

Colonel John Nixon Giving the First Public Reading of The Declaration of Independence Outside Pennsylvania State House (now known as Independence Hall) on July 8, 1776 (Constitutional; New York Public Library)

Sharing the Spirit of America

(#SharingTheSpiritOfAmercia)

On July 4, 1776, the Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence inside the Pennsylvania State House (now Independence Hall) in Philadelphia.

Four days later, on July 8, 1776, after the Declaration was printed and distributed, the citizens of Philadelphia were summoned to the State House Yard by the bells of the city. Then, Colonel John Nixon publicly read the Declaration of Independence.

While much of the Declaration deals with grievances against King George III (although his name does not appear in it), the American spirit, principles, and values memorialized in the Declaration of Independence 250-years ago continue to hold true today. The "self evident" "truths", then, "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" are valid today, as are the personal and collective responsibilities we share in protecting and perpetuating these values.

Reading the Declaration of Independence Across America, 'Together'

Just as the Declaration of Independence was read to the people on July 8, 1776, now, 250-years later, Americans in all 50 States and 16 Territories of the United States will read the Declaration of Independence 'together'. These readings will occur at State Capitols, City Halls, County and Municipal Buildings, Schools, Libraries, Community Centers, Parks, etc (including individual families sharing the words and vision of the Declaration of Independence in their own homes).

With a start time based on 6 pm (EDT), July 8, 2026 (commemorating the first public reading), people in communities across America will begin reading the Declaration of Independence.

Unlike the extent of the Colonies in 1776, today, America spans about 9,500-miles from one extreme to the other (the Caribbean across North America to the western edge of the Pacific).

Even though the United States is spread across thousands of miles and ten different time zones, all of us in America may read the Declaration of Independence 'together', at the 'same' time.

The following schedule correlates the relative time in each portion of America, based on its own timekeeping. The time conversions note the corresponding local time commensurate with 6 pm (EDT). Given the nature of time and varying time zones, at these times, we would all be reading the Declaration of Independence 'together', despite our differing and widely separated locations.

For instance, 6 pm (EDT), July 8, 2026 in Philadelphia is the same moment as 8 am, July 9, 2026 in Guam. (Guam and two other US Territories are west of the International Date Line.)

The following lists the corresponding locations/time zones, local start times, and timekeeping of the US States and Territories (East to West) for reading the Declaration of Independence in their respective communities, consistent with 6 pm (EDT) on Wednesday, July 8, 2026:

US Virgin Islands	6 pm	Atlantic Standard – no Daylight Saving
Puerto Rico	6 pm	Atlantic Standard – no Daylight Saving
Eastern Time Zone	6 pm	Eastern Daylight
Navassa Island	5 pm	Eastern Standard – no Daylight Saving
Central Time Zone	5 pm	Central Daylight
Mountain Time Zone	4 pm	Mountain Daylight
Arizona (most)	3 pm	Mountain Standard– no Daylight Saving
Pacific Time Zone	3 pm	Pacific Daylight
Alaska	2 pm	Alaska Daylight
Hawai'i	12 pm	Hawai'i Standard – no Daylight Saving
Kure Atoll	12 pm	Hawai'i Standard – no Daylight Saving
Palmyra Atoll	12 pm	US Minor Outlying Islands
Johnston Atoll	12 pm	US Minor Outlying Islands
American Samoa	11 am	Samoa Standard Time – no Daylight Saving
Midway Atoll	11 am	Samoa Standard Time – no Daylight Saving
Kingman Reef	11 am	US Minor Outlying Islands
Jarvis Island	11 am	US Minor Outlying Islands
Howland Island	10 am	US Minor Outlying Islands
Baker Island	10 am	US Minor Outlying Islands
Wake	10 am (July 9)	Wake Island Time Zone
Northern Mariana Islands	8 am (July 9)	Chamorro Standard Time – no Daylight Saving
Guam	8 am (July 9)	Chamorro Standard Time – no Daylight Saving

At the time the Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4, 1776, Britain and the Thirteen Colonies (New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia) had already been at war for more than a year. The American Revolutionary War lasted from April 19, 1775 (with the Battles of Lexington and Concord) to September 3, 1783 (with the Treaty of Paris). The United States was recognized roughly by what is now Canada to the north, Florida to the south, the Mississippi River to the west and the Atlantic to the east.

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