



CANNABIS POLICY
RESOURCE CENTER



COMMUNICATING ABOUT CANNABIS

A Guide for Government Officials



Introduction



This guide reviews what your residents most need to know about cannabis.

This includes important messages about law and health.

Overall, residents should know that while the legality of cannabis has changed, cannabis use still carries both health and legal risks, much like alcohol or tobacco. Youth access to cannabis needs to be prevented because they are most vulnerable to its risks.

Residents are likely to also wonder about delta-8 and other hemp-derived products. This guide provides some information, and more can be found on our website.



Definitions



There are two terms most people are familiar with: marijuana and cannabis.

Cannabis is a broad term and includes marijuana, hemp, and other products made from the cannabis plant.

Marijuana's definition is looser – it can be a legal definition that includes any cannabis plant with more than 0.3% delta-9 thc, but can also refer directly to smoked or combustible cannabis products. It is also used generally to refer to cannabis as a synonym. The CPRC prefers to use the term cannabis.

Both marijuana products and cannabis products derived from hemp can produce psychoactive effects or “highs.”

Cannabis Effects

Cannabis use can impair driving. It can cause health effects in pregnant people. People under 25 are most likely to experience psychological effects.

Cannabis products are generally much stronger today than in the past. Overuse is likely. Cannabis edibles can take several hours to produce an effect, so people often end up overusing easily while waiting for the effects. Other cannabis methods of use, like dabbing, can produce a very strong effect very quickly.

Cannabis products can poison young children and pets. People with young children or pets at home are encouraged to lock up their cannabis products in child-proof, odor-proof containers. If you suspect cannabis poisoning, please call the Illinois Poison Center: 1-800-222-1222.

Residents Need to Know:

- ⇒ Cannabis use in public is prohibited.
- ⇒ In vehicles cannabis must be stored in a secured, sealed or resealable, odor-proof, child-resistant cannabis container that is inaccessible.
- ⇒ Cannabis can impair your driving ability, and driving under the influence of cannabis is illegal.
- ⇒ Taking cannabis across state lines is illegal.
- ⇒ Use by people under 21, except in medical circumstances and when recommended by a doctor, is prohibited.

Cannabis in Communities

Various businesses may be selling cannabis in a community.

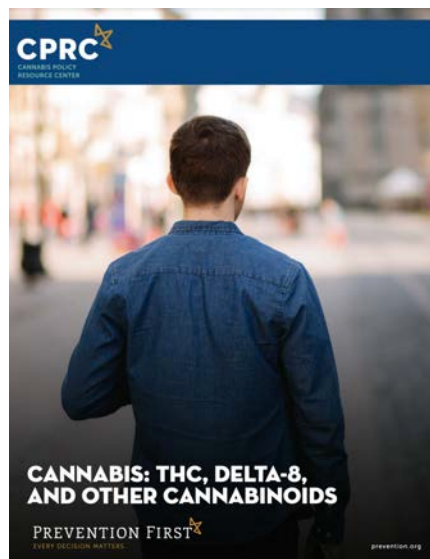
Dispensaries licensed by the state to sell cannabis products may be permitted or not by local ordinance. These businesses sell cannabis products intended to be consumed off-premise.

Municipalities in Illinois can also permit on-premise sales - locations where consumers can purchase and consume cannabis on site.

Cannabis can also be found outside of dispensaries when they are made from hemp. Hemp-derived cannabis products are largely unregulated and can also contain intoxicating compounds. Hemp-derived products are more likely to be mislabeled.

These products are available due to gaps in existing state and federal laws.

The CPRC hosts resources on our webpage at prevention.org about hemp-derived cannabis products, including these.



WONDERING ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CANNABIS PRODUCTS?

The difference between Marijuana and Hemp, and their derivatives, starts with a percentage:

0.3%

Amount of Delta-9 THC present in the cannabis plant

MARIJUANA	HEMP
<p>These products can only be legally obtained from a licensed dispensary in Illinois.</p>	<p>Due to regulatory differences, products with hemp-derived compounds can be found for sale in various locations.</p>
<p>The main psychoactive compound in cannabis, Delta-9 THC, is present at levels above 0.3%.</p>	<p>Delta-9 THC is present at levels below 0.3%. Hemp was made legal on a federal level with passage of the 2018 Farm Bill.</p>

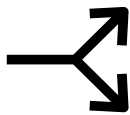


Cannabis Taxes



Residents may have questions about how the tax dollars collected from cannabis revenue are distributed and spent. This is a brief overview.

Taxes are distributed to



- Cannabis regulation, including product safety, enforcement, public education
- Deposits into general revenue funds and budget stabilization
- Distributions to local and county governments
- Expungement efforts

Expungement: Opportunities exist to have marijuana-related offenses removed from a person's legal record. While Illinois expunged many cannabis offenses automatically, other charges made in local court systems require additional steps.



Cannabis Marketing

Communities typically regulate the way businesses can advertise within their jurisdiction.

For cannabis businesses, the state has imposed several regulations.

Cannabis businesses cannot make any health claims about cannabis. They cannot use imagery that appeals to children, nor can they depict actual consumption.

Residents should know that if they see any cannabis marketing that violates these rules, they can report it to the Illinois Department of Financial and Profession Regulation Complaint Intake Unit: fpr.recomplaint@illinois.gov, or (312) 793-8724.



Additional Resources



Where can officials go for more information?

Cannabis Regulation Oversight Officer
cannabis.illinois.gov

Illinois Municipal League
iml.org

Getting it Right from the Start
gettingitrightfromthestart.org

Cannabis Policy Resource Center at Prevention First
prevention.org/cannabis-policy-resource-center

Where can residents go for more information?

National Institutes on Drug Abuse
nida.gov

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
samhsa.gov

Let's Talk Cannabis
prevention.org/lets-talk-cannabis/

Cannabis Policy Resource Center at Prevention First
prevention.org/cannabis-policy-resource-center

Illinois Poison Center
1-800-222-1222



PREVENTION FIRST

EVERY DECISION MATTERS.

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