



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

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**GOVERNOR MURPHY, GOVERNOR CUOMO AND GOVERNOR
LAMONT ANNOUNCE SIGNIFICANT EASING OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC
RESTRICTIONS ON BUSINESSES, GATHERINGS AND VENUES**

*New Jersey, New York and Connecticut to Lift Most Industry Capacity Restrictions Beginning
May 19 Given Vaccination Progress and COVID-19 Case Decline*

*Business Capacity Limits to Be Replaced with Space Available to Maintain Six Feet of Social
Distancing on May 19 in New Jersey and New York*

*Outdoor Social Gathering Limit Increases to 500 on May 10 in New York; Indoor Social
Gathering Limit Increases to 250 on May 19 in New York*

*Outdoor Residential Gathering Limit is Removed and Indoor Residential Gathering Limit
Increases to 50 on May 19 in New York*

*Large-Scale Indoor Venue Capacity Increases to 30% and Large-Scale Outdoor Venue Capacity
Increases to 33% on May 19, Proof of Vaccination or Recent Negative Test Still Required in
New York*

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy, New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, and Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont today announced a significant easing of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions on the region's businesses, venues and gatherings given significant progress in vaccinations and sustained reduction in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations.

"With our COVID-19 numbers, particularly hospitalizations, trending decisively in the right direction and our vaccination goals within reach, now is the time to take major steps to reopen our economy and loosen both indoor and outdoor gathering and capacity restrictions," **said Governor Murphy.** "We've done this the right way, in partnership with our neighboring states of New York and Connecticut, and by allowing data, science, and public health to guide our decision-making. Over these next few weeks, I encourage all remaining eligible New Jerseyans to get vaccinated so we can continue fighting back against this virus and move toward a 'new normal' for ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones."

"The tide is turning against COVID-19 in New York, and thanks to our increasing vaccination rates, as well as our successful, data-based regional approach, we're able to take more steps to reopen our economy, help businesses and workers, and keep moving towards returning to normal," **Governor Cuomo said.** "Thanks to the hard work of New Yorkers and our partners in government, we are now able to increase capacity limits for businesses, event venues and residences to reflect what we're seeing in the COVID data. Maintaining this progress is critical and in order to keep moving in a positive direction, New Yorkers must continue to take all the proper precautions. If we let up now, we could slide backwards and that is something nobody wants. So, let's be safe and for anyone who has yet to be vaccinated, please do so as soon as you can. With the addition of walk-in appointments, we've made it as easy as every to get your shot, so there are truly no excuses."

"Our region has led by example since the beginning of the pandemic, taking the virus seriously and working collaboratively across state lines to the benefit of all of our residents," **said Governor Lamont.** "We were able announce the elimination of business restrictions due to a nation-leading vaccine distribution program which benefits all Connecticut residents, and our neighbors in New York and New Jersey."

New Jersey and New York Announce Today:

Social Distance-based Business Capacities

Effective May 19, most business capacities—which are currently based upon percentage of maximum occupancy—will be removed in New Jersey and New York. Businesses will only be limited by the space available for patrons or parties of patrons to maintain the required social distance of 6 feet. This new distance-based maximum capacity will apply across commercial settings, including retail, food services, gyms and fitness centers, amusement and family entertainment, hair salons, barber shops and other personal care services, among other settings. It will also apply in houses of worship.

Increase in Social and Residential Gathering Limits

In New York beginning May 10, the outdoor social gathering limit will increase from 200 to 500 people. Beginning May 19, the indoor social gathering limit will increase from 100 to 250 people. Also, the outdoor residential gathering limit of 25 people will be removed, reverting to the social gathering limit of 500 people with space for appropriate social distancing, and the indoor residential gathering limit will increase from 10 to 50 people. In New York, any event gatherings in excess of the social gathering limits may only occur if all individuals present proof of full vaccination status or recent negative COVID-19 test result.

Event Venues

Congregate commercial and social events in New York—such as those at venues that host sports competitions, performing arts and live entertainment, and catered receptions—can exceed the social gathering limits of 500 people outdoors or 250 people indoors if all attendees over the age of four present either proof of full vaccination status or recent negative COVID-19 test result and the required social distancing can be accommodated.

Starting May 19, large-scale indoor event venues will operate at 30 percent capacity, which is an increase from the current 10 percent capacity limit. Large-scale outdoor event venues will operate at 33 percent. Social distancing, masks, and other applicable health protocols will still apply, including the requirement of attendee proof of full vaccination or recent negative COVID-19 test result.

Industry Reopening Requirements

While most industry capacity restrictions will be lifted, industry-specific requirements will remain in effect for a longer period of time, including state or local health authority event notification, health screening, contact information for tracing, enhanced air handling and building system standards, hand hygiene, and environmental cleaning and disinfection protocols. The State will continue to provide additional guidance on these provisions as they apply to each industry.

Today's announcement builds on Governor Cuomo's recent measures to further reopen the economy amid a steady decline in New York's COVID-19 positivity and hospitalization rates. On April 30, Governor Cuomo announced that [New York City indoor dining](#) will expand to 75 percent capacity beginning May 7, bringing New York City in line with the rest of New York. The Governor also announced that hair salons, barber shops and other personal care services will expand to 75 percent capacity beginning May 7. New York City gyms and fitness centers will expand to 50 percent capacity beginning May 15. On April 28, Governor Cuomo announced that the [food and beverage service, and catered event, curfews](#) would end this month.

Connecticut Previously Announced:

- Starting May 1: The elimination of outdoor restrictions including limits on table sizes, and the requirement that food be served with alcohol
- Starting May 19: The elimination of all remaining business restrictions including those on capacity limits at large event venues in the state