

Marijuana Fast Facts

Recreational use of marijuana is legal in Illinois as of January 1, 2020. The following information provides health and safety tips on both the Cannabis Regulation & Tax Act and what you need to know as an Illinois resident.

About the Illinois Law

- **Recreational marijuana use is legal only for those 21 years old and above**
 - The purchase and use of cannabis is illegal for anyone under the age of 21.
 - This does not apply to persons with state-issued registry card for qualifying medical conditions.
- A parent or guardian may not permit underage use on their property.
 - Violation of this will result in a Class A misdemeanor.
- A person 21 years of age and older cannot use cannabis in “close proximity” to anyone under 21.

Possession and use restrictions

- Marijuana use is **NOT** allowed:
 - On school grounds
 - In Motor vehicles
 - In any public place
 - While on duty as law enforcement, fire fighter, or commercial driver
 - In a private residence used as a day care
- Marijuana possession is **NOT** allowed:
 - On school grounds
 - On a school bus
 - In a private residence used as a day care
- Driving under the influence of marijuana is still **illegal**.
- In the workplace:
 - Employers are not required to permit marijuana use or to develop policies allowing marijuana use.
 - Employers can discipline or terminate employees for violating drug-free workplace policies.
- Home Grow
 - Only persons with a state-issued registry card and certified, qualifying medical condition can grow marijuana at home. The restrictions for home grow include:
 - The property owner &/or landlord must knowingly permit home grow.
 - The marijuana may not be sold or given away to others.
 - Plants must be in an enclosed, locked space, out of view from the public or neighbors.
 - This space must be locked with a lock/key different than the key used to enter the home.
 - This space can only be accessed by the person with the registry card.
 - No more than 5 plants can be grown per household, even if there is more than one registry cardholder living in the home.

About Health and Safety

For young adults under 21 years of age:

- You must be 21 to buy, use, possess, or transport marijuana.
- Your brain continues to develop until age 25 and studies have shown that marijuana use in young people can¹:
 - impair brain development
 - increase difficulty in staying focused
 - increase the risk for addiction
 - increase the risk of mental health issues
 - cause hallucinations, delusions, or paranoia

For adults over the age of 21:

- Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, more commonly known as THC, is the psychoactive component in marijuana; *the component that makes users feel "high."*
 - THC impacts normal brain function and development, even in adults. Cannabis use can lead to addiction. Research suggests that the earlier in life you begin, the greater the risk for addiction.
 - In addition to the effects listed above for persons under 21, these effects can be greater when combined with alcohol or other drug use.
- Cannabis affects everyone differently.
 - The THC component of today's marijuana is three times what it was 25 years ago.²
 - Know your dose (particularly with edibles). How you consume cannabis can affect the severity and duration of its effects.
 - Over-consumption can result in:
 - Hallucinations
 - Paranoia
 - Increased heart rate
 - Confusion
 - Poor judgement
 - Panic attacks
 - Nausea and vomiting
 - The CDC has recommended that people refrain from vaping any products containing THC and buying vaping products off the street, due to the outbreak of over 2,000 vaping-related lung injuries and over 35 deaths.
- Don't drive while high.
 - Driving under the influence of marijuana is still **illegal**. If you or someone you're with has been using, take public transportation, a ride share or call a sober friend to drive.
 - Having an open container of cannabis in a vehicle is **illegal**, even if you're a passenger.
- Don't consume cannabis if pregnant or breastfeeding.
 - There is no safe amount of cannabis while pregnant or breastfeeding, regardless of how you consume it.
 - THC can be transferred to your baby through your placenta or your breast milk.
 - Cannabis use during pregnancy is linked to low birth weight babies, which carries several health risks.³
 - If you are a current medical cannabis user or need assistance addressing morning sickness, call your medical provider.
- Safe storage- Keep cannabis in a child-resistant container, inside of a locked box or safe.

¹ National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teens

² Elshohly, M.A., Mehmedic, Z., Foster, S. (2016). Changes in Cannabis Potency Over the Last 2 Decades (1995-2014): Analysis of Current Data in the United States. *Biological Psychiatry*, 79(7), 613-619.

³ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2017. The health effects of cannabis and cannabinoids: Current state of evidence and recommendations for research. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.