

Fully vaccinated Canadians exempt from quarantine in July

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Fully vaccinated Canadian citizens who test negative for COVID-19 will be exempt from two weeks of quarantine when returning to the country in early July, officials said Monday.

Canadians and permanent residents who return to Canada will have to be fully vaccinated 14 days or more prior to the arrival. That first stage in

loosening the border restrictions begin at 11:59 p.m. Eastern time on July 5.

Officials said those travelers must have two doses of a vaccine approved by Canada, provide a negative COVID-19 test from 72 hours before arrival, take a second test upon arrival, and have a quarantine plan in the event the arrival test comes back positive.

Public Safety Minister Bill Blair said the first phase of easing border measures will continue to restrict entry to Canada for foreign nationals who want to enter for nonessential reasons.

Transport Minister Omar Alghabara also said a flight ban between Canada and India will remain in place until July 21 but a flight ban with Pakistan will be removed. The flight bans were imposed after an increase in COVID-19 cases driven by the highly contagious Delta variant first identified in India.

The government said fully vaccinated Canadian travelers who want to be considered for the quarantine exemption from quarantine and reduced testing requirements will be required to provide evidence of their vaccination status by uploading supporting documentation into what's called the ArriveCAN app or by signing in online at a government website.

The government is eliminating the need for fully vaccinated Canadians and permanent residents who are air travelers to spend three days quarantining in an authorized hotel upon arriving in the country.

Canadians who return home now through the land border must quarantine at home or elsewhere for 14 days and those who arrive by plane must quarantine at a government mandated hotel for up to three days while they wait for a COVID-19 test to come back negative. Air

travelers also have quarantine at home or elsewhere after the hotel stay.

Officials have said they would like 75% of eligible Canadian residents to be fully vaccinated before advising that border restrictions be loosened for tourists and business travelers who aren't citizens or permanent residents.

The Canadian government expects to have enough vaccine delivered for 80% of eligible Canadians to be fully vaccinated by the end of July.

"We need to make sure that a substantial majority of Canadians are fully vaccinated," Blair said.

Health Minister Patty Hajdu said unvaccinated children travelling with vaccinated parents will have to quarantine at home even if they aren't eligible for vaccines. "Undoubtedly this will be challenging for families that want to travel," she said.

The border between Canada and the U.S. remains closed to all nonessential travel. The restrictions were announced in March, 2020 in the early months of the pandemic and have been extended every month since.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government announced Friday that border restrictions on nonessential travel with the United States have been extended until July 21 as Canada works to get a higher percentage of Canadians fully vaccinated. The move was made in coordination with the U.S. There are growing calls in the U.S. to open the Canada-U.S. border for nonessential travel like tourism, but less than 25% of Canadians are fully vaccinated.

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