

Because each state can choose which holidays to observe, there are technically no “national” holidays in the U.S. However, most states, including Massachusetts, observe most of the “federal” holidays (for employees of the U.S. government). On these holidays, schools, government offices, banks, and many businesses will be closed. Other holidays are observed only informally. Be sure to learn which holidays your company and schools will observe. The chart that follows gives an explanation for many of the holidays celebrated in Massachusetts.

<b>HOLIDAY</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>MEANING</b>	<b>FORM OF OBSERVATION</b>	<b>BUSINESS &amp; SCHOOL CLOSINGS</b>
<b>New Year’s Day</b>	January 1	Reflect on new and past year	Open house parties, watch American football on TV.	Schools, government, and most businesses closed.
<b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday</b>	Third Monday of January	Birthday of civil rights leader	Discuss race issues	Schools and government closed; some businesses open.
<b>Valentine’s Day</b>	February 14th	Show love and affection	Send cards, flowers, or candy to loved ones.	No closings
<b>President’s Day</b>	Third Monday in February	Honor US presidents, especially Washington & Lincoln	Few traditions	Schools and government closed; some businesses open.
<b>St. Patrick’s Day</b>	March 17	Honor the patron saint of Ireland and Irish culture	Wear green, parades	No closings
<b>Passover</b>	14th day of Nisan, Jewish calendar	Jewish festival of freedom, celebrating the escape of the Israelites from Egypt.	Traditional meal, attend religious services, eat only unleavened food	Some schools closed
<b>Good Friday</b>	Friday before Easter Sunday	Christian commemoration of the crucifixion of Jesus	Attend religious services	Some schools and businesses closed.
<b>Easter</b>	First Sunday after first full moon after vernal equinox	Christian celebration of the rebirth of Jesus	Attend religious services, dye and hunt for hidden Easter eggs	Always a Sunday so many schools and businesses closed
<b>Patriot’s Day</b>	Third Monday in April	Beginning of the American Revolution	Re-enactment of battles at dawn in Lexington, MA	Schools and government closed; some businesses open.
<b>Mother’s Day</b>	2nd Sunday in May	Honor mothers, both living and dead	Send flowers, card, gift, visit, or telephone call	No closings
<b>Memorial Day</b>	Last Monday in May	Honor those who died fighting in a war	Parades, decorating graves of soldiers and other loved ones	Schools and government closed; some businesses open
<b>Father’s Day</b>	Third Sunday in June	Honor fathers, both living and dead	Send card, gift, visit, or telephone call	No closings
<b>Fourth of July</b>	July 4	Commemorate the adoption of Declaration of Independence from England, 1776	Family picnics, fireworks at night, concert on Boston esplanade	Government closed; some businesses open
<b>Labor Day</b>	First Monday of September	Honor the laborers of the US.	Family picnics, marks the informal end of summer	Schools and government closed
<b>Rosh Hashanah</b>	First day in Tishri, in Jewish calendar	Jewish New Year	Symbolic family dinner, attend religious services	Some schools closed

<b>Yom Kippur</b>	10 days after Rosh Hashanah	Jewish Day of Atonement	Pray and fast, to be forgiven for sins of the past	Some schools closed
<b>Columbus Day</b>	Second Monday in October	Commemorate the landing in the New World, of Columbus in 1492.	Few traditions	Schools and government closed; some businesses open
<b>Halloween</b>	October 31	Old pagan harvest roots, but now a light, fun children's holiday	Children dress in costume and go from neighbor to neighbor asking for candy	No closings
<b>Veteran's Day</b>	November 11	Honor all veterans of armed forces, and the end of World War I	Parades, wear red poppies	Schools and government closed; some business open
<b>Thanksgiving</b>	4th Thursday of November	Commemorate the first harvest of the first English Settlers in 1621	Big family dinner of turkey, cranberries, and pumpkin pie	Schools, government, and most businesses closed (may be closed the next Friday also)
<b>Hanukkah</b>	25th day of Kislev, in Jewish calendar	Jewish festival of lights, to commemorate the return of the temple of Jews	Light candles every night for 8 nights; children get small gifts	No closings
<b>Christmas</b>	December 25	Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus	Family gathering, gift-giving	Schools, government, and most businesses closed
<b>Kwanzaa</b>	December 26-January 1	Celebration of African-American culture	Family gathering, candle lighting to celebrate values	No closings
<b>New Year's Eve</b>	December 31	Celebrate the end of the year	Parties at midnight	Closings common after 12 noon.

### Additional Local Events

- ☐ St. Patrick's Day parade (March)
- ☐ Boston Marathon (April)
- ☐ Head of the Charles (October)