



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 cannabis 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 Civiqs found majority support in every state for making cannabis legal. Yet only 19 U.S. states have legalized cannabis. Meanwhile, support for medical cannabis is close to universal, although 13 states continue to criminalize medical cannabis patients.

Medical Cannabis

- Support for allowing medical cannabis is off the charts. An April 2021 Pew Research Center poll found that 91% of Americans support allowing medical cannabis, while a 2019 Quinnipiac poll found 93% support.
- Support is exceptionally high among all ages and parties. Pew Research found 91% of Americans aged 50-64 and 90% of Americans 65 and older support medical cannabis, with even higher support among younger Americans. Pew found 87% support among Republican and lean-Republican voters 95% among Democrats and lean-Democratic.
- Since 1996, 37 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). In 2020, 68.5% of Mississippi voters voted to allow medical cannabis. However, the law was overturned in court due signature requirements that are impossible to comply with, but the state legislature and governor passed a replacement medical cannabis law in 2022.

State Medical Cannabis Poll Results

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

State Medical Cannabis 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 cannabis 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 cannabis for medical use”
Texas	May 2022, University of Texas at Tyler	83%	Support the "legalization of marijuana ... for medical use"
Wisconsin	April 2019, Marquette University Law School	83%	Think “the use of cannabis 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 Cannabis Possession with a Fine, Not Jail Time

- Currently, 31 states’ laws include provisions to prevent the jailing of people who possess small amounts of cannabis, 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, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington. Most of these states instead impose a civil fine. In 19 of the states, cannabis is legal for adults 21 and older.

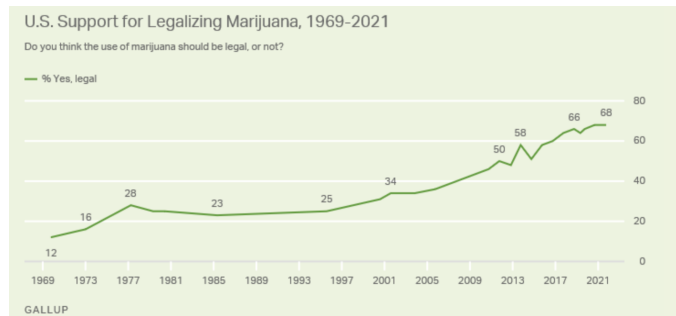
- In February 2014, Pew Research Center found that 76% of Americans believe people caught in possession of cannabis shouldn't be jailed as a result.

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 cannabis so "they would receive a fine rather than be criminally prosecuted and face possible incarceration"
Texas	June 2021, University of Texas	69%	Support lowering penalties for cannabis possession

Replacing Cannabis Prohibition With Legalization and Regulation

- National polls, including by Pew Research Center, Gallup, and CNN, show that most Americans support legalization. In October 2021, 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 2021, Gallup found 83% support from Democrats, 71% support from independents, and 50% support from Republicans.
- Gallup's recent polls found solid support for legalization in all surveyed age ranges. In 2021, Gallup reported 60% support from those 55 and older, 70% support from persons 35-54, and 77% support from individuals 18 to 34 years old.
- From 2017 to present, the public research firm Civiqs has surveyed more than 219,000 registered voters on legalization. As of July 3, 2022, it found 71% support nationwide and at least 50% support in every state, ranging from 52% in North Dakota to 81% in Washington. In 2021, *The Washington Post* published this map of Civiqs' state-by-state poll results. Support has increased since then.

Support for legalizing marijuana by state



Map: Michael Tesler • Source: Civiqs • 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. Civiqs’ data shows 70% or greater support for keeping cannabis legal in all of the legalization states where sales have legally begun: Arizona, Alaska, California, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maine, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington.

Here are Civiqs’ state-by-state results for the question, “Do you think that the use of cannabis should be legal, or not?” as of July 3, 2022:

State	Yes, Legal	No, Not Legal	Unsure
Alabama	64%	24%	12%
Alaska	74%	18%	8%
Arizona	72%	20%	8%
Arkansas	60%	25%	15%
California	77%	15%	8%
Colorado	75%	16%	9%
Connecticut	74%	15%	11%
Delaware	72%	18%	12%
Florida	71%	20%	9%
Georgia	72%	18%	10%
Hawaii	74%	16%	10%
Idaho	59%	29%	12%
Illinois	74%	17%	9%
Indiana	69%	19%	12%

Civiqs cannabis legalization polling ... continued

State	Yes, Legal	No, Not Legal	Unsure
Iowa	67%	23%	10%
Kansas	65%	21%	13%
Kentucky	67%	22%	12%
Louisiana	66%	22%	12%
Maine	77%	15%	7%
Maryland	73%	18%	9%
Massachusetts	80%	15%	8%
Michigan	72%	18%	9%
Minnesota	70%	17%	13%
Mississippi	65%	23%	12%
Missouri	66%	22%	12%
Montana	66%	26%	8%
Nebraska	63%	26%	11%
Nevada	75%	18%	8%
New Hampshire	74%	15%	11%
New Jersey	70%	20%	10%
New Mexico	71%	19%	10%
New York	71%	19%	10%
North Carolina	69%	19%	11%
North Dakota	52%	40%	8%
Ohio	68%	21%	11%
Oklahoma	63%	27%	9%
Oregon	79%	15%	6%
Pennsylvania	69%	21%	10%
Rhode Island	74%	18%	8%
South Carolina	66%	22%	12%
South Dakota	63%	27%	10%
Tennessee	68%	23%	9%
Texas	70%	19%	11%
Utah	64%	24%	12%
Vermont	80%	14%	6%
Virginia	69%	19%	12%
Washington	81%	13%	6%
West Virginia	68%	21%	11%
Wisconsin	67%	22%	11%
Wyoming	52%	31%	17%

State Legalization Poll Results

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

State	Date/Polling Firm	% in Favor	Question Wording
Arkansas	Talk Business & Politic	54%	Believe the "legal status of marijuana" should be "legal for adults"

State Legalization Poll Results ... *continued*

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”
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?”
Iowa	March 2021, Iowa Poll	54%	Support legalizing cannabis
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%	Favor “legalization of both medicinal and 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?”
Missouri	2022, Survey USA	62%	"Should the use of marijuana for recreational use" "be legalized"?"
New Hampshire	WMUR Granite State Poll, 2022	74%	Support legalizing cannabis
Ohio	May 2016, Quinnipiac University Poll	52%	Support “allowing adults in Ohio to legally possess small amounts of marijuana for personal use”

State Legalization Poll Results ... *continued*

State	Date/Polling Firm	% in Favor	Question Wording
Pennsylvania	March 2021, Muhlenberg College's annual public health poll	58%	Favor "the complete legalization of the use of marijuana for any purpose"
South Dakota	Actual ballot measure, Nov. 2020	54%	Amend the state constitution to "legalize, regulate, and tax marijuana" and require hemp and medical cannabis regulation? (Was thrown out in court after voters passed it based on a single subject rule.)
Texas	February 2021, University of Texas and <i>Texas Tribune</i>	60%	Support legalizing cannabis "for any use"
Wisconsin	February 2022, Marquette University Law School	61%	Support legalizing cannabis
Wyoming	October 2020, Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center	54%	Support allowing adults to legally possess cannabis for personal use