

Timeline



- 1775–1783** Revolutionary War

- 1812–1815** War of 1812

- 1846–1848** Mexican-American War

- 1861–1865** Civil War

- 1868** Major General John Logan, leader of the Grand Army of the Republic, issues a proclamation calling for a Decoration Day to decorate the graves of fallen Civil War veterans with flowers. It is first observed on May 30 of this year. Many Southern states did not observe the holiday until after World War I. It is unclear when the holiday officially becomes known as Memorial Day

- 1877** Henry Flipper becomes first Black person to graduate from U.S. Military Academy

- 1898–1902** Spanish-American War

- 1917** Loretta Walsh becomes first woman to enlist in the military, in the U.S. Naval Reserve

- 1917–1918** World War I

- 1919** President Woodrow Wilson declares Nov. 11 Armistice Day to remember “the heroism of those who died in the country’s service”

- 1921** Congress establishes the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery

- 1938** Congress makes Nov. 11, Armistice Day, a federal holiday

- 1940** Benjamin O. Davis Sr. is promoted to brigadier general, becoming first Black general in U.S. military history

- 1941–1945** World War II

- 1950–1953** Korean War

- 1954** President Dwight Eisenhower signs legislation changing name of Armistice Day to Veterans Day

- 1964–1975** Vietnam War

- 1966** Congress and President Lyndon Johnson declare Waterloo, N.Y., as the birthplace of Memorial Day. On May 5, 1866, the community had held a ceremony to honor local Civil War veterans

- 1968** Congress passes a law that moves Veterans Day to the fourth Monday of October, effective in 1971. It also makes Memorial Day the last Monday in May

- 1970** Anna Mae Hays, Chief of the Army Nurse Corps, is promoted to brigadier general, becoming first female general in U.S. military history

- 1975** Congress passes legislation to move Veterans Day back to Nov. 11, after 46 states continued to observe the holiday in November

- 1976** U.S. service academies admit first female cadets

- 1978** Veterans Day observance returns to Nov. 11

- 1979** Hazel Johnson is promoted to brigadier general and Chief of Army Nurse Corps, becoming first Black female general in U.S. military history

- 1990–1991** Gulf War I (Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm)



- 1994** Military adopts Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy regarding service by gays and lesbians

- 1994** Department of Defense prohibits women from serving in combat

- 2000** President Bill Clinton signs National Moment of Remembrance Act, which encourages Americans to pause at 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day for a minute of silence

- 2001–present** Gulf War II (Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom)

- 2010** Department of the Navy reverses policy and allows women to serve on submarines

- 2011** Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy officially ends on Sept. 20

- 2013** President Barack Obama signs 2013 National Defense Authorization Act, significantly reforming Department of Defense sexual assault and harassment policies

- 2014** The VA announces it will provide information on potential toxic exposure for soldiers stationed at Fort McCellan

- 2015** U.S. Military announces it is opening all combat positions to women

- 2016** Lt. Gen. Nadja Y. West becomes the first Black woman promoted to three-star army general. She was also the army's first Black surgeon general

- 2016** Wounded Warrior Project, a nonprofit that supports veterans who suffered physical and/or mental injuries following Sept. 11, fires its CEO and COO for overspending charity funds. The group says it wants to once again focus "on the men and women who have so bravely fought for our country and who need our support"

- 2016** U.S. Military Academy at West Point announces 16 Black female cadets in a photograph with raised fists did not violate Department of Defense or Army regulations

- 2016** U.S. Senate unanimously confirms Eric Fanning as Secretary of the Army, making him the highest-ranking openly gay official at the Pentagon and the first openly gay man to lead a branch of the U.S. military

- 2017** A judge blocks President Donald Trump's ban on transgender troops in the military

Sources: timetoast.com, U.S. Army Center of Military History, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, vetshq.org