



County of Onondaga  
Office of the County Executive

J. Ryan McMahon II  
County Executive

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**Media Release**

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## **County Executive Ryan McMahon Declares Juneteenth an Official Holiday for County Employees**

*County offices to be closed June 19<sup>th</sup> in honor of Juneteenth*

**SYRACUSE, N.Y.** – County Executive McMahon announced that Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 county offices will be closed in honor of Juneteenth. Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States.

The observance of Juneteenth is an important reminder of the hardships and losses suffered by African Americans throughout history while also promoting and cultivating knowledge and appreciation of African American history and culture. Juneteenth also celebrates the freedom and achievements of African Americans and aims to foster respect and appreciation for the African American community.

County Executive McMahon said, “Juneteenth is a historically important day for our country. The oppression and loss suffered by our brothers and sisters in the African American community are indescribable, but Juneteenth provides an important opportunity to reflect and take action to promote social justice and equality.” McMahon continued, “I am encouraging County employees and the entire community to take time this Friday and do something to help make our community a better place and prove that the people of Onondaga County will not tolerate racism, bigotry or oppression of any kind. We are all in this together.”

Legislator Vernon Williams said, “One of the best ways our community can show support for the African American community is to patronize one or more of our many minority owned businesses in Syracuse and Onondaga County. Small businesses are the backbone of our local economy and supporting these businesses will not only show solidarity with the minority community but also support our economic recovery.” Legislator Williams continued, “While we still have a long way to go to end the systemic racism in our community, Juneteenth provides a perfect opportunity to reflect on the necessary changes needed to make our community a place that everyone can be proud to call home.”

Legislator Lina Ervin said, “Recent events have shown us now, more than ever, the importance of recognizing the oppression and loss suffered by the African American community. Making Juneteenth an official County holiday is an important step in that direction. I hope that everyone takes time tomorrow to reflect on where we have come from as a community and nation. There is much work still to be done and we all must work together to eradicate the inequities that still exist and to restore justice. I applaud County Executive McMahon for signing this directive.”

Chairman Dave Knapp said, “Recognizing Juneteenth as an official County holiday is simply the right thing to do. I applaud County Executive McMahon for his leadership and encourage everyone to do their part to prove Onondaga County is a place that encourages and welcomes diversity.”

Essential services will still operate under normal hours and procedures tomorrow.

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