

# PROCLAMATION



## FORNEY

## TEXAS

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*Whereas*, today the significance of June 19 is celebrated in communities across the country. However, Texas continues to be the only state to officially recognize the celebration with a state holiday; and

*Whereas*, although the Emancipation Proclamation was made by Abraham Lincoln on September 22, 1862, it was only practically effective once Confederate territory was physically occupied by Union soldiers. And that did not happen to Texas until the Civil War was over. Thus, liberation came late to Texas' slaves; and

*Whereas*, to make matters more critical, the slave population of Texas soared during the Civil War as slave holders fled west to try to escape the fate of Union soldiers taking their plantations and freeing their slaves. Around a quarter million slaves lived in Texas by the war's end; and

*Whereas*, on June 19, 1865, Union General Granger arrived in Galveston with 1,800 federal troops. There, Granger read General Order Number 3 to the people of Texas that stated, "*The people are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and free laborer;*" and

*Whereas*, all 250,000 slaves in the state were free from this moment – though there were certainly cases of slave owners initially withholding the news from their slaves. Ultimately, many slaves left their former slave owners, though some chose to continue in the capacity of paid laborers. However, the fundamental shift had occurred with all former slaves in Texas now being regarded fully equal with the rest of the state's population before the law; and

*Whereas*, celebration of the end of slavery, which became known as Juneteenth, is the oldest known public celebration of the end of slavery in the United States and celebrations commemorating this historic date have occurred since 1866 in the State of Texas; and

*Whereas*, without such celebration and acknowledgement, a portion of our collective history would be lost;

*Now, Therefore*, I, Amanda Lewis, Mayor of the City of Forney, Texas, on behalf of the City Council, do hereby proclaim Sunday, June 19, 2022, as

## Juneteenth

in the City of Forney and encourage all citizens to recognize the significance of this day and to join in the jubilation and celebration of the day.

*In Witness Whereof*, I have set my hand and official seal this 7<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2022.

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*Amanda Lewis, Mayor*