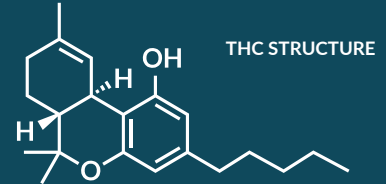


Ancillary Effects of Cannabis Use



Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 4.1-604.32, the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority (“CCA”) has prepared this informational resource on the ancillary effects of cannabis consumption. The CCA does not endorse the recreational consumption or home cultivation of cannabis.

In Virginia, adults 21 years and older may (1) possess up to one ounce of cannabis for personal use, (2) use cannabis in private residences if permitted by the homeowner, and (3) grow up to four cannabis plants per household. Although limited personal possession and use of cannabis are legal under Virginia law, consuming or possessing cannabis can still have negative effects on a person's life in a variety of ways. This resource discusses possible negative ancillary effects that may not be immediately obvious as possible issues that might come from using cannabis. Ancillary effects are most likely in the following areas:



THC
(Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol)

THC stands for delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol. It is a cannabinoid molecule in cannabis that is recognized as the main psychoactive ingredient.



EDUCATION



EMPLOYMENT



HOUSING



IMMIGRATION



FIREARMS



MILITARY SERVICE

Education

Despite changes in cannabis laws, many colleges and universities may still not allow possession and use of cannabis on campus. Students using or possessing cannabis on a college campus may face disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion.

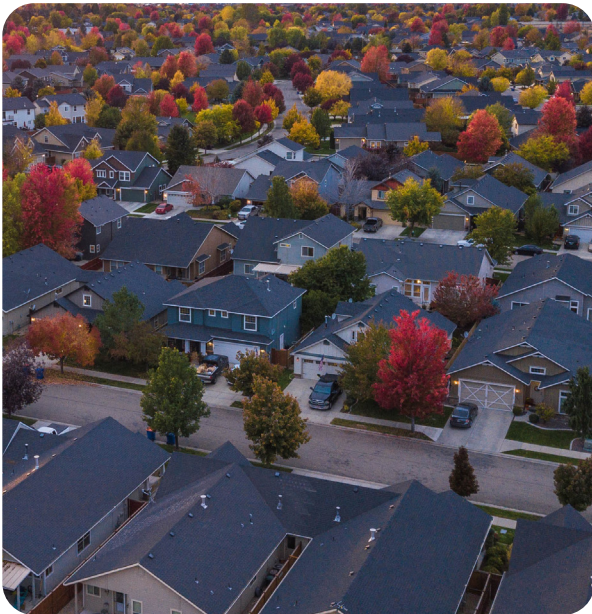


Employment

Individual workplaces and employers may still prohibit cannabis use by their employees and enforce drug testing policies that identify cannabis users. Individuals who test positive for THC may be excluded from the hiring process for jobs that involve public safety or the operation of vehicles and/or heavy machinery. Testing positive for THC while employed in these areas may result in consequences like suspension or termination. Virginia law protects some medical uses of cannabinoid oils against employment action, but this protection may not apply to all medical cannabis users.

Cannabis use can also impact workers' compensation claims. If a cannabis user is in a workplace accident, the employer may require a drug test. Testing positive for THC may affect the workers' compensation process, even if an individual is not intoxicated at the time of the incident.

Ancillary Effects of Cannabis Use



Housing

Property owners and landlords can prohibit cannabis consumption or cultivation in rental housing agreements. Tenants should check their lease agreements thoroughly before using or growing cannabis in a rental property. Even if cannabis is not mentioned specifically, no smoking clauses in rental agreements also apply to smoking cannabis products. Medical cannabis users also should check their lease before using cannabis in a rented property. Tenants who violate any lease agreements related to cannabis or smoking may face consequences from their landlord, including the possibility of eviction.

Individuals may risk the loss of federal housing benefits by using or possessing cannabis. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development does not permit the use or possession of cannabis in federally assisted housing because marijuana remains illegal under federal law.

Firearms

Cannabis use can impact firearm ownership. To purchase a firearm from a federally licensed dealer, an individual must complete Form 4473 from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF), which requires the person completing the form to certify they are not a user of any Schedule I drugs, including cannabis. This also applies to medical cannabis users. Concealed carry permits also require this certification. Firearm owners are prohibited from selling ammunition or firearms to any person they know or “[have] reasonable cause to believe” uses cannabis.

Military Service

While medical cannabis may be legal in the Commonwealth, military members or veterans using military benefits may still face repercussions from the military for using cannabis. This is true even though cannabis products may often be prescribed for PTSD, a condition that can frequently be diagnosed in veterans and active service members. While federal legislation has been proposed to address this issue at points in previous years, Congress has not yet passed such legislation and active-duty military and veterans should do research on this issue before choosing to use medical or recreational cannabis.

Immigration

Using or growing cannabis, or being employed or otherwise involved in the cannabis industry, can have significant repercussions for noncitizens even when the activity is legal under state law. Green card applications, permanent visas, and other methods of obtaining United States citizenship or residency can be denied due to cannabis use or cannabis-related employment. Consumption of cannabis or involvement in the cannabis industry can also result in a noncitizen resident of the United States being denied re-entry after visiting another country. Noncitizens should consult with an attorney before using cannabis or working in the cannabis industry.



Conclusion

Individuals should consider the potential ancillary effects of cannabis use before exercising their right to use consume cannabis under Virginia law. Cannabis users and potential users worried about any of the identified ancillary consequences of cannabis consumption, cultivation, and industry involvement, should consult an attorney for legal guidance on their specific circumstances.