

**CITY COUNCIL
ATLANTA, GEORGIA**

20-O-1454

AN ORDINANCE

**BY COUNCILMEMBERS ANDREA L. BOONE, MICHAEL JULIAN BOND, ANDRE DICKENS
AND DUSTIN HILLIS**

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 114 (PERSONNEL) ARTICLE IV (CIVIL SERVICE)
DIVISION 14 (ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE) SECTION 114-414 (HOLIDAYS) OF THE CITY
OF ATLANTA CODE OF ORDINANCES TO DESIGNATE JUNETEENTH AS A CITY PAID
HOLIDAY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is the oldest recognized celebration observing the freedom of African-Americans from slavery in the United States. Juneteenth is a historic milestone reminding Americans of the triumph of the human spirit over the harshness of slavery and the basic civil right of freedom and equality for all; and

WHEREAS, the celebration honors those 11 ½ million African-Americans who survived, in chains, the voyage to the Americas as well as the millions that did not survive. For more than 200 years, enslaved African-Americans were stripped of their humanity by forced family separation, rape, branding, whipping, mutilation and death; and

WHEREAS, the Emancipation Proclamation was issued on September 22, 1862, with an effective date of January 1, 1863, but it had minimal immediate effect on the majority of enslaved people who remained in captivity and oppressed by slave owners; and

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865, Union General Gordon Granger and 2,000 federal troops arrived in Confederate-controlled Texas to take possession of the state and to enforce the emancipation of enslaved people throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, two years, five months and eighteen days after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, the last of those enslaved within the borders of the United States were freed; and

WHEREAS, the word “Juneteenth” became the name for the joyous celebration of freedom from slavery as a result of the words “June Nineteenth” combined together in speech; and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth is celebrated in more than 205 American cities and is officially recognized by 46 states including Georgia, which became the thirty-seventh state to recognize it with the passage of S.R. 164 co-sponsored by Senators Lester Jackson, Donzella James and Valencia Seay in 2011; and

WHEREAS, it is not enough for the City of Atlanta to enjoy parades, marches and other events celebrating Juneteenth. Atlanta must recognize Juneteenth as an official City holiday, which will help support the campaign to recognize Juneteenth as a national holiday; and

WHEREAS, Atlanta is a place where millions of African-Americans never succumb to despair or cynicism and have always believed they could write their own destiny; and

WHEREAS, Atlanta, known as the cradle of the civil rights movement, can serve as a symbol and vessel that pushes this campaign forward.

THE CITY COUNCIL, OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA HEREBY ORDAINS, as follows:

SECTION 1: That Section 114-414 (Holidays) of the City of Atlanta Code of Ordinances be amended that it shall read as follows (with permanent amendments in bold font):

(a) *Designation, effect.* The following days shall be legal holidays for employees of the city:

- (1) January 1, New Year's Day.
- (2) Third Monday in January, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday.
- (3) Last Monday in May, Memorial Day.
- (4) June 19, Juneteenth.
- (5) July 4, Independence Day.
- (6) First Monday in September, Labor Day.
- (7) November 11, Veterans Day.
- (8) Fourth Thursday in November, Thanksgiving.
- (9) Day after Thanksgiving.
- (10) December 25, Christmas Day.

SECTION 2: That amendments in this ordinance shall become effective and the Juneteenth holiday will be observed beginning June 19, 2021.

SECTION 3: That all ordinances or parts of ordinances that are in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are waived to the extent of the conflict.