



Good afternoon,

Please see the Press Release below. All Vermont COVID-19 restrictions are being lifted and the Vermont State of Emergency will end tomorrow June 15th. For details on which state restrictions are being lifted, see below:

ALL state restrictions are being lifted.

This has been a year of both profound loss and discovery, and no two experiences have been the same. We've lost time and gained perspective. I am filled with gratitude for all Vermonters who peaceably helped in a million different ways. Thank you for the personal sacrifices you each made with your family and friends, your businesses and your community.

Loss of freedom is counter intuitive to what America means. For those Vermonters who complied but continually questioned the mandated and requested loss of freedoms – while still respecting and caring for neighbors, businesses and country – thank you. Freedom is precious. So are compassion and community.

Here's to perseverance!
– Laura

GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ANNOUNCES STATE HAS REACHED ITS 80% VACCINATION GOAL; LIFTS ALL STATE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott today announced that 80.2% of Vermont’s eligible population – those age 12 and older – have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, making it the first state to reach this major milestone.

Governor Scott also announced [he has rescinded all state COVID-19 restrictions](#). Additionally, Vermont’s State of Emergency, slated to expire on June 15, will not be renewed.

“Now that we have hit 80%, as promised and effective immediately, I am lifting all remaining state pandemic restrictions and the State of Emergency will formally end at midnight June 15,” announced Governor Scott at a press conference Monday. “And here’s why: Because it’s safe to do so. It is safe because Vermonters have done their part to keep spread of the virus low throughout the pandemic and stepped up to get vaccinated. In fact, no state in the nation is in a better or safer position to do this than we are.”

At 80% of the eligible population, Vermont has also administered at least one dose of vaccine to 81.8% of Vermonters aged 18 and older – exceeding President Biden’s goal of 70% of those 18 and older, and 70.8% of its total population. Vermont ranks first in the nation on the number of vaccines administered per capita, the percent of its population with at least one dose, and the percent of its population fully vaccinated. Since the start of the pandemic, Vermont also has the lowest number of cases and deaths per capita in the continental U.S. Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD, explained the impact vaccination has had in this achievement, and joined Governor Scott in making clear the state would continue its robust vaccination efforts beyond this milestone.

“Our high vaccination rates will help keep coronavirus activity at historically low levels,” said Dr. Levine. “This means fewer chances for COVID to spread between people and throughout our communities, fewer if any hospitalizations, and, importantly, prevent more loss of life from the virus. It also means less opportunity for mutations and more virulent strains from developing. This protection is what is allowing us to lift restrictions today – that is public health at work – but that work is far from over. We will continue getting as many Vermonters vaccinated as possible to keep this protection as strong as we can.”

Following the [Vermont Forward plan](#), all remaining state restrictions have been lifted, though some situations are governed by federal guidelines, like public transportation and long-term care facilities. The plan will continue to link to operational considerations for certain sectors from the Vermont Department of Health. Vermonters can find that information at Vermont.gov/Vermont-Forward.

To ensure continuation of federal funding for certain programs, as the Governor has previously indicated, he will also sign an Executive Order issued under his general authority. This order will continue Vermont National Guard involvement with COVID-19 recovery operations, ensure continued cooperation and coordination among state agencies as necessary and for the two-week period between the expiration of the Emergency Declaration and July 1, when recently enacted legislation makes it permanent, allow bars and restaurants to continue pick-up and delivery of alcoholic beverages.

The Governor and his team thanked Vermonters for their commitment and perseverance throughout the pandemic, and for their trust in the science, particularly throughout this vaccination effort.

They also recognized the many partners in this effort, including employees in agencies and departments across state government, Vermont’s state legislators and congressional

delegation, the Vermont National Guard, healthcare providers and frontline workers, municipal leaders and more. On the vaccination effort specifically, it also included emergency medical service (EMS) crews, the Medical Reserve Corps, primary care providers, all Vermont hospitals, Federally Qualified Health Centers, pharmacies, schools, colleges, businesses, congregate housing and equity support and advocacy groups, and more.

“The ingenuity, creativity and dedication of all Vermonters to their friends and families, to their neighbors and to their communities, has been incredible and we should all be very proud. Through it all, we’ve shown the nation and much of the world how to respond when there is no playbook, and how to do it with civility and respect,” added Governor Scott. “When America needs to find its path forward to solve problems and help people; when, in dark times, our country needs a state to light the way, Vermonters will always step up and lead the charge.”

Vaccines continue to be widely available across the state. 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.

Secretary of State Jim Condos Issues Open Meeting Law Guidance in Advance of Declared State of Emergency Expiration

Montpelier, VT – Secretary of State Jim Condos has issued new guidance regarding compliance with Vermont Open Meeting Law provisions, following the Governor’s decision to let the state of emergency, declared in 2020 in response to COVID-19, lapse. The state of emergency will expire on June 15th at midnight, according to statements made by the Governor. As a result of this decision, the temporary open meeting measures enacted by the Vermont Legislature tied to the declared emergency will no longer be in effect as of 12:01am on Wednesday, June 16th.

Among these measures are [Act 92](#) and [Act 113](#) of 2020, which temporarily amended the Open Meeting Law (OML) to allow for fully remote public meetings and electronic posting of notices.

“Vermont’s public servants have made it clear that our government can still operate and make critical decisions during a public health emergency without sacrificing the right of Vermonters to know how their government is making those decisions and their right to participate in the process,” said Condos. “As we transition towards our shared ‘new normal,’ it is vital that we use the many successes, best practices, and lessons learned from the last 15 months to improve how we, as trusted public officials, best serve the public.”

Public bodies must now comply with the long-standing OML as it appears in [1 V.S.A. §§ 310-314](#).

This means:

- A physical meeting location for public participation must be provided.
- Members of public bodies may still attend meetings remotely.
- Public bodies should review the OML’s advance notice requirements which requires physical posting of notices.
- Meeting minutes must be made available after five calendar days from the date of the meeting.

More detailed guidance can be found on the [Secretary of State’s website](#).

“Throughout the pandemic the way we have had to conduct open meetings to keep our communities safe has shown that allowing for remote public access increases both participation and accountability,” said Deputy Secretary of State Chris Winters. “Even though the law is reverting back we strongly encourage public bodies to continue use of these proven tools to better enable all members of the public, including those who have limitations that may preclude physical attendance, to have their voices heard in their local government. Supporting the right of all Vermonters to express their opinions on matters considered is something we all must strive for.

The Secretary of State’s office would like to thank Vermont’s hard-working board members and municipal officials for everything they are doing to serve our Vermont communities, especially during the challenges presented over the last 15 months. “If there is a silver lining to be found among the tragedies of 2020, it is that Vermonters have found innovative ways to communicate and participate in state and local democracy. We are hopeful these lessons learned translate into future best practices,” said Condos

As always, if you have suggestions, concerns or critiques please be in touch so we can schedule time to discuss them.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions, or if you need assistance navigating government services at (802) 384-0233 or lsibilia@leg.state.vt.us. Follow my regular posts online at <http://www.laurasibiliavt.com>

Kind regards,
Rep. Laura Sibilia
Dover, Readsboro, Searsburg, Somerset, Stamford, Wardsboro, Whitingham