

Public Health and Safety Updates from the Maryland Cannabis Administration

Howard County Local Health Improvement Coalition

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Who regulates cannabis in Maryland?

In 2023, MCA became an independent agency that provide services to patients, adult consumers, providers, caregivers, and Maryland businesses.

Maryland Cannabis Administration (MCA)

oversees all licensing, registration, inspection, and testing measures pertaining to Maryland's medical and adult-use cannabis program.

Maryland's medical program began in 2017 and currently has about 115,000 certified medical patients.



BACKGROUND ON LEGALIZATION IN MARYLAND



Adult-use Cannabis Legalization

**WHAT DO I
NEED TO KNOW?**



- Maryland voters passed a referendum legalizing cannabis for personal use for adults 21+ as of 7/1/23. Cannabis can only be sold in licensed dispensaries with valid ID.
- Dispensaries sell both medical + adult-use cannabis.
- The Cannabis Reform Act (CRA) (2023 HB556/SB516) established a framework for legal sales.
- CRA advances social equity through new cannabis business licensing opportunities and community reinvestment goals to assist communities impacted by cannabis criminalization.



Adult-use Cannabis Legalization

**WHAT DO I
NEED TO KNOW?**



- **Cannabis can't** be smoked in public spaces (streets, sidewalks, parks, moving cars).
- **Employers and landlords can** have stricter cannabis-related policies.
- **It remains illegal to drive** under the influence of cannabis.
- **Cannabis remains illegal under federal law**, and you may not carry or transport cannabis over state lines. It's illegal to send cannabis through the US mail.



Adult-Use Possession Limits

Establishes “Personal use amount” of:

1.5 oz flower



12 g of concentrates/
vape/cartridges



750 mg of Delta-9 THC (edibles)



Home Grow

Allows for up to two plants to be grown per residence, inside and out of public view.

Medical Patients allowed four plants to be grown per residence, inside and out of public view.

*Note: Edibles sold on the Adult-Use market **may not exceed 10 mg THC per unit and 100 mg THC per package.***

Protections in place to reduce youth use

The Cannabis Reform Act (CRA) and regulations include promising and best practices to reduce youth access and appeal.

- **Advertising restrictions** – prohibits youth appealing ads; billboards (except on licensed premises); sponsorships; giveaways; samples; coupons; and TV, radio, internet, or print ads (unless $\geq 85\%$ of the audience is 21+); requires age gating for websites.
- **Point-of-sale controls** – requires age verification, retailer education, limited hours of operation.
- **Product controls** – requires edible products only in geometric shapes; prohibits youth-appealing shapes (resembling candy, animals, etc.).

I CAN ONLY BUY IT IF I'M 21+?

Yes. Like tobacco and alcohol, the legal purchase age for adult-use cannabis in Maryland is 21 or older. A valid, government ID (driver's license or state-issued ID card, passport/passport card, military ID, tribal card) is required at the point of sale. Legal purchase and possession limits for personal use of cannabis include up to 1.5 ounces of cannabis flower (including joints and pre-rolls), 12 grams of concentrated cannabis (vape products), or a total amount of edible cannabis products that does not exceed 750 milligrams THC.

To learn more, visit cannabis.maryland.gov

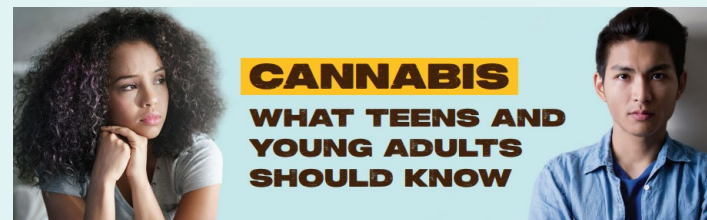
Be Informed. Be Responsible. Be Safe.



Protections in place to reduce youth use

The Cannabis Reform Act (CRA) and emergency regulations include promising and best practices to reduce youth access and appeal.

- **Packaging, labeling, product limits** – prohibits youth-appealing imagery (e.g. cartoons, candy) on packaging; potency caps; mandates specific warning and informational labels, including THC symbol
- **Zoning** – limits retail density, especially near youth-serving locations
- **Price regulations** – sets 9% sales and use tax (same as alcohol tax)
- **Smoke-free policies** – including school policies (tobacco, vape, cannabis)
- **Family, school, and community-based education**



Point of Sale Educational Materials for Adults 21+

Available in English and Spanish at cannabis.maryland.gov

Hey Maryland
DID YOU KNOW?
BE INFORMED. BE RESPONSIBLE. BE SAFE.

Guide to Responsible Cannabis Consumption for Adults 21+

Hey Maryland
DID YOU KNOW?
BE INFORMED. BE RESPONSIBLE. BE SAFE.

Pocket Guide for Responsible Cannabis Consumption

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Hey Maryland
DID YOU KNOW?
BE INFORMED. BE RESPONSIBLE. BE SAFE.

GUIDE TO ADULT-USE CANNABIS IN MARYLAND

Know the Laws

PURCHASE & POSSESSION
Adults 21+ with valid ID can purchase and possess up to:
• 1.5 ounces of flower
• 12 grams of concentrates
• Edible products up to 750 mg THC

EMPLOYMENT
Check with your employer about their policies. The new law does not prevent employers from drug testing employees.

HOME GROW
Adults 21+ can grow 2 indoor plants per household, out of view. Landlords and property managers may have restrictions.

DUI
If you feel different, you drive different. Driving under the influence of cannabis is illegal and can lead to a DUI.

KEEP IN-STATE
Cannabis is federally illegal. This means you can't:
• Use or possess on federal property (parks, military bases, etc.)
• Mail any cannabis product
• Transport it across state lines

RESALE
It is illegal for anyone other than a licensed dispensary to sell cannabis.

Use Responsibly

START LOW, GO SLOW
Start with a low dose and wait to feel the effects before using more. Effects can vary from person to person, and day to day. It may take 2 hours or more for edibles to "kick in."

SMOKE-FREE SPACES
Cannabis can't be smoked in public spaces, including streets and sidewalks, parks and schools, bars and restaurants, and on public transportation.

SAFE STORAGE
Keep all cannabis products:
• Locked up
• Out of reach and out of sight
• In their original child-resistant packaging

If you have consumed too much, call the Maryland Poison Center, 800-222-1222.

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**FIRST TIME?
BEEN A WHILE?**
Get tips on safe and responsible cannabis consumption. And more!

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Too much cannabis? Child or pet exposure?

HELPLINES

Maryland Poison Center, 800-222-1222
Pet Poison Hotline, 855-764-7661 (fee applies)
Mental health support, call or text 988
Serious reaction, call 911

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NEW IN 2024



Social Equity License Drawings: March 14 and June 28, 2024

Number* of Licensees/ Types per Jurisdiction

Maryland Jurisdictions	Existing Licensees	New Licensees	Total Dispensaries per Jurisdiction	Maryland Regions	Counties per Region	Existing Licensees		New Licensees				Total Licensees per Region	
	Standard Dispensaries					Standard Grower	Standard Processor	Standard Grower	Micro Grower	Standard Processor	Micro Processor		Micro Dispensary
Allegany	2	1	3	Western Region	Allegany	7	5	4	6	8	6	2	38
Anne Arundel	9	5	14		Carroll								
Baltimore City	9	11	20		Frederick								
Baltimore	16	6	22		Garrett								
Calvert*	1	3	4		Montgomery								
Caroline	0	1	1		Washington								
Carroll	2	2	4	Southern Region	Anne Arundel	3	2	4	6	8	6	2	31
Cecil	2	2	4		Calvert								
Charles	3	2	5		Charles								
Dorchester	1	1	2		Prince George's								
Frederick	6	3	9		St. Mary's								
Garrett	0	1	1		Baltimore								
Harford	4	3	7	Central Region	Baltimore City	4	3	4	6	8	6	2	33
Howard	7	3	10		Cecil								
Kent	0	1	1		Harford								
Montgomery	18	9	27		Howard								
Prince George's	10	9	19		Caroline								
Queen Anne's	1	1	2		Dorchester								
Somerset	0	1	1	Eastern Region	Kent	4	5	4	6	8	6	2	35
St. Mary's	1	2	3		Queen Anne's								
Talbot*	0	2	2		Somerset								
Washington	1	3	4		Talbot								
Wicomico	1	2	3		Wicomico								
Worcester	2	1	3		Worcester								
Total	96	75	171			18	15	16	24	32	24	8	137
Calvert and Talbot's Standard Dispensary lotteries are currently held up pending litigation											All Licensees	308	

**Chart is reflective of 3/14 drawing, an additional 30 licensees were selected in June.*



Regulatory Updates

- Emergency regulations took effect July 1, 2023, largely mirroring existing Maryland Medical Cannabis Commission's (MMCC) regulations for many requirements that didn't change with adult-use legalization.
- Permanent regulations took effect in June 2024 that clarify, update, and improve regulatory language where needed.
- Summary of changes:
 - Curbside pick-up and drive-through dispensing options allowable for all consumers.
 - 12-hour limit/hours of operation removed and allowable hours extended by one hour to 11pm.
 - Adult-use consumers may purchase concentrated products not to exceed 1 gram weight.
 - Establish requirements for micro dispensaries to govern transport and storage.

Introducing “BeCannabisSmart”

New branding for public health and safety education campaigns



BeCannabisSmart

Cannabis is legal for adults 21+ in Maryland.

Know the laws, be safe, and learn how to protect youth.
Be informed. Be responsible. Be Cannabis Smart.

- Focus-group tested tagline
- Emphasizes **informed, responsible, safe** consumption for adults who choose to consume and focuses on protecting high risk populations.
- <https://cannabis.maryland.gov/Pages/BeCannabisSmart.aspx>
- Campaigns co-branded with MDH



BeCannabisSmart: cannabis.maryland.gov

Let's get started!

[Drugged Driving](#)



[Smoke-free Spaces](#)

[Safe Storage](#)

[Pregnancy & Breastfeeding](#)

[Preventing Youth Use](#)

[Parents/Caregivers and Educators](#)

[Consuming Cannabis 101](#)

[What's Legal](#)

[Resources & Helplines](#)

Drugged Driving – Take it seriously. Respect the effect.

Driving even a little high can wreck you.

Cannabis and driving don't mix! Being even a little high behind the wheel can wreck you—protect yourself and others on the road.



How does cannabis influence my driving?

Cannabis affects areas of the brain that control balance, coordination, memory, and judgment.¹ On the road, this can result in slower reaction time, decreased ability to concentrate and make decisions, and reduced awareness of time and distance, which are critical for safe and alert driving.

How long should I wait to drive after using cannabis?

Research suggests waiting six hours after using cannabis before driving.² However, effects from edibles can be delayed, and last up to 12 hours. If you've mixed cannabis with other substances like alcohol, plan to wait even longer before driving. Remember—if you feel different, you drive different.

Can I get a DUI?

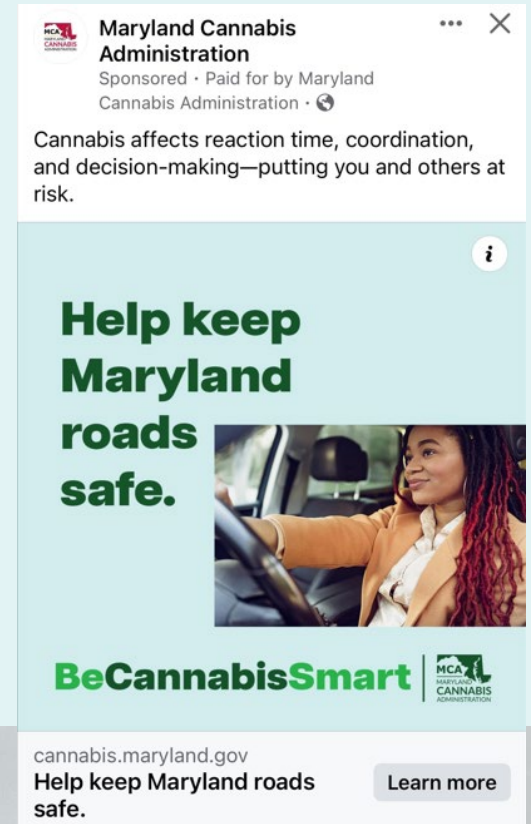
Yes. Using cannabis while driving (by a driver or passenger) and driving under the influence of cannabis is against the law. If you are impaired while driving, you can get a DUI – even as a certified patient with a medical card.

Drugged Driving Campaign Rollout

Ads started on “4/20” through 6/30 with placement on billboards, social media, TV/ streaming, buses, and bar media.

Core messages and call to action:

- Consuming cannabis before or while driving is unsafe and illegal
- Even *small* amounts of cannabis can affect coordination and delay split-second decision-making
- Effects of edibles can be delayed and long-lasting
- Protect yourself and others by planning a safe and sober ride



BeCannabisSmart: cannabis.maryland.gov

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[Drugged Driving](#)

[Smoke-free Spaces](#)



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Smoke-free Spaces: Respect each other.



Where *can* I smoke cannabis?

Generally speaking, it's legal to smoke cannabis in private homes and on private property. However, if you rent or live in an HOA, additional restrictions may apply. Check your rental or HOA agreement.

Where *can't* I smoke cannabis?

Smoking cannabis is not permitted in indoor and outdoor public spaces. That means parks and playgrounds, streets and sidewalks, bars and restaurants, moving cars* and public transportation (buses, vans, trains, cabs, limousines).

**Smoking in moving cars is a safety risk and exposes other occupants to secondhand smoke odor and chemicals.*

What else do I need to know?

Smoking cannabis in public spaces can expose others—including children—to secondhand smoke. Plus, not everyone enjoys the smell. By respecting smoke-free spaces and the preferences of others, you can help contribute to a positive cannabis culture within your community.

Smoke-free public and outdoor spaces

Ads identify outdoor and public places where smoking is not permitted and emphasize everyone's role in protecting the vibrancy of Maryland's public and outdoor spaces. Beach/boardwalk, billboards, transit, TV, social media, bars/restaurants, festivals/special events (stadiums, concert venues).



OC Mobile Truck



BeCannabisSmart  

Truck Side Video: Scene 1



BeCannabisSmart  

Truck Side Video: Scene 2



BeCannabisSmart  

Truck Side Video: Scene 3



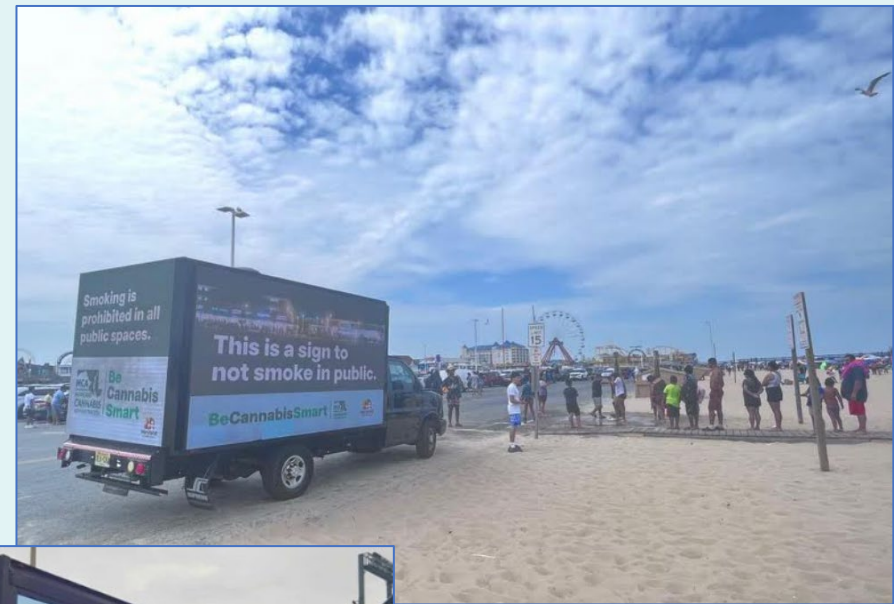
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Truck Side Video: Scene 4



BeCannabisSmart  

Truck Side Video: Scene 5



OC Mobile Truck



TV, Streaming, and Social Media Videos



BeCannabisSmart: cannabis.maryland.gov

Let's get started!

[Drugged Driving](#)

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[Safe Storage](#)



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[Preventing Youth Use](#)

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Safe storage: Lock it up. Every time!



Cannabis can be toxic to kids (and pets).

Kids are curious. Many edible cannabis products look and taste like candy, drinks, or baked goods that may appear harmless. And if kids find it -- left out on a counter, in the fridge, or in a purse or

Cannabis isn't for kids. Keep them safe.

- All edibles in licensed dispensaries in Maryland are required to be sold in child-resistant packaging. Keep products in the original packaging so you know what



Safe Storage Campaign

Ads informed by partnership with Maryland Poison Center. Messages identify common scenarios where accidental ingestion can happen (cannabis left out on counter, placed in fridge, stored in a purse). More PSAs and ad content is planned for fall 2024.

Core messages and call to action:

- Like medicines, alcohol, or cleaning products, cannabis can be toxic to children and pets.
- Store cannabis up, away, and out of sight. Lock it up if possible.



Keep cannabis out of sight and out of reach.

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Maryland Poison Center UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF PHARMACY



Cannabis can be toxic to kids.

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Cannabis isn't for kids.
Store it up, away, and out of sight.

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Maryland Poison Center UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF PHARMACY



Cannabis can be toxic to kids, too. Store it safely.

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Maryland DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Maryland Poison Center UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF PHARMACY



Keep them safe. Lock up your cannabis.

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Maryland DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Maryland Poison Center UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

BeCannabisSmart toolkit for LHDs and public health partners

- Placement-ready billboards, social media, fact sheets and more for all campaigns.
- Many assets are “taggable” with your logo.
- Spanish language assets included.
- All ads co-branded with MDH. Safe storage assets also co-branded with Maryland Poison Center.



Customizable templates available through [MCA Responsible Use Media Toolkit Link](#)



New! Outdoor and Summer Safety Fact Sheet

Available in the **toolkit** and on the BeCannabisSmart landing page, cannabis.maryland.gov. Fact sheets are double-sided in English and Spanish and taggable with your logo.

Other health and safety fact sheets in high resolution and double-sided EN/SP include:

- Drugged driving
- Safe storage
- Cannabis & Pregnancy and Breastfeeding
- Cannabis & Youth
- Cannabis & Parents/caregivers
- Plus, the Responsible Consumption Guide for Adults 21+ (SP version available)

CANNABIS: SEGURIDAD AL AIRE LIBRE

Para que Maryland siga siendo un lugar vibrante que todos puedan disfrutar, recuerde lo siguiente:

No se puede conducir si se consume cannabis.

- El consumo de cannabis afecta la coordinación, la toma de decisiones y el tiempo de reacción.
- Ya sea un bote, una moto de agua, un ATV, una motocicleta, un auto o una casa rodante, no es seguro conducir si consumió cannabis.
- Según las leyes federales y marítimas, es ilegal usar o tener cannabis en embarcaciones en aguas navegables (ríos, lagos, océanos) y en tierras federales, incluyendo parques nacionales.

El efecto del cannabis puede durar más tiempo de lo que piensa.

- Los efectos del cannabis pueden presentarse mucho después de consumirlo, y pueden durar hasta 12 horas, en especial con los productos comestibles con cannabis.
- Evite mezclar el cannabis con alcohol u otras drogas. Mezclar sustancias puede intensificar el efecto de formas impredecibles y aumentar el riesgo de daños o accidentes.



Fumar cannabis está prohibido en espacios públicos interiores y exteriores, acampar, parques, playas y parques estatales.



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cannabis.maryland.gov

CANNABIS AND OUTDOOR SAFETY

Keep Maryland vibrant and enjoyable for all with these reminders:



Cannabis and driving don't mix.

- Cannabis impairs coordination, judgement, and reaction time.
- Whether a boat, jet-ski, bike, ATV, motorcycle, car or RV, cannabis use is unsafe.
- Due to federal and maritime laws, cannabis use and possession is illegal on boats in navigable waters (rivers, lakes, oceans) and on federal land, including national parks.

The impairing effects last longer than you think.

- Intoxicating effects can be delayed and last up to 12 hours, especially with edibles.
- Avoid mixing cannabis with alcohol or other impairing substances. Mixing substances can intensify the intoxicating effects, increasing the risk of injury or harm.

Protect the environment.

- Cannabis litter can harm our beaches and bay, as well as pose health risks to pets and wildlife.
- Lit products may pose a wildfire risk. Always fully extinguish and dispose of cannabis litter properly.
- Not everyone enjoys the smell, and smoking cannabis in public can expose others to secondhand smoke.



Smoking cannabis is prohibited in all indoor and outdoor public places, including campgrounds, parks, beaches, and boardwalks.



Be Cannabis Smart



cannabis.maryland.gov

Stay informed!

How to connect with MCA and see the latest updates

Follow MCA

- Website, cannabis.maryland.gov
- Follow, tag, share our social media
 - Facebook:
facebook.com/MCAAdminOfficial/
 - Instagram: @mcadminoffical
 - Twitter: @MDCannabis

Contact us

- publichealth.mca@maryland.gov
- campaigns, educational materials, presentation requests, surveys/data collection
- policy.mca@maryland.gov -
policy-related questions

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