

Guidance on Home Cultivation



Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 4.1-604.31, the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority (“CCA”) has prepared this guidance document on safe and compliant home cultivation for individuals interested in cultivating cannabis plants in their residence. The CCA does not endorse the recreational consumption or home cultivation of cannabis.



Statutory Requirements

Individuals 21 years and older may cultivate up to four cannabis plants per household for personal use. A “household” includes all those living in the place of residence, even if those individuals are not related. Exceeding the number of allowed plants in a household may result in either civil or criminal penalties.

Each plant must have a legible tag that includes the grower’s name, driver’s license or ID number, and a note that indicates the plant is being grown for personal use as authorized by law.

FOR EXAMPLE

JANE DOE
ID #: A12345678
PERSONAL ADULT USE: VA. CODE § 4.1-1101(B)(3)

Cannabis plants must not be “visible from a public way” (e.g., a sidewalk) or accessible to anyone under 21 years old. Individuals may not manufacture cannabis concentrate from home-cultivated cannabis.

Despite the legality of limited home cultivation, property owners are permitted to develop and enforce their own policies that further restrict or prohibit home cultivation by renters. Before cultivating, renters should review their lease agreements and consult with their landlords or property management company.



Practices to Promote Personal and Public Safety

In addition to following Virginia laws, it is important to use growing processes that are safe for individuals in the home and reduce the likelihood of creating a nuisance for neighbors.

There are four key health risks to consider when growing cannabis at home:

- 01 Access and accidental poisoning
- 02 Environmental and space concerns
- 03 Electrical and fire hazards
- 04 Radiation risks

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01 Access and Accidental Poisoning

All cannabis products, even those not intended for consumption, carry a risk of accidental poisoning. Individuals should treat all home grown cannabis as though it is hazardous, especially for children and pets. Individuals cultivating home grown cannabis should plan to have secure storage to ensure any plants and plant materials are out of reach of children and pets. Home cultivators in households that include residents under 21 years old should ensure any cannabis grow area is enclosed and in a separate space that minors can not access. Home cultivators in households that do not include residents under 21 years old should still take extra precautions to make sure any underage visitors cannot access cannabis plants.

Keep poison control resources available in easily accessible common areas. The Virginia Poison Center can be reached through its hotline at (800) 222-1222.

Home cultivators should research any pesticides and chemicals before use. The CCA has not formally approved any pesticides for the cultivation of cannabis, but other agencies and states may have resources home growers in Virginia can consult before choosing to use pesticides.



02 Environmental and Space Concerns

While home cultivators in Virginia can grow up to four plants total, individuals should also consider how many plants they have enough space for in their home or on their property.

Cannabis plants may not be visible to the public. Cultivators should only consider outdoor cultivation if there is an appropriately sized space that is not visible to those outside the property.

Households should avoid overcrowding cannabis plants grown indoors to prevent other common issues, such as smell and mold, especially in smaller spaces. Excess odor from cannabis grown in the home may result in nuisance claims from neighbors. Mold is also a common problem and can present health risks to household members and others visiting the residence.

Growers also should ensure there is adequate air circulation during the grow process. Households growing cannabis should install carbon dioxide (CO2) detectors, to alert people in the residence if CO2 levels become dangerous. Test detectors frequently to confirm they are functioning.

03 Electrical and Fire Safety

Households can prevent electrical accidents by practicing electrical safety during the home cultivation process. Cannabis requires significant sources of light during the grow process. The use of artificial lighting and other forms of electrical equipment increase the risk of fire for the household.

Individuals should avoid practices that can lead to electrical accidents, such as overloading circuits and using too many lights in the grow space. Individuals should never connect multiple surge protectors or extension cords to each other to extend the length of cords or add extra electrical outlets in a small space. Growers should always follow product guidelines when using electrical equipment.



04 Radiation Risks

Many lights recommended for cannabis cultivation may produce high-intensity ultraviolet (UV) light. Using UV lights can contribute to plant growth but can also lead to skin or eye damage. To prevent UV exposure or negative side effects, growers should take precautions with any UV lights in their grow area, including wearing protective, long-sleeved clothing and switching off lights when working with cannabis plants in the grow space.

Conclusion

This document is not a complete list of all potential issues in home cultivation. Before beginning the home cultivation process, potential growers should consult with their household members and/or landlord and conduct their own research on home cultivation to ensure they are prepared to grow cannabis legally, safely, and responsibly.

