

Canada to let vaccinated US citizens enter country on Aug. 9

July 19 2021, by Rob Gillies



In this March 16, 2020, file photo, vehicles enter the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel in Detroit to travel to Canada. The Canada Border Services Agency has rejected a creative plan by Windsor Mayor Drew Dilkens to have Ontario residents line up inside the tunnel to get COVID-19 vaccinations. Credit: AP Photo/Paul Sancya, File

Canada announced Monday it will begin letting fully vaccinated U.S. citizens into Canada on Aug. 9, and those from the rest of the world on Sept. 7.

Officials said the 14-day quarantine requirement will be waived as of Aug. 9 for eligible travelers who are currently residing in the United States and have received a full course of a COVID-19 vaccine approved for use in Canada.

Public Safety Minister Bill Blair, who said he spoke with U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Friday, said the U.S. has not yet indicated any plan to change current restrictions at the land [border](#). Canadians are able to fly into the United States with a negative COVID-19 test.

Asked in Washington if the U.S. would reciprocate, White House press secretary Jen Psaki said, "We are continuing to review our [travel restrictions](#). Any decisions about resuming travel will be guided by our public health and medical experts. ... I wouldn't look at it through a reciprocal intention."

U.S. Democratic Congressman Brian Higgins, whose district includes Buffalo and Niagara Falls, said the U.S. has "neglected to give reopening the northern border the serious attention it deserves, and there is no excuse."

Canadian officials also announced that children who aren't vaccinated but are travelling with vaccinated parents won't have to quarantine, but will have to avoid group activities including schools and daycare centers.

Transport Minister Omar Alghabra also said a ban on direct flights from India will be extended to Aug. 21 because of the delta variant. "The

situation in India is still very serious," he said.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said last week that Canada could start allowing fully vaccinated Americans into the country as of mid-August for nonessential travel and should be in a position to welcome fully vaccinated travelers from all countries by early September.



People pilot their boats in Burlington Harbor on Lake Champlain, in Burlington, Vt., Wednesday, June 23, 2021. In non-COVID-19 summers the harbor is filled with boats from Canada, while this summer locals are hoping the governments of the United States and Canada reopen the border to routine crossers so the boaters can return. Credit: AP Photo/Wilson Ring

Canada leads G20 countries in [vaccination rates](#), with approximately

80% of eligible Canadians vaccinated with their first dose and over 50% of those eligible fully vaccinated.

"This weekend, we even passed the U.S. in terms of fully vaccinated people," Trudeau said. "Thanks to the rising vaccination rates and declining COVID-19 cases, we are able to move forward with adjusted border measures."

Reopening to the U.S first is a "recognition of our unique bond, especially between border communities," Trudeau said.

In the early days of the pandemic, the U.S. and Canadian governments closed the more than 5,500-mile (8,800-kilometer) border to nonessential traffic. With increasing vaccination rates and dropping infection rates, some were annoyed the two governments hadn't laid out plans to fully reopen the border.

Canada began easing its restrictions earlier this month, allowing fully vaccinated Canadians or permanent legal residents to return Canada without quarantining. But among the requirements are a negative test for the virus before returning, and another once they get back.

Pressure has been mounting on Canada to continue to ease the restrictions at the border, which have been in effect since March 2020. Providing exemptions for travel into Canada amid the pandemic is politically sensitive and Trudeau is expected to call a federal election next month.

Canadian officials have said they would like 75% of eligible Canadian residents to be fully vaccinated before loosening border restrictions for tourists and business travelers. The Canadian government expects to have enough vaccine delivered for 80% of eligible Canadians to be fully vaccinated by the end of July. The U.S. only allowed for exports of

vaccines into Canada in early May.

Commercial traffic has gone back and forth normally between the two countries since the start of the pandemic.

The U.S. Travel Association estimates that each month the border is closed costs \$1.5 billion. Canadian officials say Canada had about 22 million foreign visitors in 2019—about 15 million of them from the United States.

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