

Recognizing Heritage Months & Observance Days

**A practical guide for thoughtful, intentional
DEI engagement**

Heritage months and observance days can offer meaningful opportunities for learning, reflection, and connection, when they're approached with care, context, and intention.

A Thoughtful Approach

Heritage months and observance days can create meaningful opportunities for learning, reflection, and connection. However, recognition without care, context, and consent can cause unintentional harm.

This guide is designed to support thoughtful engagement, helping leaders collaborate with ERGs or other key partners to align recognition and action with your organization's values. Use it as a reflection tool, not a checklist or calendar of obligations.

As you use this guide, remember:

- You are not expected to recognize every month or observance
- Not every moment requires programming, messaging, or celebration
- In some cases, the most empathetic choice is listening, learning, or opting out

Recognizing With Care & Intention: Don's & Don'ts

Heritage months and observance days are not check-the-box moments or content opportunities. Whenever possible, recognition should be shaped in partnership with ERGs, affinity groups, and people who personally identify with these communities, and only when those individuals have opted in to participate.

Avoid singling out employees based on perceived or known identity, or placing responsibility on individuals simply because they "represent" a group. It is best practice to lean on subject-matter experts, internal DEI practitioners, and credible external voices to inform how recognition shows up.

The following Do's and Don'ts are intended to help you recognize these important dates with care and intention.

Do

- **Plan ahead**, allowing 4–6 weeks of lead time, depending on scope and complexity, to engage partners and avoid reactive or performative responses.
- **Partner with ERGs and affinity groups**, including those who opt in to share their perspectives on how to recognize and celebrate.
- **Offer choice and consent** to make it safe for key internal partners to opt in or out.
- **Lean on subject-matter experts** such as Internal DEI team members, consultants and/or credible external voices.
- **Focus on learning, reflection and actions** that align with your values, not just celebration.
- **Consider context**, including what else may be happening internally or externally

Don't

- **Single out** employees based on perceived or known identity, or assume who may want to participate or represent a community.
- **Assign ownership of recognition** to those who haven't explicitly opted in, as this can place undue emotional or cultural labor on those closest to the experience.
- **Over-program or force participation**, especially when listening, learning, or opting out may be more appropriate.
- **Don't rely solely on internal voices**, which can create pressure or tokenize teammates.
- **Be performative** by making these moments about content or virtue signaling especially when actions, policies or leadership behaviors are misaligned.
- **Ask the one senior leader who identifies** with a group to lead recognition efforts unless they have clearly expressed interest and have capacity.

2026 DEI Heritage Months & Observance Days

The heritage months and observance days below reflect a range of cultural, religious, and historical traditions observed worldwide. Unless otherwise noted, dates reflect U.S.-based observances.

This list is intended to serve as a planning resource to support thoughtful recognition, not as an exhaustive or prescriptive calendar. As a best practice, ensure the moments your organization chooses to recognize reflect the cultures, traditions, and lived experiences of your teammates..

January

- **Jan 19:** Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- **Jan 27:** Intl Holocaust Remembrance Day

February

- **Black History Month**
- **Feb 17:** Lunar New Year (Year of the Horse)
- **Feb 18:** Ramadan Begins (at sundown, through Mar. 19)

March

- **Women's History Month**
- **March 8:** Intl Women's Day
- **March 20:** Eid al-Fitr (End of Ramadan)
- **March 31:** Intl Transgender Day of Visibility

April

- **Autism Acceptance Month**
- **Arab American Heritage Month**
- **April 1–9:** Passover

May

- **Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month**
- **Mental Health Awareness Month**
- **May 25:** Memorial Day
- **May 27:** Eid al-Adha (Festival of Sacrifice)

June

- **LGBTQ+ Pride Month**
- **Caribbean American Heritage Month**
- **June 19:** Juneteenth

July

- **Disability Pride Month**
- **July 14:** Intl Non-Binary People's Day
- **July 26:** Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

August

- **Aug 9:** International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
- **Aug 21:** Senior Citizens Day
- **Aug 26:** Women's Equality Day

September

- **Sept 12–13:** Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year)
- **Sept 15 – Oct 15:** **Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month**
- **Sept 21:** Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)

October

- **LGBTQ+ History Month**
- **Filipino American History Month**
- **Oct 10:** World Mental Health Day
- **Oct 12:** Indigenous Peoples' Day

November

- **Native American/ Indigenous Heritage Month**
- **Nov 11:** Veterans Day
- **Nov 20:** Transgender Day of Remembrance

December

- **Universal Human Rights Month**
- **Dec 4–12:** Hanukkah
- **Dec 3:** International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- **Dec 26-Jan 1:** Kwanzaa