



Maryland 2023 Cannabis Policy Reform Bills

In the 2022 election, Maryland voters voted overwhelmingly in favor (67.2 percent) of Question 4 to legalize cannabis for adults. Effective July 1, 2023, adults will be able to legally possess up to 1.5 ounces of cannabis and cultivate up to 2 plants for personal use.

In the 2023 session, the legislature is taking up several bills to further reform Maryland's cannabis policies (you can click the bill numbers to see the bills' status):

- [HB 556 / SB 516](#) (Cannabis Reform): twin bills that would legalize and regulate the sales of cannabis in Maryland to adults 21 and older. Starting on July 1, 2023, sales would begin exclusively from existing medical cannabis licenses who pay a conversion fee. Other licenses would begin being issued to social equity applicants in early 2024. Until 2033, the bills also allocate a portion of tax revenue to communities disproportionately affected by cannabis prohibition. A detailed summary of the bills can be found [here](#).
- [HB 1071](#): would provide that the odor of cannabis alone is not grounds for a search. The bill was also amended in the House to reduce the penalty for public smoking from a \$250 fine to a \$50 fine for a first offense.
- [HB 135](#): would remove the mandatory minimum for "volume dealing" cannabis, reducing the penalty from a current felony conviction and mandatory minimum of five years imprisonment to a misdemeanor punishable by up to ten years imprisonment. The bill was also amended in the House to include language from HB 506 --- explicitly allowing adults to manufacture a personal use amount of cannabis products (such as brownies) at home.
- [HB 506](#): would have explicitly allowed adults to manufacture a personal use amount of cannabis products (such as brownies) at home. Current law carries a penalty of up to three years for such conduct. While HB 506 did not advance before crossover, it was wrapped into HB 135.
- [HB 855](#): a technical fix to clarify possession limits for adults 21 and older. Under current law, possession limits include "or" (i.e. an adult can possess 1.5 grams of cannabis flower OR 12 grams of concentrates). This bill explicitly makes clear that adults can possess flower AND concentrates, etc. It did not advance before crossover deadline.
- [HB 980](#): provides that a person will not violate parole, probation, or pre-trial release based on testing positive for cannabis, unless the Court or the Maryland Parole Commission makes a specific finding that the individual defendant, parolee, or probationer's use of cannabis could create a danger to the individual or other persons.
- [HB 232](#): provides that cannabis use by a parent does not qualify as neglect.