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Governor Phil Scott Announces Threshold to Remove All Covid-19 Restrictions

21 May 2021

Montpelier, Vt. - Governor Phil Scott today announced that when 80% of Vermont's eligible population - those age 12 and older - have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, the state will enter Step 4 of the [Vermont Forward plan](#) – currently slated for July 4 – and remove its remaining restrictions.

[On May 14, Vermont moved into the penultimate step](#) of the Vermont Forward plan after hitting its June 1 vaccination target more than two weeks ahead of schedule.

Vermont currently ranks first in the nation in rate of vaccination, with over 70% of the eligible population having received at least one dose. As of Friday morning, to reach the 80% threshold to remove restrictions early, an additional 27,954 need to be vaccinated.

The Scott Administration will regularly update Vermonters on its progress towards the 80% goal.

It has never been easier to get your COVID-19 vaccine. All Vermonters age 12 and older can find the schedule for daily walk-in clinics, or can register for an appointment, at healthvermont.gov/myvaccine.

A transcript of the Governor's remarks announcing the acceleration threshold can be found below:

Governor Scott: As you know, Vermont continues to be a national and global leader in vaccinations. This is due to the hard work of hundreds of people, including volunteers, staff at AHS, the departments of Health and Public Safety, EMS teams, the National Guard, local partners, businesses and so many others.

Most importantly, it is because Vermonters have stepped up to do the right thing. As a result, last week we were able to move into Step 3 of the Vermont Forward plan more than two weeks ahead of schedule.

We were also able to adopt the CDC's updated guidance for those who are vaccinated, and as I said on Tuesday, no state was in a better position to do so than Vermont.

With every step we have taken during this long and difficult struggle, I have been inspired by Vermonters and their willingness to help one-another, and their communities.

We are getting close to the end of this race with just a few more hurdles to overcome before we shift from emergency response to long term recovery and normalcy.

In early April, when we outlined how the Vermont Forward plan would methodically ease restrictions and work our way back to normal, we were in a much different place than we are today.

In just weeks, as our vaccination rate increased, cases fell about 75%. And more importantly, hospitalizations and deaths have reduced significantly.

Why? Because vaccines work and we are vaccinating faster than I think anyone would have imagined.

We originally calculated that all restrictions could be lifted by the Fourth of July based on projected vaccination rates, and because by then, anybody who wanted to be vaccinated could be.

And because Vermonters have answered the call, today I am announcing an opportunity to eliminate all restrictions sooner than originally planned.

Right now, we lead the nation with over 70% of the eligible population (those 12 and older having received at least one dose of the vaccine). That is over 400,000 Vermonters.

So, here is my challenge to Vermonters: If we hit 80%, I will lift any remaining restrictions and mandates that day.

Admittedly, this would be an ambitious goal for most—and to be honest, most states will not come close to reaching it. But I believe Vermont can. We can show the country how it is done.

To reach 80%, we will need to vaccinate 27,954 more Vermonters.

So, if you are on the fence, or have not gotten around to making your appointment yet, now is the time. Because we have a chance to get back to normal faster and it has never been easier to get vaccinated.

To those who have already been vaccinated, you can still help. It could be as simple as offering someone a ride, helping them find the closest vaccination site or telling them your story as to why you got yours.

Employers, you can help by offering an incentive or at least a few hours off to employees so they can get their vaccines, or by asking us to bring the vaccine to your worksite.

The State will do its part as well. As you have heard us say, we are bringing the vaccine to the people. Whether it is Church Street, North Beach, pop-ups and walk-in clinics from the NEK to Southern Vermont, job sites, colleges and more. We are working to make it as easy as possible.

Now, the people who can help us accelerate this timeline the most are those between the ages of 18 and 29, who have lagged in vaccination rates.

I understand why some might not have felt the urgency yet, but now is your time to do the right thing. We are counting on you to help us lift restrictions early, including gathering sizes, masks, social distancing, the curfew at bars, and the rest.

Now is your time to lead us to the finish line.

To be clear, we will be dropping all restrictions as planned by the Fourth of July either way because at that point, every eligible person in Vermont who wants a vaccine will have had the opportunity to get one.

Right now, our seven-day average is about 2,500, which has dropped about 30% in the past week.

So, for example, if from here on out we average 1,500 people a day, we will be able to lift remaining restrictions by June 8.

Let's keep our momentum going. Let's finish strong. Let's continue to show the nation, and the world, what this brave little state is capable of.

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