

Canada, US are easing pandemic border-crossing restrictions

July 6 2021



Canadians Stephanie Frizzell, far right, and her daughter, Shelby Dubois, second from right, move in for a big air hug with their American relatives, Christian Gervais, far left, Sherie Frizzell, second from left, and Caitlin Davis, third from left, after a visit at the U.S.-Canadian border of Stanstead, Quebec and Derby Line, Vt., in this Dec. 19, 2020, file photo. Since shortly after the border closed in March 2020, people from both countries traveled to Derby Line, and Stanstead, to hold impromptu family reunions from their own side of the border on a residential street. It's high summer along the border between the United

States and Canada and people on both sides are wondering when the two governments will ease border-crossing restrictions imposed at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Credit: AP Photo/Elise Amendola, File

Pandemic restrictions on travel between Canada and the U.S. began to loosen Monday for some Canadians, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said plans to totally reopen the border would be announced over the next few weeks.

Canadian citizens and permanent residents who have had a full dose of a coronavirus vaccine approved for use in Canada can skip a 14-day quarantine that has been a requirement since March 2020. Eligible air travelers also no longer have to spend their first three days in the country at a government-approved hotel.

Restrictions barring all non-essential trips between Canada and the United States, including tourism, will remain in place until at least July 21.

Trudeau said the easing of the rules marks a "big step" toward re-opening the [border](#).

"We're very hopeful that we're going to see new steps on reopening announced in the coming weeks," he said at a news conference in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. "We're going to make sure that we're not seeing a resurgence of COVID-19 cases because nobody wants to go back to further restrictions, after having done so much and sacrificed so much to get to this point."

Julia Dunn, who landed at Toronto's Pearson International Airport from the United States while on her way to Halifax, said she was glad the

restrictions had eased.

"It's very freeing being able to get home to family without having to spend those two weeks alone," she said.

Dunn, who is originally from Cape Breton but now lives in Houston, said she booked her trip to Canada after learning about the planned easing of quarantine rules a few weeks ago.

Trudeau said he understands how eager people are to see the border reopen but noted that the pandemic continues and "things aren't normal yet."

"Nobody wants us to move too fast and have to reimpose restrictions as case numbers rise like we're seeing elsewhere in the world," he said. "We need to do this right."

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