

Emancipation Day



August 1st



What Is Emancipation Day?

Emancipation Day is the day The Slavery Abolition Act became law in the British Empire (including Canada) and ended the practice of slavery for millions of African People and their descendants around the world. The Act became law on August 1, 1834 marking the first Emancipation Day.

When Did Canada Officially Recognize Emancipation Day?

On March 24, 2021 Members of Parliament unanimously voted to designate August 1 as Emancipation Day.

On April 21, 2021 the Province of Nova Scotia voted unanimously to designate August 1 as Emancipation Day.

Why Is Emancipation Day Important?

Emancipation Day is important because it allows all Canadians to acknowledge and hold open discussions about our shared history of the enslavement of people of African ancestry here in Canada.

Who Can Celebrate Emancipation Day?

Everyone can and is encouraged to recognize Emancipation Day



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How Can I Recognize Emancipation Day?

- Attend an event taking place throughout the province with your friends, family and children
- Talk about the history and current issues that affect African Nova Scotians and how we can work together to address systemic anti-Black racism
- Have courageous conversations about race and racism
- Talk about the true meaning of reparations
- Pay homage to the souls lost in the Atlantic Ocean during the middle passage by placing a flower in the ocean
- Learn more about August 23: The United Nations International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition

What Does Recognizing Emancipation Day mean?

“Celebrating Emancipation Day is one way to encourage all Nova Scotians to recognize and reckon with the legacy of anti-Black racism and honour the contributions of Nova Scotia’s historic Black communities as we work to build a more equitable future.”

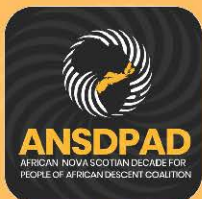
The Honourable Tony Ince, Minister of African Nova Scotian Affairs

“Acknowledging that our ancestors were enslaved in this province is one step toward righting the historical wrongs and resulting harms that African Nova Scotians continue to experience. The announcement of Emancipation Day is a milestone on the way to true emancipation for African Nova Scotians as a distinct people.”

Michelle Williams, Assistant Professor, Schulich School of Law and Co-chair of Dalhousie’s African Nova Scotian Strategy

“August 1 is a day for all Nova Scotians to pause, remember our painful past, reflect on our present and prepare for a better future for people of African descent. This recognition will help us to move toward collective healing and a more socially just province.”

Senator Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard, for Nova Scotia (East Preston)



For more information or to submit your Emancipation Day Event please visit <http://www.emancipationdays.ca/>