

Potential Implications of Legalization of Marijuana in Wisconsin



Potential Tax Revenue

From January to July 2018, Colorado collected over \$153 million in taxes, licenses and fee revenue from marijuana. This does not account for the added costs of enforcement and inspection.¹



Better Scientific Research

Legalization could remove barriers to scientific research, which would help expand what is known about the positive and negative effects of marijuana.



Effects on pregnant and breastfeeding women and babies

There is substantial evidence that smoking marijuana during pregnancy contributes to a lower birth weight baby.² Much is still unknown about impacts on breastfeeding. A recent study found that THC can be detected in breast milk 6 days after use.³



Potential for Fewer Drug Arrests

Marijuana possession arrests were 54% of all drug arrests in 2017 in Wisconsin.⁴ According to the ACLU, marijuana possession arrest rate for Black adults in the state is nearly six times higher than the arrest rate for White adults, while use rates are nearly the same.⁵



Marijuana Potency Danger

Potency of concentrated extract products has increased in Colorado after legalization.⁶ Concentrated extract is used in products like edibles and vape pens.



Youth Impact

Starting using marijuana at an earlier age is a risk factor for the development of problem marijuana use later.² According to the 2017 YRBS, 30% of Wisconsin High School students have ever used marijuana, and 16% currently use it.⁷



Potential for Job Creation

A report from New Frontier Data found that full legalization in all 50 states could add up to 1 million jobs by 2025.⁸



Worsens Respiratory Health

There is substantial evidence that smoking marijuana is associated with worse respiratory symptoms.² In Wisconsin, asthma affects 12% of adults and 11% of children.⁹



Symptom Relief

There is conclusive or substantial evidence that cannabis is effective:

- For chronic pain treatment in adults²
- In relieving chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting²
- In improving patient-reported Multiple Sclerosis spasticity symptoms²



Accidental Poisonings

In Colorado, calls to their Poison Control Center related to marijuana exposure have increased 139% in the 4 years since legalization--from 61 calls in 2012 prior to legalization up to 145 calls in 2016 after legalization.⁶ Put into perspective, Wisconsin residents made 36,640 calls to the Poison Control Center in 2017.¹⁰



Increases in Drugged Driving

Using marijuana and driving puts one at an increased risk for motor vehicle crashes.² In Colorado, marijuana related traffic deaths increased 66% in the four years since legalization. All traffic deaths have increased 16%.⁶



Key Resources for More Information

[What You Need to Know About Marijuana Use and Pregnancy from CDC](#)

[What You Need to Know About Marijuana Use and Driving from CDC](#)

[Marijuana: How Can It Affect Your Health? from CDC](#)

[The Drug War, Mass Incarceration, and Race from Drug Policy Alliance](#)

[King County, Washington Priorities Regarding Marijuana Legalization](#)

[The Current State of Evidence and Recommendations for Research from National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine \(2\)](#)

[Impacts of Legalization on Colorado from Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area \(6\)](#)

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3. Bertrand KA, Hanan NJ, Honerkamp-Smith G, et al. Marijuana Use by Breastfeeding Mothers and Cannabinoid Concentrations in Breast Milk. *Pediatrics*. 2018;142(3):e20181076

4. Wisconsin Department of Justice. (2018). *UCR arrest demographics* [Data file]. Available from <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/dles/bjia/ucr-arrest-demographics>

5. American Civil Liberties Union. 2013. *The war on marijuana in black and white*. Retrieved on August 28, 2018 from <https://www.aclu.org/report/report-war-marijuana-black-and-white>

7. Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (2017). *2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results* [Data file]. Retrieved from <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sspw/pdf/yrbs17summarytables.pdf>

8. New Frontier Data. (2018, March 13). *Cannabis taxes could generate \$106 billion, create 1 million jobs by 2025*. Retrieved from <https://newfrontierdata.com/marijuana-insights/cannabis-taxes-generate-106-billion-create-1-million-jobs-2025/>

9. Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Division of Public Health, Bureau of Environmental and Occupational Health. (2013, May). *The burden of asthma in Wisconsin 2013*. Retrieved from <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p4/p45055-2013.pdf>

10. Wisconsin Poison Center. (2018). *2018 annual report*. Retrieved from <https://www.wisconsinpoison.org/Poison-Center1/PDF/2018-Annual-Report>