



DAYS OF SIGNIFICANCE

2025

A GUIDE



TAMARACK
INSTITUTE

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Being an inclusive organization means **recognizing and embracing** the rich diversity of our world. Employees across the globe, along with Tamarack staff and learners, observe diverse ethnocultural, religious, faith, and spiritual dates celebrated by various cultures and populations. These dates often fall outside of federally and provincially regulated **public holidays**, which for some align specifically to the Christian faith (e.g., Christmas) or are a byproduct of colonization (e.g., Thanksgiving).

Applying an **anti-racist lens** to this document allows for a reflection on the power differential that exists within organizations. Examples of this power differential include putting accountability on organizations, supervisors, and event hosts to plan for ethnocultural, religious, faith, and spiritual accommodations for staff time off requests, and when planning events, meetings, and deadlines for the Tamarack learner community. If events and meetings cannot be avoided, special consideration should be made to create an inclusive environment which may include centring the observance by including the voices of the community being honoured.

We can all create **inclusive environments** by planning for items such as dietary considerations, private multi-faith and prayer rooms, and scheduling breaks in alignment with any religious, faith or spiritual practices. We can also learn about days of significance that we don't yet know about. Finally, we can ask people who share information about their observances – how and if they would like them to be recognized.

Assumptions should not be made about someone's ethnocultural, religious, faith and spiritual practices and therefore we must be aware and respect their choice to not disclose their background. Folks will often celebrate observances in diverse ways. Some observances are based on an interpretation of the lunar calendar, and thus may vary by one or two days depending upon the interpretation relevant to one's faith tradition.

Staff may require time away from work for ethnocultural, religious, faith, and spiritual observance. In such circumstances, staff should reach out to their supervisor with as much notice as possible, and reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate such requests.

Employers can consider a flexible vacation day policy. For example, the **Tamarack Institute** is closed on the statutory holidays which is noted in our internal Public Holiday Policy. To give **flexibility** to other faiths and cultures, staff may change the dates of up to three (3) statutory holidays. Staff who wish to take advantage of this policy must inform their direct supervisor and the Director of Operations by January 31st.

This is meant to be a living document and is by no means exhaustive. Statistics Canada 2021 census was used to guide this selection of ethnocultural, religious, faith and spiritual observances including large demographics, growing populations and migration patterns. Additional dates of religious observances may be found in the **InterfaithCalendar**. It is important to note that there are many holy days associated with various faiths and that the absence of such dates on this list does not indicate that an accommodation for staff who observe those holy days is not required. We welcome feedback on the content provided below, if you would like to make corrections or additions, please contact **Rochelle Ignacio** or **Jana Harris**.

For additional cause awareness and giving days, you may wish to observe please refer to the **Non-profit Tech for Good Calendar**.

* HOLIDAYS USUALLY BEGIN AT SUNDOWN THE DAY BEFORE THIS DATE

** LOCAL/REGIONAL CUSTOMS OR MOON SIGHTINGS MAY CAUSE A VARIATION OF THIS DATE DURING THIS PERIOD




DATES VARY BASED ON CORRESPONDING CALENDARS



2025
January



Observance	Background	Meaning	2025 Date	Accommodation Considerations	Suggested Greetings
Rotinoshionni Mid-Winter Ceremony	Haudenosaunee Peoples	The Midwinter ceremony is celebrated five days after the new year moon. This is a time of renewing responsibilities for the coming year and observed by the Haudenosaunee Peoples.	January 4-11	<p>Staff may request the day off on this date.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings as staff may be required to travel and dedicate their respect and attention to this honouring.</p>	
Orthodox Christmas	Orthodox & Coptic Christians	The Orthodox Church recognizes January 7 as the day that Jesus was born.	January 7	<p>Staff may request the day off on this date.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings as this is also a statutory holiday in many provinces.</p>	<i>Kala Hristouyienna</i> (Merry Christmas)
Malanka	Ukranians & Belarusians	Malanka is a Ukrainian & Belarusian folk holiday celebrated on January 13, which is New Year's Eve in accordance with the Julian calendar.	 January 13	<p>Staff may request the day off on this date.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings as this is also a statutory holiday in many provinces.</p>	I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to everyone celebrating Malanka
Lunar New Year**	Celebrated by most Asian countries.	Lunar New Year is a celebration of the arrival of spring & the beginning of a new year on the lunisolar calendar.	January 29	<p>Some staff may request the day off on this date. Formerly referred to as Chinese New Year, however is now recognized as Lunar New Year, which is more inclusive.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings as this is also a statutory holiday in many provinces.</p>	Happy Lunar New Year






2025
February

Observance	Background	Meaning	2025 Date	Accommodation Considerations	Suggested Greetings
Parinirvana Day (Nirvana Day)**	Buddhism	This date marks Buddha’s death & attainment of final nirvana.	February 15	Observe this date with a greeting.	No specific traditional greeting for Nirvana Day. Instead of handshakes, traditional Buddhists place palms together & bow slightly when greeting each other.
Louis Riel Day (MB)	Indigenous Peoples	A day that commemorates Louis Riel, the founding father of Manitoba who represented the Métis people's interests.	 February 17	This day falls on Family Day, Islander Day & Heritage Day which is observed in provinces outside of Manitoba. Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings as this is also a statutory holiday in many provinces.	
Maha Shivaratri	Hinduism	A festival called “Shiva’s night” that honors this significant deity.	 February 26	Date varies according to Hindu calendar. Observe this date with a greeting. Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible. Staff may request the following day off.	Wishing you a lifetime of good health, wealth, peace & prosperity on the occasion of Maha Shivratri <i>Om Namah Shivay!</i> <i>Har Har Mahadev!</i> May Shiva favor you with great wellbeing, joy & success; <i>Om Namah Shivay!</i>
Ramadan *	Islam	The holy month of fasting, introspection & prayer celebrated by Muslims.	 Sundown February 28 – March 29	Be sensitive to the fact that staff & learners celebrating Ramadan will be fasting during the day (continuously for 30 days) & may have less stamina as a result. Avoid planning events that serve food. Date varies according to the Islamic calendar. Avoid scheduling major deadlines during this time.	<i>Ramadan Kareem</i> (Have a generous Ramadan) <i>Ramadan Mubarak</i> (Happy Ramadan)

A stylized, minimalist line drawing of a leafy branch, rendered in a light purple color, positioned in the lower left corner of the page.

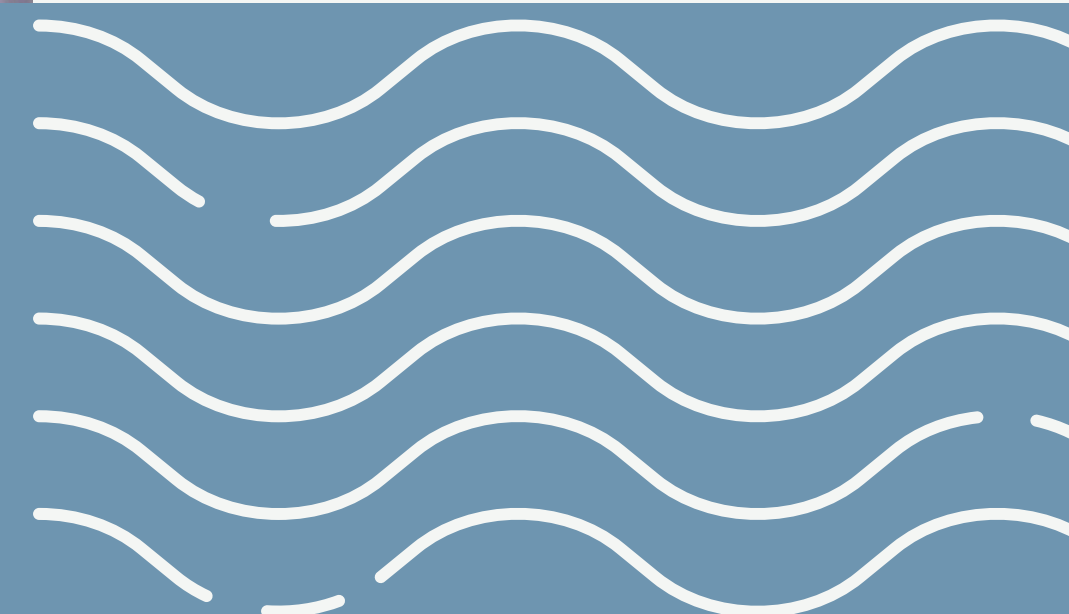
March₂₀₂₅




OBSERVANCE	BACKGROUND	MEANING	2025 Date	ACCOMMODATION CONSIDERATIONS	Suggested Greetings
Ramadan*	Islam	The holy month of fasting, introspection & prayer celebrated by Muslims.	 Sundown February 28 – March 29	<p>Be sensitive to the fact that staff & learners celebrating Ramadan will be fasting during the day (continuously for 30 days) & may have less stamina as a result. Avoid planning events that serve food.</p> <p>Date varies according to the Islamic calendar.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling major deadlines during this time.</p>	<p><i>Ramadan Kareem</i> (Have a generous Ramadan)</p> <p><i>Ramadan Mubarak</i> (Happy Ramadan)</p>
Purim*	Judaism	Commemorates the Jewish people liberating themselves from Haman in the ancient Persian Empire.	 March 14	Staff & learners may be fasting from daybreak until sundown on the day before Purim. Staff may request time off for this joyous occasion. Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible.	<i>Chag Purim Sameach</i> (Happy Purim)
Holi**	Hinduism	A festival of colors that welcomes spring & a new harvest in India.	 March 14	Staff may request the day off. Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible.	<p>Happy Holi</p> <p>Best wishes to you & your family for a Holi filled with sweet moments & memories to cherish for long. Happy Holi.</p>

Observance	Background	Meaning	2025 Date	Accommodation Considerations	Suggested Greetings
Spring Equinox	Indigenous Peoples, Pagans, Wiccans & New Agers	Equinox connects Indigenous People spiritually with nature, while Solstice honours natural patterns. It is a Pagan & Wiccan holiday beginning at sundown.	 March 20	Observe this date with a greeting.	May the happiness of spring brighten the whole year for you with lots of love. Best wishes on Spring Equinox Day to you.
Nowruz	Iranians	Nowruz is the Persian New Year, celebrating the transition from winter to spring.	 March 20	Staff may request the day off on this date. Observe this date with a greeting.	<i>Nowruz Mubarak</i> (Happy New Year)
Kurdish Newroz	Kurdish People	Newroz is the Kurdish celebration of the Persian new year holiday “Nowruz.” Over the years, Newroz has come to represent new beginnings, as well as an opportunity to support the Kurdish cause.	 March 20	Staff may request the day off on this date. Typically the festival is celebrated in the days running up to the Spring Equinox. Observe this date with a greeting.	<i>Nowruz Mubarak</i> (Happy New Year) <i>Nowruz Pirouz</i> (May it be a victorious new year)
Eid al-Fitr*	Islam	A holiday that marks the end of Ramadan.	 March 30	Staff may request the day off on this date. If planning an evening event, provide food accommodations if requested (Islamic dietary restrictions apply). Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible.	<i>Eid Mubarak.</i> May you be blessed with kindness, patience & love. <i>Eid Mubarak.</i>



April²⁰²⁵



OBSERVANCE	BACKGROUND	MEANING	2025 Date	ACCOMMODATION CONSIDERATIONS	SUGGESTED GREETINGS
Passover*	Judaism	An 8-day holiday that honors Jewish people freeing themselves from slavery in Egypt.	 Sundown April 12 – April 20	<p>Provide food accommodation as requested (leavened bread products are not consumed, so people observing Passover will need kosher for Passover food).</p> <p>Avoid scheduling event, deadlines & meetings where possible on the first two & last two days of the holiday.</p>	<p>Happy Pesach (Happy Passover)</p> <p><i>Chag sameach</i> (Happy holiday / Happy festival)</p> <p><i>Chag Pesach samech; Pesach kasher vesame’ach</i> (Have a kosher & joyous Passover)</p>
Vaisakhi	Sikh Hinduism	A festival to celebrate the birth of the Khalsa. Solar New Year & spring harvest (Hindu).	 April 14	Staff may request the day off on this date.	<p>Happy Vaisakhi!</p> <p>Wishing you & your family a fun-filled Vaisakhi & a prosperous new year ahead. Happy Vaisakhi!</p>
Velykden – Orthodox Easter		Ukrainian Easter	 April 20	<p>Staff may request the day off on this date.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling event, deadlines & meetings where possible.</p>	Christ has risen





May²⁰²⁵


OBSERVANCE	BACKGROUND	MEANING	2025 Date	ACCOMMODATION CONSIDERATIONS	SUGGESTED GREETINGS
Wesak (Vesak) or Buddha Day	Buddhism	The most important Theravada Buddhist festival that signifies the birth, enlightenment & death of the Buddha.	 May 12	Staff & learners may have had little sleep. Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible.	Happy Wesak Day May you be blessed by Buddha, Dharma & Sangha. We sincerely wish you a fruitful & spiritually refreshing Vesak Day.
National Patriot's Day	Québec	A commemoration of the 1837-8 rebellions in what was then Upper and Lower Canada.	 May 19	Staff may request the day off on this date.	



June²⁰²⁵



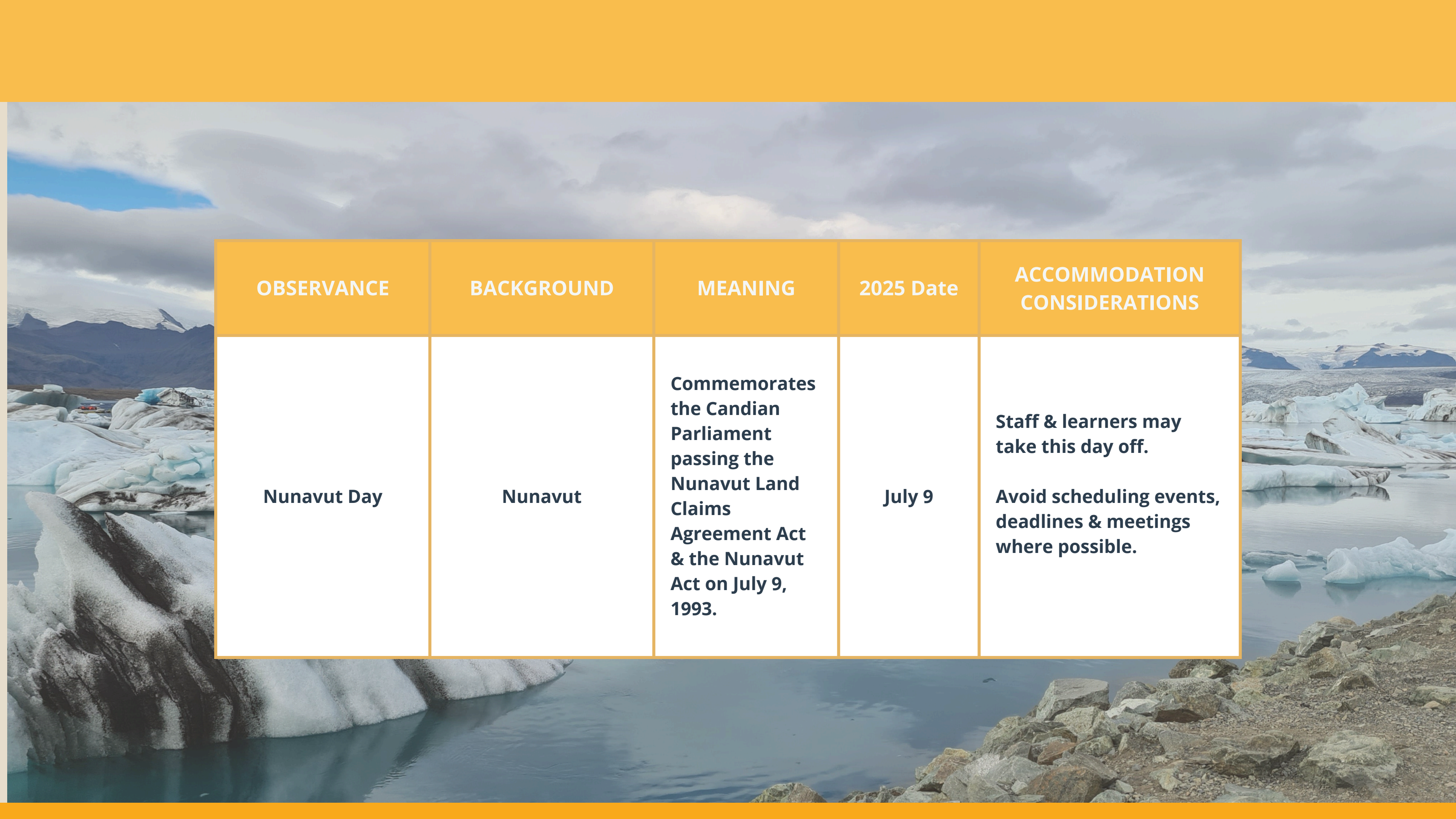
Observance	Background	Meaning	2025 Date	Accommodation Considerations	Suggested Greetings
Shavuot*	Judaism	A Jewish holiday that combines a grain harvest & the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai.	 Sundown June 1 – June 3	<p>Provide food accommodation as requested. (Kosher restrictions apply —although it is customary to eat dairy).</p> <p>Dates vary based on the Jewish calendar.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling important deadlines, events & activities on the first two & last two days of the holiday.</p>	<p>Happy Shavuot</p> <p><i>Chag sameach</i> (Happy holiday / Happy festival)</p> <p><i>Chag Shavuot sameach</i> (Happy Shavuot)</p>
Eid al-Adha*	Islam	A holiday that marks the end of the Hajj pilgrimage.	 Sundown June 6 – June 10	<p>If planning an evening event, provide food accommodations if requested (Islamic dietary restrictions apply).</p> <p>Date varies according to the Islamic calendar.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling event, deadlines & meetings where possible.</p>	<p><i>Eid al-Adha Mubarak!</i></p> <p>A very blissful Eid al-Adha to you & your family.</p>
National Indigenous Peoples Day	Indigenous Peoples	A day for all Canadians to recognize & celebrating the culture & contributions of the First Nations, Inuit & Metis Peoples of Canada.	June 21	<p>Staff may request this day off.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings unless they are focused on the celebration and amplification of Indigenous voices and peoples.</p>	Happy Indigenous Peoples Day

Observance	Background	Meaning	2025 Date	Accommodation Considerations	Suggested Greetings
Summer Solstice (also Litha*)	Indigenous Peoples, Pagans, Wiccans & New Agers	<p>Indigenous Peoples observe Solstice because their spiritual foundation lies in the natural world of connection & Solstice is a time to honor & acknowledge the natural patterns of our universe & existence.</p> <p>A Pagan & Wiccan holiday that begins at sundown at the spring equinox, summer solstice, fall equinox & winter solstice.</p>	 June 20	Observe this date with a greeting.	<p>Happy Solstice</p> <p>Happy Summer Solstice Day</p> <p>Happy Litha</p>
June Day	Newfoundland	June Day is a civic holiday which is currently undergoing consultation between the government & Indigenous People	June 24	Staff & learners may take this day off.	
Fête Nationale /St-Jean Baptiste Day	Québec	The Fête Nationale /St-Jean Baptiste Day observed in Quebec, celebrating French Quebec culture.	June 24	<p>Staff & learners may take this day off.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible.</p>	



July 2025






OBSERVANCE	BACKGROUND	MEANING	2025 Date	ACCOMMODATION CONSIDERATIONS
Nunavut Day	Nunavut	Commemorates the Candian Parliament passing the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act & the Nunavut Act on July 9, 1993.	July 9	<p>Staff & learners may take this day off.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible.</p>

A photograph of two lit candles against a dark background. The candle on the right is larger and has a taller, more intense flame. The candle on the left is smaller and has a shorter flame. Both flames are bright yellow and orange.



August⁺ 2025

OBSERVANCE	BACKGROUND	MEANING	2025 Date	ACCOMMODATION CONSIDERATIONS	Suggested Greetings
Emancipation Day	Pan-African	Marks the actual day in 1834 that the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833 came into effect across the British Empire.	Aug. 1	<p>Staff may spend the day in reflection, education & engaging in the ongoing fight against anti-Black racism & discrimination.</p> <p>Observe this date with a greeting.</p>	Happy Emancipation Day
International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples	Indigenous Peoples worldwide (varies)	To raise awareness & protect the rights of the world's indigenous population. This events also recognizes the achievements & contributions that indigenous people make to improve world issues such as environmental protection.	Aug. 9	Acknowledge this date.	
Krishna Janmashtami	Hinduism	A festival which marks the birth anniversary of Lord Krishna.	 <p>Aug. 16</p>	<p>Staff will be operating on little sleep. Some may fast during the first day.</p> <p>Date varies according to Hindu calendar.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling event, deadlines & meetings where possible.</p>	<p>Happy Krishna <i>Janmashtami!</i></p> <p>May Lord Krishna be with you & your family, always! Blessings of Health, Wealth, Love & Happiness.</p>



2025
September

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Observance	Background	Meaning	2025 Date	Accommodation Considerations	Suggested Greetings
Rosh Hashanah*	Judaism	Rosh Hashanah celebrates the Jewish New Year.	 Sundown September 22 – 24	Staff & learners may take this day off. Kosher food accommodations. Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible.	Happy new year. <i>Shana tova</i> (Have a good year)
Fall Equinox*	Indigenous peoples, Pagans, Wiccans & New Agers	Indigenous People honor Equinox & Solstice as spiritual foundations rooted in nature. Pagan & Wiccan holidays start at sundown during these four celestial eventss.	 September 22		
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	Indigenous Peoples within Canada (varies)	A Canadian statutory holiday for all to recognize the legacy of the Canadian Indian residential school system.	September 30	<p>All staff may request the day off on this date to spend time in community in reflection, learning and mourning.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling event, deadlines and meetings unless the focus is on uncovering truth as a way to move into reconciliation and includes Indigenous voices.</p>	

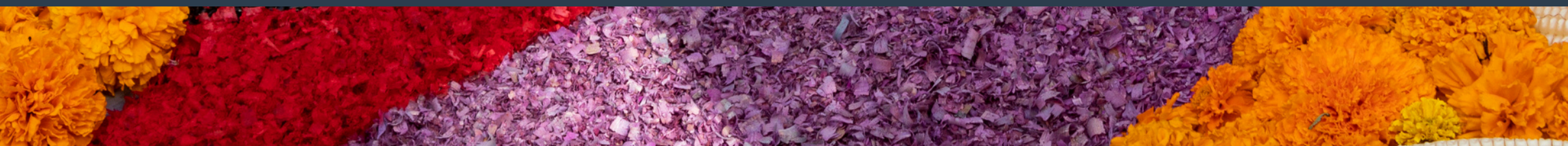
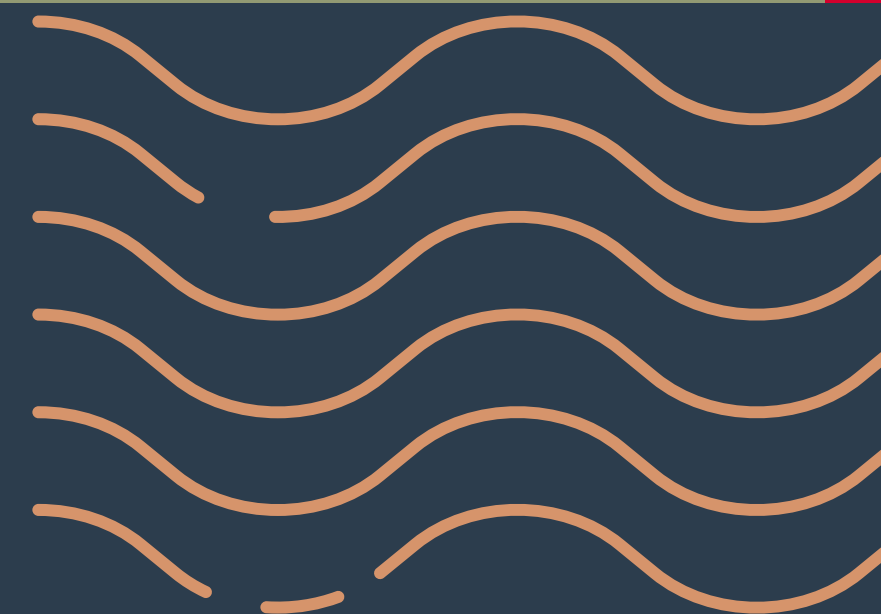


October₂₀₂₅

OBSERVANCE	BACKGROUND	MEANING	2025 DATE	ACCOMMODATION CONSIDERATIONS	Suggested Greetings
Yom Kippur*	Judaism	Day of Atonement to reflect on sins & seek forgiveness.	<div>  </div> October 2	<p>Staff & learners may be fasting all day & may take this day off.</p> <p>Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible.</p>	<p>Have a meaningful Yom Kippur</p> <p>-<i>Gmar tov</i> (A good final sealing — shortened version)</p>
Diwali**	Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism	Festival of victory of light over darkness.	<div>  </div> October 20	<p>Staff may request the day off. Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible.</p>	<p>Happy Diwali. Wishes for the New Year to bring light, abundance, happiness, love, health, wealth & prosperity.</p>



November²⁰²⁵






OBSERVANCE	BACKGROUND	MEANING	2025 Date	ACCOMMODATION CONSIDERATIONS	Suggested Greetings
The Day of the Dead (el Día de los Muertos)	Mexican People	A Mexican holiday where families welcome back the souls of their deceased relatives for a brief reunion that includes food, drink & celebration.	Nov. 2	Staff may request the day off on this date. Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible.	
Indigenous Veterans Day		Honours the important contributions made by First Nations, Inuit & Métis Veterans in service to Canada.	Nov. 8	Staff may request this day off to honour those who served. Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible.	
Remembrance Day		A memorial day observed in Commonwealth member states since the end of the First World War to honour armed forces members who have died in the line of duty.	Nov. 11	Staff may request this day off to honour those who served. Some provinces observe this day as a holiday. Avoid scheduling events, deadlines & meetings where possible.	



December²⁰²⁵



Observance	Background	Meaning	2025 Date	Accommodation Considerations	Suggested Greetings
Chanukah (Hanukah)*	Judaism	An 8-day Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Holy Temple (the Second Temple) in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt of the 2nd century BCE.	 Sundown December 14 – December 22	Dates vary based on the Jewish calendar. Observe this date with a greeting. Staff & learners may light a Menorah, exchange gifts or chocolate coins, or sing Chanukah songs.	<i>Hanukkah Sameach!</i> (Happy Hanukkah!) <i>Chag Sameach!</i> (Happy Holiday!) <i>Chag Urim Sameach!</i> (Happy Festival of Lights!)
Winter Solstice (also Yule)*	Indigenous peoples, Pagans, Wiccans & New Agers	Equinox is revered by Indigenous People for its spiritual connection to the natural world, while Solstice is a time to honor universal patterns. Pagan & Wiccan holidays mark these eventss at sundown.	 December 21	Observe this date with a greeting.	Happy Winter Solstice! Wishing a very Happy Winter Solstice to you. Sending you warm greetings on this special day. May the spring some soon.
Yaldā Night	Persian Winter Solstice	Like Winter Solstice, Yalda occurs on the longest night of the year and celebrates the coming of longer days.	 December 21	Observe this date with a greeting.	<i>Shabe Yaldā mobarak!</i> (Happy Yaldā Night!)
Kwanzaa	Black Community	An African American & Pan-African holiday which brings a cultural message of what it means to be African & human in the fullest sense.	December 26 – January 1	Observe this date with a greeting.	<i>Heri za Kwanzaa!</i> (Happy Kwanzaa!)