

# Canada announces end to Covid border restrictions

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Canada will suspend Covid-19 border restrictions in October, the country's public health agency said Monday.

The country will no longer enforce testing, quarantine, vaccination or mask rules for travelers wishing to enter Canada, the agency said in a statement.

"We are announcing that the Government of Canada will not renew the order in council that expires on September 30 and will therefore remove all COVID-19 and border requirements for all travelers entering Canada," Minister of Health Jean-Yves Duclos said.

According to a statement from the Public Health Agency of Canada, the change was made because of "modeling that indicates that Canada has largely passed the peak of the Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 fueled wave" and because of the country's high vaccination and lower hospitalization rates.

"We are able to do this because tens of millions of Canadians rolled up their sleeves and got vaccinated," Transport Minister Omar Alghabra told reporters. "We've all worked together to follow the guidelines, get vaccinated and protect one another."

The new guidelines also apply to cruises, the statement said, and will follow rules in place in the United States.

Until this change, anyone 12 and older coming into Canada had to be

vaccinated or else submit to a testing regimen and quarantine for 14 days upon arrival, and masks were mandatory on planes and trains.

Despite the relaxation of health requirements, the agency still encourages travelers and Canadians to wear "high-quality and well-fitted masks," to get vaccinated and to self-isolate when necessary, the statement said.

Around 90 percent of Canadians 12 and older have received at least two doses of a Covid vaccine and about half have received a booster, according to official government figures.

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