

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

At Charleston

A PROCLAMATION

By the Governor

WHEREAS, on July 4, 1776, the newly formed Continental Congress—representing the thirteen original colonies that would become the United States of America—formally adopted the Declaration of Independence; and

WHEREAS, the Declaration of Independence asserted a number of grievances related to British rule, proclaimed American independence, and recognized the “self-evident” truths “that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”; and

WHEREAS, the people of America then engaged in a hard-fought Revolutionary War against the imperial might of Great Britain to preserve that independence and defend the rights the Declaration of Independence proclaimed; and

WHEREAS, initially the American Continental Army suffered a number of defeats but through perseverance and indomitable faith in the righteousness of the struggle, the war turned in the American people’s favor and the British forces were forced to formally surrender at the Siege of Yorktown, Virginia in the Fall of 1781; and

WHEREAS, since the Revolutionary War, the Fourth of July has been celebrated as a national holiday not only commemorating the birthday of the United States of America and its place in world history, but also as a call to remember and live up to the high ideals proclaimed by

its Founding Fathers; and

WHEREAS, the laws of West Virginia designate the Fourth of July as a legal holiday and a day for general cessation of business, W. Va. Code § 2-2-1(a)(6); and

WHEREAS, this year, the Fourth of July falls on a Saturday, so the “preceding Friday,” July 3, 2026, automatically is treated as “the legal holiday” and a day for general cessation of business for state employees W. Va. Code § 2-2-1(b); and

WHEREAS, this year's celebration is particularly meaningful because of America 250—the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the conflict that birthed the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, across the State—and the Nation—people and communities are hosting events to celebrate and commemorate America 250; and

WHEREAS, at the State Capitol those events begin on the evening of Thursday, July 2nd and continue throughout the weekend into July 5th; and

WHEREAS, West Virginia Code § 2-2-1 vests the Governor with the authority to proclaim and treat additional days as official holidays or days of special observance, or days for the general cessation of business; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the hard work accomplished by the public employees of this State throughout the year, and in acknowledgement of the significance of the 250th anniversary of the United States of America, it is fitting and proper that the public employees of this State may be excused from their work duties on the last half of Thursday, July 2, 2026, to spend an extended and enjoyable holiday weekend with their loved ones and to participate in the special events

scheduled for the America 250 celebrations throughout the State.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, PATRICK MORRISEY, pursuant to the foregoing and by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Governor of the State of West Virginia, do hereby **PROCLAIM** and **ORDER** that the last half of Thursday, July 2, 2026, shall also be treated as if it were an official holiday, and the public employees of this State may be excused from their work duties starting at noon on that day without charge against accrued annual leave; and do further **PROCLAIM** that this **ORDER** shall not affect private businesses, local government, and other entities and individuals not employed by the State of West Virginia; nor shall it affect the work requirements of those public employees who may be called upon to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of West Virginia's citizenry and who will be compensated in accordance with the legislative rules established by the West Virginia Division of Personnel; however, in accordance with West Virginia Code § 2-2-1(c), county commissions may designate the last half of Thursday, July 2, 2026, as if it were a half-day legal holiday, and courts may do the same.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

DONE at the Capitol in the City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this Twenty-Ninth Day of June, in the Year of our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-Six, and in the One Hundred Sixty-Fourth Year of the State.



By the Governor

Patrick Morrisey
GOVERNOR

Krist Warden

SECRETARY OF STATE