFICIALS

The Director of Finance, Chief Administrative Officer and Deputy Mayor for Labor are directed to make appropriate notifications to effectuate this Order.

Date: January 27, 2021

By: 
James F. Kenney, Mayor
City of Philadelphia