



2024 INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

2024 South Dakota Cannabis Legalization Initiative

Our 2024 ballot initiative would legalize cannabis for adults 21 and over in South Dakota. If approved by voters at the next election (November 5, 2024), personal possession and use of cannabis by adults 21 and older would become legal in South Dakota. Legalizing medical cannabis in 2020 was a major step forward, but adults without a medical cannabis identification card still face extreme legal risk for cannabis possession. This is a simple policy focused on personal freedom and common sense.

The initiative's possession limits are as follows:

- Cannabis flower = Two ounces
- Cannabis products (concentrated cannabis) including hashish and extracts = 16 grams
- Cannabis products (non-concentrated cannabis) = 1,600 milligrams of THC
- Cannabis plants = Individuals 21 and older would be legally allowed to cultivate up to six cannabis plants in their private residence as long as the plants are in a locked space and not visible from a public place. The total number of plants at the private residence may not exceed 12, even if more than two adults who are 21 or older live at the residence.

Our 2024 initiative does NOT provide for unrestricted cannabis use. Policies like smoke-free and tobacco-free zones will remain in place, as will existing laws against driving under the influence. Cannabis possession for South Dakotans under the age of 21 will remain illegal as well. Finally, our initiative would not interfere with any existing workplace requirements including drug testing for cannabis.

South Dakotans 21 and older should not be jailed or fined for cannabis

Criminalizing South Dakotans for cannabis is a waste of taxpayer money: Under current state law, possession of two ounces or less is a Class 1 misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum sentence of one year imprisonment and/or a maximum fine of \$2,000. This current policy is costly and the state government estimates that our initiative would reduce incarceration expenses by \$581,556 annually at the county level.

Legalizing cannabis for adults 21 and older will not increase use among teens: Peer-reviewed research covering ten legalization states found no evidence that legalization laws are associated with increases in teen marijuana use (Association of Marijuana Legalization With Marijuana Use Among US High School Students, 1993-2019, Published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, July 2021).

Legalization broadens personal freedom: South Dakota prides itself on respecting freedom. Cannabis prohibition deprives adults of that freedom. Our initiative would strengthen South Dakotans' ability to choose their own lifestyle without fear of incarceration or the risks posed by the illicit cannabis trade.

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