

# Reparations in the United States

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Home    Last updated 29 January 2026

## An Historical Timeline of Reparations Payments Made From 1773 through 2026 by the United States Government, States, Cities, Religious Institutions, Universities, Corporations, and Communities

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By Allen J. Davis, Ed.D.

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[drive55tosurvive@gmail.com](mailto:drive55tosurvive@gmail.com)

### Methodology:

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With the superb assistance and encouragement of Lisa Di Valentino, Law Librarian at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Mary Hubbard, Assistant Director of the Peterborough Library (NH); and Andrew Reiter, Associate Professor of Politics and International Relations, Mount Holyoke College, I have completed a comprehensive review of the reparations payments literature, with regard to the United States, online and in books, articles, and academic journals.

This work is intended to build upon that of Dorothy Benton Lewis, whose pioneering research into reparations resulted in the 1996 book [\*Black Reparations Now! 40 Acres, \\$50 Dollars, and a Mule + Interest\*](#) which included the first known published timeline of reparations payments.

I look forward to hearing about reparations payments that my research missed. Please e-mail me at [drive55tosurvive@gmail.com](mailto:drive55tosurvive@gmail.com).

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### Reparations

*Reparations are a program of acknowledgement, redress, and closure for a grievous injustice.*

From Here to Equality, Reparations for Black Americans in the 21st Century, by William A. Darity, Jr. and A. Kirsten Mullen (p. 2)

## **Reparations Payments Made in the United States by the Federal Government, States, Cities, Religious Institutions, Universities, and Corporations**

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**1700-1899**     **1773:** The first [case](#) involving the rights of enslaved people in Essex County, Massachusetts, was tried in the Court of Common Pleas. Richard Greenleaf was charged with "trespass for enslaving [sic] the plaintiff", Caesar Hendrick. He was [found liable](#) for £18 in damages and costs. (History Happenings: Oct. 2, 2020. (2020, October 2). *Daily News of Newburyport, The (MA)*. Access World News.)

**1781:** Anthony (Tony) and Cuba had been enslaved by John Vassall until John fled for England. When the master's estate was confiscated, Tony petitioned the Massachusetts legislature seeking title to the plot of land on which he had been enslaved for over 40 years. They were evicted from the land but the legislature awarded them an annual pension of £12 from the sale of the estate. ([Though dwelling in a land of freedom](#). (2018). National Park Service.)

**1783:** [Belinda Sutton](#) (also Royal or Royall) was born in modern-day Ghana in 1713, and sold into slavery as a child to Isaac Royall in Massachusetts. After 50 years of enslavement she was made a freedwoman when Royall fled to Nova Scotia. Sutton petitioned the commonwealth of Massachusetts for a pension. In 1783 she was awarded a pension of 15 pounds, 12 shillings, to be paid from the estate of Isaac Royall. (*We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy* by Ta-Nehisi Coates, p. 176 in the chapter "[The Case for Reparations](#)", 2017.)

**1863:** Over four days In July mobs of white New Yorkers terrorized Black people by roaming the streets from City Hall to Gramercy Park to past 40th Street, setting fire to buildings and killing people. The overall death toll is estimated at between over 100 and over 1,000. Immediately after the riots, the white merchants of New York ("[Report of the Merchants' Committee for the Relief of the Colored People Suffering from the Late Riots in the City of New York](#)", 1863 booklet) combined forces to raise money to care for the injured, repair the damaged property, and support the legal and employment needs of the community's Black people. The shopkeepers raised over \$40,000, equivalent to \$825,000 in 2021. ("[The Real Story of the 'Draft Riots'](#)" by Elizabeth Mitchell, *The New York Times*, February 18, 2021.)

**1865:** On January 12, in the midst of the Civil War, General William T. Sherman and U.S. secretary of war Edwin M. Stanton met with 20 Black leaders in Savannah Georgia. Four days later, General Sherman issued [Special Field Order No. 15](#) stating that Black people would receive [an army mule and not more than forty acres](#) on coastal plains of South

Carolina and Georgia. By June, roughly 40,000 Blacks had settled on four hundred thousand acres of land before Confederate landowners, aided by the new Johnson administration, started taking back "their" land. (Secondary source: *How To Be An Antiracist* (2019) by [Ibram X. Kendi](#), p.174; primary sources cited by Kendi: See [The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies](#) (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1895-37-41); "Sherman's Special Field Orders, No.15", in *The Empire State of the South: Georgia History in Documents and Essays*, ed. Christopher C. Meyers (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2008, 174).)

**1866:** [Southern Homestead Act](#): "Ex-slaves were given 6 months to purchase land at reasonable rates without competition from white southerners and northern investors. But, owing to their destitution, few ex-slaves were able to take advantage of the program. The largest number that did were located in Florida, numbering little more than 3,000... The program failed."

**1878:** In 1853, [Henrietta Wood](#) was a free black woman living and laboring as a domestic worker in Cincinnati when she was lured across the Ohio River and into the slave state of Kentucky by a white man named Zebulon Ward. Ward sold her to slave traders, who took her to Texas, where she remained enslaved through the Civil War. Wood eventually returned to Cincinnati, and in 1870 sued Ward for \$20,000 in damages and lost wages. In 1878, an all-white jury decided in Wood's favor, with Ward ordered to pay \$2,500 (approximately \$68,000 in 2023), perhaps the largest sum ever awarded by a court in the United States in restitution for slavery. ("[The Ex-Slave Who Sued, and Won](#)" by W. Caleb McDaniel, *The New York Times*, September 5, 2019.)

**1900-1949**      **1924:** With the [Pueblo Lands Act of 1924](#), Congress authorized the establishment of the Pueblo Lands Board to adjudicate land title disputes, along with a payment of \$1,300,000 to the Pueblo for the land they lost (although the Pueblo disputed the amount). (*A History of the Indians in the United States* by Angie Debo (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984, p. 335).)

**1927:** The Shoshones were paid over \$6 million for land illegally seized from them (although it was only half the appraised value of the land). (*Race, Racism, and Reparations* by J. Angelo Corlett, 2003, Cornell University Press, p. 170.)

**1934:** Congress passed the [Indian Reorganization Act](#) which authorized \$2 million a year in appropriations for the acquisition of land for Indians (except for the state of Oklahoma and the territory of Alaska until 1936). Congress made appropriations until 1941. In total \$5.5 million was appropriated for 400,000 acres of land, and further legislation added 875,000 acres to reservations. One million acres of grazing land and nearly one million acres intended for homesteading were returned to the tribes. (*A History of the Indians in the United States* by Angie Debo (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984, pp. 228-341).)

**1944:** As Attorney General of California, Earl Warren [sued the federal government in the Court of Claims](#) on behalf of California's Native Americans after failure to ratify solemn treaties with various tribes. The plaintiffs were eventually awarded \$17 million, although after "costs" deducted by the federal government, the amount was whittled to \$5 million. ("[Short Overview of California Indian History](#)" by Edward D. Castillo, State of California Native American Heritage Commission, n.d.; see also [Indians of California](#) by Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1966.)

**1946:** Congress created the [Indian Claims Commission](#) to hear fraud and treaty violation claims against the United States government. The Commission was adjourned in 1978 with all pending cases transferred to the United States Court of Claims. By this time the Commission had adjudicated 546 claims and awarded more than \$818 million in judgments. (*A History of the Indians in the United States* by Angie Debo (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984, p. 346).)

**1950-1969**      **1950:** The [Navajo-Hopi Rehabilitation Act](#) was passed, authorizing an appropriation of \$88,570,000 over 10 years for a program benefiting the Navajo and Hopi, including soil conservation, education, business and industry development on reservation, and assistance in finding employment off-reservation. (*A History of the Indians in the United States* by Angie Debo (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984, p. 348).)

**1956:** The Pawnees were awarded more than \$1 million in a suit brought before the Indian Claims Commission for land taken from them in Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri. (*Race, Racism, and Reparations* by J. Angelo Corlett, 2003, Cornell University Press, p. 170.)

**1962:** Georgia restored many Cherokee landmarks, a newspaper plant, and other buildings in New Echota. It also repealed its repressive anti-Native American laws of 1830. (*Race, Racism, and Reparations* by J. Angelo Corlett, 2003, Cornell University Press, p. 170.)

**1968:** In the United States Court of Claims case [Tlingit and Haida Indians of Alaska v. United States](#), the plaintiff tribes won a judgment of \$7.5 million as just compensation for land taken by the United States government between 1891 and 1925. (*A History of the Indians in the United States* by Angie Debo (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984, p. 399).)

**1969:** [The Black Manifesto](#) was launched in Detroit as one of the first calls for reparations in the modern era. Penned by [James Forman](#), former SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) organizer, and released at the National Black Economic Development Conference, the manifesto demanded \$500 million in reparations from predominantly White religious institutions for their role in perpetuating slavery. About \$215,000 (other sources say \$500,000) was raised from the Episcopalian and Methodist churches through rancorous deliberations that ultimately tore the coalition apart. The money was used to establish organizations such as a black-owned band, television networks, and the [Black Economic](#)

[Research Center](#). ("Black and Blue Chicago Finds a New Way to Heal" by Yana Kunichoff and Sarah Macaraeg, *YES Magazine*, Spring 2017; *From Here to Equality: Reparations for Black Americans in the 21st Century* by William A. Darity, Jr. and A. Kirsten Mullen (Chapel Hill, NC: UNC Press, 2020, pp. 14-15).)

**1970-1989**     **1970:** Richard Nixon signed into law House Resolution 471 restoring Blue Lake and surrounding area to the Taos Pueblo (New Mexico). The land had been taken by presidential order in 1906. (*A History of the Indians in the United States* by Angie Debo (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984, p. 422); see also "[Taos Pueblo celebrates 40th anniversary of Blue Lake's return](#)" by Matthew van Buren, *Santa Fe New Mexican*, September 18, 2010.)

The payments from 1971-1988 are taken from the booklet *Black Reparations Now! 40 Acres, \$50 Dollars, and a Mule, + Interest* by Dorothy Benton-Lewis; and borrowed from [N'COBRA](#) (National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America).

**1971:** Around \$1 billion + 44 million acres of land: [Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act](#).

**1974:** A \$10 million out-of-court settlement was reached between the U.S. government and Tuskegee victims, black men who had been unwitting subjects of a [study of untreated syphilis](#), and who did not receive available treatments. ("[The Tuskegee Timeline](#)", CDC, updated March 2, 2020.)

**1980:** \$81 million: Klamaths of Oregon. ("[Spending Spree](#)" by Dylan Darling, *Herald and News* (Klamath Falls, OR), June 21, 2005.)

**1980:** \$105 million: Sioux of South Dakota for seizure of their land. ([United States v. Sioux Nation of Indians](#), 448 U.S. 371 (1980).)

**1985:** \$12.3 million: Seminoles of Florida. (see [Racial Justice in America: A Reference Handbook](#) by David B. Mustard, 2002, ABC-CLIO, p. 81.)

**1985:** \$31 million: Chippewas of Wisconsin. (see [Racial Justice in America: A Reference Handbook](#) by David B. Mustard, 2002, ABC-CLIO, p. 81.)

**1986:** \$32 million per 1836 Treaty: Ottawas of Michigan. (see [Racial Justice in America: A Reference Handbook](#) by David B. Mustard, 2002, ABC-CLIO, p. 81.)

**1988:** [Civil Liberties Act of 1988](#): President Ronald Reagan signed a bill providing \$1.2 billion (\$20,000 a person) and an apology to each of the approximately 60,000 living Japanese-Americans who had been interned during World War II. Additionally, \$12,000 and an apology were given to 450 Unangans (Aleuts) for internment during WWII, and a \$6.4 million trust fund was created for their communities. ("[U.S. pays restitution; apologizes to Unangan \(Aleut\) for WWII Internment](#)," National Library of Medicine.)

**1989\***: Congressman John Conyers, D-Michigan, introduced bill H.R. 3745, which aimed to create the [Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act](#). The bill was introduced "[to] address the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery in the United States and the 13 American colonies between 1619 and 1865 and to establish a commission to study and consider a national apology and proposal for reparations for the institution of slavery, its subsequent de jure and de facto racial and economic discrimination against African-Americans, and the impact of these forces on living African-Americans, to make recommendations to the Congress on appropriate remedies, and for other purposes." (Preamble)

\* Congressional actions

**1990-2009**      The reparations payments marked with † are taken from "[How Chicago Became the First City to Make Reparations to Victims of Police Violence](#)" by Yana Kunichoff and Sarah Macaraeg, *YES Magazine*, Spring 2017; and *Long Overdue: The Politics of Racial Reparations: From 40 Acres to Atonement and Beyond* by Charles P. Henry, 2007, NYU Press.

**1993\***, \*\*: U.S. Congress passed a [joint resolution acknowledging and apologizing](#) to Native Hawaiians the illegal United States-aided overthrow of the sovereign Hawaiian nation.

**1994**: The state of Florida approved \$2.1 million for the living survivors of a 1923 racial pogrom that resulted in multiple deaths and the decimation of the Black community in the town of Rosewood. ("[Rosewood Massacre: A Harrowing Tale of Racism and the Road toward Reparations](#)" by Jessica Glenza, *The Guardian*, January 3, 2016.)

**1995†\*\***: The Southern Baptists apologized to African American church members for the denomination's endorsement of slavery.

**1997†\*\***: President Bill Clinton apologized to the survivors of the U.S. government-sponsored syphilis tests in Tuskegee, Alabama.

**1998†**: President Clinton signed into law the [Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Study Site Act](#), which officially acknowledges an 1864 attack by seven hundred U.S. soldiers on a peaceful Cheyenne village located in the territory of Colorado. Hundreds, largely women and children, were killed. The act calls for the establishment of a federally funded Historic Site at Sand Creek, which was established in 2007.

**1999†**: A [class action lawsuit](#) by black farmers against the United States Department of Agriculture was settled by a consent decree, leading to nearly \$1 billion in payments to plaintiffs. The lawsuit alleged systematic racial discrimination in the allocation of farm loans from 1981 to 1996. A further \$1.2 billion was appropriated by Congress for the second part of

the settlement. ([The Pigford Cases](#), Congressional Research Service, May 29, 2013; see also *Learning from the Germans: Race and the Memory of Evil* by Susan Neiman (New York: Macmillan, 2019).)

**2001†**: The Oklahoma legislature passed and Governor Keating signed a bill to pay reparations for the destruction of the Greenwood, Oklahoma, community in 1921 in the form of low-income student scholarships in Tulsa; an economic development authority for Greenwood; a memorial; and the awarding of medals to the 118 known living survivors of the destruction of Greenwood.

**2002**: Parties in the case of [Ayres v. Fordice](#), a lawsuit first brought in 1975, agree on a settlement of \$503 million. The lawsuit alleged that the state of Mississippi had systematically underfunded or otherwise neglected its Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) as compared with other post-secondary institutions, and essentially creating a system of segregation based on race. The settlement money would be used for improving academic programs and for capital investments. (Harris, A. (2021). Thirteen years a remedy, thirty years a fight, two centuries a struggle. In *The state must provide: Why America's colleges have always been unequal—And how to set them right* (pp. 163-196). New York: Ecco.)

**2002\*\***: Governor Mark Warner of Virginia issued a formal apology for the state's decision to forcibly sterilize more than 8,000 of its residents. ("[Va. Apologizes to the Victims of Sterilizations](#)" by William Branigin, *Washington Post*, May 3, 2002.)

**2004\*\***: The faculty senate at the University of Alabama passed a resolution apologizing for its early faculty members' involvement in slavery prior to the Civil War. (Harris, L. M. (2020, January 29). [Higher education's reckoning with slavery](#). AAUP.)

**2005†\***, \*\*: The U.S. Senate approved, by voice vote, S.R. 39, which called for the lawmakers to apologize to lynching victims, survivors, and their descendants, several whom were watching from the gallery.

**2005**: Virginia, five decades after ignoring Prince Edward County and other locales that shut down their public schools in support of segregation, is making a rare effort to confront its racist past, in effect apologizing and offering reparations in the form of scholarships. With a \$1 million donation from the billionaire media investor John Kluge and a matching amount from the state, Virginia is providing up to \$5,500 to any state resident who was denied a proper education when public schools shut down. So far, more than 80 students have been approved for the scholarships and the numbers are expected to rise. Several thousand are potentially eligible. ("[A New Hope For Dreams Suspended By Segregation](#)", *The New York Times*, July 31, 2005 by Michael Janofsky.)

**2005:** Banking corporation JPMorgan Chase issues an apology for their historical ties to the slave trade. The corporation set up a \$5 million scholarship fund for black students to attend college. The scholarship program, called Smart Start Louisiana, was likened to reparations by several commentators, including Rev. Jesse Jackson. ("[JPMorgan: Predecessors linked to slavery](#)", January 21, 2005, Associated Press; "[JP Morgan Chase Creates 'Smart Start Louisiana'](#)", *Howard University News Service*.)

**2007-2008\*\*:** State legislatures in Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, Alabama, New Jersey, and Florida passed measures apologizing for slavery and segregation. (*From Here to Equality: Reparations for Black Americans in the 21st Century* by William A. Darity, Jr. and A. Kirsten Mullen (Chapel Hill, NC: UNC Press, 2020, p. 24).)

**2008/2009†\***, \*\*: U.S. [House Resolution 194](#) and [Senate Concurrent Resolution 26](#) made a formal apology to the African American community for "centuries of brutal dehumanization and injustices." Plus, there was an admission that "African Americans continue to suffer from the complex interplay between slavery and Jim Crow long after both systems were formally abolished through enormous damage and loss, both tangible and intangible, including the loss of human dignity."

\* Congressional actions

\*\* Apologies from government institutions and other organizations

**2010-2019**      The reparations payments marked with † are taken from "[How Chicago Became the First City to Make Reparations to Victims of Police Violence](#)" by Yana Kunichoff and Sarah Macaraeg, *YES Magazine*, Spring 2017; and *Long Overdue: The Politics of Racial Reparations: From 40 Acres to Atonement and Beyond* by Charles P. Henry, 2007, NYU Press.

**2014:** The state of North Carolina set aside \$10 million for reparations payments to living survivors of the state's eugenics program, which forcibly sterilized approximately 7,600 people. ("[North Carolina Set To Compensate Forced Sterilization Victims](#)" by Scott Neuman, *NPR*, July 25, 2013; "[Families of NC Eugenics Victims No Longer Alive Still Have Shot at Compensation](#)" by Anne Blythe, *News & Observer* (Raleigh, N.C.), March 17, 2017.)

**2015†:** The City of Chicago signed into law an [ordinance](#) granting cash payments, free college education, and a range of social services to 57 living survivors of police torture (Burge Reparations). Explicitly defined as reparations, which totaled \$5.5 million, the ordinance includes a formal apology from Mayor Rahm Emanuel and a mandate to teach the broader public about the torture through a memorial and public school curriculum.

**2016†:** Georgetown University has acknowledged that the school has profited from the sale of slaves and has "reconciled" by [naming two buildings](#) after African Americans and offer preferred admission to any descendants of slaves who worked at the university.

**2016:** The state of Virginia, one of more than 30 other states that practiced forced sterilizations, followed North Carolina's lead and has since 2016 been [awarding \\$25,000 to each survivor](#). ("[Virginia Votes Compensation for Victims of its Eugenic Sterilization Program](#)" by Jaydee Hanson, Center for Genetics and Society, March 5, 2015.)

**2016:** The U.S. government reached a settlement of \$492 million with 17 Native American tribes to resolve lawsuits alleging the federal government mismanaged tribal land, resources, and money. ("[U.S. Government To Pay \\$492 Million To 17 American Indian Tribes](#)" by Rebecca Hersher, NPR, September 27, 2016.)

**2018:** The Supreme Court, in a 4-4 deadlock, [let stand a lower court's order](#) to the state of Washington to make billions of dollars worth of repairs to roads, where the state had built culverts below road channels and structures in a way that prevented salmon from swimming through and reaching their spawning grounds, that had damaged the state's salmon habitats and contributed to population loss. The case involved the [Stevens Treaties](#), a series of agreements in 1854-55, in which tribes in Washington State gave up millions of acres of land in exchange for "the right to take fish." Implicit in the treaties, courts would later rule, was a guarantee that there would be enough fish for the tribes to harvest. Destroying the habitat reduces the population and thus violates these treaties. This decision directly affects the Swinomish Tribe. ("[A Victory For A Tribe That's Lost Its Salmon](#)" by John Eligon, *The New York Times*, June 12, 2018.)

**2019\*:** Senator Cory Booker, D-New Jersey, introduced bill S. 1083 ([H.R. 40 Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act](#)) in the Senate that would provide for a commission to study and report on the impact of slavery and discrimination against Black Americans and deliver a verdict on different proposals for reparations. The bill "is a way of addressing head-on the persistence of racism, white supremacy, and implicit racial bias in our country. It will bring together the best minds to study the issue and propose solutions that will finally begin to right the economic scales of past harms and make sure we are a country where all dignity and humanity is affirmed." ([Press release](#), April 8, 2019.)

**2019\*\*\*:** "Students at Georgetown University voted to increase their tuition to benefit descendants of the 272 enslaved Africans that the Jesuits who ran the school sold nearly two centuries ago to secure its future." In a nonbinding student-led referendum, "the undergraduate student body voted to add a new fee of \$27.20 per student per semester to their tuition bill, with the proceeds devoted to supporting education and health care programs in Louisiana and Maryland, where many of the 4,000 known living descendants of the 272 enslaved people now reside." ("[Georgetown Students Agree to Create Reparations Fund](#)" by Adeel Hassan, *The New York Times*, April 12, 2019.)

**2019:** Catholic nuns of the Society of the Sacred Heart introduced a [scholarship fund](#) to benefit African-American students at their school in Louisiana, along with a memorial to the 150 enslaved persons who labored to build the schools. (Swarns, R. L. (2019, August 2). [The nuns who bought and sold human beings](#). *The New York Times*; Jones, T. L. (2018, March 11). [Society of the Sacred Heart hopes for understanding, reconciliation as it delves into its history of slave ownership](#). *The Advocate*.)

**2019:** The Virginia Theological Seminary has earmarked \$1.7 million to pay reparations to descendants of African Americans who were enslaved to work on their campus. The first payments of \$2,100, to 15 recipients, were distributed in February 2021. ("[Virginia Theological Seminary, With Deep Roots in Slavery, Sets Aside \\$1.7 Million to Pay Reparations](#)" by Dara Sharif, *The Root*, September 10, 2019; Wright, W. (2021, May 31). [Seminary built on slavery and Jim Crow labor has begun paying reparations](#). *The New York Times*.)

**2019:** Princeton Theological Seminary announced a \$27 million commitment for various initiatives to recognize how it benefited from black slavery. This is the largest monetary commitment by an educational institution. ("[WWJD: Princeton Theological Seminary Announces \\$27 Million Reparations Plan](#)" by Anne Branigin, *The Root*, October 24, 2019.)

**2019:** Georgetown University announced that it would raise about \$400,000 a year to benefit descendants of the 272 enslaved people who were sold to aid the college 200 years ago, and the funds will be used to support community projects. While students would be involved in the initiative, they would not be required to pay extra fees; the money would be raised through voluntary donations from alumni, faculty, students, and philanthropists. ("[Descendants of 272 Slaves Offered Aid By Georgetown](#)" by Rachel Swarns, *The New York Times*, October 30, 2019.)

**2019:** A convention of the Episcopal Diocese of New York voted to allocate \$1.1 million to initiate a reparations program. (Episcopal Diocese of New York. (2019, November 10). [Diocesan Convention votes \\$1.1 million towards reparations, passes 1860 anti-slavery resolutions](#).)

**2019:** The City Council of Evanston, Illinois, voted to allocate the first \$10 million in tax revenue from the sale of recreational marijuana (which became legal in the state on January 1, 2020) to fund reparations initiatives that address the gaps in wealth and opportunity of black residents. "This week's City Council vote appears to have made Evanston the first municipal government in the nation to create and fund its own reparations program." Note: While Chicago created a program to compensate victims of police torture (see above), the reparations were not primarily race-based. ("[Future Weed Revenue Will Fund Evanston's New Reparations Program](#)" by Jonah Meadows, *Patch*, November 27, 2019; Associated Press. (2021, March 23). [Evanston, Illinois, becomes first U.S. city to pay reparations to Black residents](#). *NBC News*.)

\* Congressional actions

\*\* Apologies from government institutions and other organizations

\*\*\* First college students to vote to financially support reparations

**2020-present**      **2020:** The Episcopal Diocese of Texas (whose first bishop, Alexander Gregg, was a slave holder) pledged \$13 million for a racial justice project. (Downen, R. (2020, February 13). [Texas Episcopalians pledge \\$13M to 'repair and commence racial healing'](#). *Houston Chronicle*.)

**2020:** The University of Mississippi has apologized to dozens of African Americans who were arrested in 1970 for protesting racial inequality and Confederate imagery on campus. ("[Ole Miss Apologizes to Black Protesters Arrested in 1970](#)", Associated Press, February 26, 2020.)

**2020:** The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston reached an agreement with the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office to implement policies and procedures, and a \$500,000 fund, to address diversity issues. The agreement follows an incident of racial discrimination towards black students visiting the museum in May 2019. ("[AG's Office and Museum of Fine Arts Reach Historic Agreement to Support Diversity and Inclusivity](#)", MFA Press Release, May 5, 2020.)

**2020:** The town of Asheville, North Carolina, voted to give reparations to its black residents, in the form of a public apology and investing in black communities. ("[A Liberal North Carolina Town Has Unanimously Voted to Give its Black Residents Reparations](#)" by Anne Branigin. *The Root*, July 15, 2020.)

**2020:** At the recommendation of the [Racial Equity Task Force](#), Durham, N.C., city officials passed a resolution calling for the federal government to grant reparations to the descents of Black slaves. (Branigin, A. (2020, October 6). [Durham, Washington, D.C., become latest cities to call for reparations for black residents](#). *The Root*.)

**2020:** The "Fund for Reparations Now" was established to raise \$150,000 for the descendants of the [Elaine, Arkansas massacre](#) in which at least 200 African Americans were killed. The fund is a collaborate effort amongst the Elaine Legacy Center, the National African American Reparations Commission, and the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference. As of December 2020, \$50,000 has been contributed to the fund. ([National groups honor pledge to descendants of Elaine, Arkansas massacre](#). (December 15, 2020).)

**2021:** Memorial Episcopal Church in Baltimore, Maryland, [created a fund](#) to spend \$100,000 per year over the next five years, for community organizations to do "justice-centered work" to address historical racial inequalities. The church had been founded by slave owners in the 1860s. (Pitts, J. M. (2021, January 29). [Episcopal church established by Baltimore slave owners creates \\$500,000 reparations fund](#). *Baltimore Sun*.)

**2021:** The Jesuit Conference of Priests pledged to raise \$100 million for the descendants of enslaved people. This pledge is the largest monetary effort of the Roman Catholic Church to atone for its role in slavery. \$15 million has already been deposited into a trust as of March 2021. (Swarns, R. L. (2021, March 15). [Catholic order pledges \\$100 million to atone for slave labor and sales](#). *The New York Times*.)

**2021\*:** The Maryland legislature passes [a bill](#) (PDF) subsequent to the settlement of the lawsuit [The Coalition for Equity and Excellence in Maryland Higher Education, et al. v. Maryland Higher Education Commission, et al.](#), which alleged that the state failed to sufficiently desegregate its colleges and universities. The legislation provides for \$577 million over 10 years to be used for various programs benefitting the state's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). (Douglas-Gabriel, D., & Wiggins, O. (2021, March 24). [Hogan signs off on \\$577 million for Maryland's Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#). *The Washington Post*.)

**2021\*\*:** The commissioners of the county of Athens-Clarke, Georgia, pass a [proclamation](#) to extend an apology for an act in the 1960s whereby the Linnentown community of Black families was appropriated and destroyed to build dormitories for students of the University of Georgia. Two weeks later the commissioners voted in favor of a [resolution](#) to erect a memorial on the site, create a center to study slavery, and set aside funding for reparatory projects (based on the amount of intergenerational wealth lost due to the destruction of the Linnentown community). (Cohen, R. M. (2021, April 9). [Inside the winning fight for reparations in Athens, Georgia](#). *The Intercept*.)

**2021\*:** A Congressional House committee voted to recommend the advancement of [bill H.R. 40](#) (Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act), which would provide for the creation of a commission to study slavery reparations. The bill was introduced by Sheila Jackson Lee, D-TX, and co-sponsored by 184 other House Democrats. (Fandos, N. (2021, April 14). [House panel advances bill to study reparations in historic vote](#). *The New York Times*.)

**2021:** The town council of Amherst, Massachusetts voted to establish a reparations fund that will begin with a \$210,000 special appropriation and accept contributions from local organizations. The town also approved the establishment of the African Heritage Reparations Assembly to develop the reparations plan. (Merzbach, S. (2021, June 23). [Amherst council establishes reparations fund](#). *Daily Hampshire Gazette*.)

**2023:** In 1924, land owned by the Bruce family in Manhattan Beach, California, was seized via eminent domain by the city, who wanted to build a park there. The Bruce family had already faced harassment from white residents, and the Ku Klux Klan had attempted to burn down the resort that sat on the property. In July 2022 the land was returned to the family's

descendants, who then sold it back to Los Angeles County for \$20 million. (Ardrey, T. (2023, January 4). [A Black California family is selling the land stolen from their ancestors back to LA County for \\$20 million](#). *Insider*.)

**2024:** The San Diego City Council unanimously voted to support [California's statewide reparations package](#), although they also recommend adding financial compensation. (Wu, J. (2024, August 5). ['This thing doesn't happen overnight': San Diegans push for reparations for Black Californians](#). *San Diego Union-Tribune*.)

**2024\*\*:** California Governor Gavin Newsom signed a bill formally apologizing for the harms of slavery and racial discrimination against African Americans. He had previously vetoed [SB-1050](#), which proposed compensation for land taken through racially motivated eminent domain, citing the lack of an administering agency. A companion bill, [SB-1403](#), which would have created the California American Freedmen Affairs Agency to provide genealogy services, social support, and oversee a land claims process, had been blocked at the last minute by the California Legislative Black Caucus under pressure from the Governor, who had privately threatened a veto. (Holden, L. (2024, August 31). [California slavery reparations bills unraveled over Gavin Newsom amendments](#). *POLITICO*; Holden, L. (2024, September 26). [Gavin Newsom signs California apology for slavery and discrimination](#). *POLITICO*.)

**2024:** The city council of Palm Springs, California, approved a \$5.9 million settlement for survivors and descendants of Section 14, an historically Black and Latino neighborhood that had been destroyed 60 years ago for commercial development. The agreement compensates around 1,200 individuals, establishes a cultural healing center and a public monument, and allocates \$21 million for housing and economic programs prioritizing former residents. (Bolaños, M. (2024, November 15). [Palm Springs OKs \\$5.9 million in reparations for Black and Latino families whose homes the city burned](#). *KQED*.)

**2024:** The city council of Sacramento, California, passed two resolutions related to reparations in the city. The first resolution was to incorporate racial equity into the city's operations, and the second was to expand the reparations initiatives out of the mayor's office into a city-wide program. (Sanchez, S. T. (2024, December 4). [Sacramento City Council approves historic resolutions to advance racial equity and reparations](#). *ABC10*.)

**2025\*:** Congressional Rep. Ayanna Pressley reintroduces [H.R. 40, Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act](#), which had been initially introduced by Rep. John Conyers in 1989 and then every year since. (Gaynor, G. K. (2025, February 12). [An emotional Rep. Ayanna Pressley takes up historic legacy of reparations bill H.R. 40](#). *TheGrio*.)

**2025\*\*:** The city council of Decatur, Georgia, unanimously passed a resolution to create a Reparations Task Force to study the city's history of slavery, segregation, and economic disenfranchisement of its African American citizens, and recommend policy actions. The

resolution also included an acknowledgement of past injustices and an official apology. (Raby, D. (2025, May 6). [Decatur approves reparations task force, apologizes to Black residents](#). *FOX 5 Atlanta*.)

**2025:** In December 2022, 26 survivors and descendants of Black families displaced from Portland, Oregon's Albina neighborhood sued the city, development agencies, and a hospital for demolishing over 180 properties, many owned by Black residents. In 2025, Portland agreed to a settlement of \$8.5 million (up from an initial \$2 million), plus property restitution, a historic exhibit, a documentary, and other reparative actions. (Dhenin, M. (2025, August 15). ['We opened a door nobody knew existed': How displaced Black families won reparations in Portland](#). *Fox 41 Yakima*.)

**2025:** In October 2025, the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration transferred ownership of the Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center in Arbor Vitae, Wisconsin, to the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa for \$30,000 (the amount the congregation originally paid in 1966). This is first instance of a Catholic institution returning land to First Nations as a gesture of reparation. (Stockman, D. (2025, November 3). [In act of reparation, Franciscan sisters return land to Chippewa Indians in Wisconsin](#). *National Catholic Reporter*.)

**2025:** The city of Santa Monica, California, approved a \$350,000 settlement with the family of Silas White, whose Ebony Beach Club project was impeded when the city seized the property through eminent domain in the 1950s. The agreement includes commemorations (a library exhibit, a street renaming, and Silas White Day) and ensures the family will be eligible in any future reparations process. The city also plans to propose a broader reparations program by 2026. (Hall, M. (2025, November 20). [City settles Ebony Beach Club case for \\$350,000](#). *Santa Monica Daily Press*.)

**2025:** Forest Hill Presbyterian Church in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, awarded its first Racial Education Debt Repair Award, providing \$65,000 in student loan forgiveness to one African American woman as part of a broader effort to address historic racial financial inequities. (Johnson, Z. (2025, November 24). [Cleveland Heights church walks a path to racial reparations through college debt forgiveness](#). *WVXU*.)

**2025:** The Pennsylvania State Historical and Museum Commission have approved a highway marker commemorating the Myers family, the first Black family to live in Levittown. In 1957 the family were set upon by mobs who subjected them to racial threats and violence, including cross-burning. The highway marker will be located in the Dogwood Hollow district where the family lived. ([PA OKs sign to mark "Our Rosa Parks Moment," memorializing Levittown's first Black family](#). (2025, September 26). *The Keystone*.)

\* Congressional actions

\*\* Apologies from government institutions and other organizations

\*\*\* First college students to vote to financially support reparations

## **Reparations initiatives in progress**

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### **Reparations Initiatives in Progress**

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**2020:** The city council of Burlington, Vermont, voted in a resolution to create a task force to study possible reparations for the state's involvement in the slave trade. A Racial Justice Fund was created to fund the work of the task force. This resolution follows the [Resolution Relating to Racial Justice Through Economic and Criminal Justice](#) (archived PDF) which was passed in June. (Press Release. "[Burlington City Council votes unanimously to pass a historical reparations resolution to study reparations for Vermont's role in chattel slavery](#)") (2020, August 11). VTDigger.)

**2020:** California enacts a [new law](#) to create a task force to determine how the state could provide reparations to Black Americans and who would be eligible. (Linly, Z. (2020, October 1). [California passes bill to consider slavery reparations](#). *The Root*.)

**2021:** The [Northampton \(MA\) Reparations Committee](#) (NRC) began meeting in March 2021. In the fall of 2022, the NRC began circulating a reparations petition asking the Northampton City Council to (1) Investigate the historical and current effects of enslavement and racism against Black people in Northampton; and (2) Make recommendations for reparative actions in Northampton as a response to issues apparent in housing, employment, policing, schools, healthcare, and transportation. The NRC also called upon the City Council to make a formal apology to the past and present residents of Northampton for the historic harm that has occurred and the current harm and to fund the Commission's research and publish its findings. In February 2023, a resolution to take action will be presented to the City Council.

**2021:** In 2021 the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia adopted Resolution R-10a, pledging a \$10 million reparations fund over five years to support Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color, recognizing the Diocese's historical complicity with slavery, Indigenous dispossession, and segregation. The resolution directs the creation of a Reparations Task Force to recommend options for repair. ([Reparations](#). (2023, December 7). Episcopal Diocese of Virginia.)

**2022:** Harvard University published a report ([Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery](#)) detailing how the institution benefitted from the enslavement of Black people in the United States. The university has also pledged \$100 million for a fund to continue researching its ties to slavery, and for programs of reconciliation and redress. (Chang, C. J., & Cho, E. (2022, April 27). [Harvard pledges \\$100 million to redress ties to slavery](#). *The Harvard Crimson*.)

**2022:** The city council of Boston, Massachusetts, [voted to create a task force](#) to study slavery and its contribution to wealth and other inequality in the region. (Casey, M. (2022, December 14). [Boston City Council votes to study reparations for Black Bostonians](#). *Boston.Com.*)

**2022:** The city council of High Point, North Carolina, established the [One High Point Commission](#) by a 5-4 vote. The commission is charged with studying the history of racial injustice in the city and the city and recommending reparative actions. ([Tumultuous year for reparations board](#). (2022, December 27). *High Point Enterprise.*)

**2023:** The City of St. Paul, Minnesota, created the [St. Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission](#) to research possibilities for reparations to descendants of enslaved Africans. (McGee, N. A. (2023, January 5). [Minnesota city creates committee to give reparations to descendants of enslaved Africans](#). *The Root.*)

**2023:** The city of Detroit, Michigan, has assembled a group of citizens to lead a task force to recommend how to address systemic discrimination against the Black community, such as housing and economic development. The initiative was passed by 80% of voters in Detroit to create the [Committee of the Reparations Taskforce](#) in November 2021. (Aguilar, L. (2023, February 24). [Detroit reparations movement takes step forward](#). *The Detroit News.*)

**2023:** San Francisco, California's government-appointed African American Reparations Advisory Committee recommended that the city's Black residents be paid \$5 million each in reparations for historical public policies that reflected the intent of chattel slavery. The committee chair stated that the program "could represent a significant enough investment in families to put them on this path to economic well-being, growth and vitality that chattel slavery and all the policies that flowed from it destroyed." (Felton, E. (2023, February 28). [San Francisco debates reparations: \\$5 million each for Black residents?](#) *Washington Post.*)

**2023:** The town of Amherst, Massachusetts has provided a \$2 million endowment fund for reparations, coming from tax proceeds of cannabis sales. The African Heritage Reparation Assembly issued a [report](#) (PDF) with recommendations on how the funding is to be spent. (Casey, M. (2023, October 16). [Slavery reparations in Amherst Massachusetts could include funding for youth programs and housing](#). *AP News.*)

**2023:** The State of New York passes legislation to create a commission to study the legacy of slavery in the state and recommendations for reparative actions to address racial inequalities. The commission is to present a report of its findings to the legislature in 2025. (Tomkin, A. (2024, August 12). [New York's Reparations Commission starts its work](#). *City Limits.*)

**2024:** The mayor of Chicago, Illinois, has signed an executive order to create a task force to study and define reparations, identify areas for redress, and make recommendations for remedies and restitution. (Mayor's Press Office. (2024, June 17). [Mayor Brandon Johnson](#)

[signs historic executive order to launch Black reparations task force and agenda](#). City of Chicago.)

**2024:** After the Oklahoma Supreme Court [rejected a lawsuit for reparations](#) from survivors of the [1921 Tulsa Race Massacre](#) — where a white mob killed 300 Black residents and destroyed the Greenwood District — city officials have created a commission to consider this option. The commission will focus on initiatives like housing equity, educational opportunities, and economic development for survivors and their descendants. (Associated Press. (2024, August 5). [Tulsa commission will study reparations for 1921 race massacre victims and descendants](#). *NBC News*.)

**2024:** In Colorado \$900,000 has been raised to establish a 14-person commission to study racial equity, pursuant to legislation ([SB24-053](#)). The Black Coloradan Racial Equity Study Commission, based at History Colorado and chaired by Senate President James Coleman, had its first meeting in October 2024. The study will take three years to complete and will include community input sessions, economic analysis, and recommendations. (Tassy, E. (2024, November 14). [History Colorado hiring staff for state-mandated study into whether systemic harm happened to Black people](#). *Colorado Public Radio*.)

**2024:** The St. Louis (Missouri) Reparations Commission released a [report](#) recommending the city take actions to address historical and current racial injustices towards the city's African American community. Suggestions include cash payments as well as official acknowledgment and apology for racially motivated harms. (Hays, G. (2024, December 4). [In St. Louis, a new reparations report details how the city can act on racial injustice](#). *PBS News*.)

**2024:** The Northampton Commission for the Study of Reparations (Massachusetts) released a [preliminary report](#) (PDF) recommending a number of actions to address the historic wrongs towards Black residents of the town caused by slavery and its aftermath. (MacDougall, A. (2024, December 13). [Early report from reparations panel finds Blacks endured historic wrongs in Northampton](#). *Daily Hampshire Gazette*.)

**2025:** A [new law](#) in Washington, D.C., has taken effect, allowing the city to explore reparations for Black residents who are descendants of slaves or affected by Jim Crow-era policies. The legislation establishes a 12-member commission to study the city's history of slavery and discrimination, develop reparations proposals, and set up a payment fund. (Delaney, M. (2025, March 6). [D.C. reparations law takes effect, opening door for payments to Black residents](#). *The Washington Times*.)

**2025:** Tulsa, Oklahoma's first Black mayor, Monroe Nichols, unveils a \$105 million private "[Road to Repair](#)" trust to fund reparation initiatives addressing the impact of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre that took place in the city's Greenwood neighborhood ("Black Wall Street"). The plan allocates \$24 million for housing, \$60 million for historic preservation, and \$21

million for scholarships, small-business grants, and efforts to identify massacre victims in mass graves. (Burch, A. D. S., & Kerr, B. (2025, June 1). [\\$105 million reparations package for Tulsa Race Massacre unveiled by mayor](#). *The New York Times*.)

**2025:** Governor Gavin Newsom signed five bills from California's "Road to Repair 2025" package, advancing the state's reparations initiatives. Among these, [SB 518](#) establishes the Bureau for Descendants of American Slavery to begin implementing the California Reparations Task Force's recommendations that include actions of restitution, compensation, public acknowledgment, and community investment. (Ladisch, V. (2025, October 19). [Reparations bills establish foundation to turn California's vision into reality](#). KQED.)

**2025:** The New Jersey Reparations Council and the Detroit Reparations Task force have each released reports with recommendations for reparations in their jurisdictions. (New Jersey Reparations Council. (2025). [For such a time as this: The nowness of reparations for Black people in New Jersey](#); Detroit Reparations Task Force. (2025). [City of Detroit reparations recommendations report](#).)

**2025:** The Maryland legislature voted to override a previous veto by Governor Wes Moore of a [bill](#) that included the establishment of the Maryland Reparations Commission. The new law will establish a commission to study how institutions in the state benefitted from discriminatory policies of the late 19th century to middle 20th century, and provide recommendations for reparations. (Ford, W. J. (2025, December 17). [Legislature overrides Moore's veto, approves creation of reparations commission](#). *Maryland Matters*.)

**2025:** At the end of 2025, San Francisco mayor Daniel Lurie signs into law an ordinance that establishes a reparations fund to address and repair harms to the city's black community. The fund will accept donations from individuals, corporations, and foundations, and possibly future budget appropriations. (Epps, K. (2025, December 31). [\\$5 million reparations fund: From slavery's shadows, SF mayor signs historic measure for Black San Franciscans](#). *San Francisco Bay View*.)

**2025:** The [Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) released a report on the state's complicity in racial violence against African Americans following the Civil War. Recommendations include a formal apology, payments to descendants of victims, and changes to the criminal justice system. (Nelson, J. Q. (2026, January 7). [Maryland recommends \\$100K payments to descendants of lynching victims after study](#). AOL.)

**2026:** The Santa Monica City Council approved the establishment of a [restorative justice program](#) aimed at addressed the municipality's historical harms against African American residents. The program includes a \$3.5 million fund, a commission to determine eligibility, and an independent administration to oversee the program. The funding is provided via the city's development agreement with RAND Corporation. (Casuso, J. (2026, January 28). [Council approves \\$3.5 million for 'restorative justice' program](#). *Lookout*.)

**2026:** The trustees of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio have committed \$500,000 in initial funding for a reparations program that creates an endowment fund to support four Black congregations in the state. The project is led by The Commission on Reparative Justice, which got its start in 2020. (ENS Staff. (2026, February 23). [Southern Ohio is latest diocese to commit financial resources to racial reparations program](#). *Episcopal News Service*.)

**2026:** The Illinois African Descent-Citizens Reparations Commission released a [research report](#) on the harms caused to Black Illinoisans by slavery, racial violence, housing discrimination, and other injustices. (Zimmerman, B. (2026, February 27). [State commission releases new report on racial injustice throughout Illinois history](#). *WCIA*.)

## Reparations paid by other countries

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### Reparations Paid by Other Countries

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Some illustrative examples.

The payments from 1952-1990 are taken from the booklet *Black Reparations Now! 40 Acres, \$50 Dollars, and a Mule, + Interest* by Dorothy Benton-Lewis.

**1952:** Germany: \$822 million to Holocaust survivors: German Jewish Settlement. ("[West Germany Signs 822 Million Dollar Reparations Pacts with Israel Govt. and Jewish Material Claims](#)," *JTA Daily News Bulletin*, September 11, 1952.)

**1984:** Argentine President Raúl Alfonsín created the Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas ([National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons](#)) to investigate the whereabouts of desaparecidos ("the disappeared") who were abducted or killed by the military during the previous dictatorship. The Commission issued a report ([Nunca Más](#)) that led to prosecution of those involved, reparations paid to families of victims in the form of pensions, and new standards implemented to provide accountability for human rights violations. (*The Handbook of Reparations* by Paulo de Greiff (Oxford: OUP, 2006).)

**1988:** Canada: 250,000 sq. miles of land: First Nations and Inuit. ("[Canada to Give Indigenous People An Arctic Area the Size of Texas](#)" by John F. Burns, *The New York Times*, September 6, 1988.)

**1988:** Canada: \$230 million: Japanese Canadians. ("[Ottawa Will Pay Compensation To Uprooted Japanese-Canadians](#)" by John F. Burns, *The New York Times*, September 23, 1988.)

**1990:** Austria: \$25 million: Holocaust Survivors. ("[Austria to Pay \\$25 Million More in Support of Holocaust Survivors](#)" by Reinhard Engel, *JTA Daily News Bulletin*, February 13, 1990.)

**2014:** France: More than 700 claims have been filed under an agreement between U.S. and France in which French officials have agreed to pay out \$60 million for the deportations carried out by SNCF, France's railway system. In exchange, the U.S. government agreed to ask courts to dismiss any lawsuits against SNCF or the French government. ("[U.S. Begins Paying Out Reparations from France to Holocaust Survivors and Their Heirs](#)" by Katherine Shaver, *Washington Post*, September 15, 2016.)

**2015:** Japan: \$8.3 million to provide old-age care to Korean "Comfort Women" survivors plus a new apology. ("[Japan and South Korea Settle Dispute Over Wartime 'Comfort Women'](#)" by Choe Sang-hung, *The New York Times*, December 28, 2015.)

**2016:** France: The State Department has paid or approved 90 claims for a total of \$11 million in reparations by France to former WWII prisoners who were carried to Nazi Death Camps in French trains—the first French reparations paid to Holocaust survivors in the U.S. ("[U.S. Begins Paying Out Reparations from France to Holocaust Survivors and Their Heirs](#)" by Katherine Shaver, *Washington Post*, September 15, 2016.)

**Resources** Works cited in this resource can be found in the Zotero library [https://www.zotero.org/groups/5788446/reparations\\_timeline](https://www.zotero.org/groups/5788446/reparations_timeline)