

January

Month-long observances:

- National Mentoring Month
- Poverty in America Awareness Month
- Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness Month

Important January DE&I calendar dates:

- January 1 – New Year’s Day and Emancipation Proclamation Day
- January 4 – World Braille Day
- January 11 – National Human Trafficking Day
- January 13 – Korean American Day
- January 15 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- January 21 – World Religion Day
- January 27 – International Holocaust Remembrance Day

Emancipation Proclamation Day – January 1

This day honors the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Abraham Lincoln that all enslaved people in Confederate-held territory were to be set free in 1863. The proclamation declared freedom for slaves in the Confederacy but didn’t apply to those in Union slave-holding border states. It played an important role in changing American history and jumpstarting the fight toward freedom and equality.

World Braille Day – January 4

We celebrate World Braille Day every year on January 4th because it’s Louis Braille’s birthday. Louis was born in 1809 in France and became blind after a childhood accident. World Braille Day is a reminder of the importance of accessibility and independence for people who are blind or visually impaired. This day spreads awareness about braille and other accessible forms of communication. Everyone deserves (and is legally entitled to) the same accommodations and services, regardless of ability. Let’s remember that and do our part to make our workplaces more accessible for everyone.

National Human Trafficking Day – January 11

This day raises awareness and promotes the prevention of these atrocious tragedies. First observed in 2007, National Human Trafficking Day features many government-organized events aimed at educating the general public about the injustices of human trafficking, which can affect people of any race, ethnicity or age. Joining local events or supporting organizations fighting against human trafficking are ways individuals can contribute to this global cause.

Korean American Day – January 13

Honor those of Korean descent today. Learn about the contributions they have made to American history and society in various fields such as business, the military, religion, medicine, the arts and politics. First established in 2005 by President Bush, this day commemorates the arrival of the first group of about 100 Koreans in the United States in 1903. Their contributions have significantly shaped the United States.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day – January 15

Celebrated on the third Monday of January, this day honors the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., an important figure in the American civil rights movement. It commemorates his tireless efforts to promote equality, fight against racial discrimination and advocate for peaceful change. This day is not only a time for reflection on the progress made in civil rights but also a call to action for continued commitment to Dr. King's vision of a just and inclusive society.

World Religion Day - January 21

World Religion Day is celebrated on the third Sunday in January every year, and is a reminder of the need for harmony and understanding between religions and faith systems. On this day, communities of different faiths have the opportunity to get together and listen to each other, as well as celebrate the differences and commonalities that the delicate intermingling of culture and religion brings.

International Holocaust Remembrance Day – January 27

On November 1, 2005, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 60/7 to designate January 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day (IHRD). The date marks the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau and is meant to honor the victims of Nazism. The same resolution supports the development of educational programs to remember the Holocaust and to prevent further genocide.
