



Support for Marijuana Policy Reform

The public is far ahead of most elected officials in support of marijuana policy reform. A supermajority of Americans — 66% 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 11 U.S. states have legalized marijuana. Meanwhile, support for medical cannabis is close to universal, although 17 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, 33 states have adopted medical cannabis laws. Seventeen 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), and Utah (53%, 2018).

State Medical Marijuana Poll Results

State	Date/Polling Firm	% in Favor	Question Wording
Alabama	July 2004, Mobile Register/University of South Alabama	75%	Support legalizing marijuana for medical use under a doctor's supervision
Georgia	January 2016, Atlanta Journal-Constitution	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, 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
Kansas	2015, Fort Hays State University	68%	Support “medical use of marijuana”

State Medical Marijuana Poll Results ... continued

State	Date/Polling Firm	% in Favor	Question Wording
Kentucky	October 2019, Kentucky Health Issues Poll	90%	Favor “allowing residents to buy and use marijuana for medical purposes”
Miss.	January 2019, Millsaps College and Chism Strategies	67%	Support “allowing qualified patients with debilitating medical conditions to use marijuana with a physician’s certification”
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	April 2016, Public Policy Polling	74%	Support allowing doctors to “recommend marijuana for medical use”
South Carolina	December 2018, Benchmark Poll	72%	Support legalizing marijuana for medical use
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”
Virginia	April 2015, Quinnipiac University Poll	86%	Support allowing adults “to legally use marijuana for medical purposes if their doctor prescribes it”
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

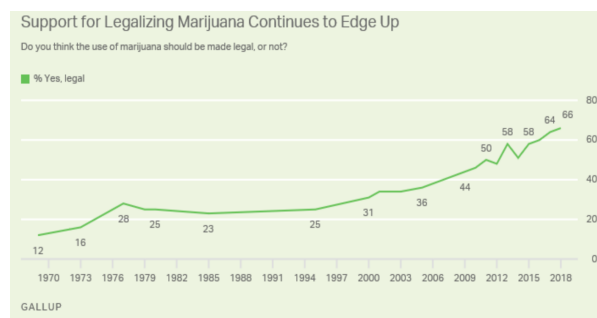
- Currently, 27 states' laws include provisions to prevent the jailing of people who possess small amounts of marijuana, at least for a first offense. Those states are: Alaska, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, 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 11 of the states, marijuana is legal for adults 21 and older.
- 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")
Louisiana	September 2014, Public Policy Polling	60%	Support changing the law to eliminate possibility of jail time "for first-time possession of an ounce or less of marijuana"
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 2019, Gallup found that a supermajority of Americans (66%) supported “making marijuana use legal” — more than double the level of support in 2000.



- Support for ending prohibition is nonpartisan. In 2019, Gallup found 76% support from Democrats, 68% support from independents, and 51% support from Republicans.
- Gallup’s 2019 poll found that no age group opposed legalization, reporting 62% support from persons 50-64, 71% support from individuals aged 30-40, and 81% support from those 18 to 29 years old. Those 65 and older were split 49% to 49%.
- From 2017 to present, the public research firm Civiq has surveyed more than 140,000 registered voters on legalization. As of May 20, 2020, it found 66% support nationwide — mirroring the Gallup numbers — and majority support in every state, ranging from 51% in Wyoming to 78% in Washington and Oregon. The *Washington Post* published this map of Civiq’s state-by-state poll results:

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 have not begun 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 show overwhelming support for keeping marijuana legal in the 11 legalization states, ranging from 66% in Michigan to 78% in Washington and Oregon.

Here are Civiq’s state-by-state results for the question, “Do you think that the use of cannabis should be legal, or not?” from April 24, 2017 through May 19, 2020:

State	Yes, Legal	No, Not Legal	Unsure
Alabama	59%	27%	14%
Alaska	70%	21%	9%
Arizona	65%	26%	9%
Arkansas	59%	28%	14%
California	73%	18%	9%
Colorado	73%	18%	9%
Connecticut	67%	22%	11%
Delaware	63%	26%	12%
Florida	68%	22%	10%
Georgia	65%	23%	12%
Hawaii	69%	21%	10%
Idaho	58%	27%	14%
Illinois	70%	20%	10%
Indiana	62%	26%	12%
Iowa	64%	22%	14%
Kansas	59%	27%	14%
Kentucky	62%	24%	14%
Louisiana	61%	24%	15%
Maine	69%	20%	11%
Maryland	68%	19%	13%
Massachusetts	73%	17%	9%
Michigan	66%	23%	11%
Minnesota	65%	23%	13%
Mississippi	56%	28%	16%
Missouri	60%	27%	13%
Montana	66%	24%	11%
Nebraska	56%	30%	14%

State	Yes, Legal	No, Not Legal	Unsure
Nevada	75%	19%	6%
New Hampshire	67%	20%	13%
New Jersey	65%	24%	11%
New Mexico	64%	26%	10%
New York	61%	24%	15%
North Carolina	63%	24%	13%
North Dakota	52%	40%	8%
Ohio	64%	22%	14%
Oklahoma	60%	30%	10%
Oregon	78%	16%	7%
Pennsylvania	64%	23%	13%
Rhode Island	72%	18%	9%
South Carolina	61%	25%	14%
South Dakota	55%	32%	13%
Tennessee	63%	24%	12%
Texas	62%	25%	13%
Utah	60%	25%	15%
Vermont	75%	16%	10%
Virginia	66%	22%	13%
Washington	78%	16%	6%
West Virginia	59%	27%	14%
Wisconsin	64%	23%	13%
Wyoming	51%	39%	10%

Other pollsters have conducted surveys in states that have not yet legalized cannabis and found majority support in at least 22 states:

State	Date/Polling Firm	% in Favor	Question Wording
Arizona	August 2019, OH Predictive Insights	54%	"Believe marijuana should be legalized for adult use in the State of Arizona"
Connecticut	January 2020, GQR	65%	Support "legalizing, regulating, and taxing recreational marijuana for adults 21 and older and allowing the personal cultivation of up to four marijuana plants"
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?"
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	2019 Louisiana Survey, Reilly Center for Media and Public Affairs	55%	Support "legalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana for recreational use"
Maryland	September 2018, Goucher Poll	62%	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?"
Montana	February to March 2019, University of Montana	51%	Should marijuana be legalized in Montana?

State Adult-Use Legalization Poll Results ... continued

State	Date/Polling Firm	% in Favor	Question Wording
New Hampshire	February 2019, WMUR Granite State Poll	68%	Support “legalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal recreational use”
New Jersey	February 2019, Monmouth University	62%	Support “legalizing the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use”
New Mexico	January to February 2020, Research & Polling Inc.	61%	Support “legalizing, taxing, and regulating marijuana sales for recreational use in adults over 21”
New York	January 2020, Siena College	58%	Support “legalizing the recreational use of marijuana”
Ohio	May 2016, Quinnipiac University Poll	52%	Support “allowing adults in Ohio to legally possess small amounts of marijuana for personal use”
Pennsylvania	2020 Pennsylvania Health Poll, Muhlenberg College Public Health Program	56%	Favor “the complete legalization of the use of marijuana for any purpose”
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	April 2018, Quinnipiac University Poll	61%	Support “allowing adults in Texas to legally possess small amounts of marijuana for personal use”
Virginia	September 2019, University of Mary Washington	61%	Support “the legalization of marijuana for recreational use by adults in Virginia”
Wisconsin	April 2019, Marquette University Law School	59%	Believe “the use of marijuana should be made legal”