

# Easton Will Celebrate Juneteenth with Outdoor Picnic

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Easton will join communities and organizations across the nation with a Juneteenth celebration on Friday, June 19 from 6 to 8 p.m. on the Morehouse Road playing fields, behind the gazebo.

“Invite your friends and bring a picnic to share and some lawn chairs,” said Wiley Mullins, Easton resident and event organizer. “We’ll have live music and talk about the meaning of Juneteenth.”

Easton held a vigil for George Floyd on June 8 at the same site. Mullins asked the community at the time whether the event would be the beginning of a “moment or a movement.” Read more about it [here](#).

“My personal feeling about the Juneteenth event is this shouldn’t be a one time thing, whether we’re talking about our town, the state or the country,” First Selectman David Bindelglass said. “It’s good the organizers wanted a followup to keep the momentum going. ‘Not a moment but a movement’ is becoming more of a focus for good reason. This is natural follow up event.”

Dating back to 1865, Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States, according to [Juneteenth.com](#). It was on June

19 that the Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free.

This was two and a half years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which had become official Jan. 1, 1863. The exact reason for the delay is not known, but the [Juneteenth.com](https://www.juneteenth.com) website posits several explanations, some of them troubling.

People who attended the Vigil for George Floyd followed the social distancing rules of wearing masks and keeping a six-foot distance from others. Bindelglass said he expects people will do the same for the Juneteenth celebration and that they will remove their masks to eat and then put them back on.

Organizers encourage everyone who comes to "bring their own and take their own home": mask, blanket or lawn chair and refreshments, and to "leave no trace" by taking their trash with them when they leave.

Juneteenth is enjoying a phenomenal growth rate across the United States, according to the [Juneteenth.com](https://www.juneteenth.com) website. In fact, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo today signed an executive order recognizing Juneteenth as a holiday for state workers. Virginia Governor Ralph Northam announced Tuesday that he's making Juneteenth — a day that commemorates the end of slavery in the U.S. — an official holiday in a state that was once home to the capital of the Confederacy.

Today Phase Two of Connecticut's reopening went into effect as part of Governor Ned Lamont's executive orders to flatten the Covid-19 curve since March, when the pandemic hit Connecticut with rising cases and deaths.

Health officials urge residents to continue following safety guidelines such as the wearing of face masks while in public and where social distancing is difficult or not possible, frequent hand washing, avoid touching your face, keep common surfaces clean and disinfected, and seek medical attention if you display any of the following symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Go to [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) or [ct.gov/coronavirus](https://www.ct.gov/coronavirus) for more information about COVID-19 and the pandemic.