



Support for Marijuana Policy Reform

The public is far ahead of most elected officials in support of marijuana policy reform. A supermajority of Americans — 68% according to Gallup — support making marijuana legal. Support isn't limited to specific states, ages, parties, or regions. Gallup found majority or plurality support among all age ranges and political parties, while the public research firm Civiq found majority support in every state for making marijuana legal. Yet only 19 U.S. states have legalized marijuana. Meanwhile, support for medical cannabis is close to universal, although 14 states continue to criminalize medical cannabis patients.

Medical Marijuana

- Support for allowing medical cannabis is off the charts. A March 2019 Quinnipiac University poll found that 93% of Americans support “allowing adults to legally use marijuana for medical purposes if their doctor prescribes it.”
- Support is exceptionally high among all ages and parties. Quinnipiac found 93% of Americans aged 50-64 and 91% of Americans aged 65 and older support medical cannabis. Support reached 99% for those 18-34. The poll found 86% of Republicans, 96% of independents, and 96% of Democrats support allowing medical cannabis.
- Since 1996, 36 states have adopted medical cannabis laws. Eighteen of the laws were adopted by voters, including in some of the most conservative states in the nation: Arkansas (53%, 2016), North Dakota (64%, 2016), Oklahoma (57%, 2018), Utah (53%, 2018), and South Dakota (70%, 2020). (Also, Mississippi voters overwhelmingly approved a medical cannabis initiative in 2020. The law was overturned in court due signature requirements that are impossible to comply with due to a reduction in Congressional districts.)

State Medical Marijuana Poll Results

State	Date/Polling Firm	% in Favor	Question Wording
Georgia	January 2016, <i>Atlanta Journal-Constitution</i>	72%	Support expanding the state's medical marijuana law “to allow the distribution of medical marijuana with strict controls”
Idaho	March 2019, Idaho Politics Weekly	73%	Support making medical marijuana legal
Indiana	October 2018, Hoosier Survey	81%	Support making marijuana legal “only for medical use” or for “personal use”
Iowa	February 2019, Iowa Poll	78%	Support expanding Iowa's limited medical marijuana law

State Medical Marijuana Poll Results ... *continued*

State	Date/Polling Firm	% in Favor	Question Wording
Kansas	2015, Fort Hays State University	68%	Support “medical use of marijuana”
Kentucky	October 2019, Kentucky Health Issues Poll	90%	Favor “allowing residents to buy and use marijuana for medical purposes”
Nebraska	February 2017, Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz and Associates	77%	Would vote to allow Nebraska doctors to prescribe medical marijuana to patients with serious conditions
North Carolina	February 2021, Elon Poll	73%	Support “the legalization of marijuana for medical use”
South Carolina	February 2021, Starboard Communications	72%	Support “allowing patients ... who suffer from serious medical conditions to use medical marijuana if their doctors recommend it.”
Tennessee	March 2018, Middle Tennessee State University Poll	81%	Support allowing marijuana for medical use
Texas	February 2016, Survey USA	71%	Support “expanding medical marijuana treatments”
Wisconsin	April 2019, Marquette University Law School	83%	Think “the use of marijuana for medical purposes with a doctor’s prescription should be made legal”
Wyoming	October 2018, Wyoming Survey and Analysis Center	86%	Support “allowing adults in Wyoming to legally use marijuana for medical purposes if their doctor prescribes it”

Penalizing Marijuana Possession with a Fine, Not Jail Time

- Currently, 32 states’ laws include provisions to prevent the jailing of people who possess small amounts of marijuana, at least for a first offense. Those states are: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington. Most of these states instead impose a civil fine. In

13 of the states, marijuana is legal for adults 21 and older. In South Dakota, the voter-enacted law has not taken effect yet due to a court challenge.

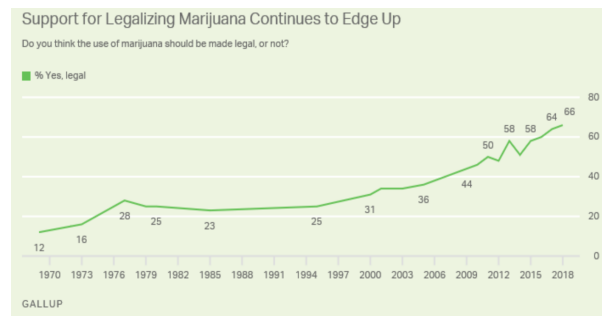
- In February 2014, Pew Research Center found that 76% of Americans believe people caught in possession of marijuana shouldn't be jailed as a result.

State Decriminalization Poll Results

State	Date/Polling Firm	% in Favor	Question Wording
Indiana	October 2018, Hoosier Survey	78%	"[I]f marijuana use is not legalized, then should people convicted of possessing small amounts serve jail time?" ("% in favor" is the percent answering "no")
Oklahoma	September 2013, Sooner Poll	57%	Support decriminalizing adults' possession of up to an ounce of marijuana so "they would receive a fine rather than be criminally prosecuted and face possible incarceration"
Texas	September 2013, Public Policy Polling	61%	Support making it a civil offense "to possess an ounce or less of marijuana for personal use, punishable by a fine of up to \$100, but without jail time"

Replacing Marijuana Prohibition With Legalization and Regulation

- National polls, including by Pew Research Center, Gallup, and CNN, show that most Americans support legalization. In October 2020, Gallup found that a supermajority of Americans (68%) supported "making marijuana use legal" — more than double the level of support in 2000.



- Support for ending prohibition is nonpartisan. In 2020, Gallup found 83% support from Democrats, 72% support from independents, and 48% support from Republicans.
- Gallup's 2020 poll found that no age group opposed legalization, reporting 55% support from those 65 and older, 60% support from persons 50-64, 75% support from individuals aged 30-49, and 79% support from those 18 to 29 years old.
- From 2017 to present, the public research firm Civiqs has surveyed more than 180,000 registered voters on legalization. As of May 23, 2021, it found 70% support nationwide and at least 50% support in every state, ranging from 50% in North

Dakota to 81% in Washington and Oregon. *The Washington Post* published this map of Civiq’s state-by-state poll results. Support has increased since then.

Support for legalizing marijuana by state



Map: Michael Tesler • Source: Civiq • Embed • Created with Datawrapper

- Voters in states that have implemented legalization and regulation laws overwhelmingly view the laws as mostly or entirely a success. April 2020 YouGov surveys found 56% to 69% of voters in California, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington viewed their state’s legalization laws as successful. In Maine — where legal sales only recently began in October 2020 under the 2016 law — a plurality of 47% viewed it as a success. (Alaska and Vermont also have legalization laws, but YouGov did not have sufficient sample size to show results.) In each state, no more than 20% of voters viewed the law as more of a failure than a success.
- Voters’ support for legalization has increased since the laws took effect. Civiq’s data shows 70% or greater support for keeping marijuana legal in all of the legalization states where sales legal have begun: Arizona, Alaska, California, Colorado, Illinois, Maine, Michigan, Nevada, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington.

Here are Civiq’s state-by-state results for the question, “Do you think that the use of cannabis should be legal, or not?” as of May 23, 2021:

State	Yes, Legal	No, Not Legal	Unsure
Alabama	63%	25%	12%
Alaska	74%	18%	8%
Arizona	70%	22%	8%
Arkansas	62%	25%	13%
California	78%	14%	8%
Colorado	76%	16%	8%
Connecticut	74%	15%	11%
Delaware	68%	20%	12%
Florida	71%	20%	8%
Georgia	71%	18%	10%
Hawaii	73%	17%	10%
Idaho	60%	28%	12%
Illinois	75%	16%	9%
Indiana	65%	22%	12%

State	Yes, Legal	No, Not Legal	Unsure
Iowa	70%	19%	11%
Kansas	64%	25%	11%
Kentucky	64%	22%	13%
Louisiana	69%	19%	12%
Maine	76%	16%	8%
Maryland	74%	16%	10%
Massachusetts	77%	15%	8%
Michigan	70%	18%	11%
Minnesota	64%	21%	15%
Mississippi	59%	29%	13%
Missouri	64%	25%	11%
Montana	64%	27%	9%
Nebraska	62%	25%	13%
Nevada	79%	16%	6%
New Hampshire	70%	18%	12%
New Jersey	69%	21%	9%
New Mexico	71%	22%	7%
New York	70%	18%	12%
North Carolina	66%	21%	12%
North Dakota	50%	41%	9%
Ohio	64%	24%	12%
Oklahoma	61%	26%	12%
Oregon	81%	14%	5%
Pennsylvania	68%	21%	11%
Rhode Island	76%	17%	7%
South Carolina	65%	23%	12%
South Dakota	58%	29%	13%
Tennessee	64%	25%	15%
Texas	68%	20%	11%
Utah	63%	26%	11%
Vermont	80%	12%	8%
Virginia	68%	19%	13%
Washington	81%	13%	6%
West Virginia	63%	25%	12%
Wisconsin	64%	24%	12%
Wyoming	60%	28%	12%

Other pollsters have conducted surveys in states that have not yet legalized cannabis and found majority support numerous states:

State	Date/Polling Firm	% in Favor	Question Wording
Delaware	October 2018, University of Delaware	61%	Think “that the use of marijuana should be made legal”

State	Date/Polling Firm	% in Favor	Question Wording
Florida	February 2020, University of North Florida Public Opinion Lab	64%	Support “permitting adults 21 years or older to possess, use, purchase, display, and transport up to 2.5 ounces of marijuana accessories for personal use...”
Georgia	October 2018, SurveyUSA	55%	“Should the use of marijuana for recreational use by adults in Georgia ... be legalized?”
Hawaii	January 2013, QMark Research	57%	Support the “idea of legalizing, regulating and taxing the sale and personal use of marijuana by adults?”
Kansas	August to October 2019, Fort Hays State University	63%	Support “legalizing recreational marijuana for individuals 21 and older to allow taxation by the State of Kansas”
Kentucky	2019, Kentucky Health Issues Poll	59%	Favor “allowing residents to buy and use marijuana ... under any circumstances”
Louisiana	March 2021 JMC Analytics and Polling	67%	Support legalization of recreational marijuana
Maryland	February 2021, Goucher Poll	66%	Support “making marijuana legal for recreational use in Maryland”
Minnesota	October 2018, KSTP/SurveyUSA	56%	Should “Minnesota legalize recreational marijuana for residents over age 21?”
New Hampshire	WMUR Granite State Poll	68%	Support “legalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal recreational use”
Ohio	May 2016, Quinnipiac University Poll	52%	Support “allowing adults in Ohio to legally possess small amounts of marijuana for personal use”
Pennsylvania	March 2021, Muhlenberg College’s annual public health poll	58%	Favor “the complete legalization of the use of marijuana for any purpose”

State Adult-Use Legalization Poll Results ... continued

State	Date/Polling Firm	% in Favor	Question Wording
Rhode Island	January 2017, Public Policy Polling	59%	Favor “changing Rhode Island law to allow adults 21 and older to use marijuana and regulating and taxing marijuana similarly to alcohol”
Texas	February 2021, University of Texas and <i>Texas Tribune</i>	60%	Support legalizing marijuana “for any use”
Wisconsin	April 2019, Marquette University Law School	59%	Believe “the use of marijuana should be made legal”