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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ANNOUNCES NEW COVID-19 TRAVEL AND GATHERING GUIDANCE

For Immediate Release
Tuesday, February 23, 2020

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Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott today announced an update to the State's policy on gatherings, as the new travel quarantine policy (announced on February 19) went into effect. Effective today, people who are fully vaccinated may travel to Vermont and return from out of state travel without quarantine restrictions, once 14 days have passed from when they received their final dose. Additionally, people who meet this vaccination criteria may now gather with one other household at time.

"As Vermonters continue to sacrifice to ensure the safety of their neighbors, these changes represent a positive turning point in this pandemic," said Governor Scott. "Our number one priority has been to protect those most vulnerable to the virus and prevent our healthcare system from being overwhelmed. As we make important progress vaccinating those at greatest risk of death, we are able take these first small steps to reunite grandparents with their grandchildren and offer a narrow path forward for people to gather again. I assure you these are just the first steps; we hope to continue to widen this path in the days and weeks

ahead. There is light at the end of the tunnel, but we must walk to get there safely, we cannot run."

These changes come following updates to CDC guidance (https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/clinical-considerations.html) which states, "Fully vaccinated persons who meet criteria will no longer be required to quarantine following an exposure to someone with COVID-19," and increasing evidence showing vaccines are not only effective at preventing infection, but also at preventing spread of the virus from vaccinated individuals.

"These policy changes represent the positive direction the state is headed in putting this virus behind us," said Agency of Commerce and Community Development Secretary Lindsay Kurrle. "We realize many Vermonters and Vermont businesses will have questions about how this impacts certain operating restrictions and guidance currently in place. We are looking at how multi-family gathering changes can be safely and properly implemented across sectors and intend to offer additional guidance soon. We are working diligently to reopen our economy while keeping safety our top priority."

While travel and gathering restrictions are changing for those vaccinated, State officials noted all public health mitigation measures and guidelines remain in place while it works to vaccinate those at greatest risk of death and severe illness. Vermonters and visitors, including those vaccinated, must still abide by measures, such as facial coverings, physical distancing and current capacity limitations.

"The changes announced today are a direct result of our steady progress, but it is important that we stay focused," said Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD. "Being vaccinated and following the prevention efforts – wearing masks, keeping 6-feet apart and avoiding crowded places – are essential to ending this pandemic and getting back to normal. It's a positive feedback loop, giving the virus fewer people to infect and make ill – which is the best way we can keep moving forward."

Find the full guidance at the ACCD website can be viewed by clicking here. (https://accd.vermont.gov/news/update-new-work-safe-additions-be-smart-stay-safe-order)

For more information on:

- COVID-19 health information, guidance and case data, visit www.healthvermont.gov/covid19 (http://www.healthvermont.gov/covid19).
- The Governor's actions, visit governor.vermont.gov/covid19response (https://governor.vermont.gov/covid19response).

- The state's modeling, visit https://dfr.vermont.gov/about-us/covid-19/modeling (https://dfr.vermont.gov/about-us/covid-19/modeling).

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^ TOP OF THE PAGE

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