

**Keven J. Stratton** proposes the following substitute bill:

**State Holy Days**

2025 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Chief Sponsor: Keven J. Stratton**

House Sponsor:

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**LONG TITLE**

**General Description:**

This bill amends provisions relating to certain days and commemorative periods recognized by the state.

**Highlighted Provisions:**

This bill:

- designates certain days and time periods of special religious significance as state holy days;
- provides that a state holy day is not a legal holiday, unless expressly provided otherwise;
- designates Easter Sunday as a legal holiday, but one that is not recognized on the preceding Friday or the following Monday; and
- provides that a state employee may use the state employee's personal preference day to recognize a state holy day or for any other purpose.

**Money Appropriated in this Bill:**

None

**Other Special Clauses:**

This bill provides a special effective date.

**Utah Code Sections Affected:**

AMENDS:

**63G-1-301** [~~Effective 05/04/22~~] (**Effective upon governor's approval**), as last amended by Laws of Utah 2022, Chapter 331

**63G-1-401** [~~Effective 05/01/24~~] (**Effective upon governor's approval**), as last amended by Laws of Utah 2024, Chapter 377

ENACTS:

**63G-1-1101** (**Effective upon governor's approval**), Utah Code Annotated 1953

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29 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

30 Section 1. Section **63G-1-301** is amended to read:

31 **63G-1-301** [~~(Effective 05/04/22)~~] (**Effective upon governor's approval**). **Legal**  
32 **holidays -- Personal preference day -- Governor authorized to declare additional days.**

33 (1)(a) The following named days are legal holidays in this state:

34 (i) every Sunday, except as provided in Subsection (1)(e);

35 (ii) the first Sunday after the first full moon that occurs on or after the spring equinox,  
36 called Easter Sunday;

37 [~~(ii)~~] (iii) January 1, called New Year's Day;

38 [~~(iii)~~] (iv) the third Monday of January, called Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day;

39 [~~(iv)~~] (v) the third Monday of February, called Washington and Lincoln Day;

40 [~~(v)~~] (vi) the last Monday of May, called Memorial Day;

41 [~~(vi)~~] (vii) on the day described in Subsection (1)(f), Juneteenth National Freedom  
42 Day;

43 [~~(vii)~~] (viii) July 4, called Independence Day;

44 [~~(viii)~~] (ix) July 24, called Pioneer Day;

45 [~~(ix)~~] (x) the first Monday of September, called Labor Day;

46 [~~(x)~~] (xi) the second Monday of October, called Columbus Day;

47 [~~(xi)~~] (xii) November 11, called Veterans Day;

48 [~~(xii)~~] (xiii) the fourth Thursday of November, called Thanksgiving Day;

49 [~~(xiii)~~] (xiv) December 25, called Christmas; and

50 [~~(xiv)~~] (xv) all days which may be set apart by the President of the United States, or  
51 the governor of this state by proclamation as days of fast or thanksgiving.

52 (b) If any of the holidays under Subsections [~~(1)(a)(ii) through (v)~~] (1)(a)(iii) through (vi)  
53 or Subsections [~~(1)(a)(vii) through (xiv)~~], (1)(a)(viii) through (xv) falls on Sunday,  
54 then the following Monday shall be the holiday.

55 (c) If any of the holidays under Subsections [~~(1)(a)(ii) through (v)~~] (1)(a)(iii) through (vi)  
56 or Subsections [~~(1)(a)(vii) through (xiv)~~] (1)(a)(viii) through (xv) falls on Saturday,  
57 then the preceding Friday shall be the holiday.

58 (d) Each employee may select one additional day, called Personal Preference Day, to be  
59 scheduled pursuant to rules adopted by the Division of Human Resource Management,  
60 which the employee may use to observe a state holy day, as described in Section  
61 63G-1-1101, or any other day the employee chooses to recognize.

62 (e) For purposes of Utah Constitution Article VI, Section 16, Subsection (1), regarding

63 the exclusion of state holidays from the 45-day legislative general session, Sunday is  
64 not considered a state holiday.

65 (f)(i) The Juneteenth National Freedom Day holiday is on June 19, if that day is on a  
66 Monday.

67 (ii) If June 19 is on a Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday, the Juneteenth  
68 National Freedom Day holiday is on the immediately preceding Monday.

69 (iii) If June 19 is on a Saturday or Sunday, the Juneteenth National Freedom Day  
70 holiday is on the immediately following Monday.

71 (2)(a) Whenever in the governor's opinion extraordinary conditions exist justifying the  
72 action, the governor may:

73 (i) declare, by proclamation, legal holidays in addition to those holidays under  
74 Subsection (1); and

75 (ii) limit the holidays to certain classes of business and activities to be designated by  
76 the governor.

77 (b) A holiday may not extend for a longer period than 60 consecutive days.

78 (c) Any holiday may be renewed for one or more periods not exceeding 30 days each as  
79 the governor may consider necessary, and any holiday may, by like proclamation, be  
80 terminated before the expiration of the period for which it was declared.

81 Section 2. Section **63G-1-401** is amended to read:

82 **63G-1-401** [~~Effective 05/01/24~~] (**Effective upon governor's approval**).

83 **Commemorative periods.**

84 (1) As used in this section, "commemorative period" means a special observance declared  
85 by the governor that annually recognizes and honors a culturally or historically  
86 significant day, week, month, or other time period in the state.

87 (2)(a) The governor may declare a commemorative period by issuing a declaration.

88 (b) The governor shall maintain a list of all commemorative periods declared by the  
89 governor.

90 (3)(a) The governor's declaration of a commemorative period expires the year  
91 immediately following the day on which the governor issues the declaration.

92 (b) Subsection (3)(a) does not prevent the governor from redeclaring a commemorative  
93 period before or after the commemorative period expires.

94 (4) Notwithstanding Subsections (2) and (3), the following days shall be commemorated  
95 annually:

96 (a) Utah History Day at the Capitol, on the Friday immediately following the fourth

- 97 Monday in January, to encourage citizens of the state, including students, to  
98 participate in activities that recognize Utah's history;
- 99 (b) Day of Remembrance for Incarceration of Japanese Americans, on February 19, in  
100 remembrance of the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II;
- 101 (c) Utah State Flag Day, on March 9;
- 102 (d) Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day, on March 29;
- 103 (e) Utah Railroad Workers Day, on May 10;
- 104 (f) Dandy-Walker Syndrome Awareness Day, on May 11;
- 105 (g) Armed Forces Day, on the third Saturday in May, in honor of men and women who  
106 are serving or have served in the United States Armed Forces around the world in  
107 defense of freedom;
- 108 (h) Arthrogryposis Multiplex Congenita Awareness Day, on June 30;
- 109 (i) Navajo Code Talker Day, on August 14;
- 110 (j) Rachael Runyan/Missing and Exploited Children's Day, on August 26, the  
111 anniversary of the day three-year-old Rachael Runyan was kidnaped from a  
112 playground in Sunset, Utah, to:
- 113 (i) encourage individuals to make child safety a priority;
- 114 (ii) remember the importance of continued efforts to reunite missing children with  
115 their families; and
- 116 (iii) honor Rachael Runyan and all Utah children who have been abducted or  
117 exploited;
- 118 (k) September 11th Day of Remembrance, on September 11, in honor and remembrance  
119 of the first responders and persons killed and injured in the terrorist attacks on  
120 September 11, 2001;
- 121 (l) Constitution Day, on September 17, to invite all Utah adults and Utah school children  
122 to read directly from the United States Constitution and other primary sources, and  
123 for students to be taught principles from the United States Constitution that include  
124 federalism, checks and balances, separation of powers, popular sovereignty, limited  
125 government, and the necessary and proper, commerce, and supremacy clauses;
- 126 (m) POW/MIA Recognition Day, on the third Friday in September;
- 127 [~~(n) Diwali, on the fifteenth day of the Hindu lunisolar month of Kartik, known as~~  
128 ~~Lakshmi puja, or the Hindu festival of lights;~~]
- 129 [(~~o~~)] (n) Victims of Communism Memorial Day, on November 7;
- 130 [(~~p~~)] (o) Indigenous People Day, on the Monday immediately preceding Thanksgiving;

- 131           and
- 132           ~~[(q)]~~ (p) Bill of Rights Day, on December 15.
- 133       (5) The Department of Veterans and Military Affairs shall coordinate activities, special
- 134           programs, and promotional information to heighten public awareness and involvement
- 135           relating to Subsections (4)(g) and (m).
- 136       (6) The month of April shall be commemorated annually as Clean Out the Medicine
- 137           Cabinet Month to:
- 138           (a) recognize the urgent need to make Utah homes and neighborhoods safe from
- 139                 prescription medication abuse and poisonings by the proper home storage and
- 140                 disposal of prescription and over-the-counter medications; and
- 141           (b) educate citizens about the permanent medication disposal sites in Utah listed on
- 142                 useonlyasdirected.org that allow disposal throughout the year.
- 143       (7) The second full week of April shall be commemorated annually as Animal Care and
- 144           Control Appreciation Week to recognize and increase awareness within the community
- 145           of the services that animal care and control professionals provide.
- 146       (8) The first full week of May shall be commemorated annually as State Water Week to
- 147           recognize the importance of water conservation, quality, and supply in the state.
- 148       (9) The third full week of June shall be commemorated annually as Workplace Safety
- 149           Week to heighten public awareness regarding the importance of safety in the workplace.
- 150       (10) The second Friday and Saturday in August shall be commemorated annually as Utah
- 151           Fallen Heroes Days to:
- 152           (a) honor fallen heroes who, during service in the military or public safety, have
- 153                 sacrificed their lives to protect the country and the citizens of the state; and
- 154           (b) encourage political subdivisions to acknowledge and honor fallen heroes.
- 155       (11) The third full week in August shall be commemorated annually as Drowsy Driving
- 156           Awareness Week to:
- 157           (a) educate the public about the relationship between fatigue and driving performance;
- 158                 and
- 159           (b) encourage the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Transportation to
- 160                 recognize and promote educational efforts on the dangers of drowsy driving.
- 161       (12) The month of September shall be commemorated annually as American Founders and
- 162           Constitution Month to:
- 163           (a) encourage all civic, fraternal, and religious organizations, and public and private
- 164                 educational institutions, to recognize and observe this occasion through appropriate

165 programs, teaching, meetings, services, or celebrations in which state, county, and  
 166 local governmental officials are invited to participate; and

167 (b) invite all Utah school children to read directly from the United States Constitution  
 168 and other primary sources, and to be taught principles from the United States  
 169 Constitution that include federalism, checks and balances, separation of powers,  
 170 popular sovereignty, limited government, and the necessary and proper, commerce,  
 171 and supremacy clauses.

172 (13) The third full week of September shall be commemorated annually as Gang Prevention  
 173 Awareness Week.

174 (14) The month of October shall be commemorated annually as Italian-American Heritage  
 175 Month.

176 (15) The month of November shall be commemorated annually as American Indian  
 177 Heritage Month.

178 (16) The first full week of December shall be commemorated annually as Avalanche  
 179 Awareness Week to:

180 (a) educate the public about avalanche awareness and safety;

181 (b) encourage collaborative efforts to decrease annual avalanche accidents and fatalities;  
 182 and

183 (c) honor Utah residents who have lost their lives in avalanches, including those who  
 184 lost their lives working to prevent avalanches.

185 Section 3. Section **63G-1-1101** is enacted to read:

186 **Part 11. State Holy Days**

187 **63G-1-1101 (Effective upon governor's approval). State holy days.**

188 (1) As used in this section, "state holy day" means an annual day or other time period of  
 189 special religious significance that the state officially recognizes and observes as a holy  
 190 day under this section.

191 (2) A state holy day is not a legal holiday or state holiday, unless the state holy day is also  
 192 designated as a legal holiday under Section 63G-1-301.

193 (3) The following are state holy days:

194 (a) Holi, on the last full moon day of the Hindu lunisolar month of Phalguna;

195 (b) Lunar New Year, from the lunar calendar's first new moon through the lunar  
 196 calendar's first full moon;

197 (c) Good Friday, on the Friday preceding Easter Sunday;

198 (d) Easter Sunday, on the first Sunday after the first full moon that occurs on or after the

- 199            spring equinox;  
200            (e) Eid al-Fitr, on the first day of the Islamic lunar month of Shawwal;  
201            (f) Passover, for eight days, starting on the fifteenth day of the Hebrew lunisolar month  
202            of Nisan;  
203            (g) Vesak Day, on the first full moon of the Hindu lunisolar month of Vaisakha;  
204            (h) Eid al-Adha, on the tenth day of the Islamic lunar month of Dhu al-Hijjah;  
205            (i) Rosh Hashanah, on the first two days of the Hebrew lunisolar month of Tishrei;  
206            (j) Yom Kippur, on the tenth day of the Hebrew lunisolar month of Tishrei;  
207            (k) Diwali, on the fifteenth day of the Hindu lunisolar month of Kartik; and  
208            (l) Christmas, on December 25.

209            Section 4. **Effective Date.**

210            This bill takes effect:

- 211            (1) except as provided in Subsection (2), May 7, 2025; or  
212            (2) if approved by two-thirds of all members elected to each house:  
213            (a) upon approval by the governor;  
214            (b) without the governor's signature, the day following the constitutional time limit of  
215            Utah Constitution, Article VII, Section 8; or  
216            (c) in the case of a veto, the date of veto override.