

# Memorial Day is Monday, May 30, 2022

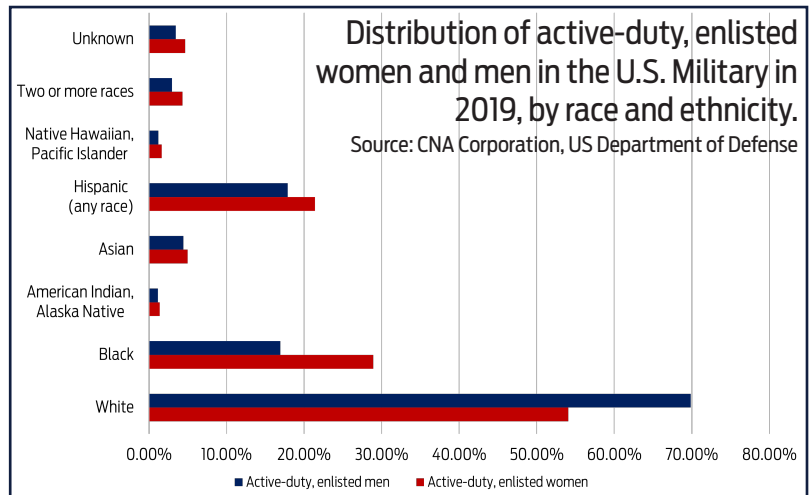


Memorial Day is a federal holiday in the United States which honors the men and women of the United States military who have died while in service to our country. Formerly known as Decoration Day, this day of honor originated during the American Civil War when citizens placed flowers on the graves of those who had been killed in battle. <sup>1</sup> Decoration day would take place annually on May 30<sup>th</sup>.

Memorial Day, as Decoration Day gradually came to be known, originally honored only those lost while fighting in the Civil War. But during World War I the United States found itself embroiled in another major conflict, and the holiday evolved to commemorate American military personnel who died in all wars, including but not limited to, World War II, The Vietnam War, The Korean War and the wars in Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan. <sup>2</sup>

“For decades, Memorial Day continued to be observed on May 30<sup>th</sup>, the date General Logan had selected for the first Decoration Day. But in 1968, Congress passed the *Uniform Monday Holiday Act*, which established Memorial Day as the last Monday in May in order to create a three-day weekend for federal employees. The change went into effect in 1971. The same law also declared Memorial Day a federal holiday.” <sup>2</sup>

“For more than 200 years, the U.S. military has fought to defend this nation and its interests, earning the reputation as the greatest military force in history. The U.S. military attracts highly qualified men and women who represent a wide variety of creeds, religions, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, and other attributes that make the people of this country stronger together. Moreover, the Department of Defense (DoD) recognizes diversity and inclusion (D&I) as strategic imperatives—to ensure that the military across all grades reflects and is inclusive of the American people it has sworn to protect and defend.” <sup>3</sup>



Americans observe Memorial Day by visiting cemeteries and memorials. Some wear a red poppy remembering those fallen in war, a tradition that had originated with a World War I poem. In the warm early spring of 1915, bright red flowers began peeking through the battle-scarred land. The sight of the bright red flowers against the dreary backdrop of war inspired Canadian Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae to pen the poem, “In Flanders Field,” in which he gives voice to the soldiers who had been killed in battle and lay buried beneath the poppy-covered grounds. <sup>4</sup>



Each year on Memorial Day, The National Moment of Remembrance asks Americans to pause for a moment of silence (one minute) at 3:00 p.m., local time.



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Sources: 1. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Memorial-Day> 2. <https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/memorial-day-history>  
3. <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Dec/18/2002554852/-1/-1/0/DOD-DIVERSITY-AND-INCLUSION-FINAL-BOARD-REPORT.PDF>  
4. <https://www.history.com/news/world-war-i-poppy-remembrance-symbol-veterans-day>  
Poppy Photo: <https://rodeorealty.blog/2020/05/23/out-and-about-celebrating-memorial-day-safely/>