

US extends land border closure to Canada and Mexico until Oct. 21

(Courtesy of Melanie Lieberman – The Points Guy)

The U.S. plans to keep its land borders with Canada and Mexico closed to nonessential travel for at least another month until Oct. 21, further extending its previous closure through Sept. 21.

White House COVID-19 Response Coordinator Jeff Zients announced the continuation of restrictions on Monday, Sept. 20, as part of the Biden administration's reopening [plan](#) to welcome back international tourists via air travel in early November, which does not apply to land borders at this time.

As a result, the land borders with Canada and Mexico will remain closed to nonessential travel through at least Oct. 21, even though both those countries have reopened to American visitors.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security cited concerns about the spread of the delta variant of the coronavirus as the reason to maintain the restrictions, as it did regarding the extension in August.

The decision does not have an impact on U.S. citizens who are returning from travel to either country.

Read more: [Canada entry restrictions will remain in place through Nov. 21](#)

Also on [Monday](#), Canada announced the continuation of entry restrictions for fully vaccinated U.S. citizens through Nov. 21. Although fully vaccinated U.S. citizens and permanent residents who are at least 14 days past the final dose have been allowed to enter Canada for nonessential travel purposes since August, these travelers are subject to a COVID-19 test within 72 hours of departure as well as a second test on arrival, regardless of whether they're flying or driving.

Canada also opened its borders to citizens of other countries in September, the restrictions of which will remain in place through November as well.

While the DHS maintained the status quo on the border closures, the [U.S. Department of State](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) have both strengthened their travel advisories for Canada to a "Level 3" to suggest Americans should "reconsider travel" to Canada due to a high level of COVID-19.

The agencies also classify Mexico at [Level 3](#) as well, used to categorize destinations with 100-500 new cases per 100,000 people in the past month.

As of Sept. 21, Canada is ahead of the U.S. when it comes to vaccinating its citizens. Nearly 69% of Canadian residents are fully vaccinated and more than 74% have received at least one dose, according to [data](#) from the Canadian government. In comparison, nearly 64% of the U.S. population has had at least one dose of the vaccine and 54% is fully vaccinated, per [CDC data](#).

In January, Canada [tightened its requirements](#) for travelers arriving by air. As of Jan. 7, all travelers age 5 or older must present a negative COVID-19 test result prior to boarding any flight entering Canada from another country.

And in February, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that travelers entering via a land border would be required to produce the result of a negative COVID-19 PCR test. People who fail to do so could be fined up to \$2,370.

That's also when Canada extended its ban on cruise ships, though Canada has since said [the cruise ban will be lifted in November](#). All passengers looking to book a voyage on a cruise will have to be fully vaccinated by October. The vaccine requirement applies to all workers, too.

Banned cruises

In March 2020, when the pandemic first spread across North America, Trudeau announced a [ban on cruise ships](#) that has since been extended, making it one of the longest cruise ship bans from any major cruise destination.

In February of 2021, that ban was extended, forbidding cruise ships from stopping at Canadian ports [until at least Feb. 28, 2022](#), exempting smaller vessels that carry fewer than 100 people, including passengers and crew.

On July 15, Canada's transport minister announced the country would end its ban on cruise ship visits on Nov. 1 — four months ahead of schedule. But cruise fans shouldn't get too excited about the change.

For the most part, cruises to Canada still won't resume until April 2022.

As of now, the first Eastern Canada cruise on the schedule for any major line is a 12-night Viking sailing from New York to Toronto starting on April 18, 2022.

Travel documents

In July, [Canada made the first move in easing restrictions](#) — but only for Canadians. As of July 5, [Canadian citizens](#) and permanent residents who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 can skip a mandatory 14-day quarantine on arrival in the country. Additionally, those entering by air no longer need to spend their first three days in the country at a [government-approved hotel](#).

All travelers 5 and older must now also present proof of a negative COVID-19 molecular test taken with 72 hours of your scheduled departure time to Canada. Without these documents and permissions, you will not be allowed to board your flight.

As of Aug. 9, unvaccinated children under 12 are [allowed](#) to enter Canada but must submit their information electronically through ArriveCan and meet all testing requirements.