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## LOOSENING OF COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS “WELCOME NEWS” FOR YUKON’S TOURISM INDUSTRY

Whitehorse: Yukon’s decimated tourism industry received some long-awaited good news Wednesday with the announcement that starting May 25 fully vaccinated Canadians will no longer be required to self-isolate when entering the territory. The previous self-isolation requirements essentially eliminated all tourism since the closure of the Yukon-B.C. bubble in November.

Chair of the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon, Neil Hartling, says that this is “welcome news for the industry” but noted that these new measures will not singlehandedly save the industry. “We are cautiously optimistic that the path forward will remain open. This season will not be robust, but it is an important step towards reopening”.

Hartling also mentioned the continued need for funding and support for Yukon’s tourism industry through all stages of the pandemic, including reopening. “Tourism businesses have experienced unprecedented losses this year and will need continued and targeted support at every stage as they build back their teams and update their offerings”.

These new loosened COVID-19 protocols were introduced largely due to the high vaccine uptake in the Yukon and TIA Yukon hopes that the new self-isolation exemption for vaccinated people will encourage more Yukoners and Canadians to get their vaccinations.

“We have known from the beginning of the pandemic that vaccination would be the way out. Now that there is a tangible incentive to get vaccinated, we hope it will encourage those who are hesitant to get the shot”, Hartling said.

Along with loosened self-isolation rules, May 25 will see restaurants and bars opening at full capacity across the territory. TIA Yukon says that this is another important step on the long path to recovery. “The tourism industry depends on tourism services, such as bars and restaurants, and giving them the green light to operate at full capacity again will give a much-needed boost to the entire industry”.

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