

Amy,

I would like to say a lot more in response to this FOIA, as it appears the requester is not aware of the FOIA laws in Illinois. She also is not aware of the freedoms and liberties I am afforded as a US citizen. My attorney responded on my behalf and not on behalf of the township.

I am responding with a copy of the emancipation proclamation and the first amendment.



# Transcript of the Proclamation

January 1, 1863

A Transcription

By the President of the United States of America:

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

"That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be, in good faith, represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States."

Now, therefore I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as Commander-in-Chief, of the Army and Navy of the United States in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days, from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James Ascension, Assumption, Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the City of New Orleans) Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth[]), and which excepted parts, are for the present, left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known, that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

By the President: ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

**The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration**

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## First Amendment

### First Amendment: An Overview

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution protects the right to freedom of religion and freedom of expression from government interference. It prohibits any laws that establish a national religion, impede the free exercise of religion, abridge the freedom of speech, infringe upon the freedom of the press, interfere with the right to peaceably assemble, or prohibit citizens from petitioning for a governmental redress of grievances. It was adopted into the Bill of Rights in 1791. The Supreme Court interprets the extent of the protection afforded to these rights. The First Amendment has been interpreted by the Court as applying to the entire federal government even though it is only expressly applicable to Congress. Furthermore, the Court has interpreted the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment as protecting the rights in the First Amendment from interference by state governments.

### Freedom of Religion

Two clauses in the First Amendment guarantee freedom of religion. The Establishment Clause prohibits the government from passing legislation to establish an official religion or preferring one religion over another. It enforces the "separation of church and state." However, some governmental activity related to religion has been declared constitutional by the Supreme Court. For example, providing bus transportation for parochial school students and the enforcement of "blue laws" is not prohibited. The Free Exercise Clause prohibits the government, in most instances, from interfering with a person's practice of their religion.

### Freedom of Speech / Freedom of the Press

The most basic component of freedom of expression is the right to freedom of speech. Freedom of speech may be exercised in a direct (words) or a symbolic (actions) way. Freedom of speech is recognized as a human right under article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The right to freedom of speech allows individuals to express themselves without government interference or regulation. The Supreme Court requires the government to provide substantial justification for the interference with the right of free speech where it attempts to regulate the content of the speech. Generally, a person cannot be held liable, either criminally or civilly for anything written or spoken about a person or topic, so long as it is truthful or based on an honest opinion and such statements.

A less stringent test is applied for content-neutral legislation. The Supreme Court has also recognized that the government may prohibit some speech that may cause a breach of the peace or cause violence. For more on unprotected and less protected categories of speech see advocacy of illegal action, fighting words, commercial speech and obscenity. The right to free speech includes other mediums of expression that communicate a message. The level of protection speech receives also depends on the forum in which it takes place.

Despite the popular misunderstanding, the right to freedom of the press guaranteed by the First Amendment is not very different from the right to freedom of speech. It allows an individual to express themselves through publication and dissemination. It is part of the constitutional protection of freedom of expression. It does not afford members of the media any special rights or privileges not afforded to citizens in general.

### Right to Assemble / Right to Petition

The right to assemble allows people to gather for peaceful and lawful purposes. Implicit within this right is the right to association and belief. The Supreme Court has expressly recognized that a right to freedom of association and belief is implicit in the [First, Fifth, and Fourteenth Amendments](#). Freedom of assembly is recognized as a human right under article 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights under article 20. This implicit right is limited to the right to associate for First Amendment purposes. It does not include a right of social association. The government may prohibit people from knowingly associating in groups that engage and promote illegal activities. The right to associate also prohibits the government from requiring a group to register or disclose its members or from denying government benefits on the basis of an individual's current or past membership in a particular group. There are exceptions to this rule where the Court finds that governmental interests in disclosure/registration outweigh interference with First Amendment rights. The government may also, generally, not compel individuals to express themselves, hold certain beliefs, or belong to particular associations or groups.

The right to petition the government for a redress of grievances guarantees people the right to ask the government to provide relief for a wrong through litigation or other governmental action. It works with the right of assembly by allowing people to join together and seek change from the government.

Last Updated in March of 2020 by Elvin Egemenoglu.

## Menu of Sources

### Federal Material

#### U.S. Constitution

- [First Amendment](#)
- [Fourteenth amendment](#)
- CRS Annotated Constitution: [First Amendment](#)
  - [Freedom of Expression: Is There a Difference Between Speech and Press?](#)
  - [Religion and Expression](#)
  - [Obscenity](#)
  - [Right of Association](#)

#### Federal Judicial Decisions

- Supreme Court:
  - [Historic Constitutional Law Decisions](#)
  - [Recent First Amendment Decisions - Religion, Press, Speech](#)
  - [LII Bulletin Oral Argument Previews](#)

### State Material

#### State Judicial Decisions

- N.Y. Court of Appeals:
  - [Recent First Amendment Decisions](#)
  - [Commentary from liibulletin-ny](#)
- [Appellate Decisions from Other States](#)

### International Material

#### Conventions and Treaties

- [Human Rights Treaties](#)

### Other References

#### Key Internet Sources

- [The First Amendment Encyclopa \(Middle Tennessee State University\)](#)
- [Freedom of Expression \(National Endowment for the Arts\)](#)
- [Freedom Forum First Amendment Center](#)
- [Christian Law Association](#)

- [EFF Legal Guide for Bloggers](#)
- [LII Sitewide: First Amendment](#)
- [Supreme Court Cases Overview 2000 – 2016](#)

Useful Offnet (or Subscription - \$) Sources

- Good Starting Point in Print: David L. Hudson, [The First Amendment: Freedom of Speech](#), TRO (2012)
- [LII Downloads](#)

other topics

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