



Legalization of Cannabis: What We Know and What You Can Do

Fact Sheet

From the Provincial Government*

1. You must be 19 or older to use, possess, buy and cultivate marijuana in the province of Ontario, the same age as purchasing and using alcohol. If 19 or older, you will be able to have up to 30 grams of cannabis at any one time and you will be able to grow up to four marijuana plants in your residence. However, this is less than 1% of our students.
2. You will only be able to order marijuana from a government website beginning Oct. 17. It will be available from the Ontario Cannabis Store (OCS) which will launch its official website on Oct. 17. This store will be able to sell dried marijuana, oils and accessories. They are not regulated to sell edibles but this will be added at a later date. All storefronts selling cannabis are now and will still be illegal after Oct. 17, until private licences will be issued on Apr. 1, 2019. The province of Ontario is giving municipalities until Jan. 22, 2019 to choose to opt out of allowing private storefront sales in their municipality.
3. Drug-impaired driving is a concern now and moving into legalization. In response, Ontario is establishing even tougher drug-impaired driving laws, including a zero-tolerance approach for young, novice and commercial drivers. Zero tolerance rules prohibiting young (age 21 and under) and novice (G1, G2, M1, M2) drivers from having the presence of a drug in their system, as detected by a federally approved oral fluid screening device. The penalties for being impaired from marijuana use are no different than those you would face from being impaired from using any other drug or alcohol. You can face licence suspension, vehicle impoundment, financial penalties, a criminal record and jail time.
4. You will be able to smoke marijuana wherever you can currently smoke cigarettes, for example, in most public spaces. You will not be able to smoke marijuana wherever tobacco smoking or vaping is not permitted. *Please note that these are the provincial regulations and by-laws could be different at a municipal level.
5. Medical cannabis has been legal since 2001. These policies and procedures will not change as a result of legalization.

From the Ministry of Education

6. Under the proposed legislation, a student under the influence or in possession of cannabis on school grounds and during school-related activities would remain an activity for which suspension would be considered (except for cannabis used for medical purposes and outlined in the student's Health Care Plan). Suspension would be required and expulsion would be considered if a student shares cannabis with anyone under the age of 19 years old.

- a. Suspension
 - i. Possessing alcohol or illegal drugs: “alcohol or illegal drugs” substituted with “alcohol, illegal drugs or, unless the pupil is a medical cannabis user, cannabis”
 - ii. Being under the influence of alcohol: “alcohol” substituted with “alcohol or, unless the pupil is a medical cannabis user, cannabis”
- b. Expulsion
 - i. Giving alcohol to a minor: “alcohol” substituted with “alcohol or cannabis”

From our Police and School Boards Protocol

- 7. The Police and School Boards Protocol has not changed. For any quantity of cannabis, administrators are to contact police through the Non-Emergency Line to commence an investigation and have YRP collect the cannabis.

Resources

- 8. The Ontario Ministry of Education, Canadian Centre for Substance Abuse and Health Canada have provided great resources to support staff, students and families’ understanding of cannabis and what legalization means, specifically:
 - a. [Cannabis Information for Educators](#)
 - b. [Cannabis Information for Students: Important Things to Know](#)
 - c. **Cannabis Information for Families**
 - i. [Cannabis: What Parents/Guardians and Caregivers Need to Know](#)
 - ii. [Cannabis Talk Kit: Know How to Talk With Your Teen](#)
- 9. The YRDSB also has resources to support cannabis education and other issues related to substance use, misuse and addictive behaviours for students, staff and school communities, including:
 - a. [Curriculum and Instructional Services Resources to Support Response to Legalization of Cannabis](#)
 - b. [Caring and Safe Schools Substance Misuse and Addictions - Awareness and Prevention Resources to Support Schools’ Comprehensive Plans](#)
 - i. This compiles all the Student, Staff and Family resources available through Caring and Safe Schools, Addictions Services of York Region, York Region Public Health, the York Regional Police and YouthSpeak.
- 10. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions, please reach out to:
 - a. [Dawn Laliberte](#), Principal, Caring and Safe Schools
 - b. [John Shep](#), Consultant, Caring and Safe Schools
 - c. [Julie Anderson](#), Curriculum Consultant - Health & Physical Education, Healthy Schools & Workplaces, Well-Being

***SOURCE:**