

# The Long History of Labor Day in America

By US Department of Labor

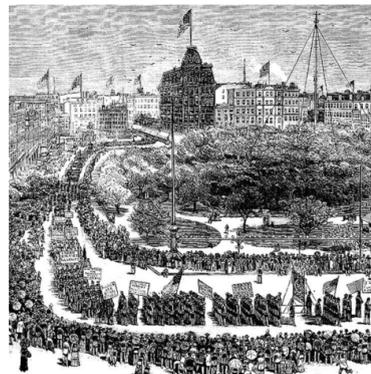
Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country.

Through the years, the nation gave increasing emphasis to Labor Day. The first governmental recognition came through municipal ordinances passed during 1885 and 1886. From these, a movement developed to secure state legislation. The first state bill was introduced into the New York legislature, but the first to become law was passed by Oregon on February 21, 1887. During the year, four more states—Colorado, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York—created the Labor Day holiday by legislative enactment. By the end of the decade, Connecticut, Nebraska, and Pennsylvania had followed suit. By 1894, twenty-three other states had adopted the holiday in honor of workers, and on June 28 of that year, congress passed an

act making the first Monday in September of each year a legal holiday in the District of Columbia and the territories.

More than one hundred years after the first Labor Day observance, there is still some doubt as to who first proposed the holiday for workers. Some records show that Peter J. McGuire, general secretary of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners and a cofounder of the American Federation of Labor, was first in suggesting a day to honor those “who from rude nature have delved and carved all the grandeur we behold.”

But Peter McGuire’s place in Labor Day history has not gone unchallenged. Many believe that Matthew Maguire, a machinist, not Peter McGuire, founded the holiday. Recent research seems to support the contention that Matthew Maguire, later the secretary of Local 344 of the International Association of Machinists in Paterson, New Jersey, proposed the holiday in 1882 while serving as secretary of the Central Labor Union in New York. What is clear is that the Central Labor Union adopted a Labor Day proposal and appointed a committee to plan a demonstration and picnic.



The first Labor Day holiday was celebrated on Tuesday, September 5, 1882, in New York City, in accordance with the plans of the Central Labor Union. The Central Labor Union held its second Labor Day holiday just a year later, on September

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 MTA Construction and Development Contract No. A-37129  
 Bid Date: September 8, 2021

**Description of project:**  
 The work under this contract includes the design and construction for ADA improvements at the 14th Street Complex, including elevator installation and ADA path-of-travel improvements, and associated state of good repair work in the Borough of Manhattan. The project improvements, including the installation of elevators and other ADA improvements, are to result in fully ADA compliant vertical transportation.

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If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact Skanska’s Outreach Coordinator: Rosemary.Nagle@skanska.com • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled

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 NJ TRANSIT Contract No: 20-083X  
 Bid Date: September 2, 2021

**ALL QUOTATIONS ARE DUE BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS Friday, August 27, 2021.**  
 For further information concerning subcontracting and/or purchasing opportunities, and to register as a subcontractor or vendor, please respond to portalbridge@tutorperini.com or contact Jackie Cotto at 914-739-1908. Come and join our team!

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 NJ TRANSIT/Amtrak Contract  
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**Description of project:**  
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If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact Skanska’s Outreach Coordinator: Rosemary.Nagle@skanska.com • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled

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 New Anaerobic Digester Facilities at Hunts Point Wastewater Treatment Plant Project at Hunts Point, New York  
 NYC DEP Contract No: HP-238  
 Bid Date: September 30, 2021

**ALL QUOTATIONS ARE DUE BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS Friday, September 24, 2021.**  
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 Design-Build Services for Metro-North Railroad Penn Access Station Project in the Boroughs of Queens, Westchester, and Bronx, New York  
 MTA Metro-North Contract No: CBX-001  
 Bid Date: November 1, 2021

**ALL QUOTATIONS ARE DUE BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS Friday, October 29, 2021.**  
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**Selling to the Federal Government Webinar**  
 Thursday, September 23, 2021, 1:00 pm–4:00 pm Online  
**Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration**  
 Contact: George Tapia, 610-382-3086, george.tapia@sba.gov  
**Fee: Free; registration required**

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**PPP Forgiveness Webinar**  
 Tuesday, September 7, 2021, 11:30 am–1:00 pm Online  
**Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration**  
 Contact: Susan Mazza, 802-828-4422, susan.mazza@sba.gov  
**Fee: Free; registration required**  
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