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In 2024, military and overseas ballots were rejected for lateness at more than eight times the rate of domestic mail ballots, according to the Bipartisan Policy Center. PATRICK T. FALLON/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES FILE

Juneteenth is a federal holiday

But it's not a paid day off for state employees

Katie Wiseman and Cheryl V. Jackson
Indianapolis Star
USA TODAY NETWORK

While many workers will have the day off on Friday, June 19 for the federal holiday established in 2021, Juneteenth, Indiana state workers will not.

Juneteenth is not listed on the Indiana State Personnel Department's website as a holiday observed by the state. Other holidays, including Christmas Day, Columbus Day, Memorial Day Thanksgiving and many others are listed as holidays that "full-time, part-time and hourly employees occupying permanent positions" get a paid day off for.

Juneteenth is not recognized as a holiday for state employees in Indiana. According to PEW Research, only 33 states and the District of Columbia mark Juneteenth as a paid day off for most state government workers.

What is Juneteenth?

Juneteenth – also called Emancipation Day, Freedom Day or Jubilee Day – commemorates the day in 1865 when enslaved African Americans in Galveston, Texas, received news that they were free, two years after Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

Texas became the first U.S. state to recognize Juneteenth as a holiday in 1980. After more than a million signatures were collected to make it a federally-recognized holiday; President Joe Biden declared it so in 2021.

What is closed on Juneteenth?

Like all federal holidays, banks, the post office and public libraries will not be open Juneteenth, but state government offices throughout Indiana will remain open.

When is Juneteenth?

Just like our other Independence Day, which is always celebrated on July 4, regardless of the day of the week, Juneteenth is celebrated on June 19 annually.

Military voters scrutinize court case

Impact on ballot access for those overseas could be far-reaching

Sarah D. Wire
USA TODAY

For three years, Alberto Ramos had a binder filled with all the important voting-related dates and rules for every state: party registration and absentee ballot request deadlines, election dates – and available grace periods for military voters.

Along with running the operations on a Navy submarine, the now-retired Navy lieutenant commander served as a voting assistance officer, coordinating helping seamen vote by getting ballots onboard, and quickly off again.

"We worked really hard to surface

the ship off the coast of the country, bring on all of this mail, which entails like tossing a rope ladder over and manually bringing it all below decks, sorting through it, having people vote and then getting that back off of the submarine before we'd have to go back underwater," he said.

He and people with similar roles in units across every branch of the military do the "backward algebra" of calculating how long it might take a ballot to get off a Navy ship, mailed from the nearest port and back to the United States in time for Election Day.

The role is "critically important," Ramos said. "As a military family member,

as a veteran, and while you're in active duty service, you really feel the weight of these elections, that you're voting for people who can send you to war."

But a pending Supreme Court decision on whether states can offer grace periods for when officials receive ballots postmarked by Election Day could make it harder for hundreds of thousands of military members stationed overseas or at bases far from home to vote, he said. The ruling could also impact millions of Americans living overseas.

Thirty states, Washington, DC, and three U.S. territories have "grace period" laws that allow at least some voters' mailed ballots to count if they are sent by Election Day but arrive a few days later. Many of the laws have been

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Police: Richmond mom visited park with children, whiskey 'shooters'

Douglas Walker
Richmond Palladium-Item
USA TODAY NETWORK

RICHMOND, IN — A Richmond woman has been charged with neglect of a dependent and public intoxication.

On the afternoon of June 4, Wayne County dispatchers received a report of a woman at Glen Miller Park, 2200 E. Main St., with four young children in a wagon that also contained an open 10-pack of Fireball whiskey "shooters."

An officer found Cecilia McCoy, 35, standing nearby, holding one of her four children and speaking with the occupant of a car.

McCoy reportedly acknowledged she was the mother of the four children

and that she had been drinking.

However, she maintained she had not consumed all five of the "shooters" missing from the open 10-pack. A police officer described the Richmond woman's speech as "slurred."

McCoy told the officer counts of neglect of a dependent and public intoxication filed against her in Wayne Superior Court 2 in January had recently been dismissed "due to her completion of treatment for substance abuse."

Court records indicate that case was dismissed a day before the Richmond woman's June 4 encounter with police.

"I advised Cecilia that it did not appear appropriate to immediately be in-

toxicated in public with her children following charges being dropped in a separate but nearly identical case," the officer wrote.

He added that McCoy asked him several questions, which he answered, and a few minutes later asked the same questions again.

Officers reported the incident to the Indiana Department of Child Services and made arrangements for the children to be delivered to the home of McCoy's mother-in-law.

According to an affidavit, McCoy became "extremely defensive" when officers tried to discuss her behavior with her.

The more recent neglect and public intoxication charges were filed against

"I advised Cecilia that it did not appear appropriate to immediately be intoxicated in public with her children following charges being dropped in a separate but nearly identical case."

Police officer

McCoy on Wednesday, June 10.

A trial date has not yet been set. The neglect count is a Level 6 felony carrying up to 30 months in prison, while the public intoxication charge is a misdemeanor.

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