



MARIJUANA'S IMPACT ON CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA HIGH INTENSITY DRUG TRAFFICKING AREAS REPORT

2025



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summary of a Few Key Findings from Throughout the Report

Section One: Potency and Price of Marijuana

- ❖ Nationally, the average THC content of marijuana has increased steadily over the years. The average THC potency of traditional marijuana was approximately 4% in 1995. As of 2022, its potency had risen to approximately 16%, an increase of nearly 308%.
- ❖ The price of a pound (lb.) of marijuana in California can vary from \$500 to \$2500 depending on THC potency level.

Section Two: Vaping

- ❖ Nationally in 2023, the daily use of nicotine vaping continues to be higher than the daily use of smoking tobacco across all grade levels: 1.4% vs. .4% in 8th grade, 2.4% vs. 1% in 10th grade and 5.8% vs. .7% in 12th grade.
- ❖ From 2017 to 2022, national past month marijuana vaping use more than doubled among college and non-college students.

Section Three: California Youth Marijuana Use Ages 12-17

- ❖ Nationally, vaping (any substance) continues to surpass alcohol and marijuana use for 8th and 10th graders.
- ❖ From 2022 to 2023, California's rank decreased nationally in past month usage of marijuana by 12-17 year olds (by state).
- ❖ In California, individuals ages 12 and older, continue to have a higher rate of past month use of marijuana (2015-2023).
- ❖ 12 - 17 year olds in California reported using marijuana and cigarettes at a lower rate than the national (rate) in 2022-2023.

Section Four: California Marijuana Use Ages 18-25

- ❖ Since 2017-2018, California's marijuana use by 18-25 year olds continued to surpass their use of cigarettes.

Section Five: California Marijuana Use Ages 26 and Older

- ❖ In 2019-2020, California's past month marijuana use surpassed past month cigarette use for individuals 26 years and older.

Section Six: California Traffic Fatalities, DUI and Arrest Data

- ❖ In California, the percentage of driver fatalities testing positive for legal and/or illegal drugs decreased from 55% in 2020 to 52.9% in 2021.
- ❖ In California, juvenile felony narcotics arrests greatly increased from 154 in 2022 to 233 in 2023.

Section Seven: Public Health

- ❖ National marijuana edibles exposure calls for ages 0-12 from 2018 (808) to 2023 (6,888) has increased by 752%.
- ❖ In California in 2023, the highest number of marijuana exposure calls to Poison Control Centers were for individuals 5 years of age and under (842).
- ❖ Nationally in 2023, marijuana was the most prevalent drug present in alcohol-related polysubstance emergency department visits.
- ❖ From 2008 (1,988) to 2022 (12,347) there was a 521% increase in California emergency department visits for primary marijuana use.
- ❖ In 2022, 43% of suicides of those aged 25 and under in San Diego County, had THC in their systems at the time of death.

Section Eight: Treatment

- ❖ Nationally from 2017 to 2021, the highest percentage of marijuana treatment admissions were amongst those 26 years and older.
- ❖ In California in 2023, 37.7% of marijuana treatment admissions were amongst those 12-17 years of age.

Section Nine: Diversion, Eradication and Related Crime

- ❖ In the 2023 DCE season, California seized more illicitly cultivated cannabis plants than any other state; arrested more individuals associated with illicit cultivation; and seized more weapons from illicit cultivation sites than any other state in the country.
- ❖ Marijuana was the most seized drug (in pounds) by U.S. Border Patrol from FY20-FY23.
- ❖ Cocaine was the most seized drug (in pounds) by Nationwide Air and Marine Operations in FY22 and FY23.

Section Ten: THC Extraction Labs

- ❖ There were 157 reported clan lab incidents in California in 2022. Out of the 157 reported labs, 149 were lab seizures (11 explosion/fire), and 8 were chemical equipment only.
- ❖ There were 75 reported clan lab incidents in California in 2023. Out of the 75 reported labs, 71 were lab seizures (11 explosion/fire), and 2 were chemical equipment only.

Section Eleven: Illegal Chinese Labeled Pesticide Fumigants Pose Significant Threat to Human Health and the Environment

- ❖ Since 2023, law enforcement teams and regulatory personnel have been encountering Chinese-labeled pesticide fumigants at licensed and unlicensed marijuana grow sites throughout California.
- ❖ Laboratory analysis of these materials confirm the presence of highly toxic pesticides that pose a significant threat to human health and the environment.

INTRODUCTION

In 1996, California became the first state to legalize marijuana for medicinal purposes with the passage of Proposition 215, the Compassionate Use Act. Now, in 2025, recreational marijuana use is fully legal within California for individuals 21 years of age and over. This report will outline the current and potential impacts of these policies.

DUE TO USAGE IN VARIOUS BILLS, STUDIES AND RESOURCES, THE TERM MARIJUANA AND CANNABIS WILL BE USED INTERCHANGEABLY THROUGHOUT THIS DOCUMENT.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to describe the impacts that have arisen from the legalization of marijuana for both medical and recreational use in California. By gathering and examining data, citizens and policymakers can better understand the implications and effects of marijuana's increased presence in the state.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Marijuana Legalization

Due to concerns about public health risks and other possible impacts of marijuana, there is an on-going debate in the United States regarding the effects of the increasing prevalence of marijuana in our society.

Some common arguments for the legalization of marijuana use include:

- Elimination of arrests for possession and sale, resulting in fewer citizens with criminal records and a reduction in the incarceration rates.
- Freeing up law enforcement resources for more serious crimes.
- Reduction in the disproportionate incarceration of minorities for possession of small quantities of marijuana.
- Potentially reduced traffic fatalities since users may switch from alcohol to marijuana.
- Increased tax revenue from marijuana sales.
- Reduced profits for drug cartels trafficking marijuana.

Arguments for continued restrictions against marijuana use/legalization include:

- Increased marijuana use among youth and young adults due to availability and the normalization of marijuana.
- Increased road fatalities due to marijuana impairment.
- Increased marijuana-related emergency room visits.
- Increased costs of physical and mental health services due to marijuana use.
- Continued diversion of marijuana to illegal markets.
- Negative social and economic costs (e.g., poor academic outcome to include risks of

dropping out of school) will far exceed the benefit to society of any potential revenue generated.¹

- Marijuana cultivation would cause environmental degradation to air, water, land, and wildlife.

History of Marijuana in California

California's relationship with marijuana has evolved significantly over time. A brief overview of how it has changed since marijuana first gained any legal status is necessary to understand where the state stands now and to create a starting point for this report.

Proposition 215

California was the first state to decriminalize possession of lesser quantities of marijuana, when voters approved the Compassionate Use Act on November 5, 1996; also known as Proposition 215. Proposition 215 was intended to ensure that seriously ill Californians could obtain and use marijuana for the treatment of serious medical diseases such as cancer, AIDS, and severe spasms.² Currently, Proposition 215 makes California one of 37 states that allows marijuana for medical uses.

Proposition 215 allows the use of marijuana upon recommendation of a physician and ensures that patients and primary caregivers are not prosecuted or sanctioned. It also encourages the federal and state governments to implement plans to provide for the safe and affordable distribution of marijuana to all patients medically in need.

California State Assembly Bill 420 (SB 420)

The Medical Marijuana Program Act, which became effective on January 1, 2004, created a voluntary identification card system for purchasing medical marijuana. Governor Gray Davis signed this bill in 2003 and it was intended to clarify the scope of Proposition 215 to ensure its equitable application across the state. SB 420 allows the California Attorney General to clarify policies for the possession and cultivation of marijuana, and to create new regulations as needed.

To facilitate the tracking of medical marijuana distribution, the California Department of Public Health Medical Marijuana Program (MMP) was established to create a state-authorized medical marijuana identification card (MMIC) program and a registry database for verification of qualified patients and their primary caregivers. However, this program is voluntary.

Commercialization of Medical Marijuana

Beginning in 2010, marijuana in California grew into a commercialized industry, with the number of dispensaries and other marijuana-related businesses increasing quickly. In 2010, Los Angeles reported 545 dispensaries compared to 186 in 2007, an increase of 193%.³ As of 2021, the LA City Controller's documents state that there were 135 regulated cannabis shops and at least

1,400 unlicensed marijuana dispensaries within the LA metropolitan area.⁴ With a total of 1,244 marijuana dispensaries reported by Dispense App. in 2024.⁵ There are 373 legal dispensaries in Los Angeles according to Department of Cannabis Control in 2024.

California State Assembly Bill 1449 (AB 1449)

In September 2010, Governor Schwarzenegger signed California State Assembly Bill 1449 (AB 1449) into law, which reduced the sanction for possessing less than one ounce of marijuana from a misdemeanor to an infraction, legally the equivalent of a parking ticket. This decriminalized the personal possession of up to one ounce of marijuana.⁶

California State Assembly Bills 21, 2516 and 2679; and Senate Bill 837

The Medical Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MCRSA) includes four bills and directed the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to create the Medical Cannabis Cultivation Program (MCCP). The MCCP was charged to create a licensing program for medical cannabis cultivation, implement a “track and trace” program, and evaluate potential environmental impacts in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.⁷ These bills were enacted in September 2015.

California State Assembly Bills 266 and 243, and Senate Bill 643

The Medical Marijuana Regulation and Safety Act 2016 (MMRSA) includes three bills: Assembly Bill 266 (Bonta, Cooley, Jones-Sawyer, Lackey, and Wood) establishes a dual licensing structure requiring state and local license permits; Assembly Bill 243 (Wood) aims to establish a regulatory and licensing structure for cultivation sites under the Department of Food and Agriculture; Senate Bill 643 (McGuire) sets the criteria for the licensing of medical marijuana businesses, regulates physicians, and recognizes local authority to levy taxes and fees.⁸ These bills took effect in January 2016.

Full Legalization of Marijuana

California Proposition 64

On November 8, 2016, California voters approved Proposition 64 or, the Control, Regulate and Tax Adult Use of Marijuana Act (AUMA) which legalized the adult use of cannabis. According to California Health and Safety Code 11362.5 HS, adults 21 years old and over can possess one ounce of cannabis per day, grow six mature plants and twelve immature plants (for medical use). However, commercial sales of marijuana for recreational use were postponed until January 1, 2018.⁹ This report shows the impacts AUMA had on the public health, education and criminal justice systems in California.

California State Assembly Bill 133 and Senate Bill 94

The Medicinal and Adult-Use Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MAUCRSA), signed by Governor Brown, on June 27, 2017, combined elements of the Medical Cannabis Regulation and

Safety Act (MCRSA) and the Adult Use of Marijuana Act (AUMA). This act created one regulatory system for both medicinal and recreational (adult-use) cannabis under the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA).¹⁰ It also increased the amount of cannabis personal possession from four to eight grams.

California Assembly Bill 1793

Required the state to track down and process all marijuana cases eligible for expungement. Assembly Bill 1793 gave local prosecutors until July 1, 2020 to process eligible cases to review whether to challenge the recall or dismissal of sentence, dismissal and sealing, or re-designation of an existing conviction to a lesser offense. This bill was signed by Governor Brown on September 30, 2018.¹¹

California Budget Trailer Assembly Bill 97

With the passage of Budget Trailer Assembly Bill 97, Senate Bill 97, the rules for provisional marijuana licenses were revised. It is now possible to get a provisional commercial cannabis license if the applicant has submitted a completed state cannabis license application, the applicant is following the California Environmental Quality Act, and has completed or is in the process of completing their local city or county permits. This bill requires that no later than July 1, 2021, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) establish a certification program for manufactured marijuana products comparable to the National Organic Program and the California Organic Food and Farming Act. This bill extends the repeal date from July 1, 2019 to July 1, 2021. Governor Newsom signed this into law on July 1, 2019.¹²

California Budget Trailer Senate Bill 97

Gave power to licensing authorities to issue a citation to a licensee, or unlicensed person, for any act or omission that violates or has violated a provision of MAUCRSA. It also extends the repeal date for the provisional or temporary license to January 1, 2022. This bill also requires that no later than July 1, 2021, the CDPH establish a certification program for manufactured marijuana products comparable to the National Organic Program, and the California Organic Food and Farming Act, and extends the repeal date from July 1, 2019 to July 1, 2021.¹³

California Senate Assembly Bill 657 Cannabis Cultivation: County Agricultural Commissioner's Reporting

Required county agricultural commissioners to report, to the secretary of state, the total acreage and production value of marijuana produced in the commissioner's county. Governor Newsom signed this into law on September 5, 2019.¹⁴

California Senate Bill 527 Local Government: Williamson Act: Cultivation of Cannabis and Hemp

Added cannabis and hemp to the definition of agricultural commodities, therefore qualifying

these crops as appropriate use in an agricultural preserve (an area of at least 100 acres designated by the Board of Supervisors within which a landowner may contract with the County to receive property taxes in exchange for maintaining the land on open space use). The bill was signed by Governor Newsom on September 6, 2019.¹⁵

California Senate Bill 223

Authorized school districts to set policies that allows a parent or guardian of a pupil to possess and administer the pupil's medicinal marijuana at a school site. The bill was signed by Governor Newsom on October 9, 2019, and took effect January 1, 2020.¹⁶

California Senate Bill 153 – Industrial Hemp

Revised regulating the cultivation and testing of industrial hemp to conform to the requirements for a state plan under the federal Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as amended by the federal Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018. It revises the definition of “industrial hemp” and its terms. A state hemp regulatory plan was submitted to the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). This bill was signed by Governor Newsom on October 12, 2019.¹⁷ At time of publication, some plans have been approved and others are under review.

California Senate Bill 34

Permitted licensed businesses to donate cannabis products for medical marijuana patients in need. This bill was signed by Governor Newsom on October 12, 2019 and went into effect January 1, 2020.¹⁸

California Senate Bill 185

Applied the same prohibitions against misrepresentation of “county of origin” to misuse of “appellations of origin” (specific qualities due to the geographical environment in which produced) and prohibits use of names that are likely to mislead consumers or cannabis product type. The bill passed and was signed by Governor Newsom on October 12, 2019.¹⁹

California Assembly Bill 1529

Created to change the size requirement of the universal marijuana symbol as it pertains to vape cartridges, to no less than 0.25” x 0.25” (lowering it from the requirement of 0.5” x 0.5”). This bill was signed by Governor Newsom on October 12, 2019.²⁰

California Senate Bill 595

Required a state licensing authority to develop and implement a program to provide a deferral or waiver of a marijuana application fee, marijuana licensing fee, or cannabis renewal fee for needs-based applicants or a needs-based licensee, on or before January 1, 2020. The bill passed by Senate and was signed by Governor Newsom on October 12, 2019.²¹

California Marijuana Chemicals Listed January 3, 2020

The office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) added marijuana smoke and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) to their list of known toxins and carcinogens. On January 3, 2020, marijuana smoke and THC was listed as known to the State of California to cause reproductive toxicity (Development Endpoint). At a public meeting on December 11, 2019, the Developmental and Reproductive Toxicant Identification Committee (DARTIC) in its official capacity as the “state’s qualified experts determined that cannabis (marijuana) smoke and Δ9-tetrahydrocannabinol (Δ9-THC)” were shown to cause reproductive toxicity based on the developmental endpoint. Regulations for the listing of chemicals by the DARTIC are set out in Title 27, California Code of Regulations, in section 25305(b) (1).

A complete, updated Proposition 65 chemical list is available on the OEHHA website at <https://oehha.ca.gov/proposition-65/proposition-65-list>.

California Senate Bill 67

Established an appellations of origin program, which is meant to indicate where marijuana is grown and how that influences the geographical area of the environment instead of identifying solely by county. It also prohibits marketing, of any product, from using a county of origin in the name of the product unless 100% of the cannabis contained in the product was produced in that county. Governor Newsom signed this bill on August of 2020.²²

California Assembly Bill 1872

Froze state marijuana cultivation and excise taxes for the entire year of 2021. This bill was intended to provide financial stability for marijuana businesses in California, where the taxes are the highest in the nation. Governor Newsom signed this into law on September 18, 2020.²³

California Assembly Bill 1458

Required a certificate of analysis on edible marijuana products to report that the milligrams (mg) of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) per serving does not exceed 10 mg per serving, plus or minus 12% until January 1, 2022. The bill includes plus or minus 10% after January 1, 2022. Governor Newsom signed this bill on September 29, 2020.²⁴ Note: This bill regulates weight in product not potency.

California Senate Bill 1244

Allowed state licensed marijuana testing labs to provide sample testing services to law enforcement. Governor Newsom signed this bill on September 29, 2020.²⁵

California Assembly Bill 195

Reduced the existing tax rate on marijuana, and marijuana products, to 11% on and after the date of this bill until July 1, 2023, at which time the tax would return to 15%. This bill would

defer the imposition of the cultivation tax. This bill would take effect immediately as a tax levy, but its operative date would depend on its effective date. Introduced to Assembly on January 17, 2020, and signed into law by Governor Newsom in June of 2020.²⁶

California Proposition 65: Changes to the Law

Proposition 65 became law in California in November of 1986, also known as the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986. This proposition requires businesses to provide warning of significant exposures to chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects and other reproductive dangers. Effective January 3, 2021, proper signage was required to be placed on marijuana products. Marijuana smoke is now listed as a carcinogen containing reproductive toxins. Smoked and non-smoked products now require Prop 65 warnings for cancer and developmental toxicity from tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).²⁷

California Assembly Bill 141

Assembly Bill 141 combines the three state licensing authorities into a single California Department of Cannabis Control (DCC). This department provides licensure, safety, and quality assurance. The DCC will consolidate the three state marijuana programs: which were the Bureau of Cannabis Control (BCC), the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing Division, and the CDPH's Cannabis Safety Branch. Governor Newsom signed AB141 into law on July 12, 2021.²⁸

California Assembly Bill 1305

The Controlled Substances Act (CSA) is a federal law that generally prohibits commercial marijuana activity, but authorizes cultivation and distribution of marijuana for research purposes. AB1305 would exempt individuals from Medicinal and Adult-Use Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MAUCRSA) activity that is in accordance with Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) registration, if the person engaging in the activity provides the licensing authority valid documentation of their registration and location prior to engaging in the activity. This bill became law on August 31, 2021.²⁹

California Assembly Bill 1302

California Assembly Bill 1302 would restrict the placement of commercial billboards related to marijuana advertising. This bill passed the Senate floor; but was vetoed by Governor Newsom on September 2, 2021, because it would've allowed more billboards and weakened the protections set in place to protect youth from exposure to marijuana and marijuana advertising.³⁰

California Senate Bill 166

The California Cannabis Equity Act of 2018 requires the Department of Cannabis Control, to develop and implement a program to provide a deferral or a waiver for an application fee, licensing fee, or renewal fee otherwise required by MAUCRSA, for needs-based applicant or needs-based licensee. Governor Newsom signed SB166 into law on September 23, 2021.³¹

California Senate Bill 311

The Compassionate Access to Medical Cannabis Act or Ryan's Law requires specified types of health care facilities to allow use of marijuana by terminally ill patients. Governor Newsom approved the bill on September 28, 2021.³²

California Assembly Bill 1222

On October 5, 2021, Governor Newsom signed Bill 1222 into law. The bill will allow marijuana beverages to be packaged in glass containers that are clear or see-through of any color. Before delivery or sale at a retailer, marijuana and marijuana products must be labeled and placed in a tamper-evident, child-resistant package and include a unique identifier for tracking marijuana and marijuana products. Packages and labels should not attract the interest of children.³³

California Senate Bill 73

California Senate Bill 73 allows the deletion of various crimes relating to controlled substances to include possessing agreeing to sell or transporting marijuana, planting or cultivating peyote, and various crimes relating to individuals that had been previously convicted, including specified felony offenses. SB73 authorizes remaining prohibitions on probation to be waived by a court in the interests of justice. Governor Newsom signed this bill into law on October 5, 2021.³⁴

California Assembly Bill 45

California Assembly Bill 45 "allows for the inclusion of hemp and cannabinoids (e.g., CBD), extracts, or derivatives of hemp in food and beverages, dietary supplements, cosmetics, and processed pet food provided that they, among other things, contain less than 0.3% THC." Governor Newsom enacted AB45 into law on October 6, 2021.³⁵

California Assembly Bill 2568

California Assembly Bill 2568 introduced on February 18, 2022, states that it is not a crime for individuals and firms to provide insurance and related resources to persons licensed to participate in commercial marijuana activities.³⁶ This bill was enrolled, presented and signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.

California Assembly Bill 1646

This would authorize marijuana beverages to be packaged into containers of any material that are free of color (i.e. any clear packaging). All marijuana and marijuana products will have two different product labels and inserts that include information displayed in legible writing in accordance with the requirements. AB1646 passed the Assembly on May 5, 2022, and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.³⁷

California Senate Bill 988

California Senate Bill 988 makes changes to the existing Compassionate Access to Medical Cannabis Act. It revokes the requirement that healthcare facilities permit patient use of medical marijuana comply with other drug and medication requirements. SB988 would require a health care facility to require a patient or a primary caregiver to be responsible for acquiring, retrieving, administering and removing medicinal marijuana as well as storing it securely. The bill passed the Senate on May 9, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.³⁸

California Assembly Bill 1894

Starting July 1, 2024, California Assembly Bill 1894 would require that packaging and labeling of marijuana vaporizers fully display a specific message of how to properly dispose as hazardous waste or, to imply that it may not be thrown into the trash or recycling streams. The bill passed in the Assembly on September 18, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.³⁹

California Assembly Bill 1954

“This bill would prohibit a medical doctor from not evaluating an individual or denying treatment because of a positive drug screen for tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), or report of medical marijuana use without completing a case-by-case evaluation on the patient to determine that the patient’s use of medical marijuana is medically significant. The bill specifies that a physician and/or surgeon, will not be punished for having administered treatment or medication to a qualified patient.” Governor Newsom signed AB1954 on September 2, 2022.⁴⁰

California Senate Bill 1097

California Senate Bill 1097 would require, in addition to existing product labels, a clear and prominent warning regarding the risks that marijuana use may contribute to mental health problems by July 1, 2025. This bill would require that on or before January 1, 2024, the department create a public use pamphlet or brochure that includes prescribed information, recommendations that new users start with lower doses and the dangers of purchasing illegal

marijuana and marijuana products. The information contained in this brochure should be re-certified every 5 years starting on January 1, 2030, to provide the most updated language. The bill passed the Senate on May 25, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.⁴¹

California Assembly Bill 2188

This bill would “alter the California Fair Employment and Housing Act to make it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a person in hiring, termination, or any term or condition of employment, or otherwise penalize a person, if the discrimination is based upon the person’s use of cannabis off the job and away from the workplace or, with prescribed exceptions, upon an employer-required drug screening test that has found the person to have non-psychoactive cannabis metabolites in their urine, hair, or bodily fluids.”⁴² The bill passed the Assembly on May 26, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.

California Assembly Bill 195

Eliminated a cultivation tax placed on marijuana growers and shifts excise tax collection from distributors to retail businesses. This bill amends the California Revenue and Taxation Code to eliminate the cultivation tax on harvested marijuana. The bill also gives three years of relief for excise tax. This bill was signed into law by Governor Newsom on June 30, 2022.⁴³

California State Assembly Bill 623

Established the regulations to adjust testing variances for marijuana edibles. Introduced on February 9, 2023. The Department of Cannabis Control (DCC) would establish rules for products that are less than 5 milligrams of THC in total. The new bill focuses on products with lower THC levels. Governor Newsom signed this bill on September 30, 2023.⁴⁴

California State Assembly Bill 1684

Would fine up to \$1000.00 to \$10,000.00 for unlicensed commercial property, including cultivation, manufacturing, processing, distribution, or retail sale. This bill will be designed to give local governments more power to control illegal cannabis activities and regulate the industry effectively within their jurisdiction. Governor Newsom signed into law in October of 2023.⁴⁵

California State Assembly Bill 1775

Allowed marijuana retailers to sell non-cannabis food and beverages, as well as sell tickets to performances such as concerts. This bill could create cafes and venues that would allow a social space for indoor vaping and smoking of marijuana. ANR Americans for Nonsmoker’s Rights. The bill would also allow local governments to make decisions on which marijuana cafes to open

instead of allowing them to open a business. Governor signed this into law on September 30, 2024.⁴⁶

California State Assembly Bill 2223

Regulated that retail sales of hemp foods and beverages and dietary supplements having any THC is unlawful and must be removed.⁴⁷ These products can still be sold at marijuana dispensaries. This is a temporary ban that expires next year. The bill failed earlier this year, which expanded on legislation that passed in 2021. The bill was AB45 that stated businesses had to register with government and that hemp products should contain less than 0.3% milligrams of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) per serving per package, 1mg of THC per final product.⁴⁸ This was proposed by Governor Newsom on September 24, 2024. The bill did not advance. In March of 2025 Governor Newsom extended the ban on hemp products through the Office of Administrative Law that will last another 90 days until June of 2025.⁴⁹

California State Assembly Bill 2643

Required the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to submit a yearly report to the Legislature on illegal marijuana that is cultivated on public lands. This would provide guidance on remediation of the devastation on the environment due to illegal crops and aims to enhance the efficiency and transparency of restoration initiatives. This bill was signed by Governor Newsom on September 28, 2024.⁵⁰

California Senate Bill 540

Required the DCC to adopt regulations for marijuana and marijuana products to include public posted messaging detailing the implication and risks associated with marijuana use. These would also include warnings about high potency products and require first-time users to be offered a printed brochure. This bill requires the DCC and CDPH to create a public booklet or brochure that includes the risks associated with marijuana use. Signed into law by Governor Newsom in October of 2023.⁵¹

California Senate Bill 622

Required a unique identifier to be attached at the base of each marijuana plant, ensuring transparency and compliance within the legal cannabis industry. The goal is to better regulate cannabis cultivation and distribution while addressing challenges such as illegal cultivation and enhancing accountability in the supply chain. This bill was signed into law by Governor Newsom in October of 2023.⁵²

California Senate Bill 700

It would make it unlawful to inquire about the past use of marijuana of an applicant relating to employment. This bill was signed into law by Governor Newsom in October of 2023. This bill will keep most employers from asking whether the applicant has used marijuana before. This bill amends California's Fair Employment and Housing Act. The law went into effect on January 1, 2024.⁵³

California Senate Bill 753

Resulted in felony charges for planting, cultivating, and harvesting, drying or processing more than 50 living marijuana plants under pesticides provisions. Also taking water from storage facility without consent or permissions or extraction. This bill was signed into law by Governor Newsom in October of 2023.⁵⁴

California Senate Bill 756

Authorized The California State Water Resources Control Board to investigate an unlicensed marijuana cultivation site suspected of illegal water use or diversion for cannabis cultivation. It allows the board to obtain inspection warrants or conduct inspections in emergency situations, such as those affecting public health and safety. This bill became law on September 3, 2023.⁵⁵

Federal Position on the Legalization of Marijuana

The Ogden Memorandum

Marijuana use, whether intended for medical purposes or not, is illegal at the federal level under the Controlled Substances Act of 1970. On October 19, 2009, United States Department of Justice (USDOJ) Deputy Attorney General (DAG) David Ogden issued a memorandum to provide clarification and guidance regarding federal investigations and prosecution, to federal prosecutors in states with medical marijuana laws. This memorandum emphasized that federal prosecution resources be used rationally and efficiently. The memorandum adds that: "...nothing herein precludes investigation or prosecution where there is a reasonable basis to believe that compliance with state law is being involved as a pretext for the production or distribution of marijuana for purposes not authorized by state law. Nor does this guidance preclude investigation or prosecution, even when there is clear and unambiguous compliance with existing state law, in particular circumstances *where investigation or prosecution otherwise serves important federal interests.*"⁵⁶

The U.S. DOJ:

- Unlawful possession or unlawful use of firearms;
- Violence;
- Sales to minors;

- Financial and marketing activities inconsistent with the terms, conditions, or purposes of state law, including evidence of money laundering activity and/or financial gains or excessive amounts of cash inconsistent with purported compliance with state or local law;
- Amounts of marijuana inconsistent with purported compliance with state or local law;
- Illegal possession or sale of other controlled substances; or
- Ties to other criminal enterprises.⁵⁷

The Cole Memorandum

As with medical marijuana, recreational marijuana use is also illegal at the federal level. However, on August 29, 2013, a memorandum was released by U.S. DOJ DAG James Cole. This memorandum described a new set of priorities for federal prosecutors operating in states which had legalized the medical use of marijuana. The Cole memorandum provided direction to U.S. Attorneys stating, “in light of recent state ballot initiatives that legalize, under state law, the possession of small amounts of marijuana and provide for the regulation of marijuana production, processing, and sale.”⁵⁸

The Cole memorandum was directed to federal prosecutors and federal law enforcement agencies and, while refocusing federal resources, identified eight priority areas that states needed to ensure would not be violated. These guidelines included:

- Preventing the distribution of marijuana to minors;
- Preventing revenue from the sale of marijuana going to criminal enterprises, gangs, and cartels;
- Preventing the diversion of marijuana from states where it is legal under state law in some form to other states;
- Preventing state-authorized marijuana activity from being used as a cover or pretext for the trafficking of other illegal drugs or other illegal activity;
- Preventing violence and the use of firearms in the cultivation and distribution of marijuana;
- Preventing drugged driving and the exacerbation of other adverse public health consequences associated with marijuana use;
- Preventing the growing of marijuana on public lands and the attendant public safety and environmental dangers posed by marijuana production on public lands;
- Preventing marijuana possession or use on federal property.⁵⁹

Rescinding of the Cole Memorandum

On January 4, 2018, the Cole memorandum was rescinded by a memo signed by US. DOJ Attorney General Jeff Sessions. In a release the U.S. DOJ stated:

“The Department of Justice today issued a memo on federal marijuana enforcement policy announcing a return to the rule of law and the rescission of previous guidance documents. Since the passage of the

Controlled Substances Act (CSA) in 1970, Congress has generally prohibited the cultivation, distribution, and possession of marijuana.

In the Memorandum, Attorney General Jeff Sessions directs all U.S. Attorneys to enforce the laws enacted by Congress and to follow well-established principles when pursuing prosecutions related to marijuana activities. This return to the rule of law is also a return of trust and local control to federal prosecutors who know where and how to deploy Justice Department resources most effectively to reduce violent crime, stem the tide of the drug crisis, and dismantle criminal gangs.”⁶⁰

Federal H.R.5485: - Hemp Farming Act of 2018

This act legalized industrial hemp containing tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the psychoactive component of marijuana, concentration of no more than 0.3% by removing it from Schedule I of the CSA. States and Indian tribes may regulate the production of hemp by submitting a plan to the USDA. The bill also makes hemp producers eligible for the federal crop insurance program and certain USDA research grants. Its provisions were incorporated into the 2018 United States Farm Bill that became law on December 20, 2018.⁶¹

Federal H.R. 8454-Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Research Expansion Act

Simplified and encouraged the application process for research under the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to develop marijuana-derived medicines. The bill also requires the Department of Health and Human Services to report on possible benefits and harms of marijuana use to Congress. This would occur without changing the Schedule I status or legalizing marijuana. This bill passed through The House of Representatives on July 26, 2022. And was signed into law by President Biden on December 2, 2022.⁶²

A Proposed Rule by the Drug Enforcement Administration on 8/29/2024

The Drug Enforcement Administration will hold a hearing on December 2, 2024. The hearing will address the rescheduling of marijuana from schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) to Schedule III of the CSA.⁶³

Availability

As of 2023, California is considered the single largest global producer of legal cannabis.⁶⁴ With sales in the multibillions of dollars, California continues to be the largest and most profitable cannabis market according to California’s Cannabis Industry Market update.⁶⁵ Marijuana, in all its forms, is the most widely available scheduled controlled substance in California, in the legal and illegal market retail quantities. As of 2020. California growers, including foreign nationals with grow sites in California, produced 15.5 million pounds of marijuana annually. The overwhelming majority of which is grown in Northern California. It is distributed by

independent growers, legal and illegal dispensaries. In 2022, California produced 577 metric tons of legal marijuana.⁶⁶

The Department of Cannabis Control began issuing Type 5 Large licenses on January 1st, 2023. These licenses permit growers as much square footage under one license.

Active California Marijuana Licenses

Cultivation	4,570
Distribution	1,170
Microbusiness	370
Nursery	298
Processor	142
Retailer	1,200
Retailer (Non-Storefront)	383
Testing Laboratory	27
Event Organizer	43
Type N-Infusion	105
Type P-Packaging	26
Type S Shared Use	16
Manufacturer-Type 6	357
Manufacturer– Type 7	148

Source: <https://cannabis.ca.gov/resources/data-dashboard/license-report/>

Note: Updated 8/26/24

California Marijuana Taxation

When California legalized recreational marijuana, it granted cities the flexibility to regulate cannabis or prohibit it. Approximately 57% of California’s cities and counties ban retail cannabis businesses in 2024. This caused some marijuana farmers to locate to non-regulated areas. As of July 2024, 54% of cities and counties do not allow any retail cannabis business across the state and 46% of cities and counties allow at least one form of cannabis business.⁶⁷ Consequently, it can be difficult to find licensed marijuana sellers who do not complain about burdens imposed on them by the state, specifically taxes. California recently raised the cannabis excise and cultivation taxes, which many store owners and licensed growers protest as counter-productive if the state wants the industry to survive. The price of operating legally exceeds the cost of operating without a license. In 2023, with the changing of cannabis excise tax reporting from distributor to the retailer of 15%; some retailers may receive a credit for excise tax paid to a distributor before January 1, 2023. For current operating costs visit [Getting Started for Cannabis](#)

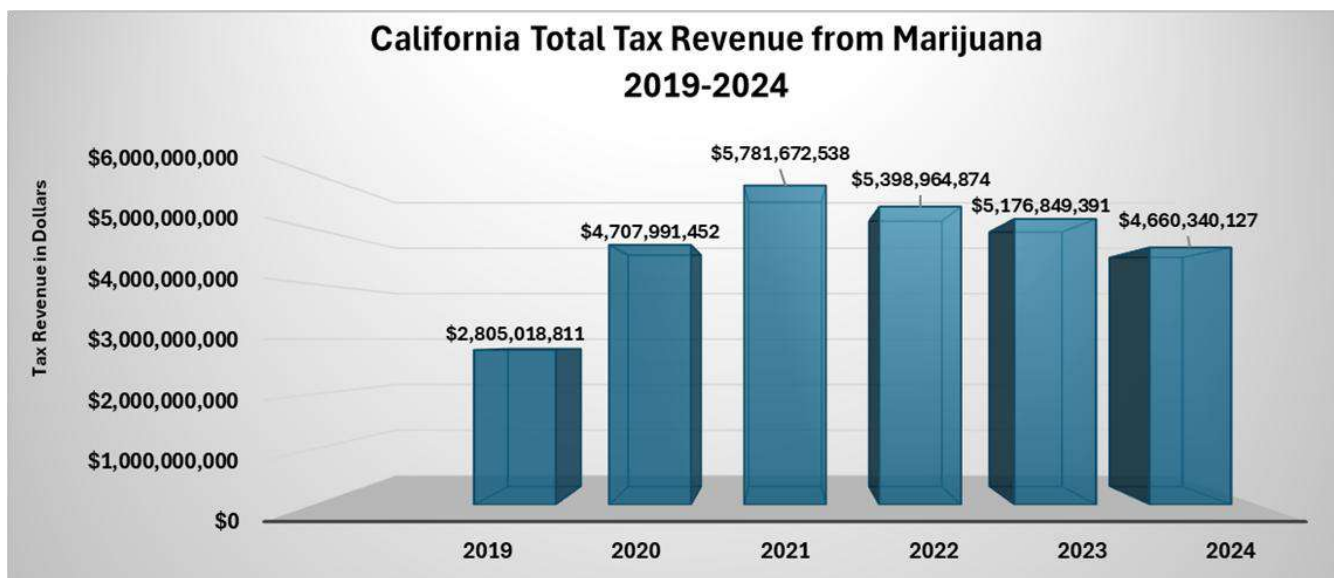
Businesses. It has been stated that the illegal marijuana grows in northern California have gotten worse as illicit marijuana sales force licensed operations out of business. Now as of August 26, 2024, there are 8,855 active marijuana licenses in California.⁶⁸

California charges growers state taxes in the amount of \$10.08 per ounce of dried marijuana flowers, \$3.00 per ounce of dry marijuana leaves and \$1.41 per ounce of fresh marijuana plants as per the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration. The state also requires retailers to charge customers a 15% tax on any product sold. These taxes contribute to an increase in sales of illegal marijuana on the black market.

The California Cannabis Advisory Committee states in their annual report that California's marijuana industry was the world's largest legal market in 2021. The Newsom administration implemented numerous COVID-19 protections and budget investment (grant opportunities) to assist legal marijuana farmers who were unable to compete with the illicit marijuana market. Legal marijuana store fronts, like liquor stores, were considered essential and remained open during this time.

Marijuana Tax Revenue

The California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) reported revenue numbers for 2021 as \$679.5 million in excise tax, \$166.2 million in cultivation tax, and \$469.1 million in sales tax. Since 2018, total tax revenues from marijuana have increased by 230% in California. The California total tax revenue from marijuana went from \$2,805,018,811 in 2019 to \$4,660,340,127 in 2024 with an increase of 66%.⁶⁹



Source: California Department of Tax and Fee Administration, Cannabis Tax Revenues, Grid View

Accessed : April 2025

Notes: Revenue represents amounts reported based on the reporting period of the return. Amounts are subject to change and updated every year. Taxable sales: Taxable sales include sales of cannabis, cannabis products, and other retail sales of tangible personal property reported on sales and use tax returns.

NOTE:

- MULTI-YEAR COMPARISONS ARE GENERALLY BETTER INDICATORS OF TRENDS. ONE-YEAR FLUCTUATIONS DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT A NEW TREND.
- THIS REPORT WILL CITE DATASETS WITH TERMS SUCH AS “MARIJUANA-RELATED” . THAT DOES NOT NECESSARILY PROVE THAT MARIJUANA WAS THE CAUSE OF THE INCIDENT.

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¹³ Ibid

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¹⁵ Ibid

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- ²⁷ CA.gov Proposition 65 Your Right to Know. [Cannabis \(Marijuana\) Smoke - Proposition 65 Warnings Website](#)
- ²⁸ California Governor Signs Bill Creating Department of Cannabis Control, July 12, 2021. [https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/california-governor-signs-bill-creating-1040940/#:~:text=California%20Governor%20Signs%20Bill%20Creating%20Department%20Of%20Cannabis%20Control,-Jonathan%20Dolgin&text=On%20July%2012%2C%202021%2C%20California,of%20Cannabis%20Control%20\(DCC\).](https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/california-governor-signs-bill-creating-1040940/#:~:text=California%20Governor%20Signs%20Bill%20Creating%20Department%20Of%20Cannabis%20Control,-Jonathan%20Dolgin&text=On%20July%2012%2C%202021%2C%20California,of%20Cannabis%20Control%20(DCC).)
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- ³¹ Law Offices of Jennifer McGrath <https://www.jennifermcgrath.com/california-cannabis-law-legislative-update/california-cannabis-bills-2021-california-legislature/>
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- ³⁴ California Legislative Information. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB73
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- ³⁶ Manzuri Law. <https://manzurilaw.com/everything-you-need-to-know-about-the-cannabis-related-bills-in-the-2022-california-legislative-session/>
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- ⁴² California Legislative Information. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB2188
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- ⁴⁵ FastDemocracy. [Bill tracking in California - AB 1684 \(2023-2024 legislative session\) - FastDemocracy](#)
- ⁴⁶ LegiScan. [Bill Text: CA AB1775 | 2023-2024 | Regular Session | Introduced | LegiScan](#)
- ⁴⁷ California Department of Public Health. [California's Ban on Intoxicating Hemp Products Now in Effect](#)
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- ⁴⁸ Forbes.com. [California Bans Hemp Products with Any Amount of THC \(forbes.com\)](https://www.forbes.com)
- ⁴⁹ Lester Black, SF Gate March 3, 2025.
- ⁵⁰ Law Offices of Jennifer McGrath. [California Cannabis Bills Introduced in the California Legislature in 2024 \(jennifermcgrath.com\)](https://jennifermcgrath.com)
- ⁵¹ LegiScan. [CA SB540 | 2023-2024 | Regular Session | LegiScan](https://legiscan.com)
- ⁵² LegiScan. [CA SB622 | 2023-2024 | Regular Session | LegiScan](https://legiscan.com)
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- ⁵⁶ Department of Justice Archives. <https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/blog/memorandum-selected-united-state-attorneys-investigations-and-prosecutions-states>
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- ⁵⁸ U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the Deputy Attorney General, "Memorandum for all United States Attorneys." <http://dfi.wa.gov/documents/banks/cole-memo-08-29-13.pdf>
- ⁵⁹ Ibid
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- ⁶¹ U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Hemp Production and 2018 Farm Bill. July, 25, 2019. <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/congressional-testimony/hemp-production-and-2018-farm-bill-07252019>
- ⁶² Congress.Gov. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/8454?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22Federal+H.R.+8454%22%2C%22Federal%22%2C%22H.R.%22%2C%228454%22%5D%7D&s=2&r=1>
- ⁶³ Schedules of Controlled Substances: Rescheduling of Marijuana, 89 FR 44597 (/citation/89-FR-44597) (May 21, 2024)
- ⁶⁴ Chris Dillis, Margiana Peterson-Rockney, Michael Polson. A theory of geo social marginalization: A case study of the licensed industry in California. Journal of Environmental Management. March 2024, Vol. 355. A. Long. How Big is California's Cannabis Market? Think a Small Nation. MJBizDaily.com (2023) June 27. [A theory of geo-social marginalization: A case study of the licensed cannabis industry in California - ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0950268824000000)
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SECTION ONE: Potency and Price of Marijuana

There appears to be two contributing factors to the increase in potency: 1.) cultivators are breeding cannabis plants specifically for higher THC concentration, and 2.) concentrates and other high potency products make up a large part of the cannabis market in part due to consumer demand.¹

Key Findings:

- ❖ Nationally, the average THC content of marijuana has increased steadily over the years. The average THC potency of traditional marijuana was approximately 4% in 1995. As of 2022, its potency had risen to approximately 16%, an increase of nearly 308%.
- ❖ The price per pound (lb.) of marijuana in California can vary from \$500 to \$2500 depending on THC potency level.

Definitions:

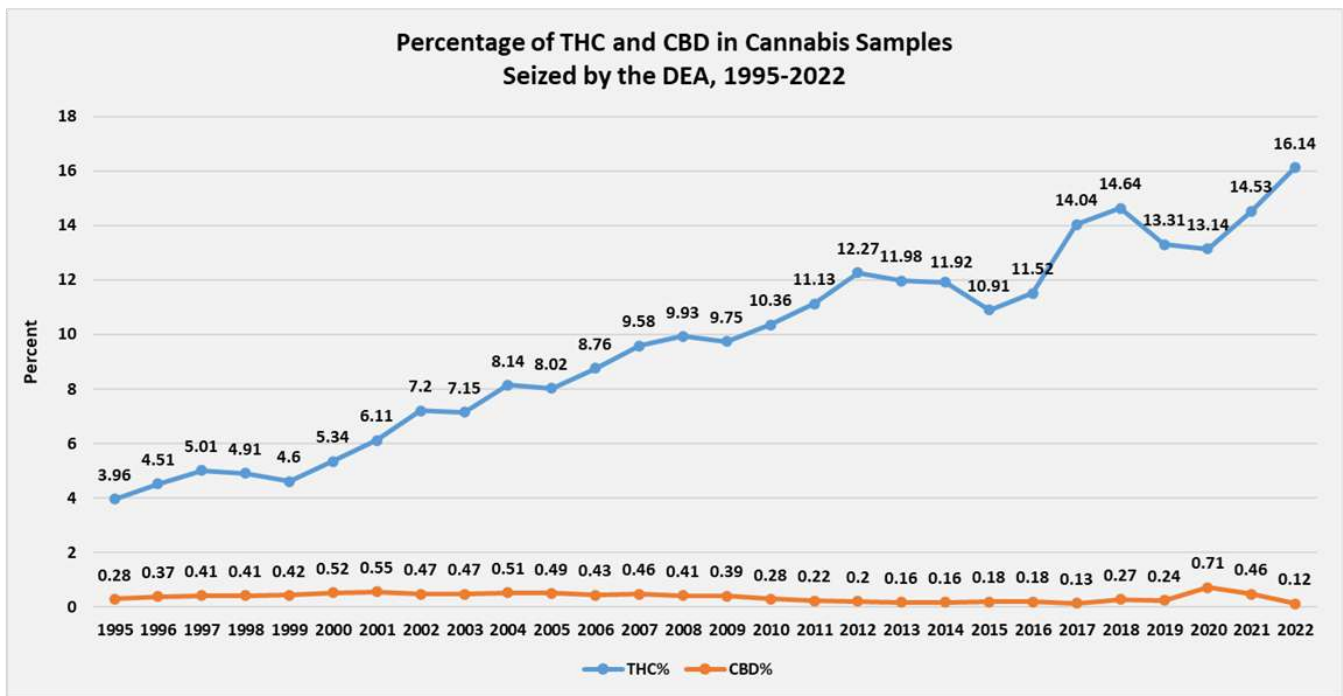
Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC): The chemical responsible for most of marijuana's psychoactive effects. It acts much like cannabinoid chemicals, i.e., endocannabinoids, made naturally by the body.

Delta 8 THC: Usually manufactured from hemp-derived cannabidiol (CBD). While CBD does not have any intoxicating effects, delta-8 THC has similar psychoactive properties to delta-9 THC, but generally less potent.

Delta 9 THC: The major naturally occurring intoxicating component of the cannabis plant.

Marijuana Concentrate: A highly potent tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) concentrated substance such as shatter, wax, distillates and oils.

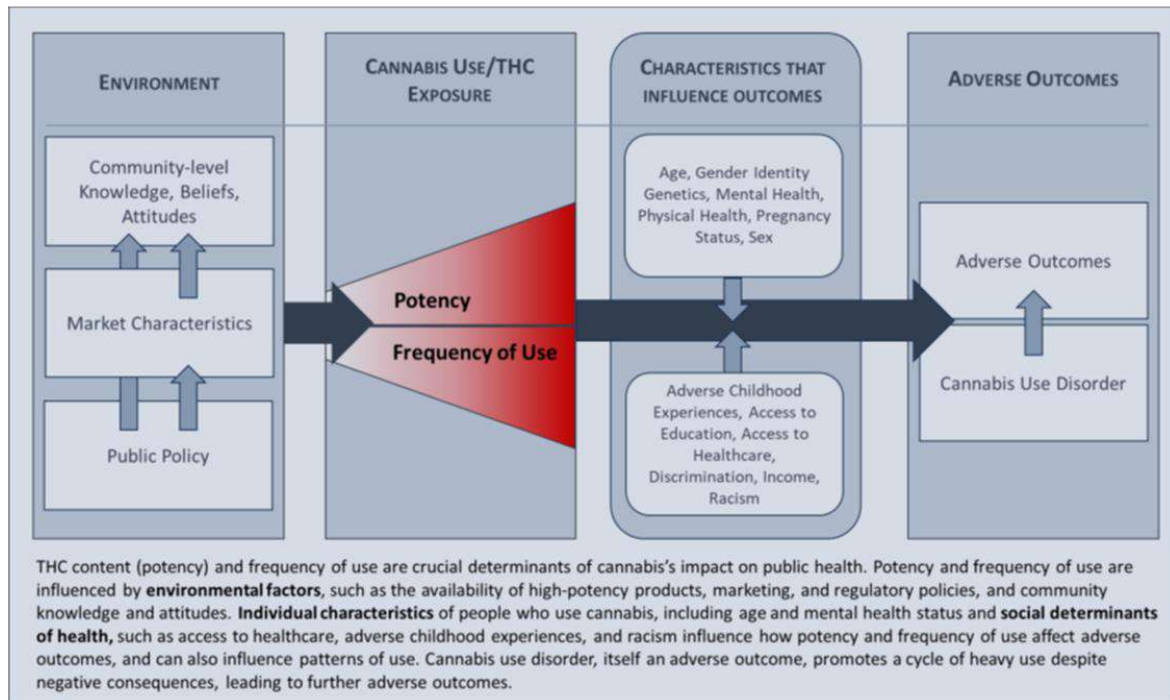
Cannabidiol (CBD): The second most prevalent of the active ingredients of marijuana. CBD is a non-psychoactive component derived from the marijuana (cannabis) plant.



Source: University of Mississippi, Potency Monitoring Project and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). Note: Delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and Cannabidiol (CBD) Potency of Cannabis Samples Seized by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Percent Averages from 1995-2022. Cannabis Potency Data | National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) (nih.gov).

- ❖ Nationally, the average THC content of marijuana has increased steadily over the years. The average THC potency of traditional marijuana was approximately 4% in 1995. As of 2022, its potency had risen to approximately 16%, an increase of nearly 308%.

From Public Policy to Potency to Adverse Outcomes: A Conceptual Model



Source: *Report and Recommendations of the High Potency Cannabis Think Tank to the State of California*, October 30, 2024.

Prepared by an independent scientific committee convened by the California Department of Public Health.

California Marijuana Prices (as of July 2024)

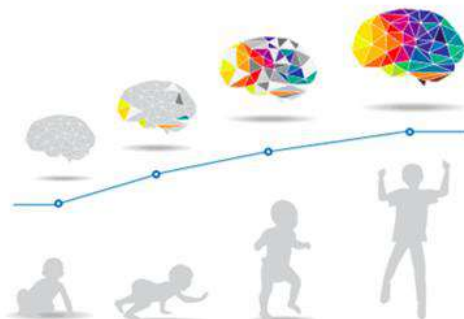
HIDTA	Mexican Marijuana	Domestic Marijuana
San Diego Imperial Valley	\$500-\$1,500	\$750-\$2,500
Los Angeles		
Central Valley		\$1,000-\$2,000
Northern California		\$500

Source: Law Enforcement Reporting System

Note: Measurement is in pounds.

- ❖ The price of a pound (lb.) of marijuana in California can vary from \$500 to \$2500 depending on THC potency level.

The Growing Brain



- Science age of adult brain = 25-27
- Substance Use Disorder is up to 7x more likely if exposed to addictive substances during age of development.

Sources: Pejo J., Vendrell, P., Jaque, C., Marb-Villab, J. L., & Capdevila, A. (1993). When does human brain development end? Evidence of corpus callosum growth up to adulthood. *Annals of Neurology*, 34(1), 71-75. doi:10.1002/ana.410340113; Wilens J.C. and Lee C.Y. Likelihood of developing an alcohol and cannabis use disorder during youth: Association with recent use and age. *Drug Alcohol Depend.* 2008.

THC in pot shops – not just a plant

- Varied state regulations
 - CA: no regulation on smoked products
 - Edibles: 10 mg per serving, 100mg per package
- Product Diversity
 - smoke, vape, edible, suppositories, drinks, wax, creams
- Wax products – up to 99% THC
- Impurities including pesticides



Source: Dr. Roneet Lev; California Cannabis Control Board

Cannabis Poisonings

MAY CAUSE:

- Psychosis
- Suicidal ideation
- Scromiting
- Excited Delirium
- Seizures
- Cardiovascular Collapse
- Pneumothorax
- Motor Vehicle Collisions
- Stroke like symptoms
- Anxiety
- Tachycardia
- Amotivational Syndrome
- Over sedation – can't wake up
- Chest Pain and Palpitations
- Excessive Bleeding
- Allergic Reaction



Source: Dr. Roneet Lev

¹ Petek, Gabriel. Legislative Analyst's Office, "How High? Adjusting California's Cannabis Taxes." 2019 www.lao.ca.gov.

SECTION TWO: Vaping

Key Findings:

- ❖ Nationally, any lifetime vaping use has continued to decrease slightly from 2022 to 2023: 8th grade use decreased from 18.1% to 17.5%, 10th grade decreased from 29.6% to 26% and 12th grade decreased from 40.7% to 37.7%.
- ❖ Nationally in 2023, the daily use of nicotine vaping continues to be higher than the daily use of smoking tobacco across all grade levels: 1.4% vs. .4% in 8th grade, 2.4% vs. 1% in 10th grade and 5.8% vs. .7% in 12th grade.
- ❖ Nationally, the 30-day prevalence of marijuana (non-vaping) and vaping marijuana decreased across 10th and 12th graders from 2022 to 2023 but remained constant for 8th graders at 4.2%.
- ❖ From 2017 to 2023, national past month marijuana vaping use more than doubled among college and non-college students.

Definitions:

Monitoring the Future (MTF): This study/survey is funded by research grants from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). MTF is an ongoing study of behaviors, attitudes and values of American secondary school students, college students and young adults.

The California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS): The largest statewide survey of resiliency, protective factors, risk behaviors, and school climate in the nation. This survey is administered in California every other year to 7th, 9th and 11th grade students in most public-school districts.

What Are People Using to Vape, Smoke, Dab and Vape THC and CBD?

Key Facts About E-Cigarette, or Vaping, Products

Important notes:

1. E-liquids can contain nicotine, THC, CBD, flavors, or other solvents.
2. Marijuana herb, hash oil, dab wax are used with vaporizers.



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

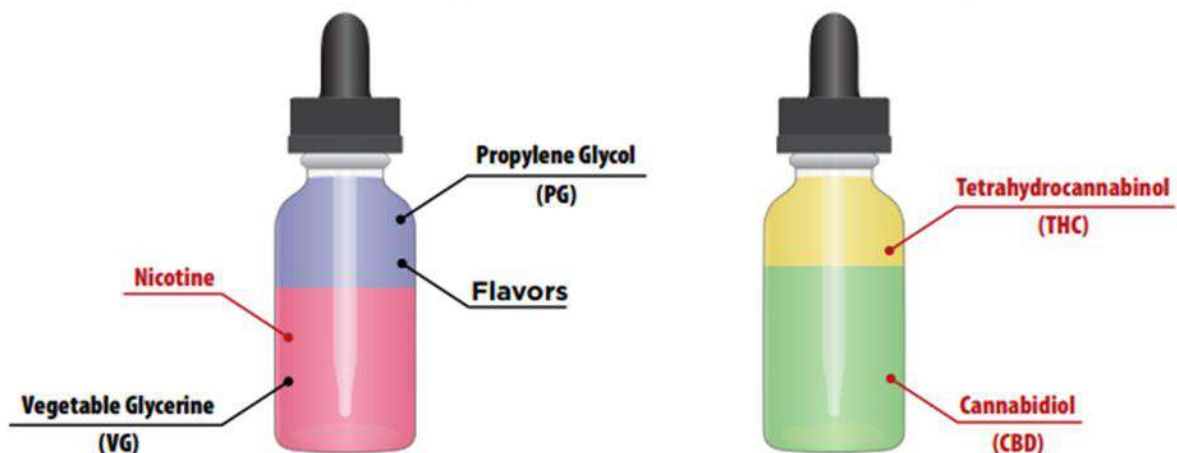
E-Liquid



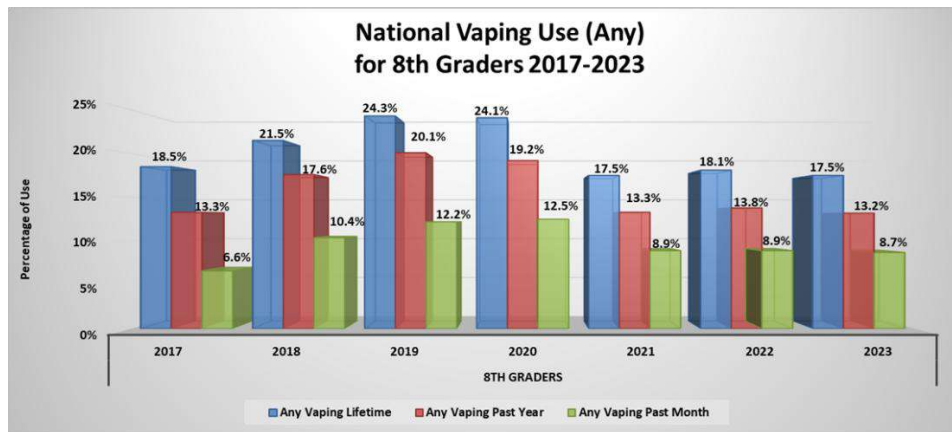
E-Liquid

- E-liquid is the liquid that is converted into an aerosol by an e-cigarette, or vaping, product. It is typically a mixture of water, food grade flavoring, a choice of nicotine levels, cannabis (THC, CBD), propylene glycol (PG) or vegetable glycerin (VG).
- PG and VG are humectants used in e-liquid to produce aerosols that simulate combustible tobacco cigarette smoke.
- The ratio of PG and VG in the e-liquid can change based on whether flavor (higher levels of PG) or plume (higher levels of VG) is desired.

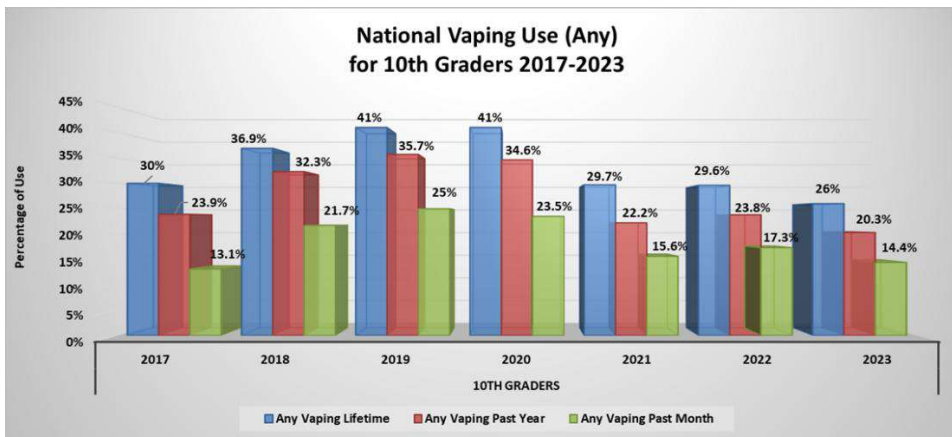
REGULAR E-LIQUID VS. CANNABIS E-LIQUID



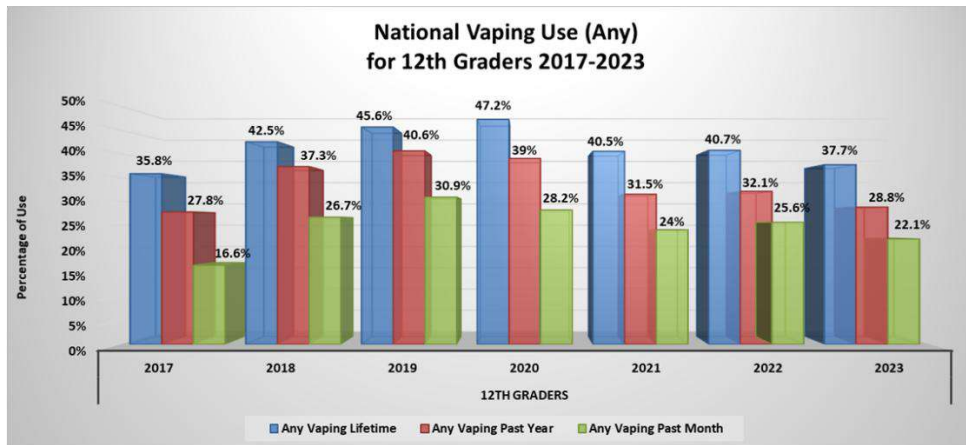
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



Source: Monitoring the Future Study, the University of Michigan: Trends in Prevalence of Various Drugs for 8th Graders, 10th Graders, and 12th Graders; 2017-2023.

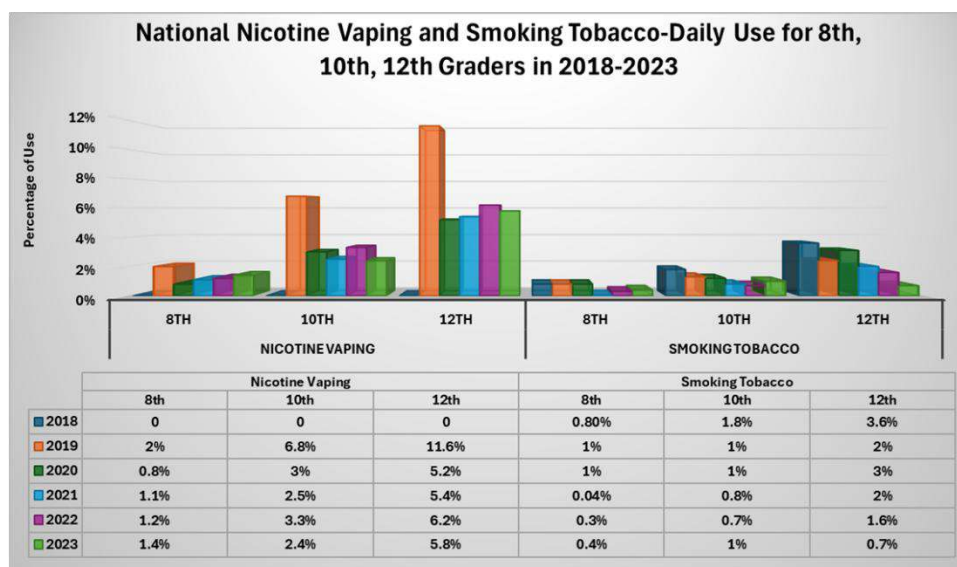


Source: Monitoring the Future Study, the University of Michigan: Trends in Prevalence of Various Drugs for 8th Graders, 10th Graders, and 12th Graders; 2017-2023.



Source: Monitoring the Future Study, the University of Michigan: Trends in Prevalence of Various Drugs for 8th Graders, 10th Graders, and 12th Graders; 2017-2023.

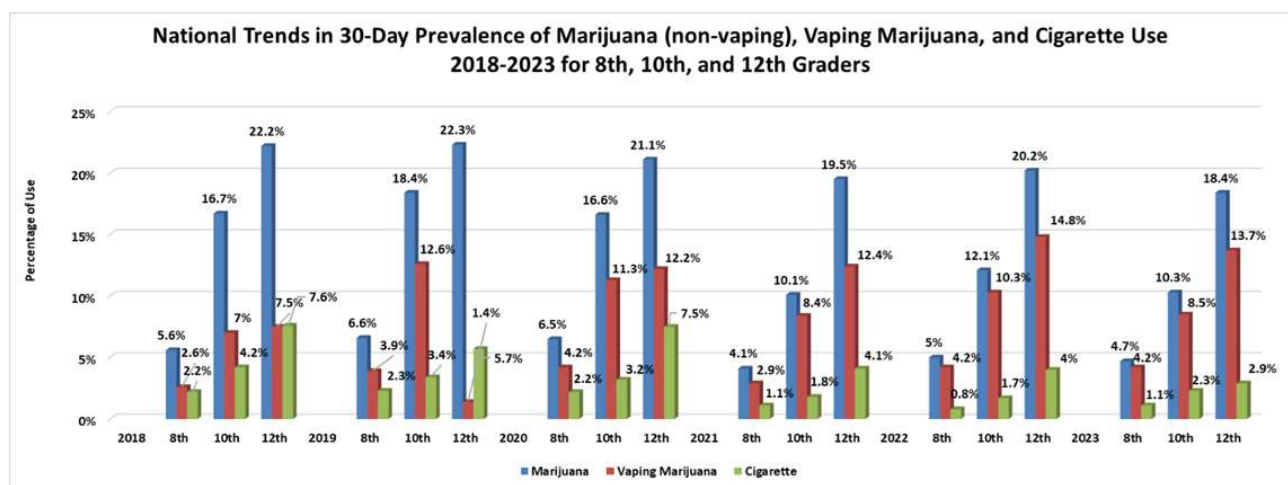
- ❖ Nationally, any lifetime vaping use has continued to decrease slightly from 2022 to 2023: 8th grade use decreased from 18.1% to 17.5%, 10th grade decreased from 29.6% to 26% and 12th grade decreased from 40.7% to 37.7%.



Source: Monitoring the Future Study, the University of Michigan.

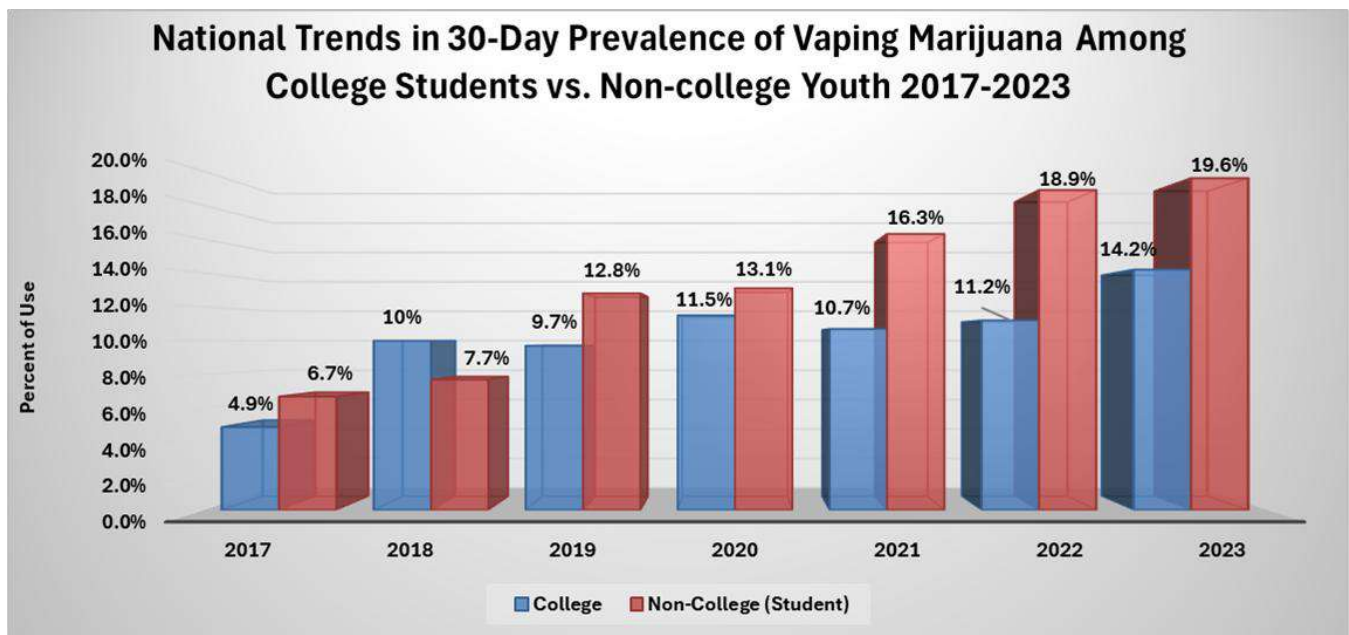
Note: 0 means not collected at year 2018.

- ❖ Nationally in 2023, the daily use of nicotine vaping continues to be higher than the daily use of smoking tobacco across all grade levels: 1.4% vs. .4% in 8th grade, 2.4% vs. 1% in 10th grade and 5.8% vs. .7% in 12th grade.



Source: Miech, R.A., Johnston, L.D., Patrick, M.E., & O'Malley, P.M. (2024). Monitoring the Future national survey results on drug use, 1975-2023: Overview and detailed results on drug use for secondary school students. Monitoring the Future Monograph Series. Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.

- ❖ Nationally, the 30-day prevalence of marijuana (non-vaping) and vaping marijuana decreased across 10th and 12th graders from 2022 to 2023 but remained constant for 8th graders at 4.2%.



Source: Monitoring the Future Study, the University of Michigan, College Students and Adults Ages 19-65

Accessed: March 2025

- ❖ From 2017 to 2023, national past month marijuana vaping use more than doubled among college and non-college students.

SECTION THREE: California Youth Marijuana Use Ages 12-17

Key Findings

- ❖ California youth predominantly had a lower perception of risk of smoking marijuana once a month, compared to the national average from 2014-2021 data, but had a higher perception of risk in 2021-2023.
- ❖ Nationally, vaping (any substance) continues to surpass alcohol and marijuana use for 8th and 10th graders.
- ❖ From 2022 to 2023, California's rank decreased nationally in past month usage of marijuana by 12-17 year-olds (by state).
- ❖ In California, individuals ages 12 and older, continue to have a higher rate of past month use of marijuana (2015-2023).
- ❖ 12-17 year-olds in California reported using marijuana and cigarettes at a lower rate than the national (rate) in 2022-2023.
- ❖ California lifetime use of drugs and alcohol for 7th, 9th and 11th grades has been decreasing since the 2011-2013 survey period.
- ❖ Drugs continue to be one of the top reasons for California public school expulsions (2018-2024).

Definitions:

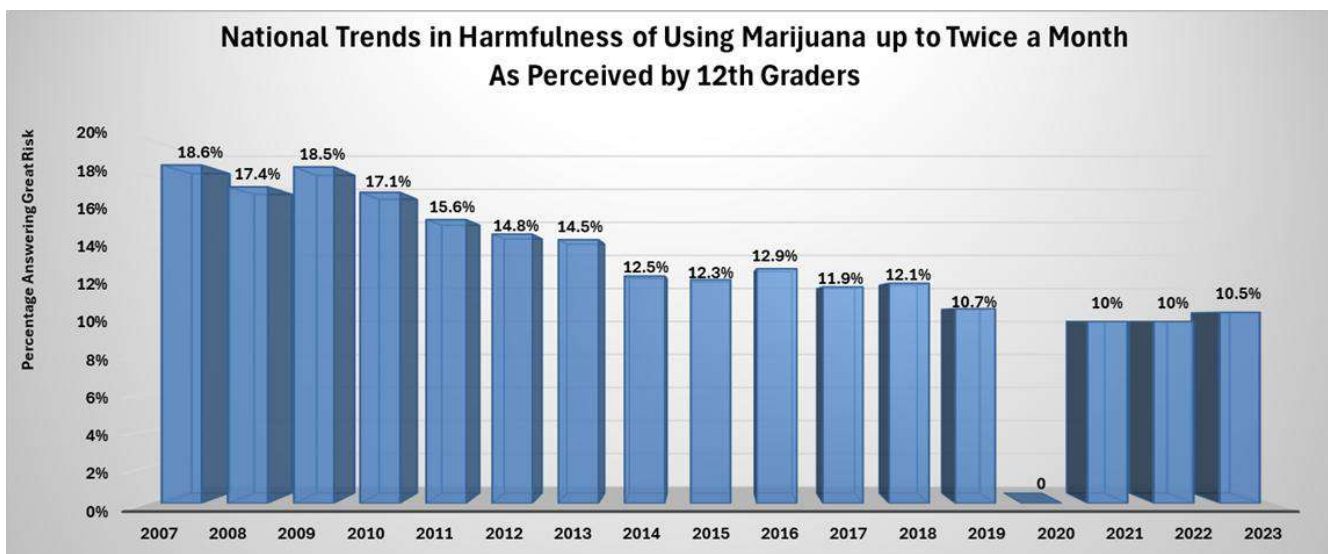
Monitoring the Future (MTF): This study/survey is funded by research grants from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), a part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). MTF is an ongoing study of behaviors, attitudes and values of American secondary school students, college students and young adults.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): A branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH): Provides annual information on tobacco, alcohol, drug use, mental health outcomes and other health-related issues in the United States associated with substance use.

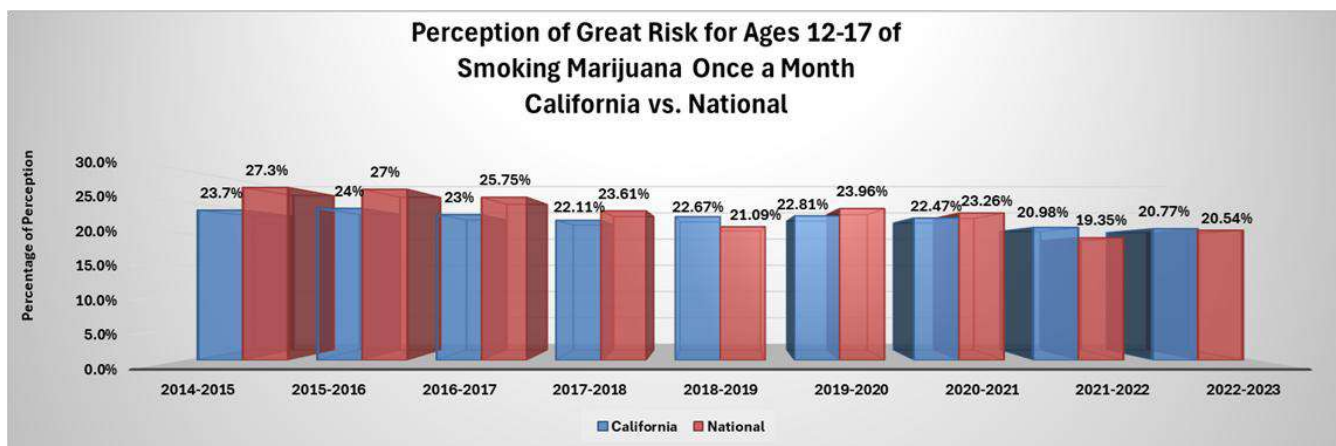
The California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS): The largest statewide survey of resiliency, protective factors, risk behaviors, and school climate in the nation. This survey is administered in California every other year to 7th, 9th and 11th grade students in most public-school districts.

Ed-Data: A Partnership of the California Department of Education, EdSource and Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team/California School Information Services (FCMAT/CSIS) designed to offer educators, policymakers, the legislature, parents and the public quick access to timely and comprehensive data about K-12 education in California.



Source: Monitoring the Future Study.

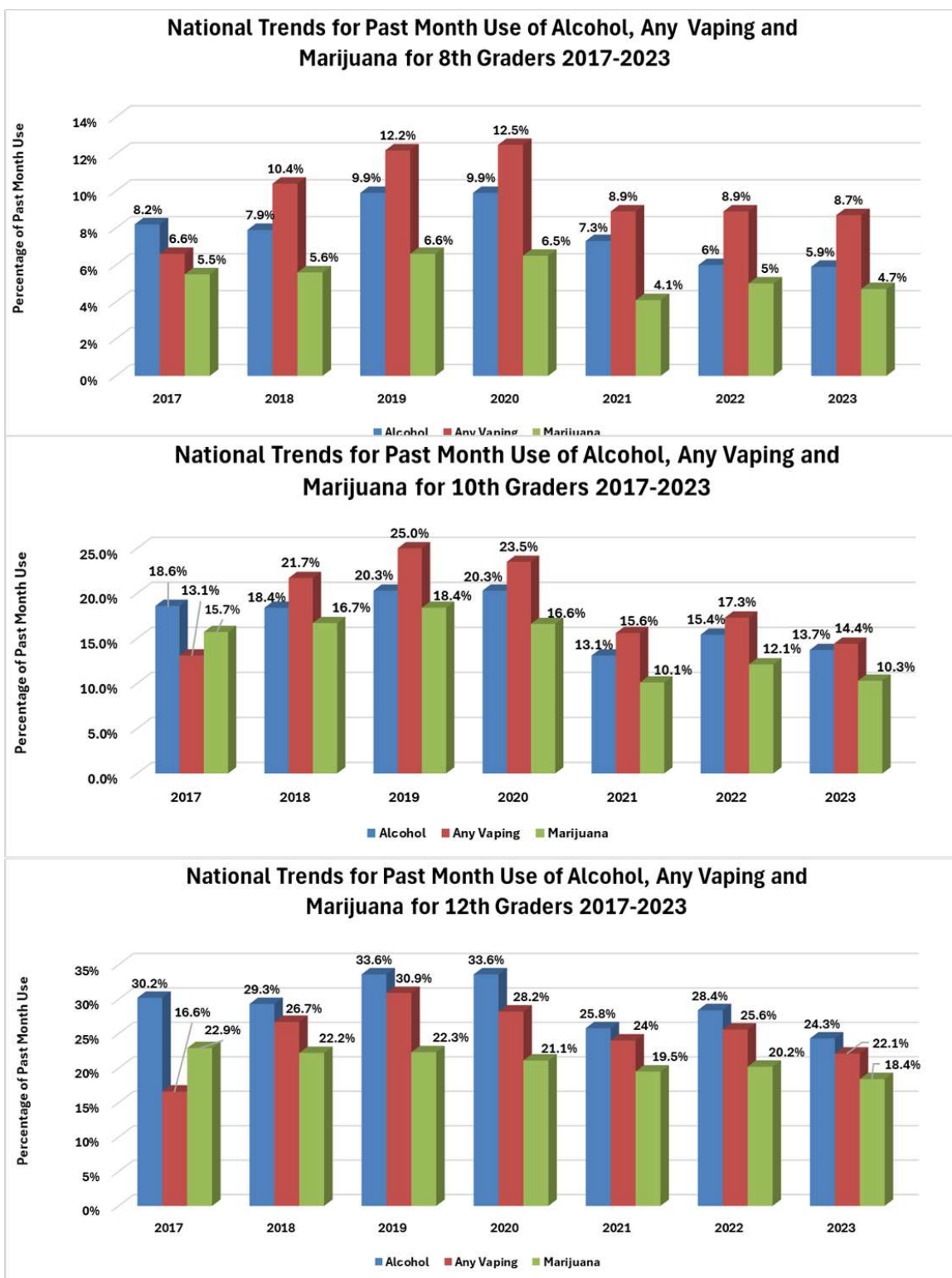
Note: 0 for 2020 due to "Estimates not presented due to insufficient data".



Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health 2014-2023.

Accessed: March, 2025

- ❖ California youth predominantly had a lower perception of risk of smoking marijuana once a month, compared to the national average from 2014-2021 data, but had a higher perception of risk in 2021-2023.

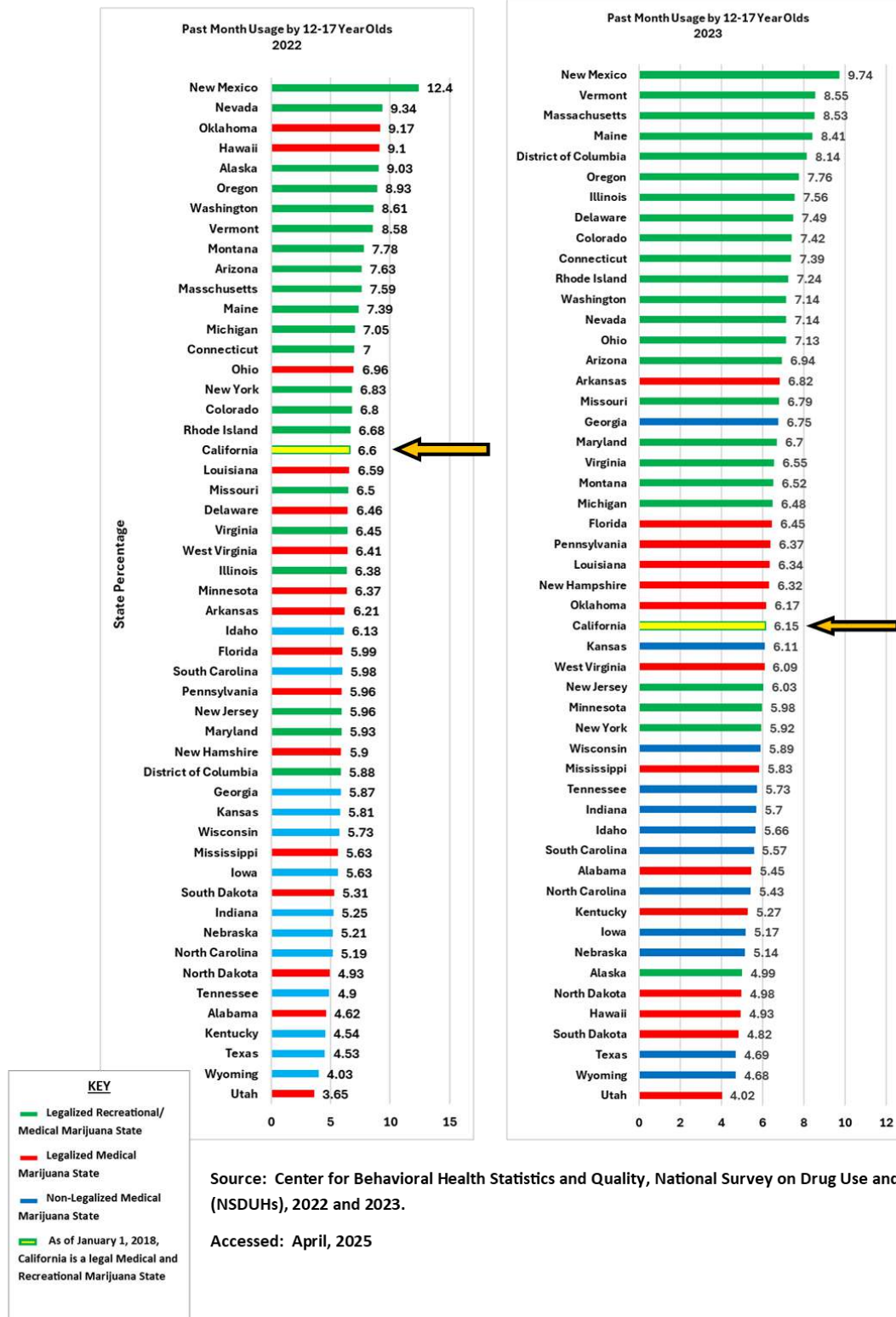


Source: The Monitoring the Future study, the University of Michigan. 2023

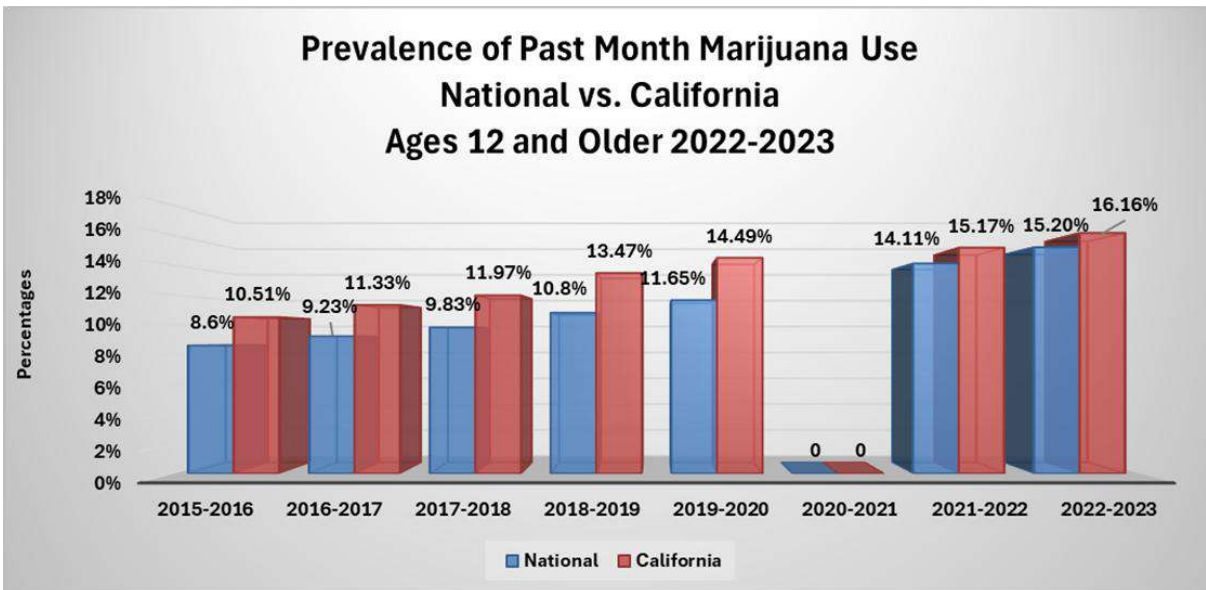
Accessed 6/29/24

- ❖ Nationally, vaping (any substance) continues to surpass alcohol and marijuana use for 8th and 10th graders.

National Ranking by State of Past Month Use Ages 12-17, 2022-2023



- ❖ From 2022 to 2023, California's rank decreased nationally in past month usage of marijuana by 12-17 year-olds (by state).

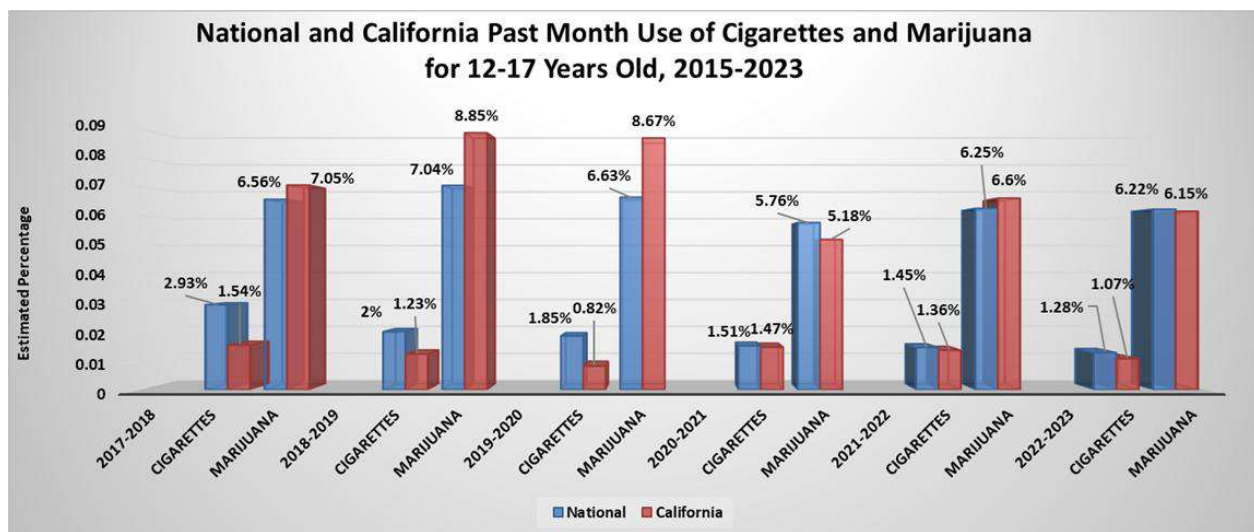


Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2021 and 2022

Note: These estimates of marijuana use include marijuana vaping. Accessed on March 2025

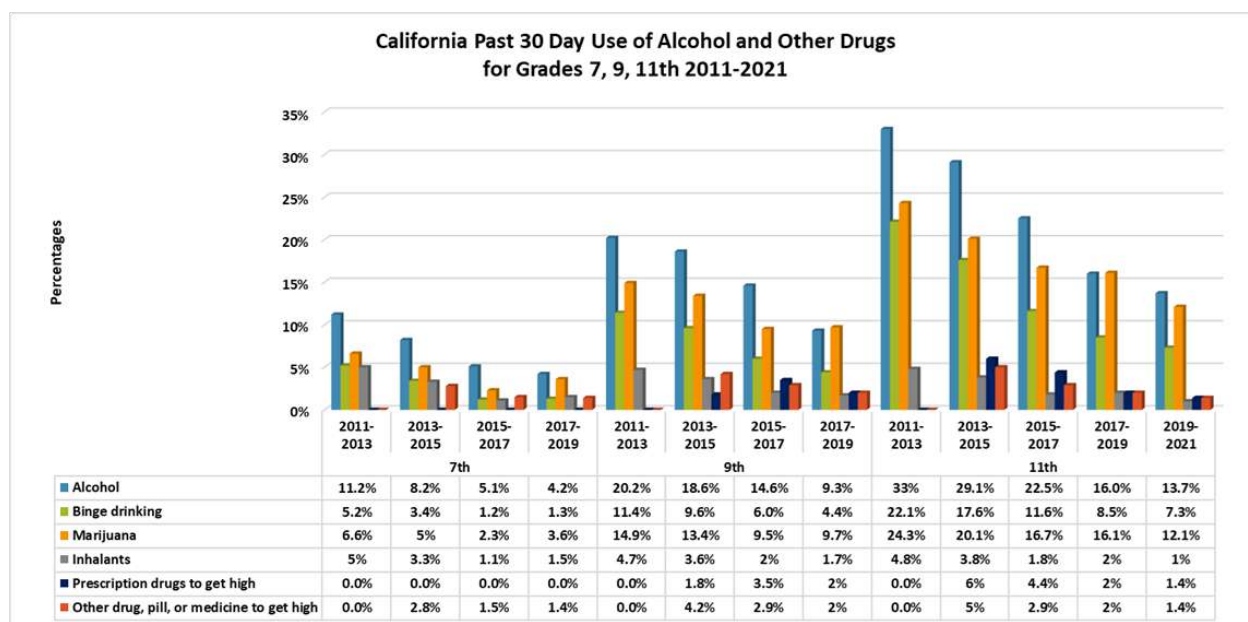
Zero's in graph denote no available data.

- ❖ In California, individuals ages 12 and older continue to have a higher rate of past month use of marijuana (2015-2023).



Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, March 2025

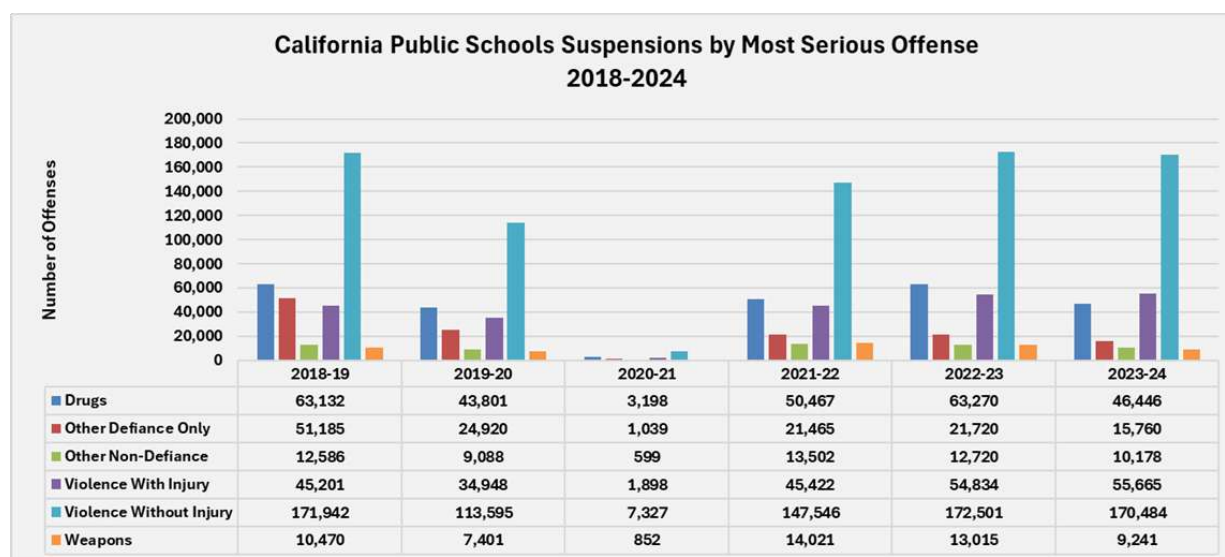
- ❖ 12–17-year-olds in California reported using both marijuana and cigarettes at a lower rate than the national (rate) in 2022-2023.



Source: Student Engagement and Well-Being in California 2019-2021; Results of the Eighteenth Biennial State California Healthy Kids Survey, WestEd. (2023)

Accessed 9/26/24

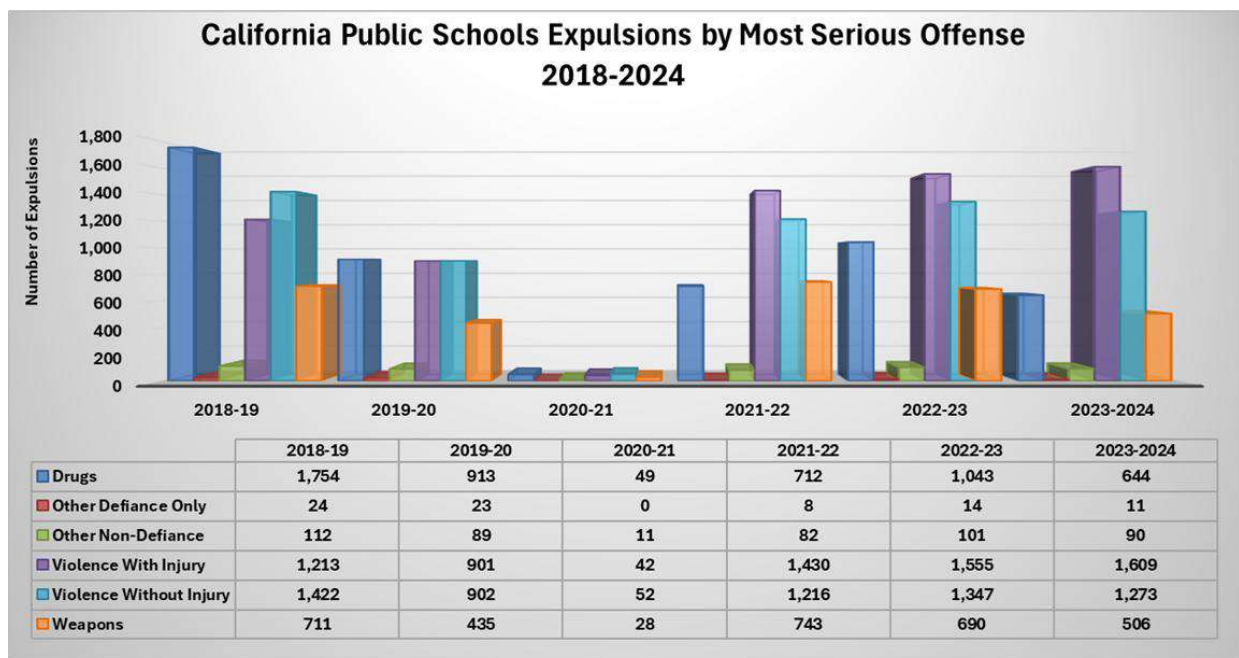
- ❖ California lifetime use of drugs and alcohol for 7th, 9th and 11th grades has been decreasing since the 2011-2013 survey period.



Source: EdData, State Profile, California 2023: Suspension Count (California Department of Education).

Note: 2020-2021, Education was delivered primarily virtually due to Covid-19.

Accessed: March 2025



Source: EdData, State Profile, California 2023: Suspension Count (California Department of Education).

Note: 2020-2021, Education was delivered primarily virtually due to Covid-19.

Accessed: March 2025

- ❖ Drugs continue to be one of the top reasons for California public school expulsions (2018-2024).

SECTION FOUR: California Marijuana Use Ages 18-25

Key Findings

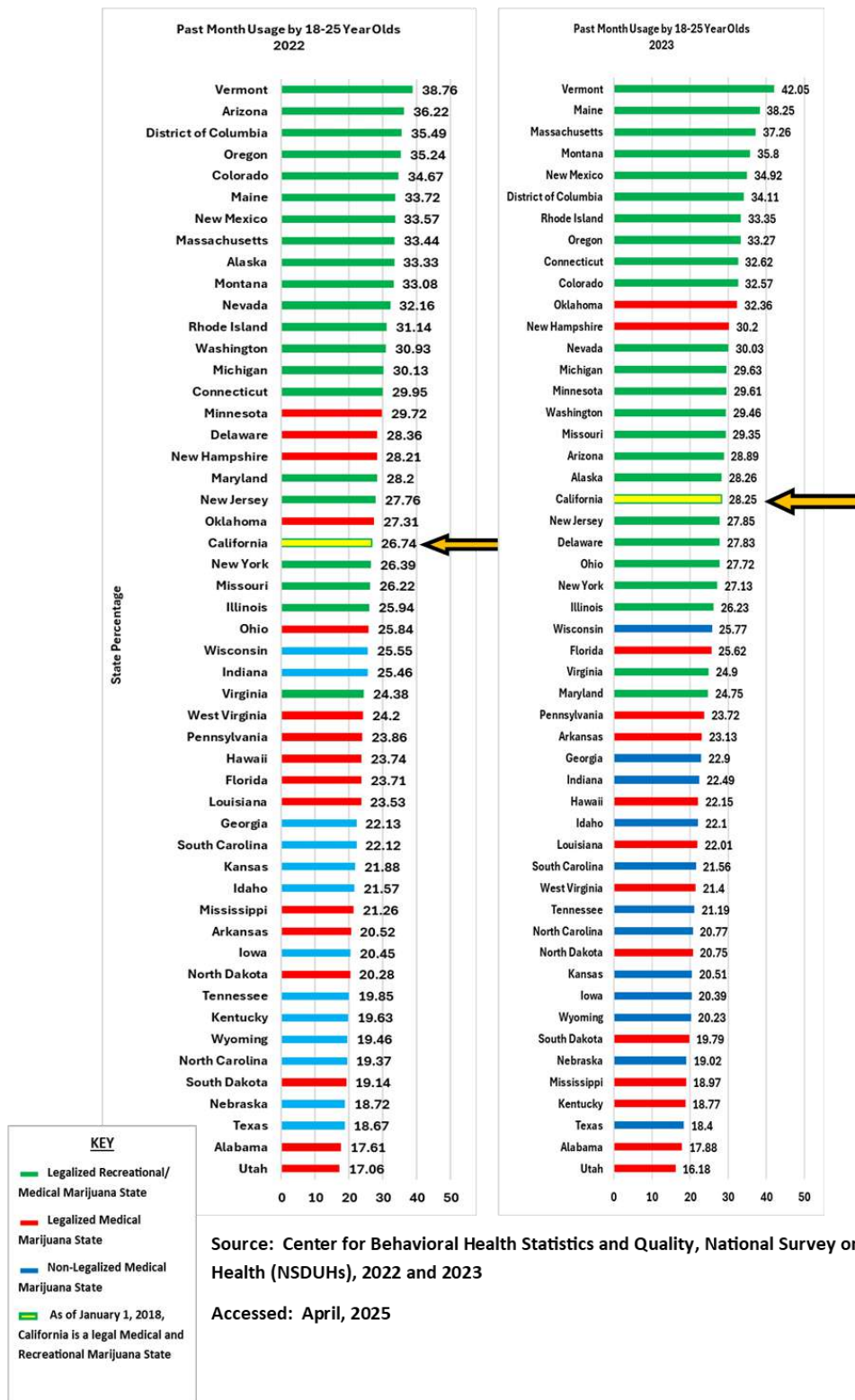
- ❖ Since 2017-2018, California's marijuana use by 18- 25 year olds continued to surpass their use of cigarettes.

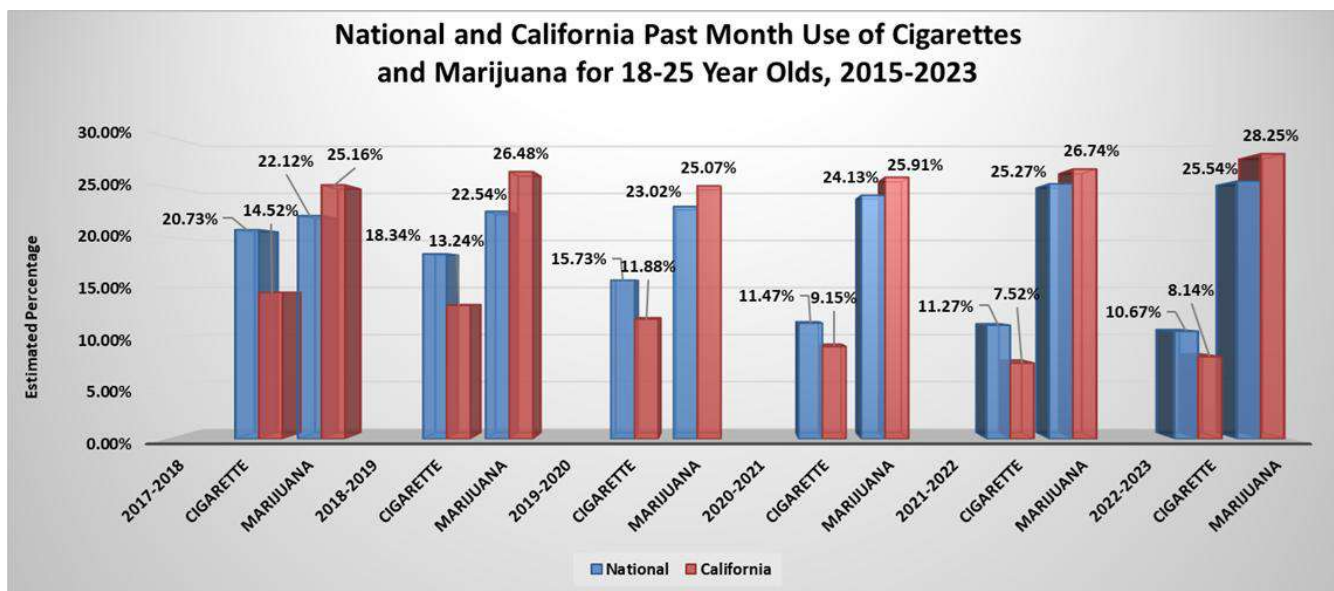
Definitions:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): A branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH): Provides annual information on tobacco, alcohol, drug use, mental health outcomes and other health-related issues in the United States associated with substance use.

National Ranking by State of Past Month Use Ages 18-25, 2022-2023





Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2024

Accessed: March 2025

- ❖ Since 2017-2018, California's marijuana use by 18-25 year-olds continued to surpass their use of cigarettes.

SECTION FIVE: California Marijuana Use Ages 26 and Older

Key Findings

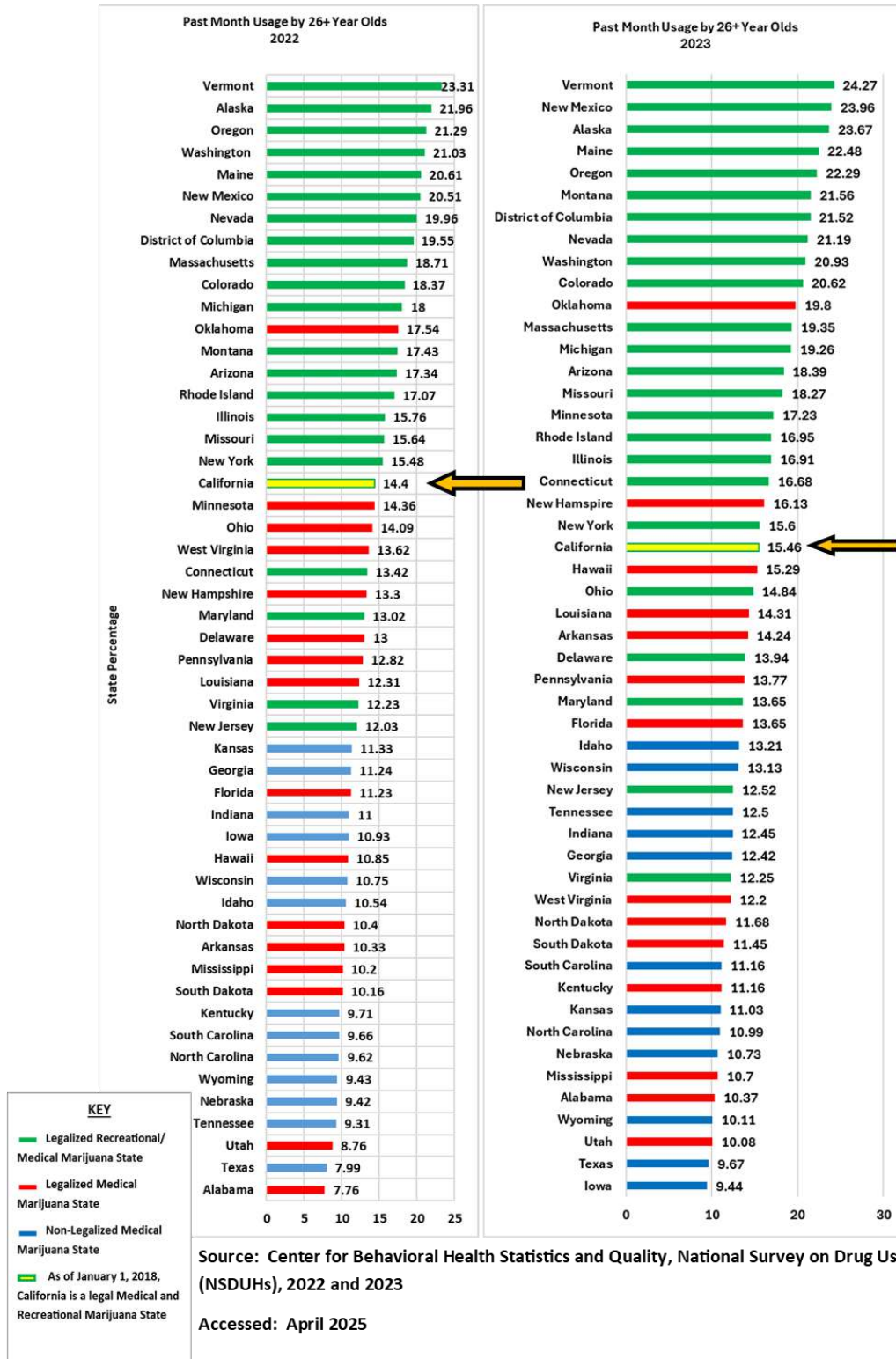
- ❖ In 2019-2020, California's past month marijuana use surpassed past month cigarette use for individuals 26 years and older.

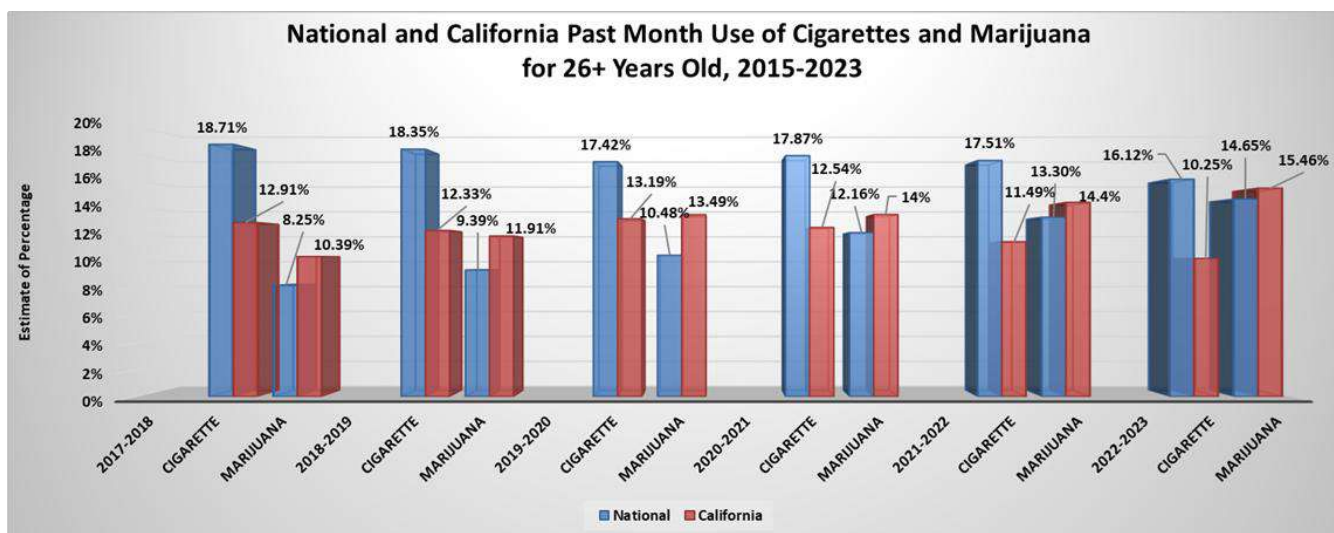
Definitions:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): A branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH): Provides annual information on tobacco, alcohol, drug use, mental health outcomes and other health-related issues in the United States associated with substance use.

National Ranking by State of Past Month Use Ages 26 and Older, 2022-2023





Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA), Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 2024.

Accessed: March 2025

- ❖ In 2019-2020, California's past month marijuana use surpassed past month cigarette use for individuals 26 years and older.

SECTION SIX: California Traffic Fatalities, DUI and Arrest Data

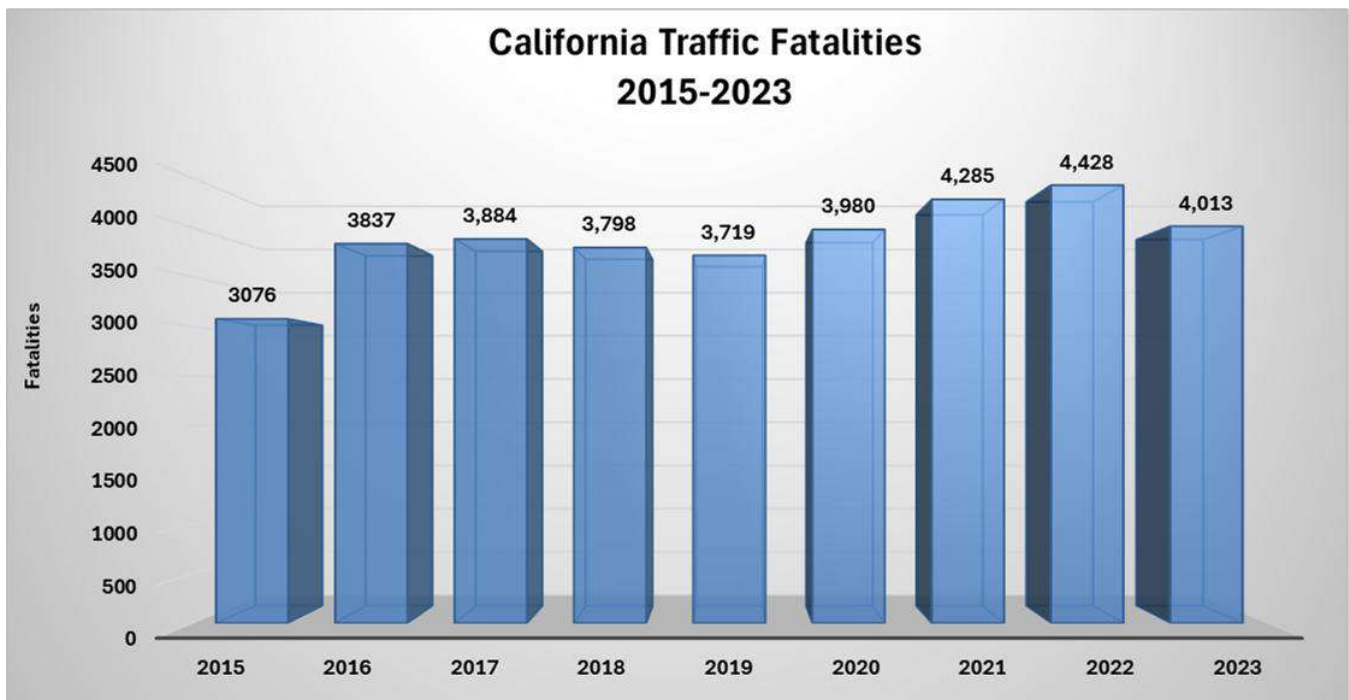
Key Findings

- ❖ In California, the percentage of driver fatalities testing positive for legal and/or illegal drugs decreased from 55% in 2020 to 52.9% in 2021.
- ❖ Felony narcotics arrests increased from 154 in 2022 to 233 in 2023.

Definitions:

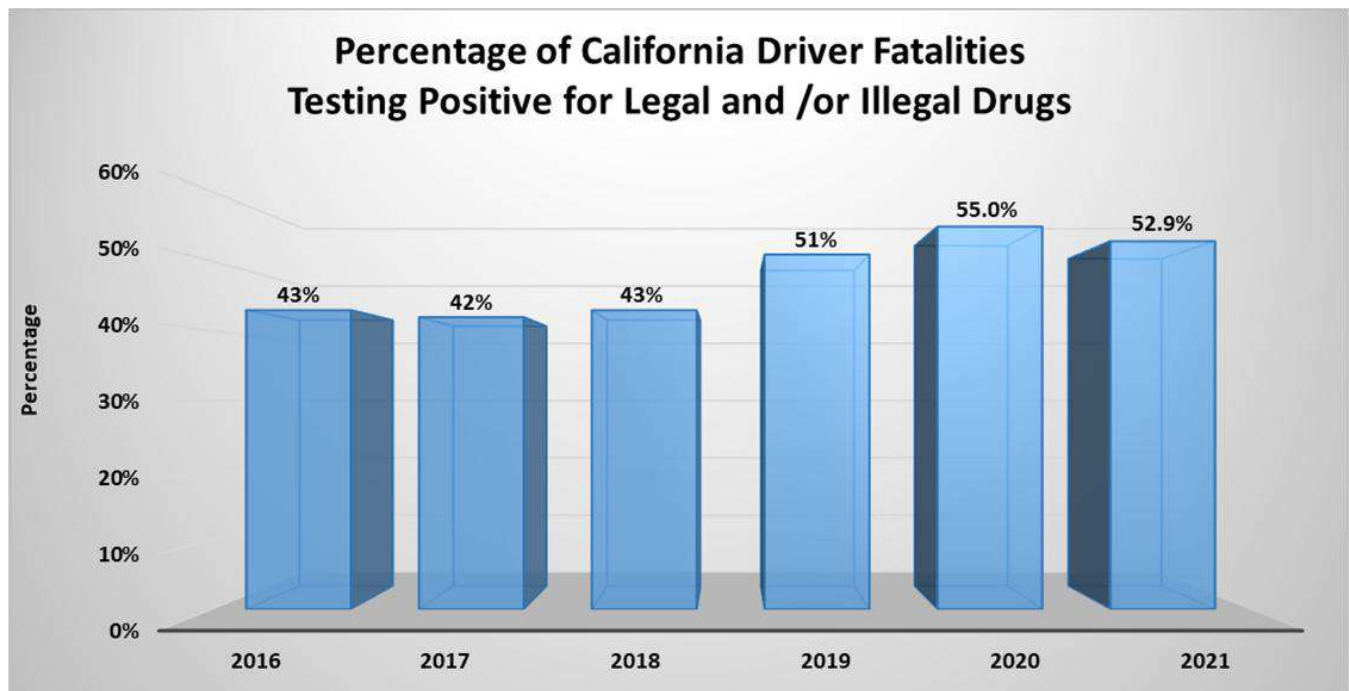
Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR), U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ), Crime Data Explorer (CDE): The FBI's UCR program generates reliable statistics for use in law enforcement and provides information for students of criminal justice, researchers, the media and the public. The CDE is an interactive online tool used to understand the data collected by the UCR.

California Office of Traffic Safety: OTS takes a leadership role in efforts to make California roadways safe for all users. Through thoughtful, forward-thinking, and data-driven selection of grants to local and state agencies, OTS provides an effective means of reducing fatalities, injuries, and economic losses resulting from crashes.



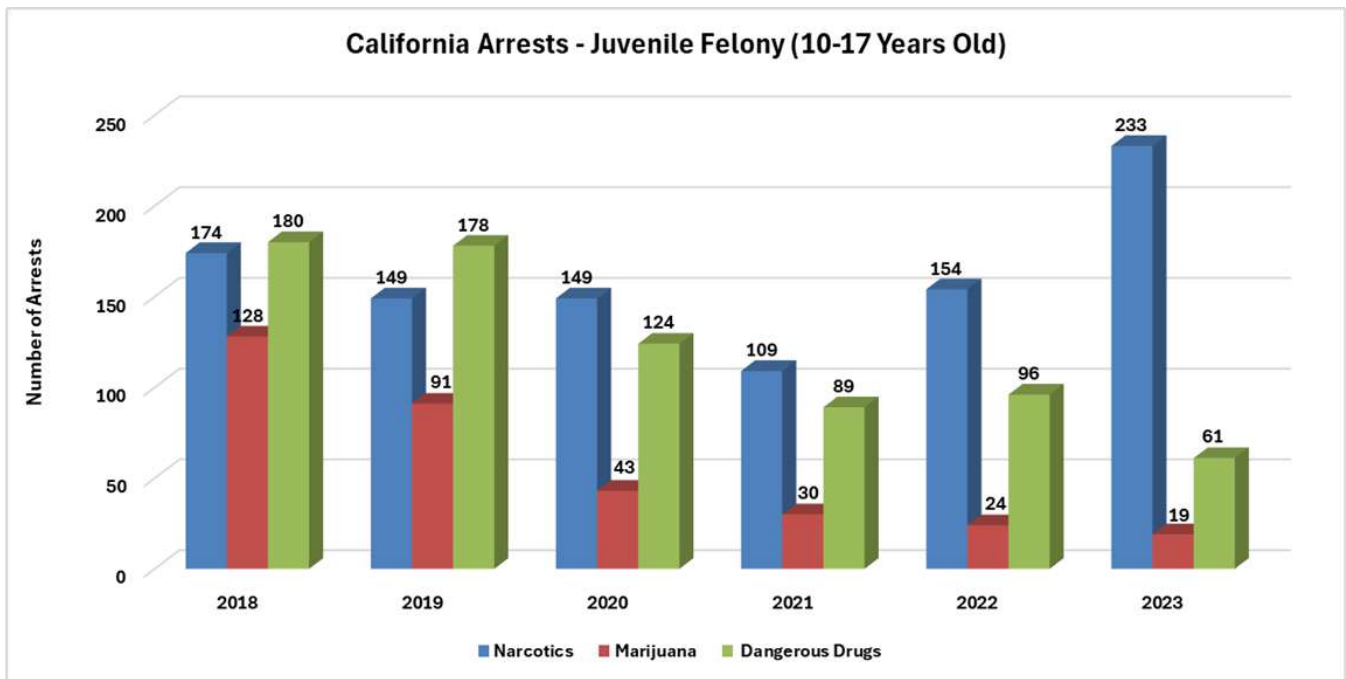
Source: Traffic Safety Facts, Crash Stats, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) April 2024

Accessed: April 2025



Source: 2023 Annual Report/California Office of Traffic Safety

- ❖ In California, the percentage of driver fatalities testing positive for legal and/or illegal drugs decreased from 55% in 2020 to 52.9% in 2021.



Source: Uniform Crime Reporting, Federal Bureau of Investigations, U.S. Department of Justice, Crime Data Explorer.
Accessed 6/20/24

- ❖ Felony narcotics arrests increased from 154 in 2022 to 233 in 2023.

San Diego County Arrestee Data

SANDAG CJFLASH

VOLUME 26 ISSUE 6

Research findings from
the Criminal Justice
Clearinghouse

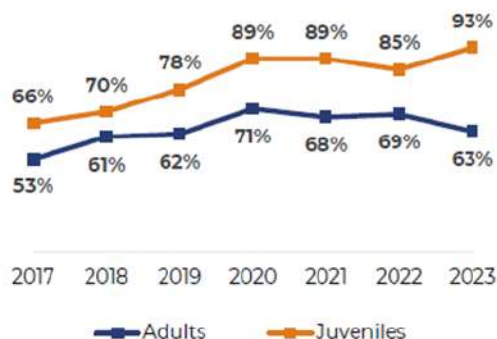
Marijuana Use Among San Diego Arrestees: Seven Years After Proposition 64

As part of SANDAG's Substance Abuse Monitoring (SAM) project, adults and juveniles booked into San Diego County jails are interviewed in an effort to learn more about substance use trends in the region. Following the passage of Proposition 64 in 2016, which legalized the recreational use of marijuana in California for individuals 21 years of age and older, monitoring marijuana usage trends has become essential for evaluating the potential impacts of legalization on public health and safety. This CJ Flash highlights results from 216 interviews conducted in 2023 and draws comparisons to data from previous years where noteworthy.¹ Findings reveal key trends related to consumption methods, sources of purchase, and perceived benefits and risks.

Highlight 1: Juveniles are increasingly choosing to vape THC

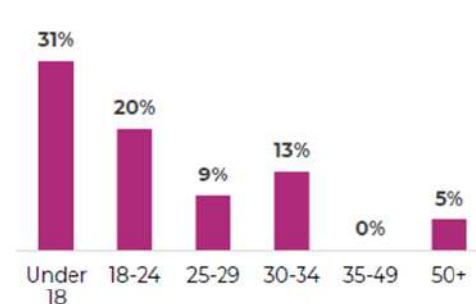
In 2023, over two-thirds (69%) of all respondents reported having vaped THC, with juveniles reporting a significantly higher rate at 93%, compared to 63% among adults. Although juveniles have consistently reported higher vaping rates than adults, the sharp increase in their usage over the years is particularly noteworthy. A clear generational divide also emerged when respondents reported their preferred THC consumption methods. Younger individuals were significantly more likely to report vaping as their preferred method of consuming THC.

Figure 1: Percentage of respondents who have ever vaped THC, 2017 to 2023



Source: SANDAG, 2023

Figure 2: Percentage of respondents who prefer vaping THC by age group*



*Significant at $p < 0.05$.

Note: Age categories 35-39, 40-44, 45-49 were merged to show a cumulative 0%.

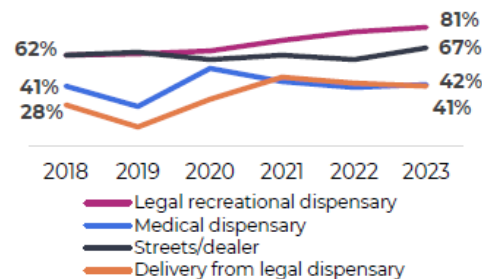
Source: SANDAG, 2023

¹ In 2023, the marijuana addendum was completed with 216 individuals (174 adults and 42 juveniles). Due to an overall decrease in the number of respondents interviewed over time, results should be interpreted with caution. More information about the SAM program is available at [SANDAG.org/cj](https://sandag.org/cj).

Highlight 2: Despite a rise in legal recreational purchases, most still buy from street sources

Adults are increasingly reporting purchasing marijuana from legal recreational dispensaries (81% in 2023 compared to 62% in 2018). The rate of adults reporting deliveries from legal dispensaries has also increased over time, from 28% in 2018 to 41% in 2023. However, this shift towards legal recreational sources has not replaced illegal purchases from street dealers, which remains the second most commonly reported source in 2023.

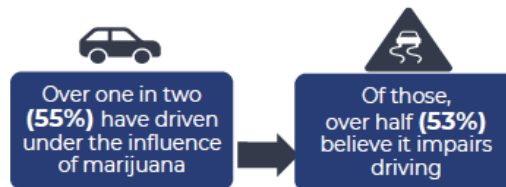
Figure 3: Sources of marijuana acquisition from 2018 to 2023



Highlight 3: Most adults who drove under the influence acknowledge impairment risks

Over half (55%) of adult respondents in 2023 reported ever driving after ingesting or smoking marijuana. Of those, over one in two (53%) believe driving under the influence of marijuana impairs driving. This is particularly notable, given that most adult respondents (69%) believe the potency of marijuana has increased since they first began to use it (not shown).

Figure 4: Adults' experience with driving under the influence of marijuana

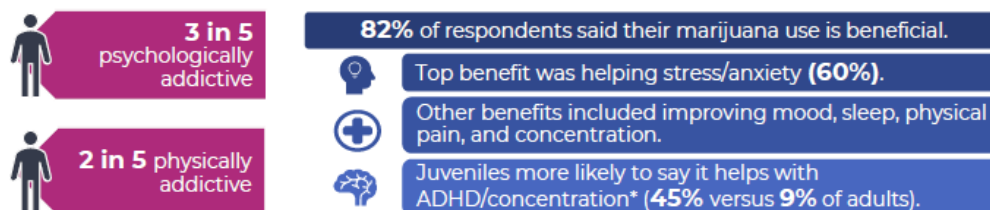


Source: SANDAG, 2023

Highlight 4: Majority of respondents view marijuana as beneficial despite addiction risks

In 2023, three in five (60%) respondents believed marijuana is psychologically addictive and two in five (40%) felt it is physically addictive. Despite these beliefs, a majority of respondents (82%) consider marijuana to be beneficial, particularly for relieving stress and anxiety, suggesting that perceived rewards may outweigh the risks of addiction.

Figure 5: Respondent perceptions of marijuana's addictiveness and benefits



*Significant at $p < 0.05$.

Source: SANDAG, 2023

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 Assistência linguística gratuita | मुफ्त भाषा सहायता | Assistance linguistique gratuite | ផ្ដោតភាសាឥតគិតថ្លៃ
 ఉచిత భాషా సహాయం | Kaalmada Luqadda ee Bilaashka ah | Безкоштовна мовна допомога
[SANDAG.org/LanguageAssistance](https://www.sandag.org/LanguageAssistance) | 619.699.1900



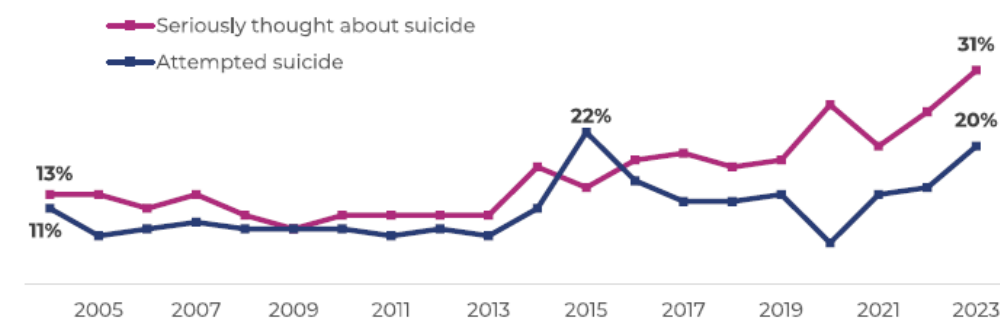
Mental Health and Substance Use Among Juvenile Arrestees in 2023

In light of May's designation as National Mental Health Awareness Month, this CJ Flash explores the intersectionality between mental health and substance use patterns among juvenile arrestees in the San Diego Region. In 2023, nearly one in three (31%) interviewed youth reported previous suicidal thoughts and one in five (20%) reported a previous suicide attempt, marking the highest recorded percentage of interviewed youth that have thought about ending their own lives. Notably, youth that reported experiencing mental health difficulties showed higher rates of overall substance use than their peers who did not report these difficulties. Addressing mental health in the context of justice involved youth is a crucial step toward reducing stigma and promoting early intervention, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated preexisting challenges. Findings on juvenile arrestee substance use are discussed in further detail in the [SANDAG 2023 Juvenile Arrestee Drug Use in the San Diego Region Bulletin](#).

Highlight 1: Highest recorded rate of suicidal thoughts among interviewed youth

When the question was first asked in 2004, just over one in ten interviewed youth reported ever thinking about or attempting suicide (13% and 11%, respectively). These rates have grown to nearly one in three (31%) and one in five (20%) in 2023, marking the highest rate of suicidal thoughts ever observed, and the highest rate of suicide attempts since 2015.¹ Findings also point to gender differences in suicidal behavior. In 2023, a higher proportion of female youth reported suicidal thoughts (47% compared to 24%) and suicidal attempts (29% compared to 16%) than their male counterparts (not shown).

Figure 1: Percentage of youth who have reported suicidal thoughts and attempts over time (2004–2023)



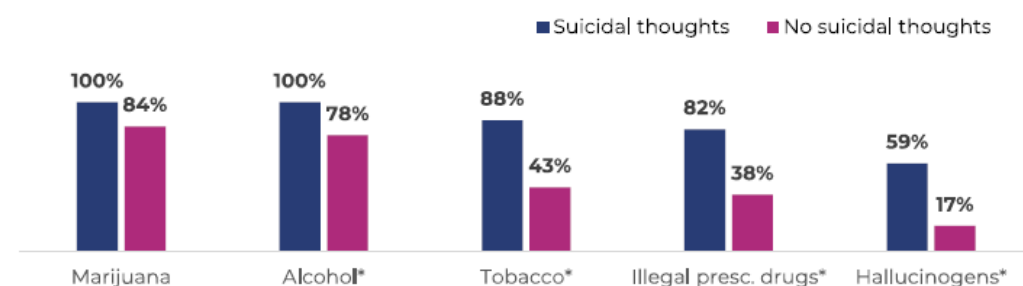
Source: SANDAG

¹ The number of youth interviewed has substantially decreased over time and should be taken into consideration when reviewing these results. While 2004 included a sample of 175 youth, 2023 included a sample of 54. This decrease can be largely attributed to an increase in detention alternatives and more recently, booking and intake procedural changes related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Highlight 2: Youth facing mental health challenges show higher rates of overall substance use than those without such challenges

Youth who expressed mental health difficulties (across various indicators) showed higher rates of overall substance use than their peers who did not report such difficulties. Following the three gateway drugs (marijuana, alcohol, and tobacco), illegal prescription drugs were the most commonly used by youth struggling with mental health. Specifically, over four in five youth (82%) who reported ever having suicidal thoughts also reported misuse of prescription drugs, compared to 38% among youth who did not report such thoughts. Notably, youth with previous suicidal thoughts were almost three times as likely to report the use of hallucinogens (59% compared to 17%).

Figure 2: Top five substance use rates among youth with suicidal thoughts



* Significant at $p < 0.05$

Source: SANDAG

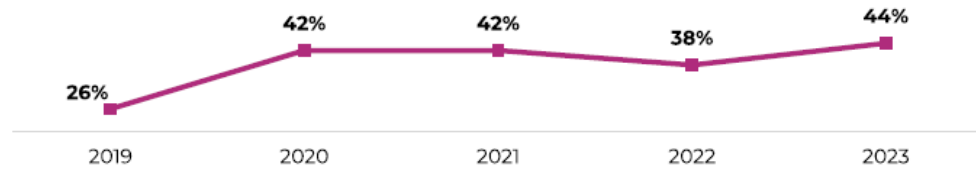
Highlight 3: More than two in five youth say their mental or emotional health has interfered with achieving their tasks and goals

Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a notable increase in the percentage of juveniles who reported feeling like their mental or emotional health interferes with accomplishing their tasks and goals. From 2019 to 2020, the percentage of youth who reported feeling this way grew from 26% to 42% and has remained relatively consistent since then. While a causal relationship between this increase and the global pandemic cannot be established, the negative effects of the pandemic (social isolation, family hardship, disruption of routine) on youths' mental health has been well-documented.² Some studies show the strongest impacts on those who were already vulnerable, including racial and ethnic minorities, youth with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ youth.³

²Jones, Sherry Everett. 2022. "Mental Health, Suicidality, and Connectedness among High School Students during the COVID-19 Pandemic — Adolescent Behaviors and Experiences Survey, United States, January–June 2021." *MMWR Supplements* 71 (3). <https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.su7103a3>.

³Cora Collette Breuner, and David L. Bell. 2023. "Adolescent Mental and Behavioral Health: COVID-19 Exacerbation of a Prevailing Crisis." *Pediatrics* 151 (Supplement 1). <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2022-057267d>.

Figure 3: Percentage of youth whose mental health has interfered with achieving their goals over the last five years

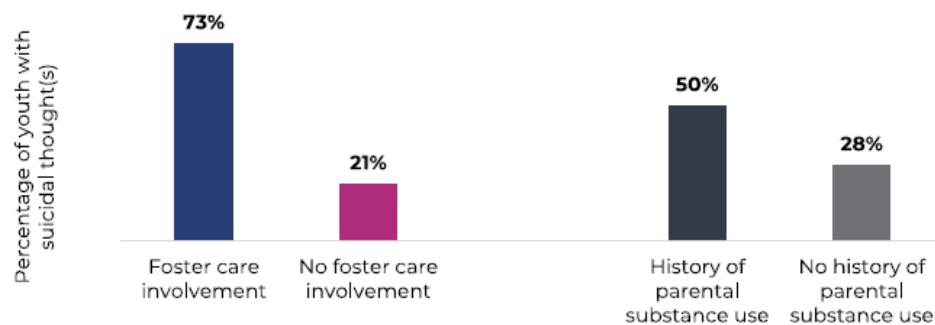


Source: SANDAG

Highlight 4: Youth with foster care involvement and history of parental substance use at higher risk of negative mental health outcomes

Youth who reported prior involvement in the foster care system and those with a history of parental substance use were more likely to report mental health difficulties than those without these histories. Of youth who had been in foster care, nearly three in four (73%) reported having seriously considered ending their own lives, compared to 21% of those who had never been in foster care. Youth whose parents have used illegal drugs (outside of marijuana) were almost twice as likely to report suicidal thoughts than their counterparts (50% compared to 28%). These findings underscore the importance of addressing such risk factors early on to prevent the escalation of mental health disorders, and relatedly, juvenile substance use.

Figure 4: Percentage of youth who reported suicidal thoughts along foster care involvement and parental substance use history



Source: SANDAG

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 無料の言語支援 | Бесплатная языковая помощь | Assistência linguística gratuita | मुफ्त भाषा सहायता
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SECTION SEVEN: *Public Health*

Key Findings

- ❖ Cannabidiol-related (CBD) exposure calls have decreased nationally from (3,385) in 2021 to (2,291) in 2023.
- ❖ National marijuana edibles exposure calls for ages 0-12 from 2018 (808) to 2023 (6,888) has increased by 752%.
- ❖ In California in 2023, the highest number of marijuana exposure calls to Poison Control Centers were for individuals 5 years of age and under (842).
- ❖ Nationally in 2023, marijuana was the most prevalent drug present in alcohol-related polysubstance emergency department visits.
- ❖ Nationally in 2022 and 2023, alcohol was the most prevalent drug present in marijuana-related polysubstance emergency department visits (228,539 and 205,193).
- ❖ Nationally in 2023, 41.6% of marijuana-related emergency department visits were individuals between the ages of 26-44.
- ❖ From 2019 (16,151) to 2022 (12,984) there was a 19.6% decrease in California emergency department visits and admissions for primary marijuana use.
- ❖ From 2019 (16,151) to 2022 (12,984) there was a 19.6% decrease in California emergency department visits and admissions for primary marijuana use.
- ❖ From 2008 (1,988) to 2022 (12,347) there was a 521% increase in California emergency department visits for primary marijuana use.
- ❖ In San Diego County 43% of suicides of those aged 25 and under in 2022, had THC in their systems at the time of death.
- ❖ In San Diego County 38% of suicides of those aged 25 and under in 2023, had THC in their systems at the time of death.

Definitions:

Hospital Stay/Hospitalization: Admission to a hospital for treatment.

Emergency Department: The department of a hospital responsible for the provision of medical and surgical services to patients arriving at the hospital in need of immediate care.

Primary Diagnosis: Describes the diagnosis that was the most serious and/or resource-intensive during the hospitalization or inpatient encounter.

Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHDP): California's Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development collects and disseminates information about California's healthcare infrastructure.

American Association of Poison Control Centers: The American Association of Poison Control Centers represents the nation's 55 poison centers.

Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN): A nationwide public health surveillance system that captures data on emergency department (ED) visits related to recent substance use and misuse directly from the electronic health records of participating hospitals.

California Poison Control System: Provides immediate, free and expert treatment advice and referral over the telephone in case of exposure to poisonous or toxic substances.

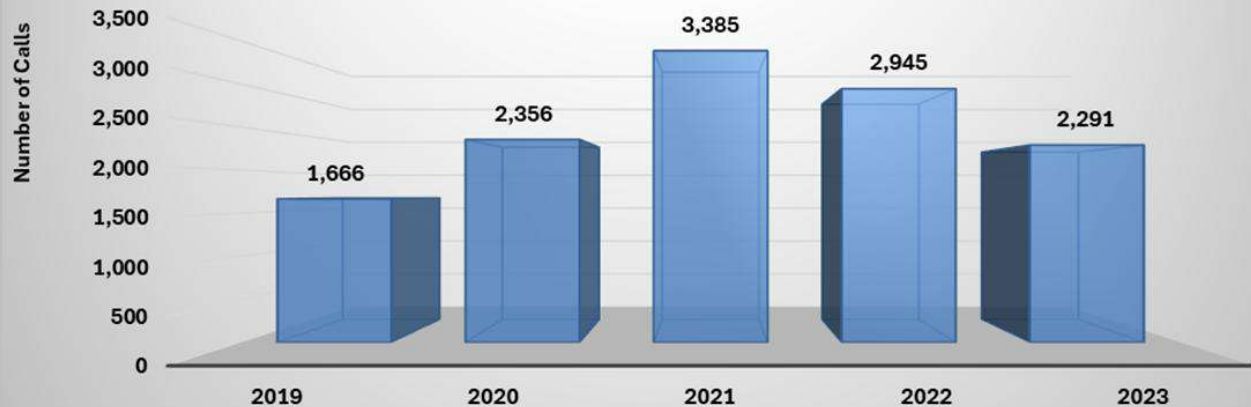
The International Classification of Diseases (ICD): A system used by physicians and other healthcare providers to classify and code all diagnoses, symptoms and procedures recorded in conjunction with hospital care in the United States. ICD-10 replaced ICD-9 as of October 1, 2014.

Commercialization: The process of managing or running something principally for financial gain.

Legalization: The action of making something that was previously illegal permissible by law.

Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego: A nonprofit, 511-bed pediatric-care facility dedicated to excellence in care, research and teaching.

National Cannabidiol (CBD) Exposure Calls to Poison Control, 2019-2023 All Ages

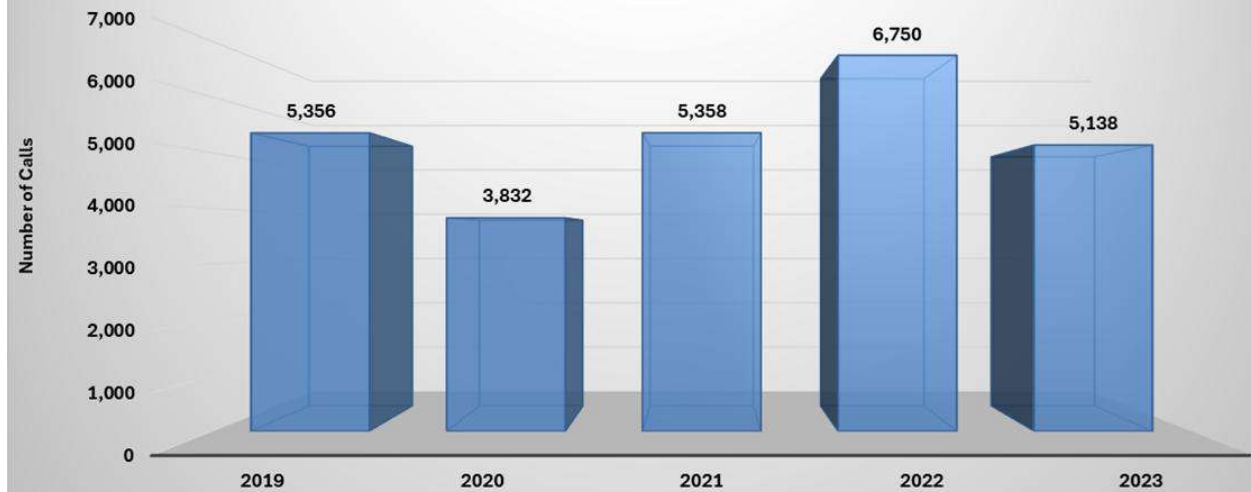


Source National Poison Data Systems, American Association of Poison Control Centers.

Note: CBD reported to Poison Control Centers as of February 29, 2024. Numbers may change as cases are closed and additional information is received.

- ❖ Cannabidiol-related (CBD) exposure calls have decreased nationally from (3,385) in 2021 to (2,291) in 2023.

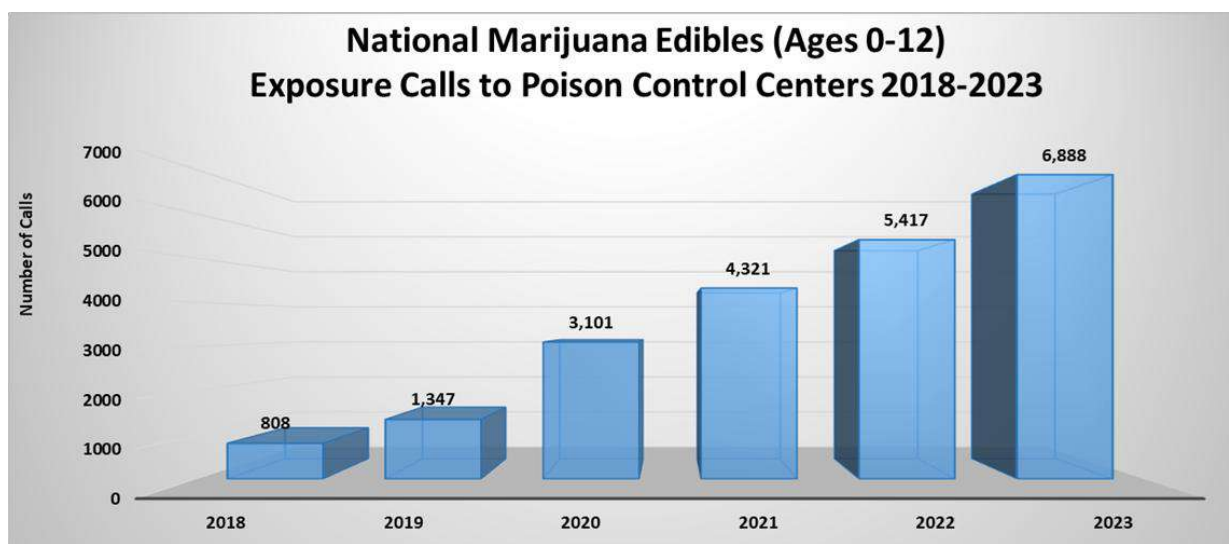
National E-Cigarette and Liquid Nicotine Exposure Calls to Poison Control Centers, All Ages 2019-2023



Source: National Poison Data System, American Association of Poison Control Centers.

Accessed February 12, 2024

You can reach your local poison control center by calling the Poison Help Hotline: 1-800-222-1222.

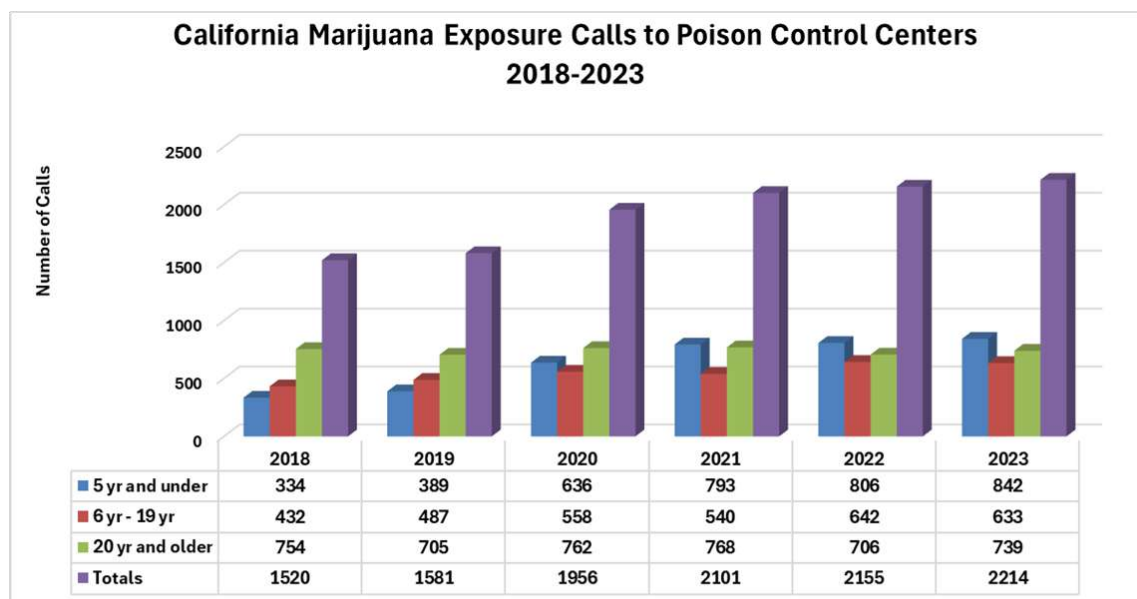


Source: America's Poison Centers

Note: The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) classifies all products containing CBD that are not FDA-approved to be Schedule I under the Controlled Substances Act as of the creation of this document.

Accessed: September 18, 2024

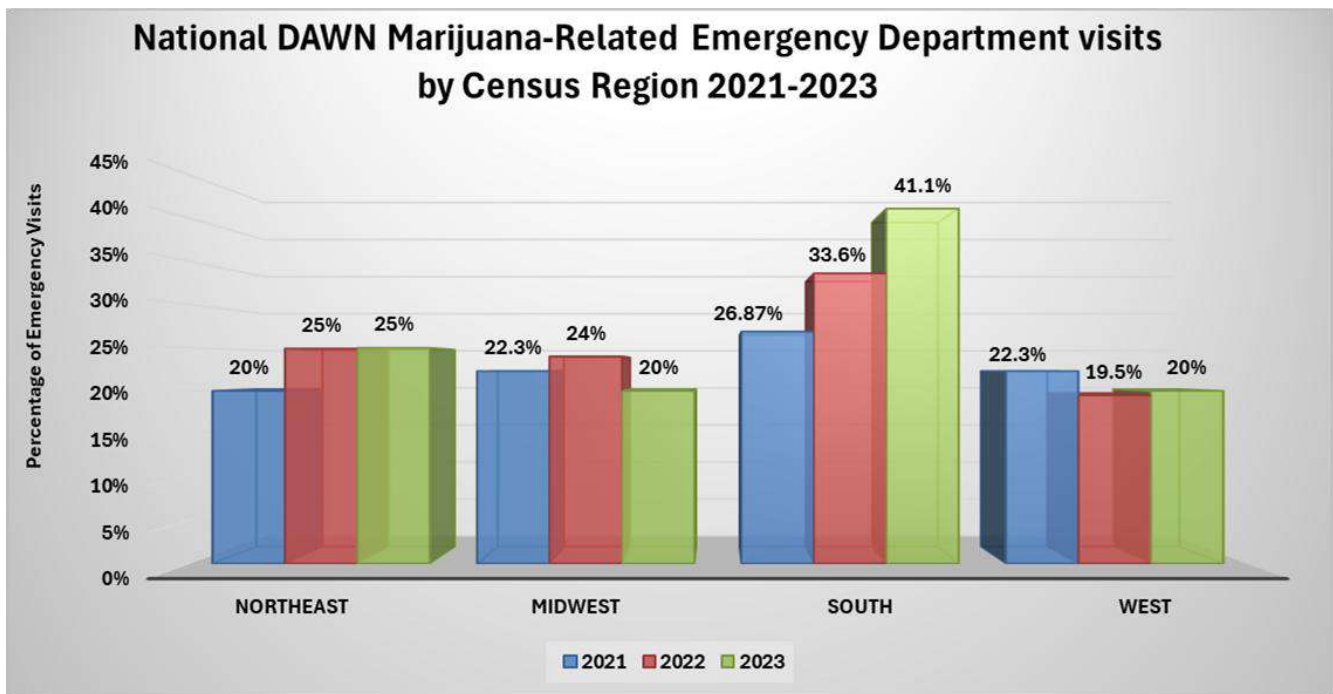
- ❖ National marijuana edibles exposure calls for ages 0-12 from 2018 (808) to 2023 (6,888) has increased by 752%.



Source: California Department of Public Health, Substance and Addiction Prevention Branch. Cannabis Poison Control System Calls Dashboard, 2024.

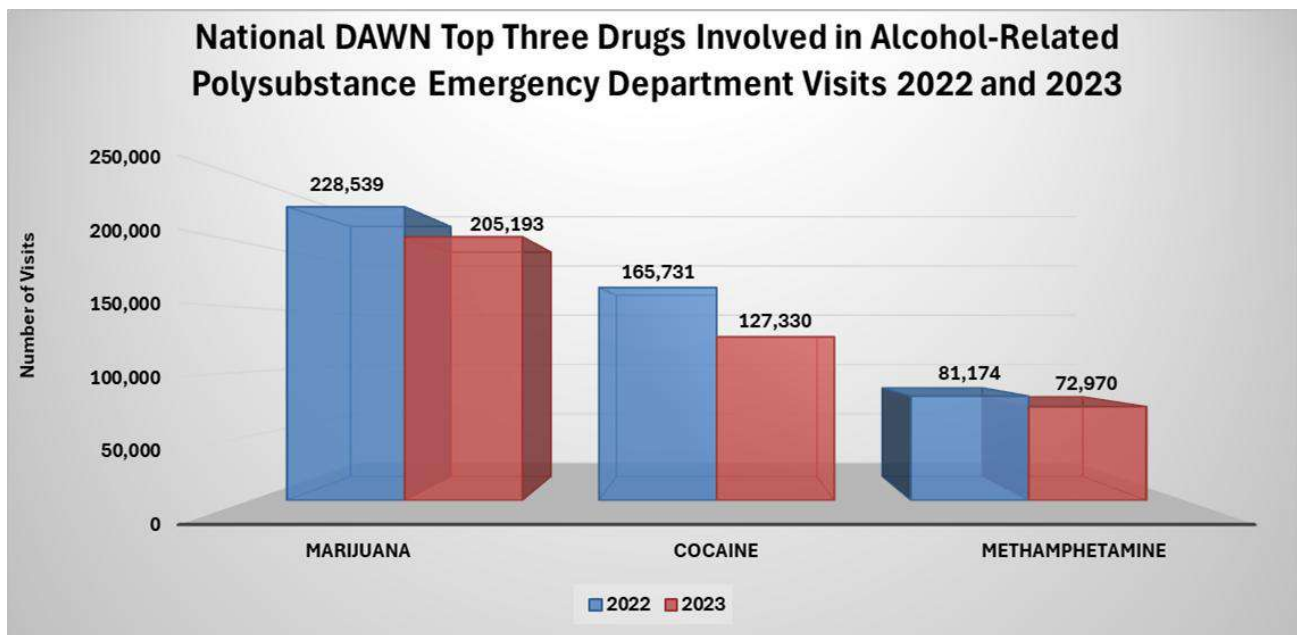
Accessed: March 1, 2025

- ❖ In California in 2023, the highest number of marijuana exposure calls to Poison Control Centers were for individuals 5 years of age and under (842).



Source: Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN): Findings from Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits, 2023

Accessed: March 2025

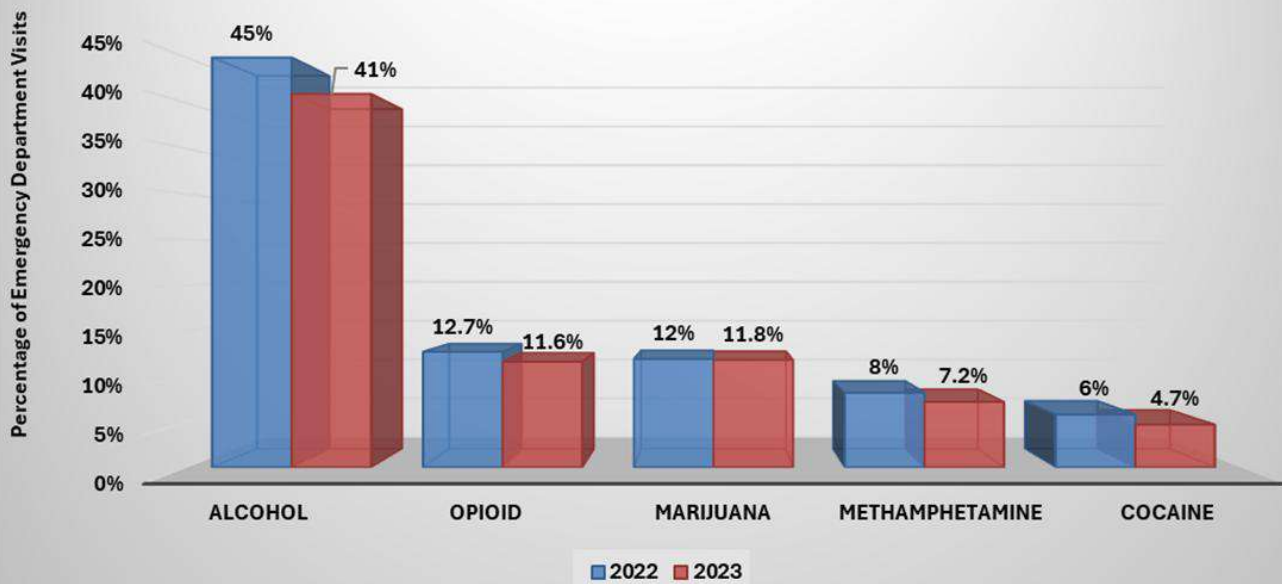


Source: Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN), Findings from Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits, 2022 and 2023

Accessed: March 2025

- ❖ Nationally in 2022 and 2023, marijuana was the most prevalent drug present in alcohol-related polysubstance emergency department visits.

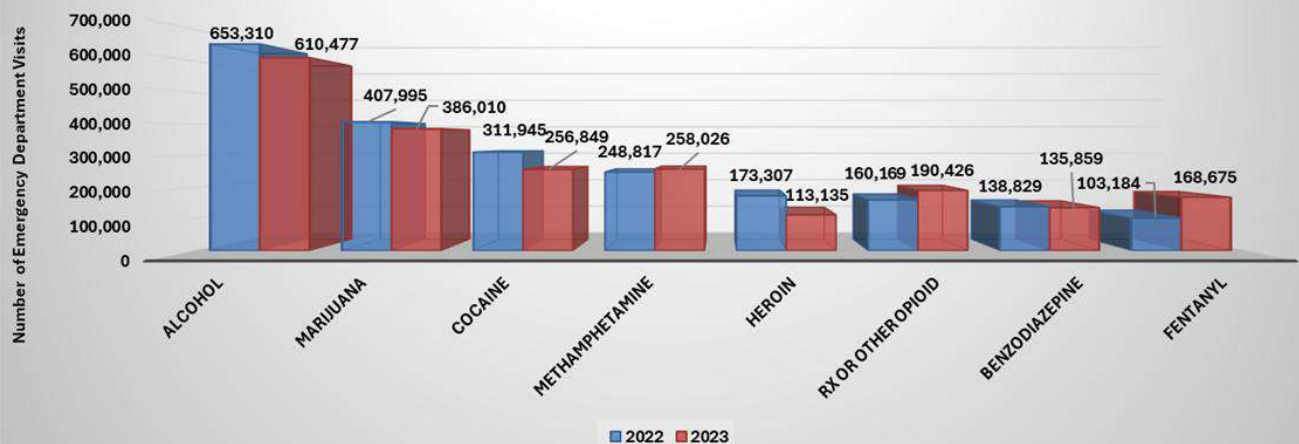
National DAWN Estimated Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits of Top Five Drugs 2022 and 2023



Source: Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN). Findings from Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits, 2022 and 2023.

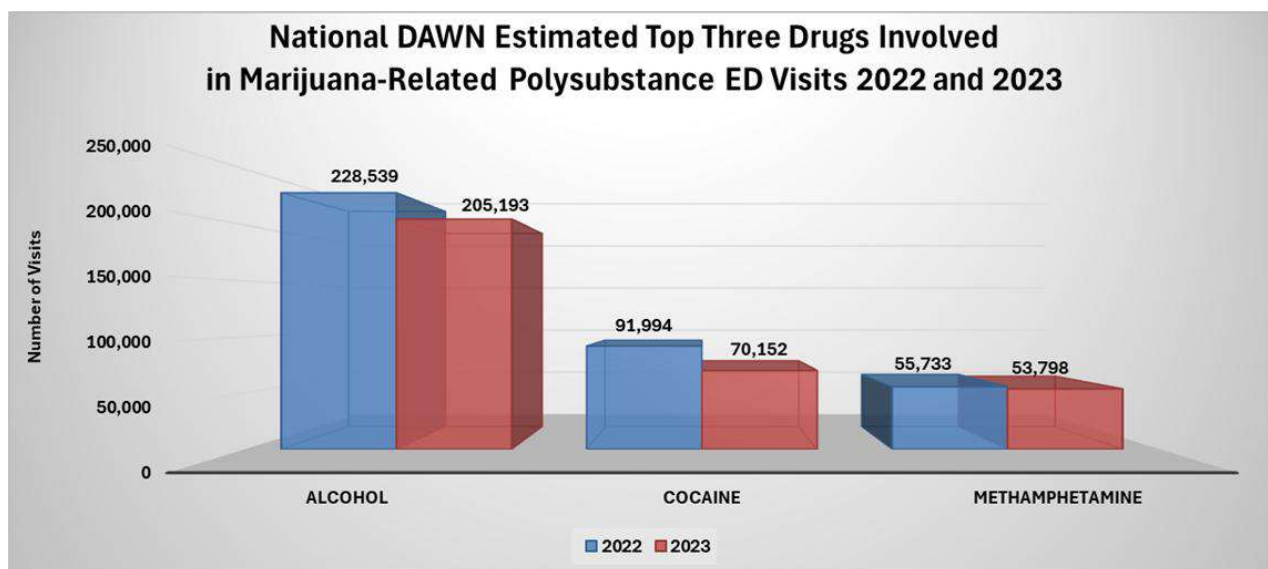
Accessed: 2025

National DAWN Polysubstance Emergency Visits 2022 and 2023



Source: Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN), Preliminary Findings from Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits, 2022 and 2023.

Accessed: March 2025

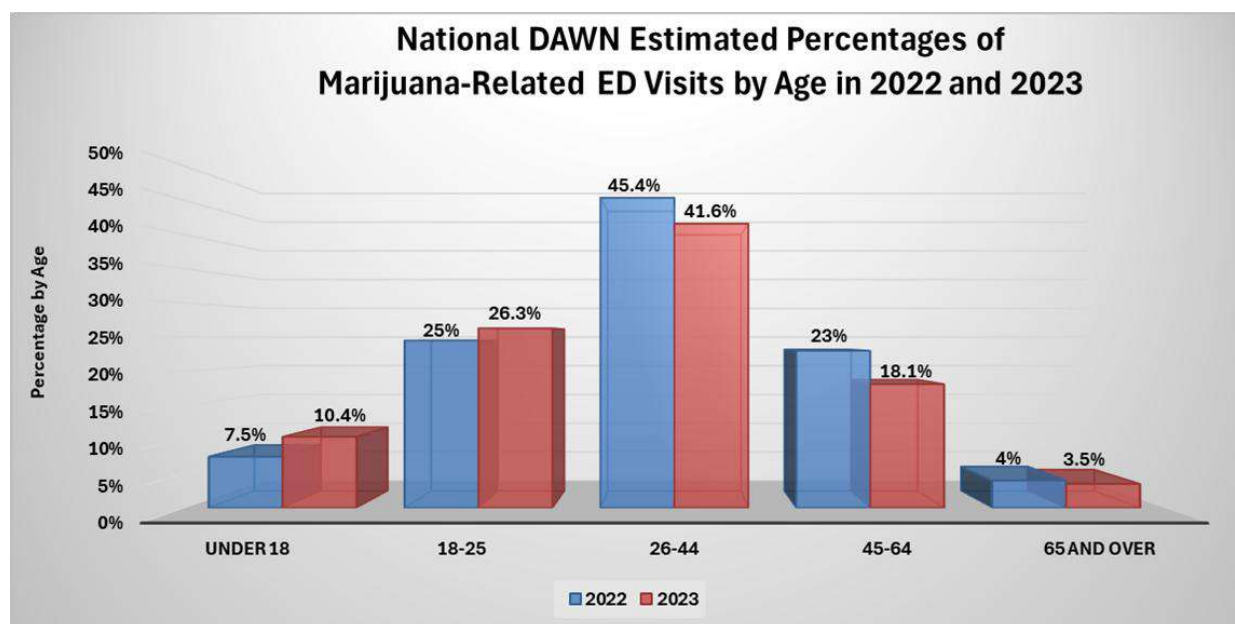


Source: Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) Findings from Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits, 2022 and 2023.

Note: Top three substance most frequently reported with marijuana.

Accessed: March 2025

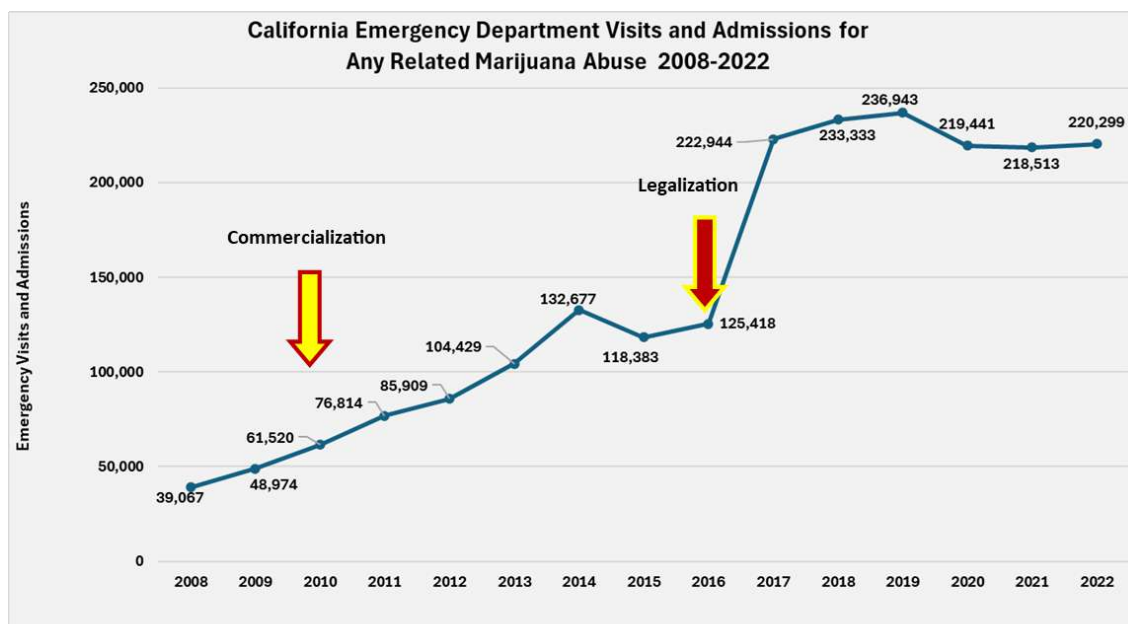
- ❖ Nationally in 2022 and 2023, alcohol was the most prevalent drug present in marijuana-related polysubstance emergency department visits (228,539 and 205,193).



Source: Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN), Findings from Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits, 2022 and 2023.

Accessed: March 2025

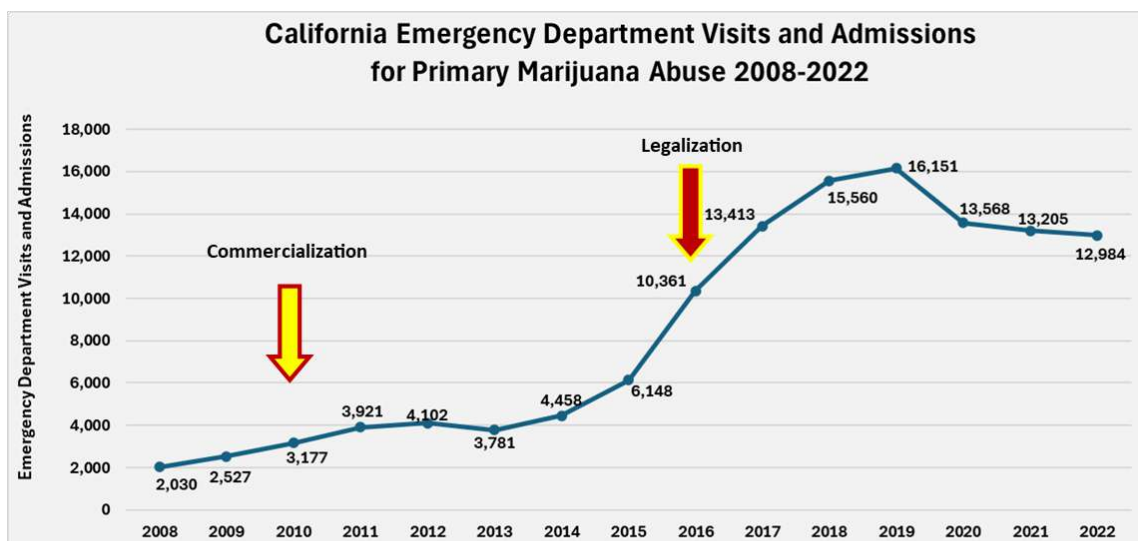
- ❖ Nationally in 2022, 45.4% of marijuana-related emergency department visits were individuals between the ages of 26-44.



Source: Patient Discharge and Emergency Department Data, 2008-2022, Office of Statewide Planning and Development, ICD-10 (Primary or Secondary), F-12 or T-40.7 Initial Encounter Cannabis.

Note: ICD-10 replaced ICD-9 as of October 1, 2014

Accessed: June 18, 2024

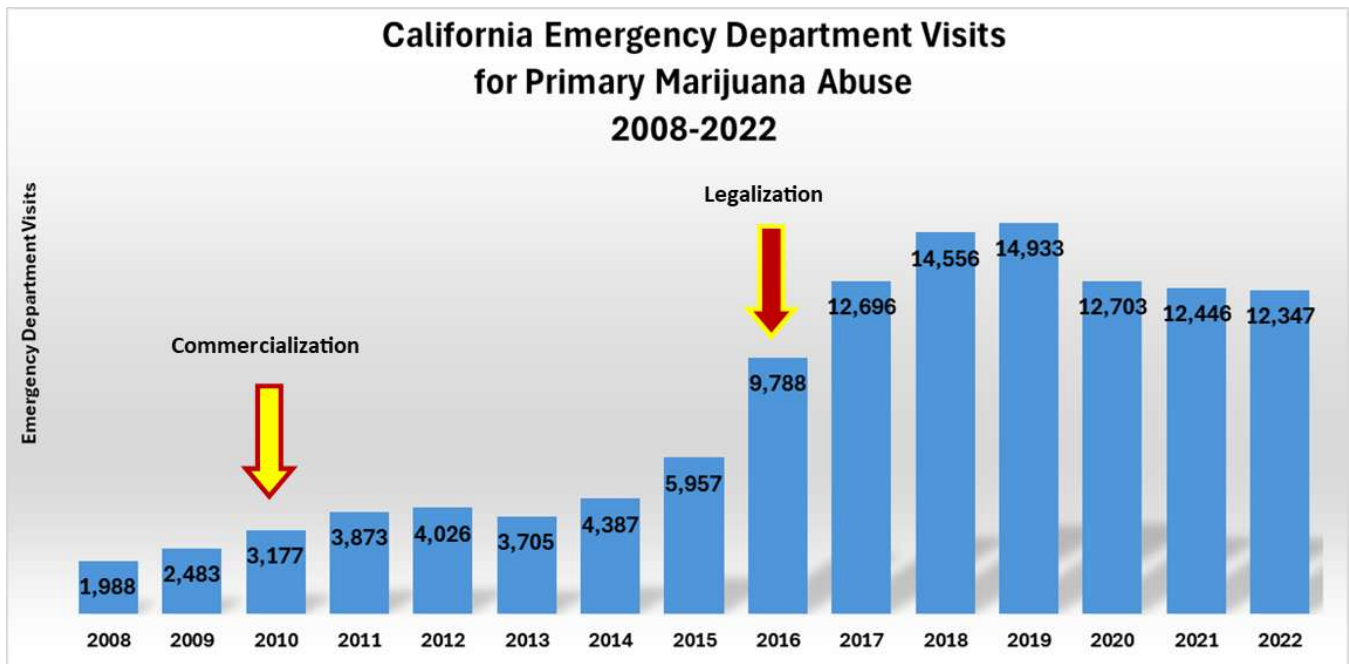


Source: Patient Discharge and Emergency Department Data, 2008-2022, Office of Statewide Planning and Development, ICD-10 (Primary), F-12 or T-40.7 Initial Encounter Cannabis.

Note: ICD-10 replaced ICD-9 as of October 1, 2014

Accessed: June 18, 2024

- ❖ From 2019 (16,151) to 2022 (12,984) there was a 19.6% decrease in California emergency department visits and admissions for primary marijuana use.

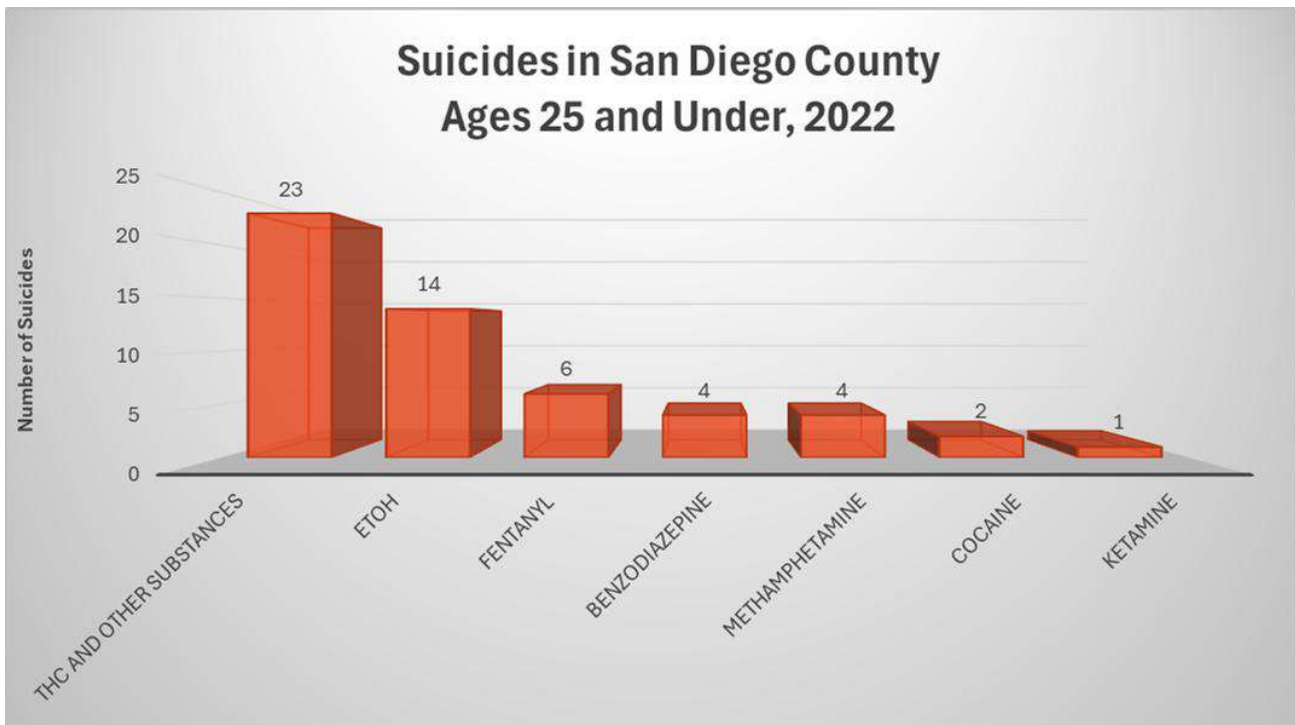


Source: Patient Discharge and Emergency Department Data, 2008-2022, Office of Statewide Planning and Development, ICD-10 (Primary), F-12 or T-40.7 Initial Encounter Cannabis.

Note: ICD-10 replaced ICD-9 as of October 1, 2014

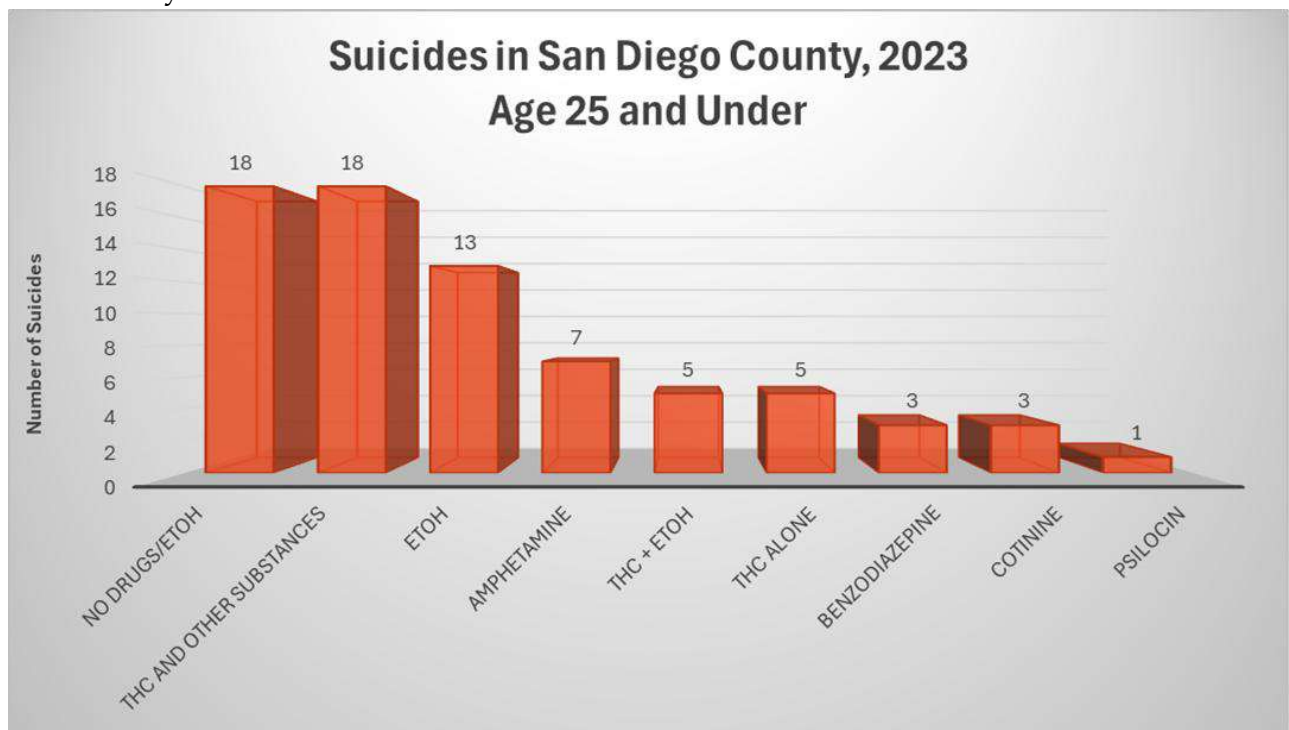
Accessed: June 18, 2024

- ❖ From 2008 (1,988) to 2022 (12,347) there was a 521% increase in California emergency department visits for primary marijuana use.



Source: San Diego County Medical Examiner's Office

- ❖ In 2022, 43% of suicides of those aged 25 and under in San Diego County, had THC in their systems at the time of death.



Source: San Diego County Medical Examiner's Office

- ❖ In 2023, 38% of suicides of those aged 25 and under in San Diego County, had THC in their systems at the time of death.



Cannabis Use in the Teenage Population

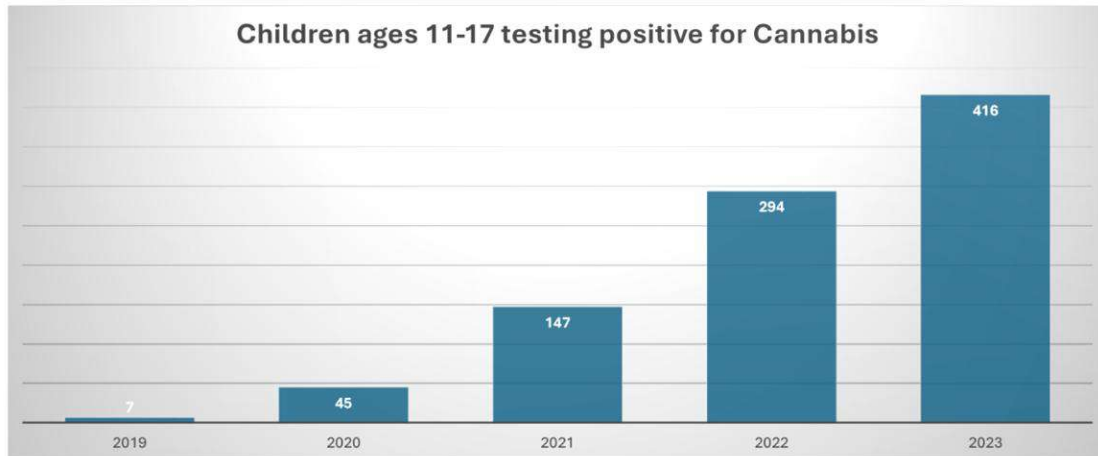
Natalie Laub MD MSHP

Associate Professor of Pediatrics UCSD

Program Director Child Abuse Pediatrics

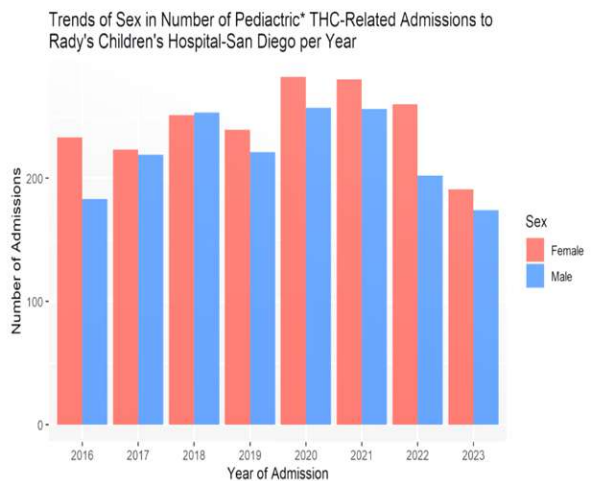
Director of clinical research- Division of
Child Abuse Pediatrics

Local Data: Positive Urine Drug Screens



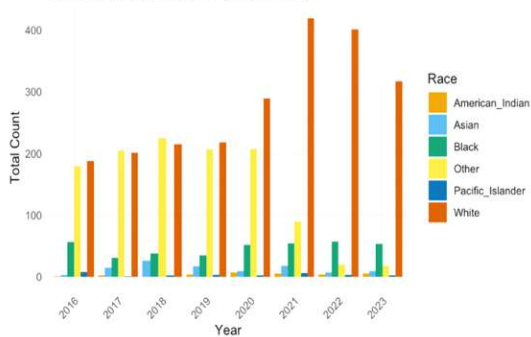
Cannabis related admissions per year to Rady Children's

There are more female patients than male patients every year admitted to the hospital due to cannabis use or addiction

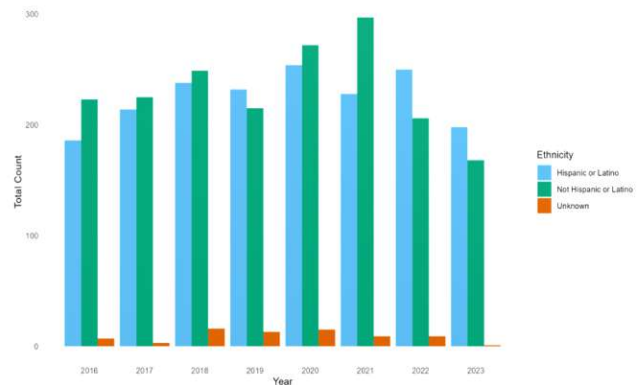


Race and Ethnicity Data: Rady Children's admissions related to THC use

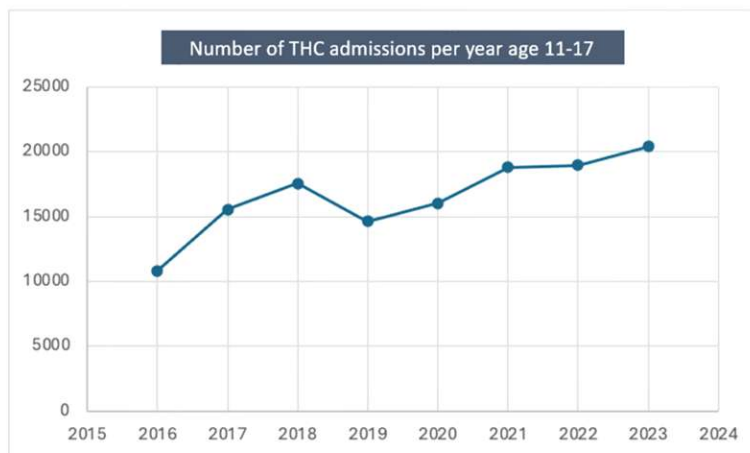
Race Distribution by Year (2016-2023)



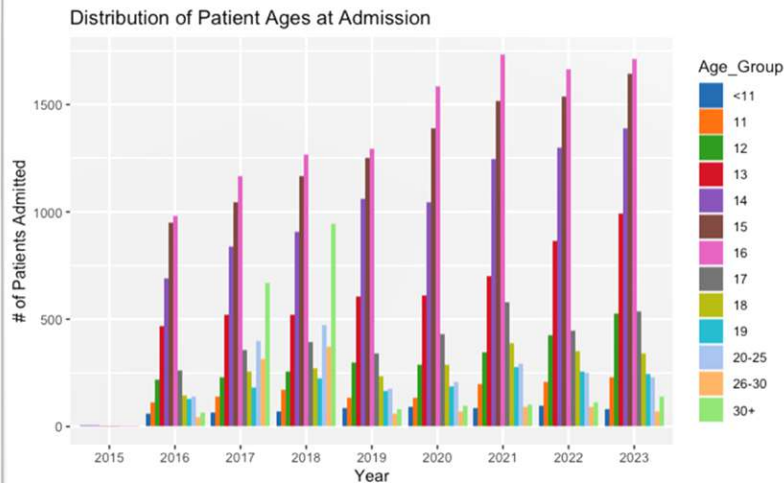
Ethnicity Distribution by Year (2016-2023)



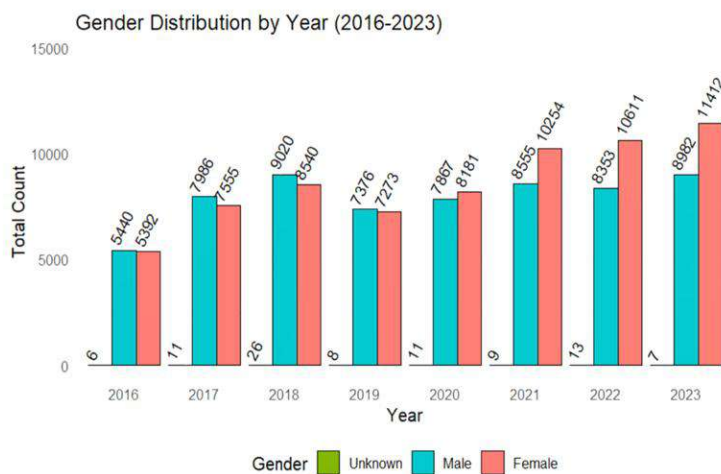
National Data for reference



The number of adolescents admitted to the hospital for THC related concerns has doubled since 2016



Since 2020 the fastest growing group of new users is females ages 11-13



Since 2020 females have outnumbered males in hospital admissions related to THC use

Please see the original article in Appendix C

SECTION EIGHT: Treatment

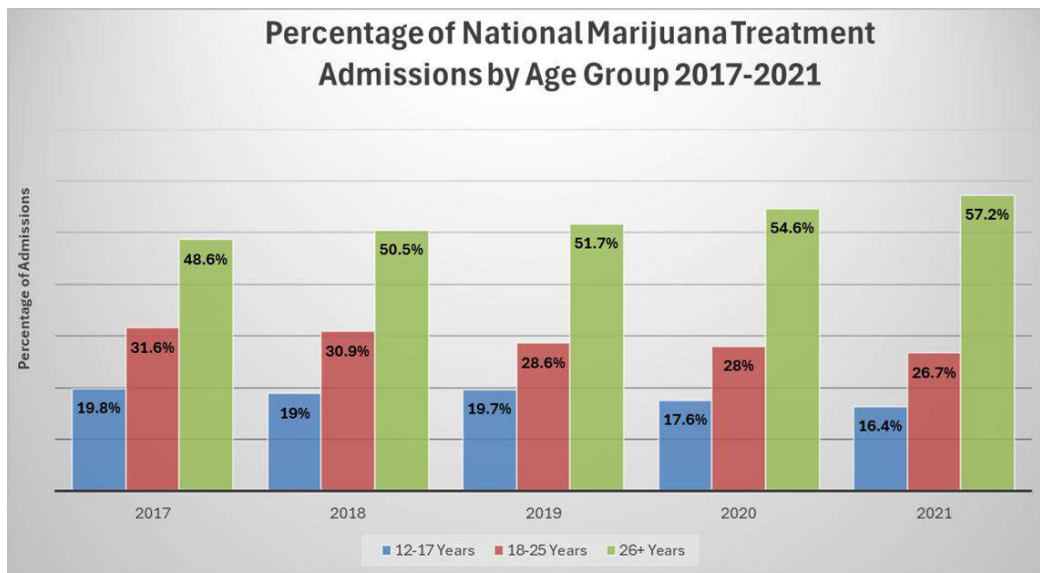
Key Findings

- ❖ Nationally from 2017 to 2021, the highest percentage of marijuana treatment admissions were amongst those 26 years and older.
- ❖ In California in 2023, 37.7% of marijuana treatment admissions were amongst those 12-17 years of age.

Definitions:

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): A branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS): Compiles client-level data for substance abuse treatment admissions from State Agency data systems. State data systems collect data from facilities about their admissions to treatment and discharges from treatment. TEDS is an admission-based system, but it does not include all admissions.

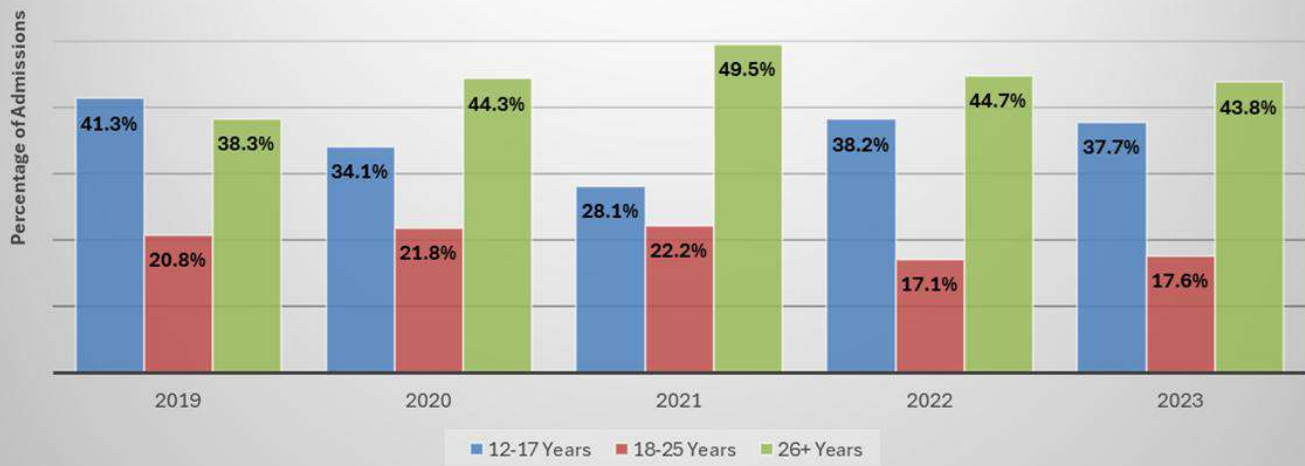


Source: Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration, Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS). Based on administrative data reported by states to TEDS through June 30, 2024.

Accessed: October 3, 2024

- ❖ Nationally from 2017 to 2021, the highest percentage of marijuana treatment admissions were amongst those 26 years and older.

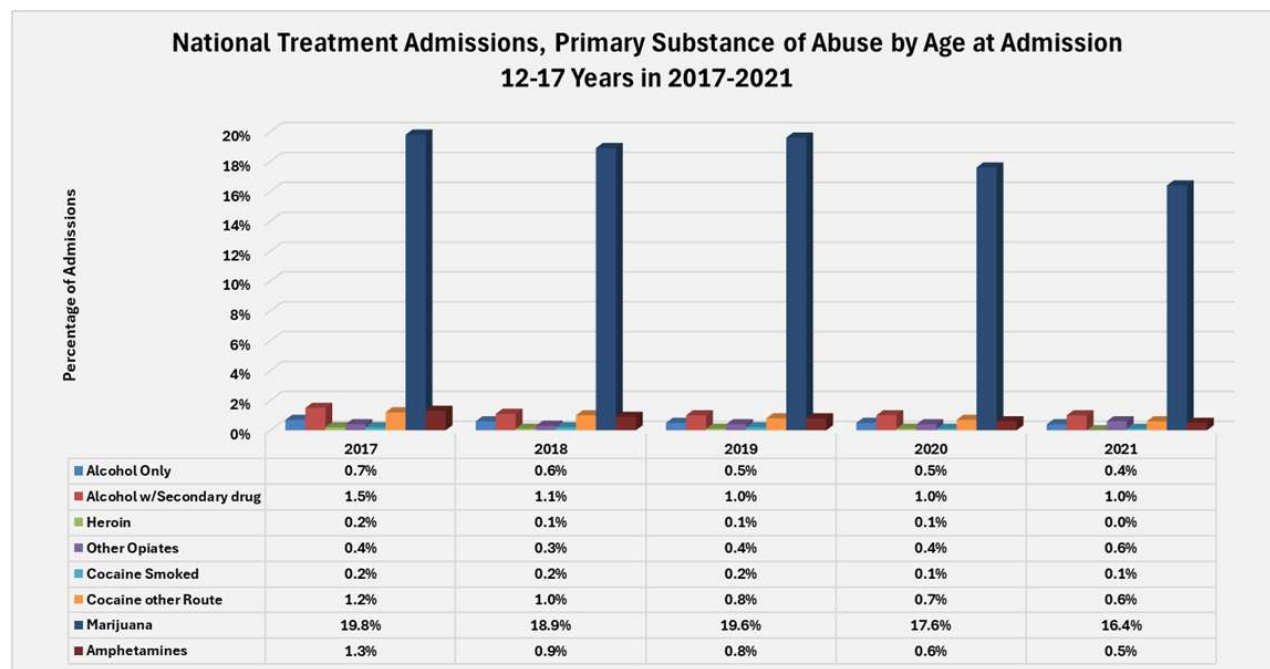
Percentage of California Marijuana Treatment Admissions by Age Group 2019-2023



Source: Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration, Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS). Based on administrative data reported by states to TEDS through June 30, 2024.

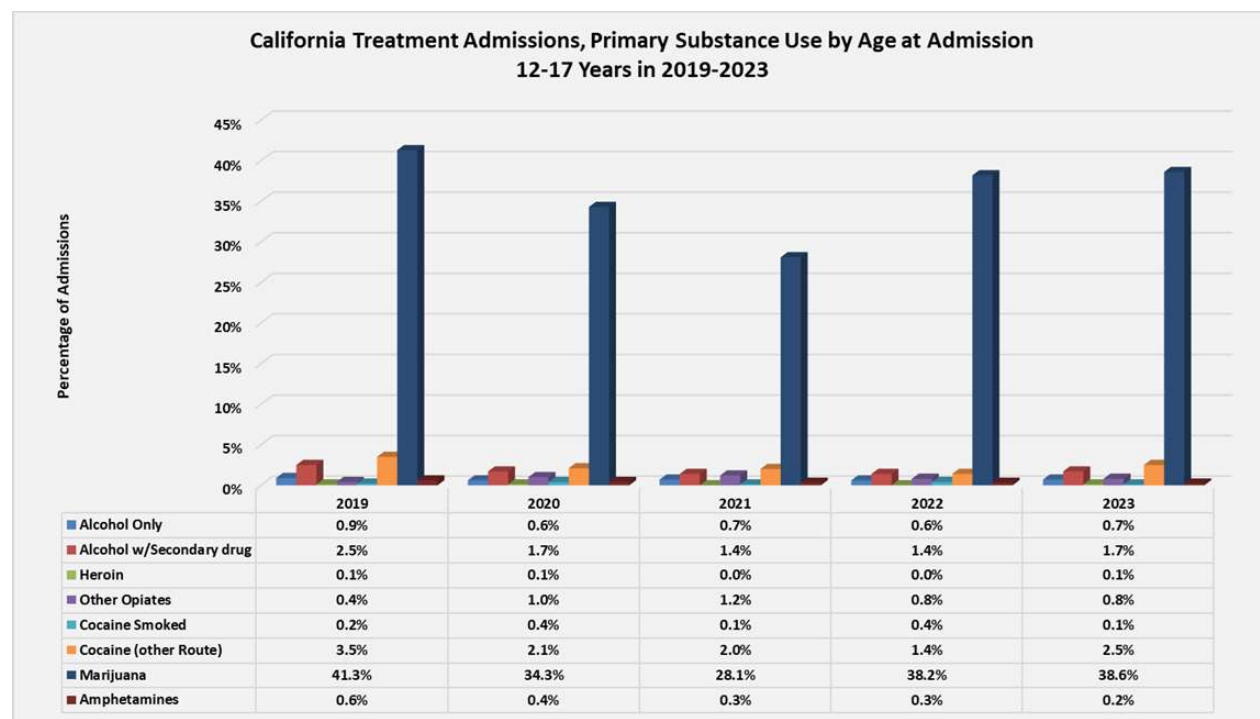
Accessed: October 3, 2024

- ❖ In California in 2023, 37.7% of marijuana treatment admissions were amongst those 12-17 years of age.



Source: Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration, Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS). Based on administrative data reported by states to TEDS through June 30, 2024.

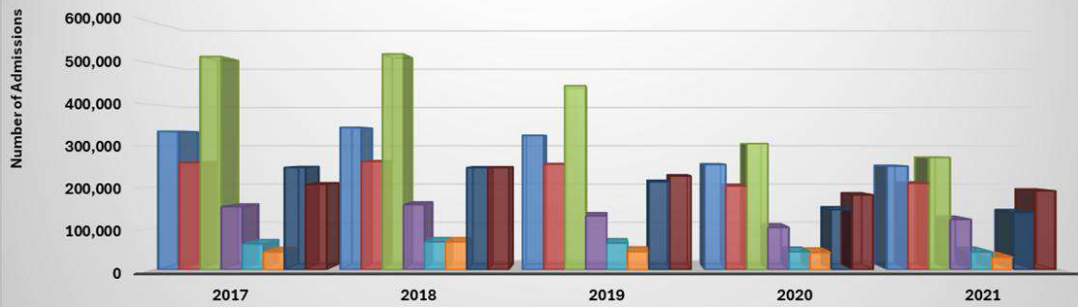
Accessed: September 26, 2024



Source: Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration, Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS). Based on administrative data reported by states to TEDS through June 30, 2024.

Accessed: September 26, 2024

National Treatment Admissions by Primary Substance of Abuse Ages 12 and Older, 2017-2021

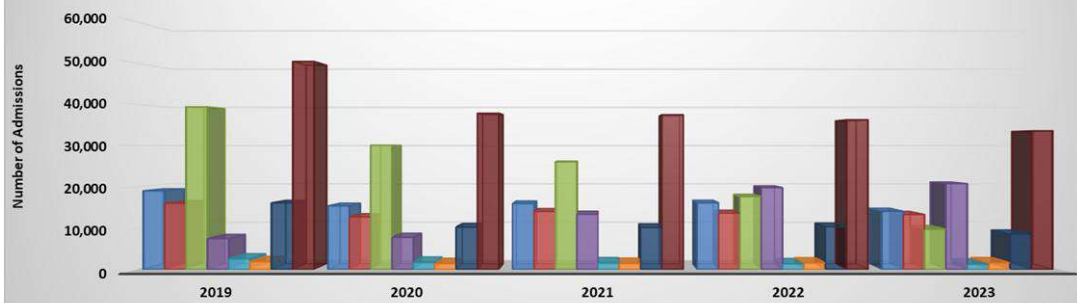


	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Alcohol Only	335,128	344,500	325,516	254,450	250,471
Alcohol w/Secondary drug	259,109	262,320	255,275	202,616	208,607
Heroin	515,957	522,343	445,419	305,212	271,481
Other Opiates	152,338	157,695	130,425	102,216	121,528
Cocaine Smoked	62,190	67,330	64,468	43,378	42,997
Cocaine (other Route)	42,515	67,330	43,817	40,996	29,918
Marijuana	247,478	246,928	212,652	145,429	138,228
Amphetamine	206,250	246,982	226,521	180,840	190,681

Source: Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration, Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS). Based on administrative data reported by states to TEDS through June 30, 2024.

Accessed: September 26, 2024

California Treatment Admissions by Primary Substance of Abuse Ages 12 and Older, 2019-2023



	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Alcohol Only	19,057	15,403	15,958	16,138	14,110
Alcohol w/Secondary drug	16,030	12,725	14,042	13,627	13,314
Heroin	39,384	30,105	26,062	17,661	9,748
Other Opiates	7,494	7,775	13,383	19,802	20,779
Cocaine Smoked	2,590	1,758	1,606	1,367	1,273
Cocaine other Route	1,907	1,436	1,492	1,592	1,621
Marijuana	16,132	10,258	10,169	10,357	8,593
Amphetamines	50,380	37,839	37,489	36,264	33,583

Source: Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration, Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS). Based on administrative data reported by states to TEDS through June 30, 2024.

Accessed: September 26, 2024

SECTION NINE: Diversion, Eradication and Related Crime

Key Findings

- ❖ In the 2023 DCE season, California seized more illicitly cultivated cannabis plants than any other state; arrested more individuals associated with illicit cultivation; and seized more weapons from illicit cultivation sites than any other state in the country.
- ❖ California accounted for approximately 49.7% (343) of the total eradicated indoor grow sites in the United States reported to the DCE/SP in CY 2023 (690).
- ❖ In CY 2023, California seized 1,435 weapons from illicit cannabis sites, which accounts for 41.8% of the total number of weapons seized from illicit cannabis sites throughout the country and reported to DCE/SP.
- ❖ There was a spike in marijuana eradication seizures during the 2009 and 2010 CAMP seasons that coincided with the commercialization of marijuana.
- ❖ Marijuana was the most seized drug (in pounds) by U.S. Border Patrol from FY20-FY23.
- ❖ Cocaine was the most seized drug (in pounds) by Nationwide Air and Marine Operations in FY22 and FY23.

Definitions:

Domestic Cannabis Suppression/Eradication Program (DCS/EP): A nationwide law enforcement program initiated by the Drug Enforcement Administration to target drug trafficking organizations involved in illicit cannabis cultivation and provide funding for eradication programs.

Infrastructure Removal: Removing elemental cultivation infrastructure during the marijuana eradication process such as propane tanks, toxicants, tubing, and car batteries.

High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA): The High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program, created by Congress with the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988, assists federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies operating in areas determined to be critical drug-trafficking regions of the United States.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP): One of the world's largest law enforcement organizations and is charged with keeping terrorists and their weapons out of the U.S. while facilitating lawful international travel and trade. CBP takes a comprehensive approach to border management and control, combining customs, immigration, border security and agricultural protection into one coordinated and supportive activity.

Office of Field Operations (OFO): The largest component in CBP and is responsible for border security-including anti-terrorism, immigration, anti-smuggling, trade compliance, and agriculture protection while simultaneously facilitating lawful trade and travel at U.S. ports of entry.

United States Border Patrol (USBP): A federal law enforcement agency under CBP responsible to safeguard the borders, protect the American people and enhance the nation's economic prosperity.

Air and Marine Operations (AMO): Run out of CBP, AMO deploys aircraft and maritime vessels to air and marine branches and units throughout the country to provide rapid air and marine response capabilities.

The Eradication & Prevention of Illicit Cannabis (EPIC) Program

The Eradication & Prevention of Illicit Cannabis (EPIC) program was established in 1983 as the Campaign Against Marijuana Planting (CAMP) program under the California Attorney General. The program marked its 40-year anniversary in 2023 and has the distinction of being one of the nation's longest running law enforcement task forces. Since inception, over one hundred federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies have participated in the program.

The CAMP program was initiated to address the growing problem of illicitly cultivated cannabis, primarily in the National Forests and public land areas of Northern California. The instances of illicit cannabis cultivation had become a substantial safety concern for members of the public recreating in the forests, as well as causing significant environmental damage.

The CAMP program was established as a multi-agency task force partnership of federal, state, local law enforcement agencies, and the California National Guard. The California Department of Justice (CA DOJ) administered the program, with input from a Steering Committee comprised of the partner agencies. Over the 41-year span of the program, the task force has fielded three to five eradication teams operating during the summer months throughout the state based on available funding.

In October 2022, Attorney General Rob Bonta re-branded the CAMP program to the Eradication & Prevention of Illicit Cannabis (EPIC) program, with a goal to include the investigation and prosecution of civil and criminal cases relating to illicit cannabis cultivation with an additional focus on environmental and economic harms and labor exploitation.

The EPIC program continues to be a multi-agency collaboration led by CA DOJ in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service; the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service; the California Department of Fish and Wildlife; the U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration; the California National Guard, Counter Drug Task Force; the Central Valley High Intensity Drug Trafficking; California State Parks; and many county law enforcement partners.

EPIC also works in close coordination with CA DOJ's Cannabis Control Section, Special Prosecutions Section, and the Tax Recovery and Underground Economy (TRUE) Task Force to build investigations and prosecute civil and criminal cases.

As a long-running law enforcement task force, the EPIC program is a true reflection of the benefits and successes achieved through collaboration and partnerships to address the issues related to illicit cannabis cultivation in California.

Illicit Cultivation in California

As a regrettable distinction, California leads the nation in the illegal cultivation of cannabis and continues to be a primary source for the illicit market across the country. Dating back to the 1980's, illicit cannabis cultivation in California was primarily a public lands occurrence, specifically on the National Forests throughout the state.

Throughout California, there are over forty-eight million acres of public lands (49%) managed by the USFS, BLM, US Park Service, CA State Parks, and CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, to name a few. These public lands include 149 Designated Wilderness Areas encompassing fifteen million acres. To conceal the presence of illicit cultivation operations on public lands, the operators will often move deep into remote areas. These cultivation sites create tremendous negative impact on the environment and wildlife.

Although, currently in declining numbers, illicit cannabis cultivation on public lands continues to be a foremost concern for the EPIC program, as well as all federal, state, and local land management agencies. Cultivation of cannabis in any form on public lands is illegal.

Once sites are set up on public lands, a myriad of other issues and violations follow. These issues include water diversion/theft, the introduction of highly toxic chemicals into the environment, the accumulation of garbage, and of most concern, the threat to the safety of the public enjoying the lands.

As time passed, the "public-land" model encountered by the EPIC program (formerly CAMP) morphed into a two-fold combination of illicit cannabis cultivation sites that now consist of those on public land, and private land "trespass." A "trespass" site is defined as an illicit cannabis cultivation that was set up on privately owned land without the owner's knowledge or permission. "Trespass cultivations" are commonly found on timberland, food crop farmlands, and large "open field" property holdings. The illegal cultivation sites often border public lands, and the responsible operators are often not well versed in actual property ownership. Many of the "trespass" cultivations are the subject of local, state, or federal investigations and are eradicated during the service of court issued search warrants.

Those sites that have traditionally been identified as “private lands” are illegal cultivation sites, in which the growers have “trespassed” onto lands owned by farmers, ranchers, and timber holdings, or have secured land by purchase or agreement, and established illegal cultivation operations. Often, the landowner is unaware of the trespass and may only become aware of the situation when water stops flowing from established sources or unknown subjects and/or vehicles are seen in the vicinity. Although the illicit cultivation site may be on private land, the impacts to the environment and public safety are not reduced.

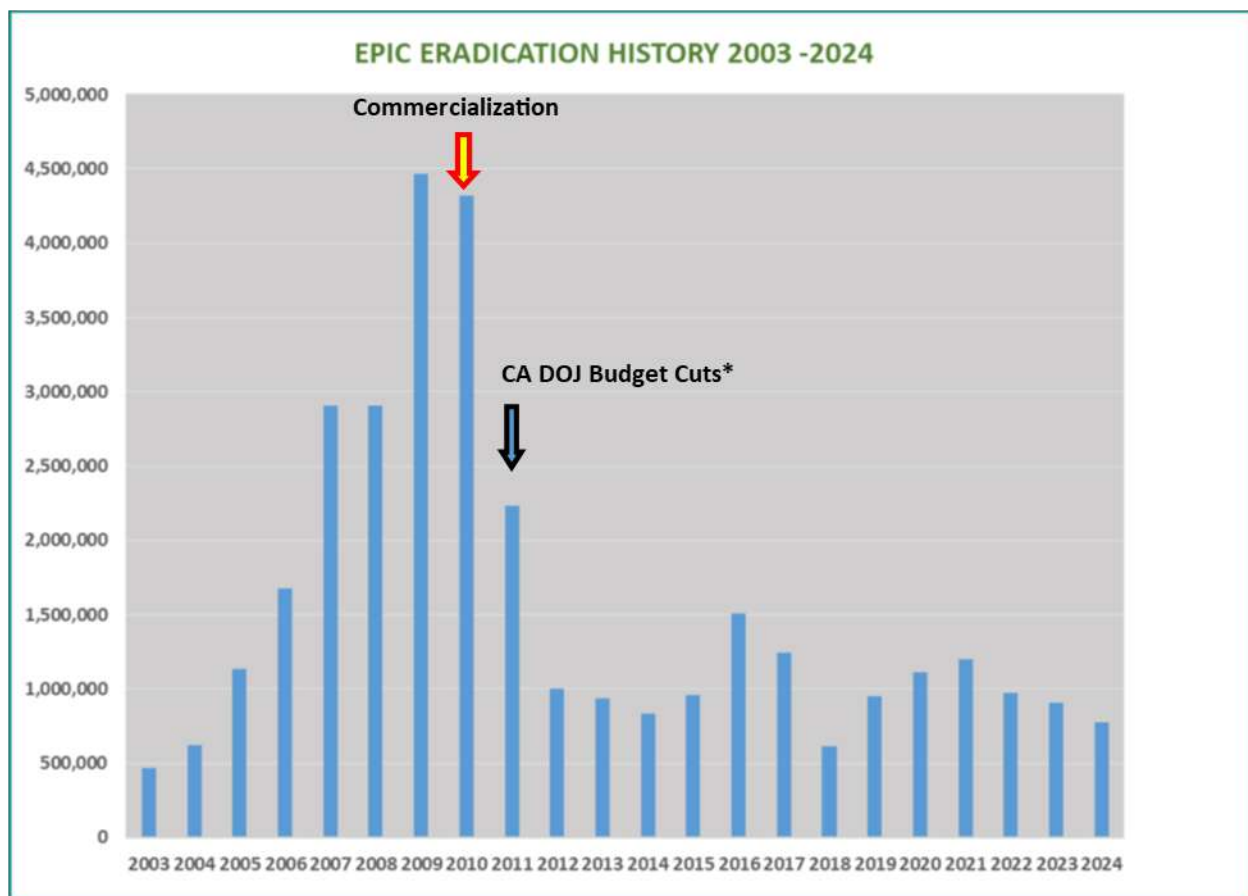
On November 9, 2016, California voters passed Proposition 64, “The Adult Use of Marijuana Act”. Following the passage of Proposition 64, the illegal cultivation of cannabis became a free for all throughout the state.

While cultivation on federal public lands (USFS, BLM, and National Parks) remained a federal felony level violation, restrictions and penalties at the state level were re-classified to lesser violations. At that point, the illicit cultivation of cannabis began an eight-year transition from predominantly public land to private land sites, first as trespassing onto land owned by others, then fast-tracking to land purchased by persons for the explicit purpose of establishing illicit cannabis cultivation.

2023 FINAL DOMESTIC CANNABIS ERADICATION/SUPPRESSION PROGRAM STATISTICAL REPORT
 Date From: 10/01/2022 and Date To: 09/30/2023
 DICE Terminated on 6/14/2023 - Possible Under Reporting

	Total Eradicated Outdoor Grow Sites	Total Cultivated Plants Outdoor	Total Eradicated Indoor Grow Sites	Total Cultivated Plants Indoor	Total Cultivated Plants (Outdoor & Indoor)	Bulk Processed Marijuana	THC Wax/ Oil	THC Edibles	Number Of Arrest	Assets Seized (Value)	Weapon Seizure
Alabama	2	179	0	0	179	47	0	0	12	\$0.00	8
Arizona	1	4,117	0	0	4,117	2,425	0	0	19	\$37,622.00	3
California	447	2,143,759	343	652,861	2,796,620	369,795	15,215	4,960	1,384	\$6,680,328.00	1,435
Florida	4	5,298	1	0	5,298	1,935	37	0	5	\$423,000.00	25
Georgia	6	480	3	1,425	1,905	212	0	0	23	\$162,000.00	5
Hawaii	0	2	0	0	2	34	2	9,885	0	\$0.00	0
Idaho	1	0	0	0	0	3	956	75	2	\$0.00	0
Illinois	2	0	0	0	0	7,085	0	0	32	\$5,728,235.00	3
Indiana	14	33,370	51	1,529	34,899	9,047	8,193	14,916	405	\$513,024.52	220
Kansas	1	33	0	0	33	837	10	43	54	\$87,104.00	10
Kentucky	28	361,786	10	102	361,888	2,345	0	0	588	\$1,225,053.49	868
Louisiana	3	61	19	242	303	3,000	3,501	302	48	\$876,676.50	126
Maryland	2	2	11	0	2	1,330	64	105	32	\$189,604.00	40
Massachusetts	0	0	4	130	130	20	0	0	3	\$8,006.00	0
Mississippi	25	5,315	11	517	5,832	12,680	843	20	101	\$186,000.00	45
Missouri	6	121	4	0	121	4,563	0	0	14	\$0.00	10
Nebraska	3	0	2	4	4	3,339	105	79	84	\$2,350.00	6
Nevada	2	4,200	4	6,551	10,751	254	116	119	19	\$227,484.00	25
New Jersey	2	201	5	2,234	2,435	2,248	636	439	15	\$105,598.00	10
New York	7	235	15	100	335	2536	26	26	15	\$951,090.00	11
Ohio	1	14,015	0	0	14,015	0	0	0	6	\$0.00	35
Oklahoma	5850	6,264	52	237,849	244,113	85,058	21,965	8,983	295	\$8,383,519.00	100
Oregon	4	14,934	8	92,831	107,765	103,750	1,280	0	69	\$1,138,104.00	67
South Carolina	7	24	5	204	228	3,076	504	50	12	\$297,226.25	24
Tennessee	2	17,477	0	0	17,477	4,101	2	480	126	\$1,448,549.00	73
Texas	0	0	4	1,069	1,069	1,012	0	0	4	\$24,350.00	0
Utah	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.00	0
Virginia	10	2905	3	704	3,609	40	0	0	21	\$9,302.00	13
Washington	2	6,132	13	16,642	22,774	3,048	54	0	14	\$9,606.00	14
West Virginia	2	59,925	15	30	59,955	388	66	20	65	\$210,279.00	43
Wisconsin	102	170	106	305	475	17	0	0	1277	\$1,448,463.00	162
Wyoming	0	0	0	0	0	1,323	174	241	47	\$201,567.00	44
Totals	6,536	2,681,005	690	1,015,329	3,696,334	625,548	53,749	40,743	4,791	\$30,574,140.76	3,425

- ❖ California accounted for approximately 49.7% (343) of the total eradicated indoor grow sites in the United States reported to the DCE/SP In CY 2023 (690).
- ❖ In CY 2023, California seized 1,435 weapons from illicit cannabis sites, which is 41.8% of the total number of weapons seized from illicit cannabis sites throughout the country and reported to DCE/SP.



Source: EPIC 2024 Annual Report

*In 2011, the California Department of Justice endured budget cuts resulting in the elimination of the Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement (BNE), directly affecting CAMP operations.

- ❖ There was a spike in marijuana eradication seizures during the 2009 and 2010 CAMP seasons that coincided with the commercialization of marijuana.

2024 EPIC Plant Seizures by Landowner



Source: EPIC 2024 Annual Report

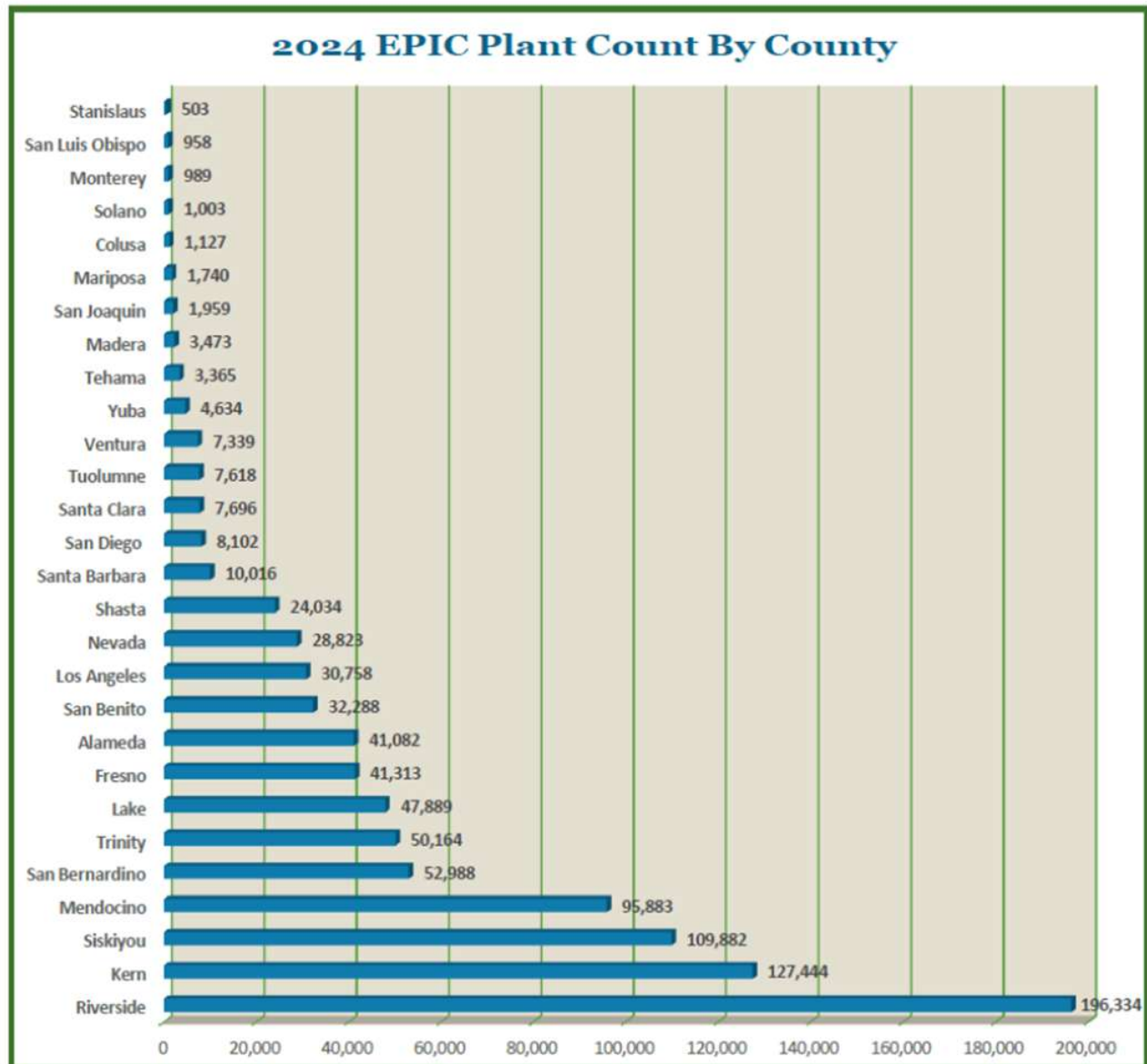
Historical Arrests, Weapons, and Processed Cannabis Seizure Data

Year	Arrests	Weapons Seized	Processed Cannabis Seized (Lbs.)
2024	282	201	106,141.56
2023	209	156	111,219
2022	290	184	203,872
2021	292	165	180,293.9
2020	140	174	64,958.93
2019	148	168	50,930
2018	52	110	41,465
2017	35	35	8,696
2016	45	51	6,811
2015	86	56	10,688
2014	67	38	9,704
2013	56	63	6,500
2012	25	40	3,798
2011	46	72	Not available**
2010*	107	108	Not available**

NOTE: * The seasons of 2009 – 2010 were focus operation years during which large scale operations and workforce were focused on the Central Valley for periods of two to three weeks. ** Statistics for Processed Cannabis were not kept until the 2012 season.

Source: 2024 EPIC Annual Report

2024 EPIC SEIZURE DATA



Source: 2024 EPIC Annual Report

Anecdotal Evidence of Violent Incidents Related to Marijuana Cultivation and/or Trafficking

Oftentimes, it is difficult for a police officer to determine whether a violent crime occurred because of a dispute over marijuana. Even if marijuana is present at the scene of a violent crime, it is not necessarily the motivation for the crime. Consequently, California law enforcement agencies do not keep statistics specifically on marijuana-related violence.

Compounding the issues relating to marijuana (legal or otherwise), cannabis businesses in California continue to lack access to many common banking services since it remains an illegal substance under federal law. This necessitates all-cash transactions and complicates income storage options, making business owners and their property vulnerable to criminal groups. Human targets, such as growers, laborers, and employees who transported large sums of cash or marijuana, were at an increased risk of being assaulted, robbed, or victims of other violent crimes.

Nonetheless, marijuana-related violence does occur as anecdotal evidence shows:

1/4/2022 –San Leandro police officer shoots two men during marijuana dispensary break-in (mercurynews.com)

Two suspected burglars were shot by a San Leandro police officer Sunday night during a break-in at a marijuana dispensary, according to the San Leandro Police Department. The two men were shot in their torsos and taken to a nearby hospital, said Capt. Ali Kahn, of the San Leandro Police Department. They are expected to survive. The shooting happened shortly after 10:40 p.m. when more than 10 people with masks on tried breaking into the Silverstreak marijuana dispensary, 1915 Fairway Drive, according to police. An officer who arrived on scene ran after one of the suspected burglars, who fled to a nearby vehicle.¹

1/3/2022 – Deputies fired upon near Illegal marijuana cultivation site in El Mirage - VVNG.com – Victor Valley News Group

Deputies conducting vehicle checks were fired upon near an illegal marijuana cultivation operation in El Mirage, officials said. It happened on December 30, 2021, at about 5:02 pm, when deputies from the Sheriff's Victor Valley Station conducted the check near the intersection of Parkdale Road and Sheep Creek Road.²

2/1/2022 – Drive-By Shooting Reported At Palm Springs Marijuana Dispensary | Palm Desert, CA Patch

PALM SPRINGS, CA — Authorities were investigating a drive-by shooting Tuesday at a marijuana dispensary in Palm Springs. The Palm Springs Police Department received a report of the shooting at around 12:43 a.m. at One Plant located at 2739 North Palm Canyon Drive. According to Lt. William Hutchinson, several shots were fired from a vehicle driving by the location. The shots damaged several windows at the residence, but no one was injured.³

3/17/2022 – 1 dead, 1 injured after shooting at Bell Gardens marijuana shop, LA Times

A male juvenile was killed, and another person was injured Wednesday night after a shooting at a Bell Gardens marijuana shop in what is believed to have been an attempted robbery, authorities said. The shooting was reported just before 8 p.m. at the shop in the 5800 block of Florence Avenue, according to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, which is assisting Bell Gardens police with the investigation. Bell Gardens officers responded to the scene and found two people with gunshot wounds, authorities said. One person was pronounced dead at the scene and the other was transported to a local hospital in an unknown condition.⁴

4/4/2022 - Armed men rob cannabis facility in Adelanto after attacking, holding guard at gunpoint. Marijuana shop Big Trip hit by robbers in stolen SUV, authorities say (vvdailypress.com)

Authorities are searching for four men who robbed a cannabis facility in Adelanto while holding a security guard at gunpoint. The Victor Valley Sheriff's Station reported that on March 30, deputies responded to Big Trip Manufacturing in Adelanto after a 911 caller said the business had been robbed by four men. Located in the 9900 block of Rancho Road in Adelanto, the Big Trip website said, "From sourcing and fulfillment to packaging design and supply, we are a one-stop-shop access point to the California cannabis market and beyond." Sheriff's officials said four Black men pulled up to the business in a 1990s model GMC Yukon. When the security guard approached them, he was pushed to the ground and held at gunpoint.⁵

4/25/2022 – Oakland man shot during burglary of marijuana dispensary <https://www.ktvu.com/news/oakland-security-guard-shot-during-burglary-of-marijuanadispenary>

A man was shot early Sunday morning after several people broke into a marijuana dispensary in Oakland, authorities said. The shooting happened shortly after 4 a.m., when a security company notified a man associated with the Oakanna dispensary that a group was breaking into the shop at 3238 Lakeshore Ave, according to the East Bay Times.⁶

5/1/2022 – Man Shot and Killed Inside Los Angeles Cannabis Dispensary

Man Shot and Killed Inside Los Angeles Cannabis Dispensary | California News | US News

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A man was shot and killed inside a Los Angeles cannabis dispensary and police are searching for two suspects, authorities said Sunday. Investigators didn't immediately identify a possible motive for the shooting around noon Saturday at the second-floor shop along a busy boulevard in the Tarzana neighborhood.⁷

5/4/2022 – At least 1 arrested after stolen marijuana bins fall onto Venice roadway

At least 1 arrested after stolen pot bins fall onto L.A. roadway - Los Angeles Times (latimes.com)

At least one person was arrested Tuesday by Los Angeles police after an early morning burglary led to the pursuit of a stolen box truck during which bins of marijuana spilled out on a roadway. The burglary was reported around 3:30 a.m. at a business in the 900 block of Venice Boulevard. Los Angeles police said a camera inside the business showed two burglars in the building. KTLA-TV Channel 5 reported that the business was a marijuana grow house. At some point after the burglary, police initiated a pursuit.⁸

6/10/2022 – California marijuana dealer held for ransom, killed in Carrollton Ridge

Federal docs: California marijuana dealer held for ransom, killed in Carrollton Ridge | WBAL NewsRadio 1090/FM 101.5, 6/9/2022 WBAL TV 11.

A man was taken hostage, held for ransom and shot to death. Then the place he was held captive set on fire, according to unsealed federal court records regarding the fire in May on Furrow Street in Carrollton Ridge. Federal agents arrested Ziyon Thompson, 21, of Baltimore, in connection with the crime. The ATF used facial recognition to identify the suspect. It was taken from security footage of him buying a burner phone.⁹

6/28/2022 – Booby-trap damages fire and sheriff's vehicles near illegal marijuana grow in Baldy Mesa

A booby-trap set near an illegal marijuana grow in Baldy Mesa damaged responding fire and sheriff's vehicles, authorities said. The Victor Valley Sheriff's Station reported that at 5:57 p.m. on Sunday, deputies responded to a report of a structure fire at a residence in the 9300 block of White Road in Baldy Mesa. Upon arrival, deputies discovered the home fully engulfed. Also, the structure was being used for an illegal marijuana grow, sheriff's officials said. Deputies later

discovered that the dirt area leading up to the residence was booby-trapped with nails sticking out of the ground, which caused tire damage to responding sheriff's vehicles and fire engines. There were no injuries caused by the fire and no arrests have been made.¹⁰

8/9/2022 - \$100k of weed, inventory stolen at gunpoint from Oakland dispensary
\$100K of Weed, Inventory Stolen at Gunpoint From Oakland Dispensary | High Times

Suspects are still at-large after C.R.A.F.T. Cannabis in Oakland in California was robbed at gunpoint and about \$100,000 in product was stolen. Making things worse, eyewitnesses say it took hours for police to arrive at the scene—once everything was taken and the damage had already been done. In the early hours of August 6, officers responded to reports of a burglary near the 2500 block of Willow Street in Oakland. Police say that around 2:30 a.m. on Saturday, three vehicles and three unknown individuals parked on the 2400 block of Willow Street, then broke into the business and cut the power.¹¹

8/13/2022 – Los Angeles Man killed in marijuana dispensary shooting
Los Angeles Man Killed in Marijuana Dispensary Shooting | KFI AM 640 | LA Local News (iheart.com)

WINDSOR HILLS (CNS) - A man shot to death at a marijuana dispensary in the unincorporated Windsor Hills area was a Los Angeles resident, authorities said today. Azuma Bennett was 30 years old, according to the coroner's office. Deputies from the Marina del Rey sheriff's station were called at 9:45 a.m. Friday to the 3800 block of West Slauson Avenue, between La Brea Avenue and Crenshaw Boulevard, where they found the victim now identified as Bennett lying in a doorway with apparent gunshot wounds, said Deputy Brenda Serna of the Sheriff's Information Bureau. He was pronounced dead at the scene.¹²

9/11/2022 – Police: multiple injured after shootout during attempted burglary at San Leandro marijuana grow
Multiple injured after shootout during attempted burglary at San Leandro marijuana grow, police say - ABC7 San Francisco (abc7news.com)

SAN LEANDRO, Calif. (KGO) -- San Leandro police are investigating after a shootout that happened during an attempted burglary at an indoor marijuana cultivation early Sunday morning. At around 4:20 a.m., police responded to the 2000 block of Adams Avenue to the report of the shootout between burglary suspects and people tending to the grow site. Police say a security guard for the site was struck once by gunfire and is listed in stable condition. A site

manager, as he is being described, also associated with the marijuana cultivation, was struck by gunfire multiple times and is listed in critical condition. Police say one burglary suspect was located at the scene with at least one gunshot wound. That person is listed in critical condition.¹³

12/2/2022 – Cannabis delivery driver robbed at gunpoint in Santa Rosa

Cannabis delivery driver robbed at gunpoint in Santa Rosa (ktvu.com)

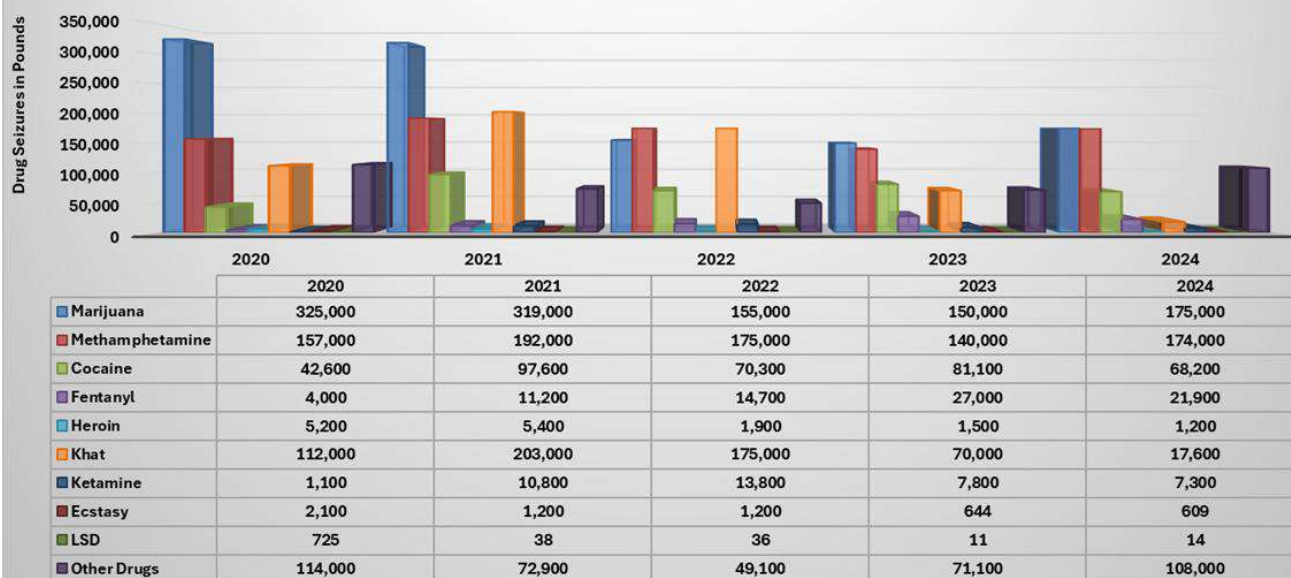
SANTA ROSA, Calif. - A cannabis delivery driver was robbed at gunpoint Thursday in Santa Rosa, officials said. Police said the driver first made a delivery in Oakland to receive a cash payment before driving back to Santa Rosa when a black Audi rear-ended him shortly before 5 p.m. when the driver stepped outside the van to check for damage, two black male adults approached and one was holding a firearm, officials said.¹⁴

12/21/2022 – 2-year old overdoses on fentanyl-laced marijuana in Central California, police say

California toddler overdoses on fentanyl-laced marijuana, police say (ktla.com)

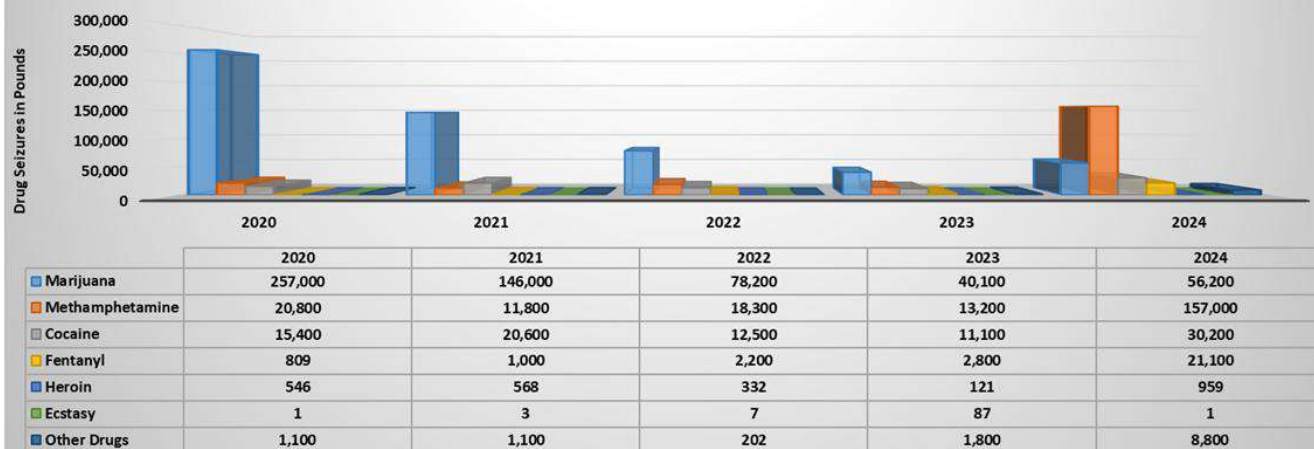
A central California man faces felony charges after his 2-year-old son overdosed on fentanyl, authorities said. Marvin Thomas, 34, was arrested Sunday after Merced police responded to Mercy Medical Center. "The parents transported the child to the emergency room after he experienced life-threatening symptoms consistent with a fentanyl exposure," police said in a news release.¹⁵

**U.S. Customs and Border Protection,
Office of Field Operation (OFO)
Nationwide Drug Seizures
FY 2020 to FY 2024**



Source: USBP and OFO official year end reporting for FY21-FY24. Data is current as of August 28, 2024. U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Border Patrol and Office of Field Operation (OFO) Nationwide Drug Seizures, 2020-2024.

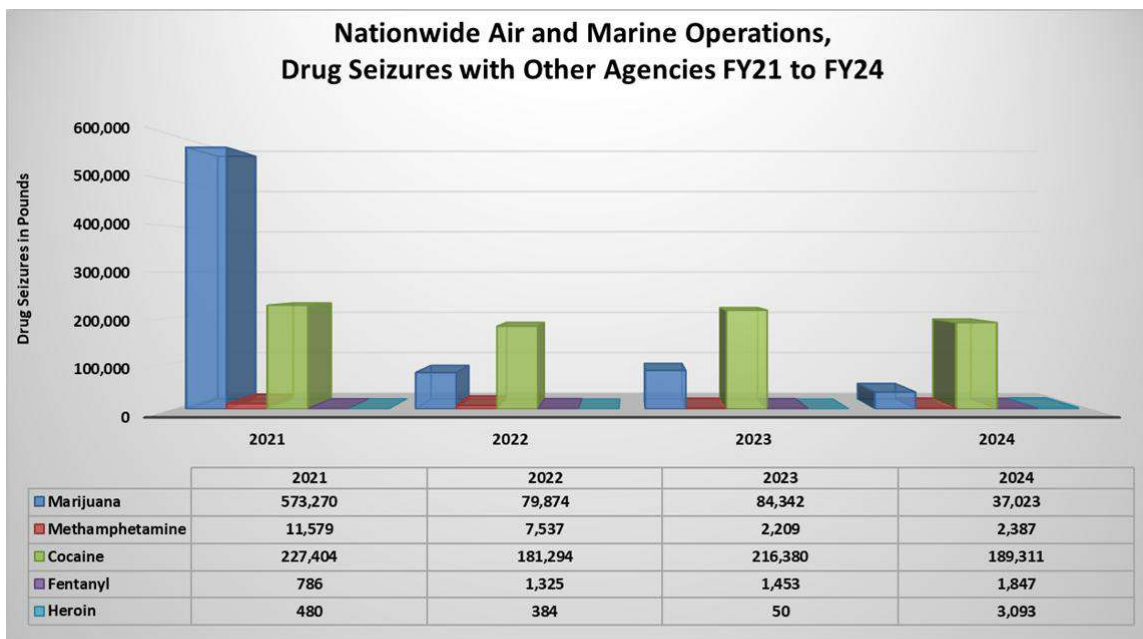
**U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Drug Seizures
U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) FY2020 to FY2024**



Source: Southwest Border U.S Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Drug Seizures FY 2020 to FY 2023.

Accessed: March 12, 2025

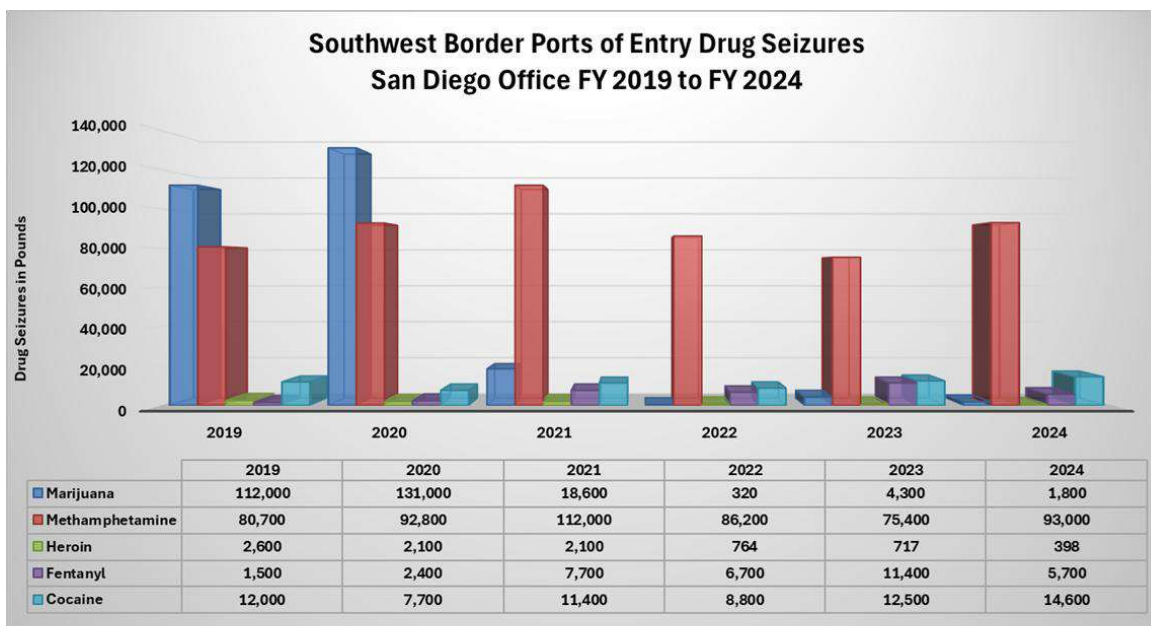
- ❖ Marijuana was the most seized drug (in pounds) by U.S. Border Patrol from FY20-FY23.



Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Drug Seizures, Air and Marine Operations (AMO) Weight (lbs.) and Count of Drug Seizure Events with Other Agencies by Fiscal Year FY21 to FY24

Accessed: March 13, 2025

- ❖ Cocaine was the most seized drug (in pounds) by Nationwide Air and Marine Operations in FY22 and FY23.



Source: U.S. Customs and Border Protection Southwest Border, San Diego Field Office FY 19 to FY 24

Accessed: March 2025

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- ¹ The Mercury News. Jakob Rodgers. San Leandro police officer shoots two men during marijuana dispensary break-in. January 4, 2022. [San Leandro police officer shoots two men during marijuana dispensary break-in](#)
- ² Victor Valley News. Victor Valley News Group. Deputies fired upon near Illegal marijuana cultivation site in El Mirage. January 3, 2022. [Deputies fired upon near Illegal marijuana cultivation site in El Mirage - Victor Valley News](#)
- ³ City News Service, News Partner. Renee Schiavone/Patch. Drive-by Shooting Reported at Palm springs Marijuana Dispensary. February 1, 2022. [Drive-By Shooting Reported at Palm Springs Marijuana Dispensary | Palm Desert, CA Patch](#)
- ⁴ Los Angeles Times. Christian Martinez. 1 dead, 1 injured after shooting at Bell Gardens marijuana shop. March 17, 2022 [1 dead, 1 hurt after shooting at Bell Gardens marijuana shop - Los Angeles Times](#)
- ⁵ Victorville Daily Press. Rene Ray De La Cruz. Armed men rob cannabis facility in Adelanto after attacking, holding guard at gunpoint. April 4, 2022. [Marijuana shop in Adelanto hit by armed robbers, authorities say](#)
- ⁶ FOX KTVU 2. KTVU Staff. Oakland man shot during burglary of marijuana dispensary. April 25, 2022. [Oakland man shot during burglary of marijuana dispensary | KTVU FOX 2](#)
- ⁷ The Associated Press. News Channel 12CBS, 3ABC, 11Fox. Man shot and killed inside Los Angeles cannabis dispensary. May 1, 2022. [Man shot and killed inside Los Angeles cannabis dispensary | News Channel 3-12](#)
- ⁸ Los Angeles Times. Staff writer. At least 1 arrested after stolen marijuana bins fell onto Venice roadway. May 4, 2022. [At least 1 arrested after stolen pot bins fall onto L.A. roadway - Los Angeles Times](#)
- ⁹ WBAL TV 11. David Collins. Federal docs: California marijuana dealer held for ransom, killed in Carrollton Ridge. June 9, 2022. [Marijuana dealer held for ransom, killed in Carrollton Ridge](#)
- ¹⁰ Victorville Daily Press. Rene Ray De La Cruz. Booby-trap damages fire and sheriff's vehicles near illegal marijuana grow in Baldy Mesa. June 28, 2022. [Booby-trap goes off by Illegal marijuana grow in Baldy Mesa](#)
- ¹¹ High Times RSS Feed. 100K of Weed, Inventory Stolen at Gunpoint from Oakland Dispensary. August 9, 2022. [HT>100K of Weed, Inventory Stolen at Gunpoint from Oakland Dispensary - High Times - SEATTLE ART COLONY](#)
- ¹² KFI AM 640 iHeart Radio. City News Service. Man Killed in Marijuana Dispensary Shooting. August 13, 2022. [Man Killed in Marijuana Dispensary Shooting | KFI AM 640 | LA Local News](#)
- ¹³ ABC7 San Francisco. Police: Multiple injured after shootout during attempted burglary at San Leandro marijuana grow. September 11, 2022. [Multiple injured after shootout during attempted burglary at San Leandro marijuana grow, police say - ABC7 San Francisco](#)
- ¹⁴ FOX 2 KTVU. O. Gloria Okorie. Cannabis delivery driver robbed at gunpoint in Santa Rosa. December 2, 2022. [Cannabis delivery driver robbed at gunpoint in Santa Rosa | KTVU FOX 2](#)

¹⁵ KTLA 5 California News. Marc Sternfield. 2-year-old overdoses on fentanyl-laced marijuana in Central California, police say. December 20, 2022. [California toddler overdoses on fentanyl-laced marijuana, police say](#)

SECTION TEN: *THC Exctraction Labs*

Key Findings

- ❖ There were 157 reported clan lab incidents in California in 2022. Out of the 157 reported labs, 149 were lab seizures (11 explosion/fire), and 8 were chemical equipment only.
- ❖ There were 75 reported clan lab incidents in California in 2023. Out of the 75 reported labs, 71 were lab seizures (11 explosion/fire), and 2 were chemical equipment only.

Definitions:

Clandestine “Clan” Lab: A place where preparation of illegal substances takes place. These ‘labs’ are used to manufacture drugs, explosives and even biological or chemical weapons.

Western States Information Network (WSIN): The information network for Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California and Hawaii that contributes information to the Regional Information Sharing Systems Program (RISS).

El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC): EPIC offers tactical, operational and strategic intelligence support to Federal, State, local, tribal and international law enforcement organizations.



- ❖ There were 157 reported clan lab incidents in California in 2022. Out of the 157 reported labs, 149 were lab seizures (11 explosion/fire), and 8 were chemical equipment only.



- ❖ There were 75 reported clan lab incidents in California in 2023. Out of the 75 reported labs, 71 were lab seizures (11 explosion/fire), and 2 were chemical equipment only.

SECTION ELEVEN: Illegal Chinese Labeled Pesticide Fumigants Pose Significant Threat to Human Health and the Environment

Update Provided by Hasti Javid, CalEPA

SUMMARY

Since 2023, law enforcement teams and regulatory personnel have been encountering Chinese-labeled pesticide fumigants at licensed and unlicensed marijuana grow sites throughout California. Laboratory analysis of these materials confirm the presence of highly toxic pesticides that pose a significant threat to human health and the environment.

DESCRIPTION

Chinese-labeled pesticide fumigants come in a variety of multi-colored mylar packaging with labels in Chinese writing (Photo 1). These illegal foreign pesticide products consist of individual packets of combustible treated saw dust mixed with small white granules of ammonium nitrate (Photo 2). The sawdust is impregnated with numerous toxic pesticide compounds classified as carbamates, organophosphates, pyrethroids, and fungicides. These illicit products also contain a packet of “wicks” made up of sulfur and other contaminants (Photo 2). The sawdust is placed in an open container (e.g., an aluminum food or soda can cut in half), and the “wick” is placed in the center. The “fumigation cans” are then placed on the ground throughout the hoop house or other enclosed structure and the wicks are lit (Photo 3).

As these materials burn, they release highly toxic fumes. The primary routes of exposure are inhalation and dermal contact. To date, a total of twenty-three (23) pesticides have been identified, fifteen (15) of which are not listed as required pesticides to test for per [Title 4 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 15719](#) as it relates to “Residual Pesticide Testing” for cannabis and cannabis products. Of the twenty-three (23) pesticides, five (5) are not registered for use in the United States; none of the pesticides are registered/approved for use as fumigants; eight (8) of the pesticides are listed as CA Prop 65 carcinogens; three (3) are listed as CA toxic air contaminants; six (6) are listed as CA groundwater pollutants; and twelve (12) act similar to chemical nerve agents in that they attack the central nervous system (i.e., acetylcholinesterase inhibitors). Based on reports from law enforcement and regulatory personnel, the Chinese labeled pesticide fumigants have been observed in the following counties: Siskiyou, Trinity, Lake, Butte, Solano, Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, San Diego, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Los Angeles.

For additional information about the pesticides associated with the Chinese labeled fumigants and, for general worker safety guidance on pesticides associated with cannabis cultivation sites, go to: https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/cannabis/cannabis_pesticide_exposure_guide.pdf.

For enforcement coordination assistance related to the possession or use of illegal/unregistered pesticides, contact Hasti Javid with CalEPA at Hasti.Javid@calepa.ca.gov.



Photo 1: Variety of Outer Mylar Packaging for Chinese Labeled Pesticide Fumigant Products (Siskiyou County, Trinity County, San Diego County, San Bernardino County).



Photo 2: Individual Packets of Saw Dust Impregnated with Pesticides and Packet of Wicks.



Photo 3: Spent Fumigant Cans Observed on the Ground in Hoop House (*Siskiyou County*).

Appendices

Appendix A

In 1996, California became the first state to legalize marijuana for medicinal purposes with the passage of Proposition 215, the Compassionate Use Act. Now, in 2024, recreational marijuana use is fully legal within California for individuals 21 years of age and over. This report will outline the current and potential impacts of these policies.

DUE TO USAGE IN VARIOUS BILLS, STUDIES AND RESOURCES, THE TERM MARIJUANA AND CANNABIS WILL BE USED INTERCHANGEABLY THROUGHOUT THIS DOCUMENT.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to describe the impacts that have arisen from the legalization of marijuana for both medical and recreational use in California. By gathering and examining data, citizens and policymakers can better understand the implications and effects of marijuana's increased presence in the state.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Marijuana Legalization

Due to concerns about public health risks and other possible impacts of marijuana, there is an on-going debate in the United States regarding the effects of the increasing prevalence of marijuana in our society.

Some common arguments for the legalization of marijuana use include:

- Elimination of arrests for possession and sale, resulting in fewer citizens with criminal records and a reduction in the incarceration rates.
- Freeing up law enforcement resources for more serious crimes.
- Reduction in the disproportionate incarceration of minorities for possession of small quantities of marijuana.
- Potentially reduced traffic fatalities since users may switch from alcohol to marijuana.
- Increased tax revenue from marijuana sales.
- Reduced profits for drug cartels trafficking marijuana.

Arguments for continued restrictions against marijuana use/legalization include:

- Increased marijuana use among youth and young adults due to availability and the normalization of marijuana.
- Increased road fatalities due to marijuana impairment.
- Increased marijuana-related emergency room visits.
- Increased costs of physical and mental health services due to marijuana use.
- Continued diversion of marijuana to illegal markets.
- Negative social and economic costs (e.g., poor academic outcome to include risks of dropping out of school) will far exceed the benefit to society of any potential revenue

generated.¹

- Marijuana cultivation would cause environmental degradation to air, water, land, and wildlife.

History of Marijuana in California

California's relationship with marijuana has evolved significantly over time. A brief overview of how it has changed since marijuana first gained any legal status is necessary to understand where the state stands now and to create a starting point for this report.

Proposition 215

California was the first state to decriminalize possession of lesser quantities of marijuana, when voters approved the Compassionate Use Act on November 5, 1996; also known as Proposition 215. Proposition 215 was intended to ensure that seriously ill Californians could obtain and use marijuana for the treatment of serious medical diseases such as cancer, AIDS, and severe spasms.² Currently, Proposition 215 makes California one of 37 states that allows marijuana for medical uses.

Proposition 215 allows the use of marijuana upon recommendation of a physician and ensures that patients and primary caregivers are not prosecuted or sanctioned. It also encourages the federal and state governments to implement plans to provide for the safe and affordable distribution of marijuana to all patients medically in need.

California State Assembly Bill 420 (SB 420)

The Medical Marijuana Program Act, which became effective on January 1, 2004, created a voluntary identification card system for purchasing medical marijuana. Governor Gray Davis signed this bill in 2003 and it was intended to clarify the scope of Proposition 215 to ensure its equitable application across the state. SB 420 allows the California Attorney General to clarify policies for the possession and cultivation of marijuana, and to create new regulations as needed.

To facilitate the tracking of medical marijuana distribution, the California Department of Public Health Medical Marijuana Program (MMP) was established to create a state-authorized medical marijuana identification card (MMIC) program and a registry database for verification of qualified patients and their primary caregivers. However, this program is voluntary.

Commercialization of Medical Marijuana

Beginning in 2010, marijuana in California grew into a commercialized industry, with the number of dispensaries and other marijuana-related businesses increasing quickly. In 2010, Los Angeles reported 545 dispensaries compared to 186 in 2007, an increase of 193%.³ As of 2021, the LA City Controller's documents state that there were 135 regulated cannabis shops and at least 1,400 unlicensed marijuana dispensaries within the LA metropolitan area.⁴ With a total of 1,244

marijuana dispensaries reported by Dispense App. in 2024.⁵ There are 373 legal dispensaries in Los Angeles according to Department of Cannabis Control in 2024.

California State Assembly Bill 1449 (AB 1449)

In September 2010, Governor Schwarzenegger signed California State Assembly Bill 1449 (AB 1449) into law, which reduced the sanction for possessing less than one ounce of marijuana from a misdemeanor to an infraction, legally the equivalent of a parking ticket. This decriminalized the personal possession of up to one ounce of marijuana.⁶

California State Assembly Bills 21, 2516 and 2679; and Senate Bill 837

The Medical Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MCRSA) includes four bills and directed the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to create the Medical Cannabis Cultivation Program (MCCP). The MCCP was charged to create a licensing program for medical cannabis cultivation, implement a “track and trace” program, and evaluate potential environmental impacts in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.⁷ These bills were enacted in September 2015.

California State Assembly Bills 266 and 243, and Senate Bill 643

The Medical Marijuana Regulation and Safety Act 2016 (MMRSA) includes three bills: Assembly Bill 266 (Bonta, Cooley, Jones-Sawyer, Lackey, and Wood) establishes a dual licensing structure requiring state and local license permits; Assembly Bill 243 (Wood) aims to establish a regulatory and licensing structure for cultivation sites under the Department of Food and Agriculture; Senate Bill 643 (McGuire) sets the criteria for the licensing of medical marijuana businesses, regulates physicians, and recognizes local authority to levy taxes and fees.⁸ These bills took effect in January 2016.

Full Legalization of Marijuana

California Proposition 64

On November 8, 2016, California voters approved Proposition 64 or, the Control, Regulate and Tax Adult Use of Marijuana Act (AUMA) which legalized the adult use of cannabis. According to California Health and Safety Code 11362.5 HS, adults 21 years old and over can possess one ounce of cannabis per day, grow six mature plants and twelve immature plants (for medical use). However, commercial sales of marijuana for recreational use were postponed until January 1, 2018.⁹ This report shows the impacts AUMA had on the public health, education and criminal justice systems in California.

California State Assembly Bill 133 and Senate Bill 94

The Medicinal and Adult-Use Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MAUCRSA), signed by Governor Brown, on June 27, 2017, combined elements of the Medical Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MCRSA) and the Adult Use of Marijuana Act (AUMA). This act created one

regulatory system for both medicinal and recreational (adult-use) cannabis under the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA).¹⁰ It also increased the amount of cannabis personal possession from four to eight grams.

California Assembly Bill 1793

Required the state to track down and process all marijuana cases eligible for expungement. Assembly Bill 1793 gave local prosecutors until July 1, 2020 to process eligible cases to review whether to challenge the recall or dismissal of sentence, dismissal and sealing, or re-designation of an existing conviction to a lesser offense. This bill was signed by Governor Brown on September 30, 2018.¹¹

California Budget Trailer Assembly Bill 97

With the passage of Budget Trailer Assembly Bill 97, Senate Bill 97, the rules for provisional marijuana licenses were revised. It is now possible to get a provisional commercial cannabis license if the applicant has submitted a completed state cannabis license application, the applicant is following the California Environmental Quality Act, and has completed or is in the process of completing their local city or county permits. This bill requires that no later than July 1, 2021, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) establish a certification program for manufactured marijuana products comparable to the National Organic Program and the California Organic Food and Farming Act. This bill extends the repeal date from July 1, 2019 to July 1, 2021. Governor Newsom signed this into law on July 1, 2019.¹²

California Budget Trailer Senate Bill 97

Gave power to licensing authorities to issue a citation to a licensee, or unlicensed person, for any act or omission that violates or has violated a provision of MAUCRSA. It also extends the repeal date for the provisional or temporary license to January 1, 2022. This bill also requires that no later than July 1, 2021, the CDPH establish a certification program for manufactured marijuana products comparable to the National Organic Program, and the California Organic Food and Farming Act, and extends the repeal date from July 1, 2019 to July 1, 2021.¹³

California Senate Assembly Bill 657 Cannabis Cultivation: County Agricultural Commissioner's Reporting

Required county agricultural commissioners to report, to the secretary of state, the total acreage and production value of marijuana produced in the commissioner's county. Governor Newsom signed this into law on September 5, 2019.¹⁴

California Senate Bill 527 Local Government: Williamson Act: Cultivation of Cannabis and Hemp

Added cannabis and hemp to the definition of agricultural commodities, therefore qualifying these crops as appropriate use in an agricultural preserve (an area of at least 100 acres designated

by the Board of Supervisors within which a landowner may contract with the County to receive property taxes in exchange for maintaining the land on open space use). The bill was signed by Governor Newsom on September 6, 2019.¹⁵

California Assembly Bill 1810

Made it illegal for passengers in limos, taxis, buses, and other commercial vehicles to consume marijuana, although alcohol is allowed. It was signed by Governor Newsom on October 8, 2019, and extends through January 1, 2021.¹⁶

California Senate Bill 223

Authorized school districts to set policies that allows a parent or guardian of a pupil to possess and administer the pupil's medicinal marijuana at a school site. The bill was signed by Governor Newsom on October 9, 2019, and took effect January 1, 2020.¹⁷

California Assembly Bill 37

Allowed state tax deductions for cannabis business expenses even though there is federal disallowance for these deductions. This bill passed the Senate and Assembly was signed by Governor Newsom on October 12, 2019, and went into effect January 1, 2020.¹⁸

California Senate Bill 153 – Industrial Hemp

Revised regulating the cultivation and testing of industrial hemp to conform to the requirements for a state plan under the federal Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as amended by the federal Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018. It revises the definition of “industrial hemp” and its terms. A state hemp regulatory plan was submitted to the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). This bill was signed by Governor Newsom on October 12, 2019.¹⁹ At time of publication, some plans have been approved, and others are under review.

California Senate Bill 34

Permitted licensed businesses to donate cannabis products for medical marijuana patients in need. This bill was signed by Governor Newsom on October 12, 2019 and went into effect January 1, 2020.²⁰

California Assembly Bill 1291

Required marijuana license applicants to agree to enter into a labor peace agreement within 60 days of employing 20 or more employees. The bill passed the Senate and was signed by Governor Newsom on October 12, 2019. The law took effect on January 1, 2020.²¹

California Senate Bill 185

Applied the same prohibitions against misrepresentation of “county of origin” to misuse of “appellations of origin” (specific qualities due to the geographical environment in which

produced) and prohibits use of names that are likely to mislead consumers or cannabis product type. The bill passed and was signed by Governor Newsom on October 12, 2019.²²

California Assembly Bill 1529

Created to change the size requirement of the universal marijuana symbol as it pertains to vape cartridges, to no less than 0.25" x 0.25" (lowering it from the requirement of 0.5" x 0.5"). This bill was signed by Governor Newsom on October 12, 2019.²³

California Senate Bill 595

Required a state licensing authority to develop and implement a program to provide a deferral or waiver of a marijuana application fee, marijuana licensing fee, or cannabis renewal fee for needs-based applicants or a needs-based licensee, on or before January 1, 2020. The bill passed by Senate and was signed by Governor Newsom on October 12, 2019.²⁴

California Marijuana Chemicals Listed January 3, 2020

The office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) added marijuana smoke and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) to their list of known toxins and carcinogens. On January 3, 2020, marijuana smoke and THC was listed as known to the State of California to cause reproductive toxicity (Development Endpoint). At a public meeting on December 11, 2019, the Developmental and Reproductive Toxicant Identification Committee (DARTIC) in its official capacity as the "state's qualified experts determined that cannabis (marijuana) smoke and Δ9-tetrahydrocannabinol (Δ9-THC)" were shown to cause reproductive toxicity based on the developmental endpoint. Regulations for the listing of chemicals by the DARTIC are set out in Title 27, California Code of Regulations, in section 25305(b) (1).

A complete, updated Proposition 65 chemical list is available on the OEHHA website at <https://oehha.ca.gov/proposition-65/proposition-65-list>.

California Senate Bill 67

Established an appellations of origin program, which is meant to indicate where marijuana is grown and how that influences the geographical area of the environment instead of identifying solely by county. It also prohibits marketing, of any product, from using a county of origin in the name of the product unless 100% of the cannabis contained in the product was produced in that county. Governor Newsom signed this bill on August of 2020.²⁵

California Assembly Bill 1872

Froze state marijuana cultivation and excise taxes for the entire year of 2021. This bill was intended to provide financial stability for marijuana businesses in California, where the taxes are the highest in the nation. Governor Newsom signed this into law on September 18, 2020.²⁶

California Assembly Bill 1458

Required a certificate of analysis on edible marijuana products to report that the milligrams (mg) of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) per serving does not exceed 10 mg per serving, plus or minus 12% until January 1, 2022. The bill includes plus or minus 10% after January 1, 2022. Governor Newsom signed this bill on September 29, 2020.²⁷ Note: This bill regulates weight in product not potency.

California Senate Bill 1244

Allowed state licensed marijuana testing labs to provide sample testing services to law enforcement. Governor Newsom signed this bill on September 29, 2020.²⁸

California Assembly Bill 195

Reduced the existing tax rate on marijuana, and marijuana products, to 11% on and after the date of this bill until July 1, 2023, at which time the tax would return to 15%. This bill would defer the imposition of the cultivation tax. This bill would take effect immediately as a tax levy, but its operative date would depend on its effective date. Introduced to Assembly on January 17, 2020, and signed into law by Governor Newsom in June of 2020.²⁹

California Proposition 65: Changes to the Law

Proposition 65 became law in California in November of 1986, also known as the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986. This proposition requires businesses to provide warning of significant exposures to chemicals that cause cancer, birth defects and other reproductive dangers. Effective January 3, 2021, proper signage was required to be placed on marijuana products. Marijuana smoke is now listed as a carcinogen containing reproductive toxins. Smoked and non-smoked products now require Prop 65 warnings for cancer and developmental toxicity from tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).³⁰

California Assembly Bill 141

Assembly Bill 141 combines the three state licensing authorities into a single California Department of Cannabis Control (DCC). This department provides licensure, safety, and quality assurance. The DCC will consolidate the three state marijuana programs: which were the Bureau of Cannabis Control (BCC), the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) CalCannabis Cultivation Licensing Division, and the CDPH's Cannabis Safety Branch. Governor Newsom signed AB141 into law on July 12, 2021.³¹

California Senate Bill 160

California Senate Bill 160 makes modifications to AB141. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) will keep the Cannabis Appellations Program. The Cannabis Organic Certification (OCal) Program will also stay in the CDFA. The OCal Program will initiate

marijuana standards comparable to the National Organic Program. Governor Newsom signed SB160 into law on July 16, 2021.³²

California Assembly Bill 1305

The Controlled Substances Act (CSA) is a federal law that generally prohibits commercial marijuana activity but authorizes cultivation and distribution of marijuana for research purposes. AB1305 would exempt individuals from Medicinal and Adult-Use Cannabis Regulation and Safety Act (MAUCRSA) activity that is in accordance with Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) registration, if the person engaging in the activity provides the licensing authority valid documentation of their registration and location prior to engaging in the activity. This bill became law on August 31, 2021.³³

California Assembly Bill 1302

California Assembly Bill 1302 would restrict the placement of commercial billboards related to marijuana advertising. This bill passed the Senate floor; but was vetoed by Governor Newsom on September 2, 2021, because it would've allowed more billboards and weakened the protections set in place to protect youth from exposure to marijuana and marijuana advertising.³⁴

California Assembly Bill 287

This bill would require a civil action for a penalty on a person engaging in commercial marijuana activity without a license required by MAUCRSA, of up to three times the amount of the license fee for each violation. This bill would declare that its provisions further the purposes and intent of the Control, Regulate and Tax Adult Use of Marijuana Act. This bill became law on September 23, 2021.³⁵

California Senate Bill 166

The California Cannabis Equity Act of 2018 requires the Department of Cannabis Control, to develop and implement a program to provide a deferral or a waiver for an application fee, licensing fee, or renewal fee otherwise required by MAUCRSA, for needs-based applicant or needs-based licensee. Governor Newsom signed SB166 into law on September 23, 2021.³⁶

California Senate Bill 311

The Compassionate Access to Medical Cannabis Act or Ryan's Law requires specified types of health care facilities to allow use of marijuana by terminally ill patients. Governor Newsom approved the bill on September 28, 2021.³⁷

California Senate Bill 292

California Senate Bill 292 would require the testing plan of an established agricultural research organization and hemp breeder to provide for testing representative sample, instead of all the plants cultivated within a determined timeframe. The bill would require a grower of industrial hemp to include the country of origin, instead of the county, of the approved cultivar in the registration application. This became law on October 4, 2021.³⁸

California Assembly Bill 1138

This bill would impose a civil penalty on persons who are encouraging unlicensed commercial marijuana activity of up to \$30,000 for each violation. This bill would limit the filing of an action for civil penalties against a person, pursuant to MAUCRSA, to three years after filing of the discovery of a violation. Governor Newsom signed this bill on October 5, 2021.³⁹

California Assembly Bill 1222

On October 5, 2021, Governor Newsom signed Bill 1222 into law. The bill will allow marijuana beverages to be packaged in glass containers that are clear or see-through of any color. Before delivery or sale at a retailer, marijuana and marijuana products must be labeled and placed in a tamper-evident, child-resistant package and include a unique identifier for tracking marijuana and marijuana products. Packages and labels should not attract the interest of children.⁴⁰

California Senate Bill 544

MAUCRSA prohibits marijuana products from being sold unless a representative sample, of specified batches has been tested by a licensed testing laboratory. SB544 would require the bureau to create a standardized marijuana testing method to be used by all laboratories in California. Governor Newsom signed the bill into law on October 5, 2021. SB544 would also require the Department of Cannabis Control to create a standardized marijuana testing method to be used by all laboratories in California by January 1, 2023.⁴¹

California Senate Bill 73

California Senate Bill 73 allows the deletion of various crimes relating to controlled substances to include possessing agreeing to sell or transporting marijuana, planting or cultivating peyote, and various crimes relating to individuals that had been previously convicted, including specified felony offenses. SB73 authorizes remaining prohibitions on probation to be waived by a court in the interests of justice. Governor Newsom signed this bill into law on October 5, 2021.⁴²

California Assembly Bill 45

California Assembly Bill 45 “allows for the inclusion of hemp and cannabinoids (e.g., CBD), extracts, or derivatives of hemp in food and beverages, dietary supplements, cosmetics, and processed pet food provided that they, among other things, contain less than 0.3% THC.” Governor Newsom enacted AB45 into law on October 6, 2021.⁴³

California Assembly Bill 527

On October 7, 2021, Governor Newsom enacted AB527 into law “which would further the provisions authorizing the prescription, furnishing, dispensing, transfer, transportation, possession, or use of cannabis oil products, e.g. Cannabidiol (CBD), in accordance with federal law, to include all products with cannabinoids. This bill would require the California Department of Justice (CALDOJ) to provide the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) with access to data for research.”⁴⁴

California Assembly Bill 1656

MAUCRSA will not forbid a licensee from manufacturing, distributing, or selling products that are made from industrial hemp or cannabinoids, extracts, or derivatives from hemp if the product complies with applicable state laws. The bill passed the Assembly on April 18, 2022, and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.⁴⁵

California Assembly Bill 2568

California Assembly Bill 2568 introduced on February 18, 2022, states that it is not a crime for individuals and firms to provide insurance and related resources to persons licensed to participate in commercial marijuana activities.⁴⁶ This bill was enrolled, presented and signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.

California Assembly Bill 1646

This would authorize marijuana beverages to be packaged into containers of any material that are free of color (i.e. any clear packaging). All marijuana and marijuana products will have two different product labels and inserts that include information displayed in legible writing in accordance with the requirements. AB1646 passed the Assembly on May 5, 2022, and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.⁴⁷

California Senate Bill 988

California Senate Bill 988 makes changes to the existing Compassionate Access to Medical Cannabis Act. It revokes the requirement that healthcare facilities permit patient use of medical marijuana comply with other drug and medication requirements. SB988 would require a health

care facility to require a patient or a primary caregiver to be responsible for acquiring, retrieving, administering and removing medicinal marijuana as well as storing it securely. The bill passed the Senate on May 9, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.⁴⁸

California Assembly Bill 2595

This bill required the California Department of Social Services to update regulations regarding investigations involving alleged child abuse or neglect. The family or people involved would be treated as if the parent's use or possession of marijuana is the same as if it were alcohol or a legal medication. AB2595 passed in Assembly on May 25, 2020 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2020.⁴⁹

California Assembly Bill 1885

"This would stop the California Veterinarian Medical Board from disciplining a veterinarian who uses marijuana as a medicine for animals for such things that may have therapeutic purposes, unless the veterinarian is employed by or has an agreement with a marijuana license." The bill passed in the Assembly on May 25, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.⁵⁰

California Assembly Bill 1894

Starting July 1, 2024, California Assembly Bill 1894 would require that packaging and labeling of marijuana vaporizers fully display a specific message of how to properly dispose as hazardous waste or, to imply that it may not be thrown into the trash or recycling streams. The bill passed in the Assembly on September 18, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.⁵¹

California Assembly Bill 1954

"This bill would prohibit a medical doctor from not evaluating an individual or denying treatment because of a positive drug screen for tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), or report of medical marijuana use without completing a case-by-case evaluation on the patient to determine that the patient's use of medical marijuana is medically significant. The bill specifies that a physician and/or surgeon, will not be punished for having administered treatment or medication to a qualified patient." Governor Newsom signed AB1954 on September 2, 2022.⁵²

California Assembly Bill 2925

The Control, Regulate and Tax Adult Use of Marijuana Act of 2016 (AUMA) requires the Controller to distribute funds from the Youth Education, Prevention, Early Intervention, and Treatment Account to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) for programs to prevent

substance use disorders and prevent harm from substance use. This bill would require, on or before July 10, 2023, to provide to the Legislature a spending report of funds from the Youth Education, Prevention, Early Intervention and Treatment Account for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 fiscal years. This bill would require the Department to provide a spending report for the prior fiscal year. The bill passed in Assembly on May 25, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.⁵³

California Senate Bill 1097

California Senate Bill 1097 would require, in addition to existing product labels, a clear and prominent warning regarding the risks that marijuana use may contribute to mental health problems by July 1, 2025. This bill would require that on or before January 1, 2024, the department create a public use pamphlet or brochure that includes prescribed information, recommendations that new users start with lower doses and the dangers of purchasing illegal marijuana and marijuana products. The information contained in this brochure should be re-certified every 5 years starting on January 1, 2030, to provide the most updated language. The bill passed the Senate on May 25, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.⁵⁴

California Assembly Bill 2188

This bill will “alter the California Fair Employment and Housing Act to make it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against a person in hiring, termination, or any term or condition of employment, or otherwise penalize a person, if the discrimination is based upon the person’s use of cannabis off the job and away from the workplace or, with prescribed exceptions, upon an employer-required drug screening test that has found the person to have non-psychoactive cannabis metabolites in their urine, hair, or bodily fluids.”⁵⁵ The bill passed the Assembly on May 26, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.

California Assembly Bill 1706

If a sentence had not been challenged by July 1, 2020, this bill requires the court to update the record and notify the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice must complete and update records on or before July 2023. The bill would enable a conviction, arrest, or other proceeding be dismissed, and sealed, or re-designated. The bill passed in Assembly on May 26, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.⁵⁶

California Assembly Bill 2210

California Assembly Bill 2210 gives the Department of Cannabis Control authority to issue a state temporary event license to a marijuana retail licensee. It would authorize onsite marijuana

retail sales at an event once the application has been approved by the State. The bill passed in Assembly on May 26, 2022 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2022.⁵⁷

California Assembly Bill 195

Eliminated a cultivation tax placed on marijuana growers and shifts excise tax collection from distributors to retail businesses. This bill amends the California Revenue and Taxation Code to eliminate the cultivation tax on harvested marijuana. The bill also gives three years of relief for excise tax. This bill was signed into law by Governor Newsom on June 30, 2022.⁵⁸

California State Assembly Bill 623

Established the regulations to adjust testing variances for marijuana edibles. Introduced on February 9, 2023. The Department of Cannabis Control (DCC) would establish rules for products that are less than 5 milligrams of THC in total. The new bill focuses on products with lower THC levels. Governor Newsom signed this bill on September 30, 2023.⁵⁹

California State Assembly Bill 107

AB107 and SB108 became the Budget Act of 2024 which made appropriations for the support of the State government for the 2024/2025 fiscal year. Governor Newsom signed this into law on June 26, 2024.⁶⁰

California State Assembly Bill 993

Created to expand the task force on regulation of commercial cannabis for local and state activity to include representatives from the Civil Rights Department and the Department of Industrial Relations. This will help to enforce state and local laws. Governor Newsom signed this into law on October 2, 2023.⁶¹

California State Assembly Bill 1126

Gave the authority to the California Department of Cannabis Control to issue citations too or law enforcement to seize marijuana or marijuana products in certain times to a person or group if unlicensed. For an unlicensed cannabis product and using a license of an unlicensed cannabis universal symbol. Governor Newsom signed this bill into law in October of 2023.⁶²

California State Assembly Bill 1171

Authorized a California marijuana licensee to bring an action in a court against people or person for a claim. This bill gives the right to pursue legal action against an illegal unlicensed marijuana business in state superior court. They must be able to prove damages against them. Governor Newsom signed this bill into law in October 2023.⁶³

California State Assembly Bill 1448

Redirected one/half of remaining civil penalties recovered in an enforcement action brought by a city or county from the General fund to the treasurer of that city or county. This shift is aimed at encouraging local governments to more actively pursue enforcement efforts against illegal cannabis businesses. The Governor signed this into law in October of 2023.⁶⁴

California State Assembly Bill 1684

Would fine up to \$1000.00 to \$10,000.00 for unlicensed commercial property, including cultivation, manufacturing, processing, distribution, or retail sale. This bill will be designed to give local governments more power to control illegal cannabis activities and regulate the industry effectively within their jurisdiction. Governor Newsom signed into law in October of 2023.⁶⁵

California State Assembly Bill 1775

Allowed marijuana retailers to sell non-cannabis food and beverages, as well as sell tickets to performances such as concerts. This bill could create cafes and venues that would allow a social space for indoor vaping and smoking of marijuana. ANR Americans for Nonsmoker's Rights. The bill would also allow local governments to make decisions on which marijuana cafes to open instead of allowing them to open a business. Governor signed this into law on September 30, 2024.⁶⁶

California State Assembly Bill 2188

Stated that it is unlawful for employers to discriminate against a person in hiring and termination. Limits how employers can test employees for marijuana use. It prohibits employers from using hair or urine samples for hiring workers. This law will take effect on January 1, 2024.⁶⁷

California State Assembly Bill 2223

Regulated that retail sales of hemp foods and beverages and dietary supplements having any THC is unlawful and must be removed.⁶⁸ These products can still be sold at marijuana dispensaries. This is a temporary ban that expires next year. The bill failed earlier this year, which expanded on legislation that passed in 2021. The bill was AB45 that stated businesses had to register with government and that hemp products should contain less than 0.3% milligrams of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) per serving per package, 1mg of THC per final product.⁶⁹ This was proposed by Governor Newsom on September 24, 2024. The bill did not advance. In March of 2025 Governor Newsom extended the ban on hemp products through the Office of Administrative Law that will last another 90 days until June of 2025.⁷⁰

California State Assembly Bill 2555

Extended the tax exemption for donated medicinal cannabis to financially challenged patients, which were set into place with SB 34 in 2019 and will expire next year. Governor Newsom signed this bill on September 29, 2024.⁷¹

California State Assembly Bill 2643

Required the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to submit a yearly report to the Legislature on illegal marijuana that is cultivated on public lands. This would provide guidance on remediation of the devastation on the environment due to illegal crops and aims to enhance the efficiency and transparency of restoration initiatives. This bill was signed by Governor Newsom on September 28, 2024.⁷²

California State Assembly Bill 2841

Allowed the closed-door meeting to be held by teleconference for the California Research Advisory Panel that handles hearings on research projects involving marijuana and hallucinogenic drugs. Governor Newsom signed this bill into law on July 18, 2024.⁷³

California Senate Bill 108

The bill was signed into law on September 29, 2024 and became the Budget Act of 2024. It outlines the intent of the Legislature to make statutory adjustments related to the state's financial planning for the 2024 fiscal year.⁷⁴

California Senate Bill 302

Required healthcare facilities to allow terminally ill patients, aged 65 and over with chronic illnesses, to use non-smoked forms of cannabis with a doctor's recommendation. The bill applies to hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, congregate living health facilities, special hospitals, hospice, and home health agencies. This bill passed on October 8, 2023 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom in 2023.⁷⁵

California Senate Bill 540

Required the DCC to adopt regulations for marijuana and marijuana products to include public posted messaging detailing the implication and risks associated with marijuana use. These would also include warnings about high potency products and require first-time users to be offered a printed brochure. This bill requires the DCC and CDPH to create a public booklet or brochure that includes the risks associated with marijuana use. Signed into law by Governor Newsom in October of 2023.⁷⁶

California Senate Bill 622

Required a unique identifier to be attached at the base of each marijuana plant, ensuring transparency and compliance within the legal cannabis industry. The goal is to better regulate cannabis cultivation and distribution while addressing challenges such as illegal cultivation and enhancing accountability in the supply chain. This bill was signed into law by Governor Newsom in October of 2023.⁷⁷

California Senate Bill 700

It would make it unlawful to inquire about the past use of marijuana of an applicant relating to employment. This bill was signed into law by Governor Newsom in October of 2023. [This bill](#) will keep most employers from asking about whether the applicant has used marijuana before. This bill amends California's Fair Employment and Housing Act. The law went into effect on January 1, 2024.⁷⁸

California Senate Bill 753

Resulted in felony charges for planting, cultivating, and harvesting, drying or processing more than 50 living marijuana plants under pesticides provisions. Also taking water from storage facility without consent or permissions or extraction. This bill was signed into law by Governor Newsom in October of 2023.⁷⁹

California Senate Bill 756

Authorized The California State Water Resources Control Board to investigate an unlicensed marijuana cultivation site suspected of illegal water use or diversion for cannabis cultivation. It allows the board to obtain inspection warrants or conduct inspections in emergency situations, such as those affecting public health and safety. This bill became law on September 3, 2023.⁸⁰

California Senate Bill 833

Required the DCC to create a marijuana licensing fallowing program (land for crops to lie idle during the growing season) by March 1, 2024. This requires the DCC to enact a marijuana license fallowing (a farming technique that is arable land left without sowing for one growing cycle; goal is to recover and store organic matter in the land) source program. It can also place a cultivation license inactive. This was signed into law by Governor Newsom on October 13, 2023.⁸¹

California Senate Bill 1059

Prohibited a city or county to include gross receipts (definition) for any local tax or fee on a marijuana retail license. This bill was signed into law by Governor Newsom on September 28, 2024.⁸²

California Senate Bill 1064

Would add a “combined activities license” classification to permit to two or more commercial marijuana activities at the same place of operation. This bill was signed into law by Governor Newsom on September 28, 2024.⁸³

California Senate Bill 1109

Entailed the California Department of Cannabis Control to gather demographic data on their website for every person with a financial interest in a marijuana license application. This bill was signed into law by Governor Newsom on September 28, 2024.⁸⁴

California Senate Bill 1186

Stated that local jurisdictions cannot stop the sale by delivery within the local jurisdiction marijuana to patients. This applies to all cities and counties. This went law went into effect on January 1, 2024.⁸⁵

California Senate Bill 1498

Required a manufacturer, distributor or seller of industrial hemp to comply with advertising and marketing restrictions. Approved by Governor Newsom on September 29, 2024.⁸⁶

California Senate Bill 1511

Allowed marijuana to be given to a patient who is terminally ill, in an acute general hospital setting. This bill was introduced on September 4, 2024 and was signed into law by Governor Newsom on September 9, 2024.⁸⁷

Federal Position on the Legalization of Marijuana

The Ogden Memorandum

Marijuana use, whether intended for medical purposes or not, is illegal at the federal level under the Controlled Substances Act of 1970. On October 19, 2009, United States Department of Justice (USDOJ) Deputy Attorney General (DAG) David Ogden issued a memorandum to provide clarification and guidance regarding federal investigations and prosecution, to federal prosecutors in states with medical marijuana laws. This memorandum emphasized that federal prosecution resources be used rationally and efficiently. The memorandum adds that: “...nothing herein precludes investigation or prosecution where there is a reasonable basis to

believe that compliance with state law is being involved as a pretext for the production or distribution of marijuana for purposes not authorized by state law. Nor does this guidance preclude investigation or prosecution, even when there is clear and unambiguous compliance with existing state law, in particular circumstances *where investigation or prosecution otherwise serves important federal interests.*"⁸⁸

The U.S. DOJ:

- Unlawful possession or unlawful use of firearms;
- Violence;
- Sales to minors;
- Financial and marketing activities inconsistent with the terms, conditions, or purposes of state law, including evidence of money laundering activity and/or financial gains or excessive amounts of cash inconsistent with purported compliance with state or local law;
- Amounts of marijuana inconsistent with purported compliance with state or local law;
- Illegal possession or sale of other controlled substances; or
- Ties to other criminal enterprises.⁸⁹

The Cole Memorandum

As with medical marijuana, recreational marijuana use is also illegal at the federal level. However, on August 29, 2013, a memorandum was released by U.S. DOJ DAG James Cole. This memorandum described a new set of priorities for federal prosecutors operating in states which had legalized the medical use of marijuana. The Cole memorandum provided direction to U.S. Attorneys stating, "in light of recent state ballot initiatives that legalize, under state law, the possession of small amounts of marijuana and provide for the regulation of marijuana production, processing, and sale."⁹⁰

The Cole memorandum was directed to federal prosecutors and federal law enforcement agencies and, while refocusing federal resources, identified eight priority areas that states needed to ensure would not be violated. These guidelines included:

- Preventing the distribution of marijuana to minors;
- Preventing revenue from the sale of marijuana going to criminal enterprises, gangs, and cartels;
- Preventing the diversion of marijuana from states where it is legal under state law in some form to other states;
- Preventing state-authorized marijuana activity from being used as a cover or pretext for the trafficking of other illegal drugs or other illegal activity;
- Preventing violence and the use of firearms in the cultivation and distribution of marijuana;
- Preventing drugged driving and the exacerbation of other adverse public health

- consequences associated with marijuana use;
- Preventing the growing of marijuana on public lands and the attendant public safety and environmental dangers posed by marijuana production on public lands;
- Preventing marijuana possession or use on federal property.⁹¹

Rescinding of the Cole Memorandum

On January 4, 2018, the Cole memorandum was rescinded by a memo signed by US. DOJ Attorney General Jeff Sessions. In a release the U.S. DOJ stated:

“The Department of Justice today issued a memo on federal marijuana enforcement policy announcing a return to the rule of law and the rescission of previous guidance documents. Since the passage of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) in 1970, Congress has generally prohibited the cultivation, distribution, and possession of marijuana.

In the Memorandum, Attorney General Jeff Sessions directs all U.S. Attorneys to enforce the laws enacted by Congress and to follow well-established principles when pursuing prosecutions related to marijuana activities. This return to the rule of law is also a return of trust and local control to federal prosecutors who know where and how to deploy Justice Department resources most effectively to reduce violent crime, stem the tide of the drug crisis, and dismantle criminal gangs.”⁹²

Federal H.R.5485: - Hemp Farming Act of 2018

This act legalized industrial hemp containing tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the psychoactive component of marijuana, concentration of no more than 0.3% by removing it from Schedule I of the CSA. States and Indian tribes may regulate the production of hemp by submitting a plan to the USDA. The bill also makes hemp producers eligible for the federal crop insurance program and certain USDA research grants. Its provisions were incorporated into the 2018 United States Farm Bill that became law on December 20, 2018.⁹³

Federal H.R. 8454-Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Research Expansion Act

Simplified and encouraged the application process for research under the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to develop marijuana-derived medicines. The bill also requires the Department of Health and Human Services to report on possible benefits and harms of marijuana use to Congress. This would occur without changing the Schedule I status or legalizing marijuana. This bill passed through The House of Representatives on July 26, 2022. And was signed into law by President Biden on December 2, 2022.⁹⁴

A Proposed Rule by the Drug Enforcement Administration on 8/29/2024

The Drug Enforcement Administration will hold a hearing on December 2, 2024. The hearing will address the rescheduling of marijuana from schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) to Schedule III of the CSA.⁹⁵

Availability

As of 2023, California is considered the single largest global producer of legal cannabis.⁹⁶ With sales in the multibillions of dollars, California continues to be the largest and most profitable cannabis market according to California’s Cannabis Industry Market update.⁹⁷ Marijuana, in all its forms, is the most widely available scheduled controlled substance in California, in the legal and illegal market retail quantities. As of 2020. California growers, including foreign nationals with grow sites in California, produced 15.5 million pounds of marijuana annually. The overwhelming majority of which is grown in Northern California. It is distributed by independent growers, legal and illegal dispensaries. In 2022, California produced 577 metric tons of legal marijuana.⁹⁸

The Department of Cannabis Control began issuing Type 5 Large licenses on January 1st, 2023. These licenses permit growers as much square footage under one license.

Active California Marijuana Licenses

Cultivation	4,570
Distribution	1,170
Microbusiness	370
Nursery	298
Processor	142
Retailer	1,200
Retailer (Non-Storefront)	383
Testing Laboratory	27
Event Organizer	43
Type N-Infusion	105
Type P-Packaging	26
Type S Shared Use	16
Manufacturer-Type 6	357
Manufacturer– Type 7	148

Source: <https://cannabis.ca.gov/resources/data-dashboard/license-report/>

Note: Updated 8/26/24

California Marijuana Taxation

When California legalized recreational marijuana, it granted cities the flexibility to regulate cannabis or prohibit it. Approximately 57% of California’s cities and counties ban retail cannabis businesses in 2024. This caused some marijuana farmers to locate to non-regulated areas. As of

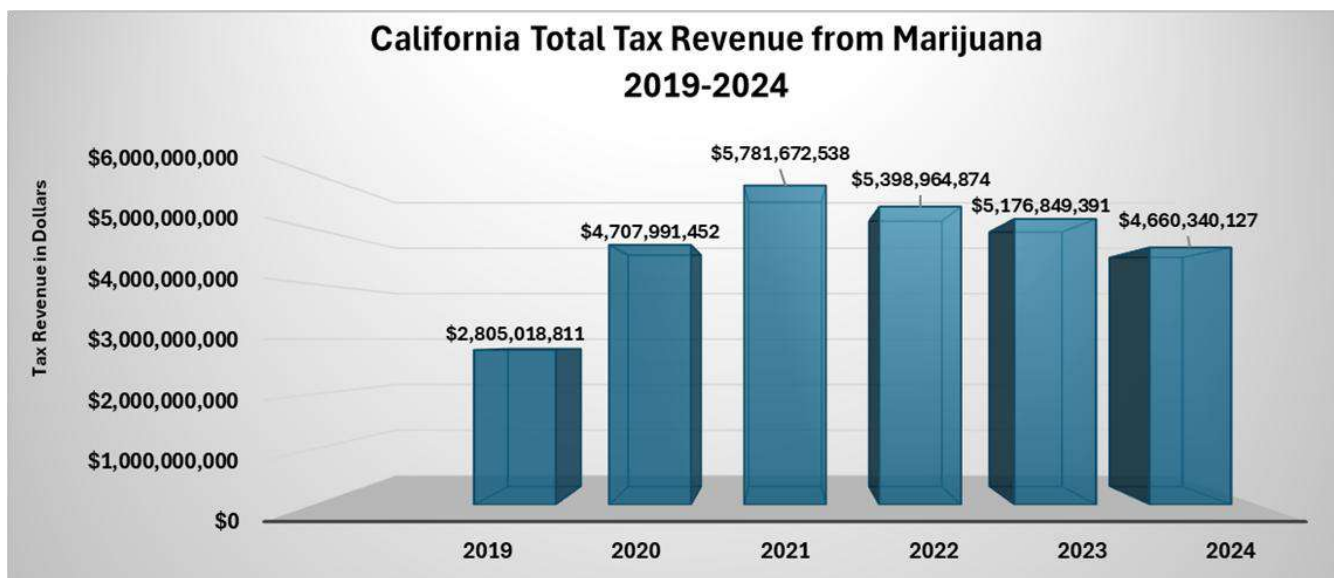
July 2024, 54% of cities and counties do not allow any retail cannabis business across the state and 46% of cities and counties allow at least one form of cannabis business.⁹⁹ Consequently, it can be difficult to find licensed marijuana sellers who do not complain about burdens imposed on them by the state, specifically taxes. California recently raised the cannabis excise and cultivation taxes, which many store owners and licensed growers protest as counter-productive if the state wants the industry to survive. The price of operating legally exceeds the cost of operating without a license. In 2023, with the changing of cannabis excise tax reporting from distributor to the retailer of 15%; some retailers may receive a credit for excise tax paid to a distributor before January 1, 2023. For current operating costs visit [Getting Started for Cannabis Businesses](#) . It has been stated that the illegal marijuana grows in northern California have gotten worse as illicit marijuana sales force licensed operations out of business. Now as of August 26, 2024, there are 8,855 active marijuana licenses in California.¹⁰⁰

California charges growers state taxes in the amount of \$10.08 per ounce of dried marijuana flowers, \$3.00 per ounce of dry marijuana leaves and \$1.41 per ounce of fresh marijuana plants as per the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration. The state also requires retailers to charge customers a 15% tax on any product sold. These taxes contribute to an increase in sales of illegal marijuana on the black market.

The California Cannabis Advisory Committee states in their annual report that California's marijuana industry was the world's largest legal market in 2021. The Newsom administration implemented numerous COVID-19 protections and budget investment (grant opportunities) to assist legal marijuana farmers who were unable to compete with the illicit marijuana market. Legal marijuana store fronts, like liquor stores, were considered essential and remained open during this time.

Marijuana Tax Revenue

The California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) reported revenue numbers for 2021 as \$679.5 million in excise tax, \$166.2 million in cultivation tax, and \$469.1 million in sales tax. Since 2018, total tax revenues from marijuana have increased by 230% in California. The California total tax revenue from marijuana went from \$564,188,154 in 2018 to \$1,283,273,365 in 2023 with an increase of 127%.¹⁰¹



Source: California Department of Tax and Fee Administration, Cannabis Tax Revenues, Grid View

Accessed : April 2025

Notes: Revenue represents amounts reported based on the reporting period of the return. Amounts are subject to change and updated every year. Taxable sales: Taxable sales include sales of cannabis, cannabis products, and other retail sales of tangible personal property reported on sales and use tax returns.

NOTE:

- MULTI-YEAR COMPARISONS ARE GENERALLY BETTER INDICATORS OF TRENDS. ONE-YEAR FLUCTUATIONS DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT A NEW TREND.
- THIS REPORT WILL CITE DATASETS WITH TERMS SUCH AS “MARIJUANA-RELATED” . THAT DOES NOT NECESSARILY PROVE THAT MARIJUANA WAS THE CAUSE OF THE INCIDENT.

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Appendix B



SAN DIEGO COUNTY
Cannabis
Public Health
Initiative

San Diego County Cannabis Public Health Initiative (CPHI) Data Snapshot

Number of Emergency Department (ED)
Discharges for Cannabis-Related Diagnoses
in San Diego County, 2019-2021



● Primary Diagnosis Only
● Any Mention

Source: CPHI, HCAI, ED Data, and Patient Discharge Data, 2019-2021

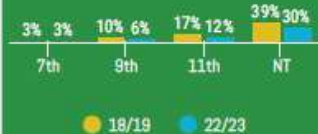
In 2021, the number of ED visits related to any mention of cannabis surpassed 36 per day, marking a steady increase over the past four years.

Rate per 100,000 residents of ED
Discharges for Cannabis-Related Diagnoses
in San Diego County, 2019-2021



● Primary Diagnosis Only
● Any Mention

Lifetime Vaping of Cannabis



Reported lifetime use of cannabis vaping has decreased or remained stable across all grade levels (7th, 9th, 11th, Non-Traditional).

Current Vaping of Cannabis - 22/23*



Source: CHKS, 2018-2022

*Survey question was added during the 2022/2023 administration

Past 30-Day Use

Reported use of cannabis in the past 30 days has decreased among all grade levels (7th, 9th, 11th, and Non-Traditional).



Source: CHKS, 2015-2022

Number of California Poison Control Cases Related
to Cannabis for San Diego County, 2016-2022

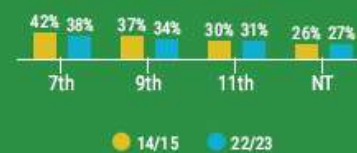


There has been a 145% increase in cannabis exposure cases handled by the California Poison Control Center since the implementation of Prop 64 in 2016.

Source: California Poison Control System

Perception of Harm

The occurrence of students reporting 'great' harm from occasional marijuana use has decreased or remained stable across all grade levels (7th, 9th, 11th, Non-Traditional).



Source: CHKS, 2015-2022

For more details, resources, and data, please visit the CPHI website at <https://www.ccrconsulting.org/initiatives/cannabis-public-health>.

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Presentation, Management, and Child Protective Service Reporting of Children Who Test Positive for Cannabis in an Emergency Room Setting

Alexandra Dubinin, MD,* Mario Bialostozky, MD,*†
Andrew Richardson, MS,† and Natalie Laub, MD, MSHP*†

Objectives: Rates of cannabis ingestion among young children are increasing. Small studies have evaluated symptomatology of these children. The literature lacks research regarding factors influencing medical management. Our goal was to 1) understand circumstances leading to exposure over time and 2) gain insight into factors that may influence emergency room management and Child Protective Services reporting over time.

Methods: Retrospective cross-sectional study on children younger than 10 years with cannabis-positive urine drug screens in the emergency room setting. Single-factor analysis of variance and Fisher exact tests were used to assess for trends. Two-tailed *t* tests and Fisher exact tests were used to compare management of children presenting to the emergency room with chief complaint (CC) "ingestion" versus those without.

Results: Of the 179 children, the mean age was 3.7 years and 48% were boys. We observed a significant increase over time in cannabis-positive children. The most common location of exposure was the primary residence (54%), with parents as the most frequent users (46%). In the emergency department, the most common CC was ingestion followed by altered mental status and fatigue. Children with an "ingestion" CC were managed with less testing than those with other CCs. They received fewer needle sticks (43% vs 91%), less imaging (5% vs 56% computed tomography heads), and fewer procedures (0% vs 8% lumbar punctures). Children with "ingestion" CC were less likely to be reported to Child Protective Services.

Conclusions: Pediatric cannabis exposures are increasing and have a wide array of clinical presentations that complicate emergency room management. Parental report of cannabis ingestion seems to impact and reduce potentially unnecessary testing.

Key Words: cannabis ingestion, cannabis poisoning, cannabis toxicity

(*Pediatr Emer Care* 2024;40: 443–448)

Rates of cannabis consumption in the United States are increasing and, with it, a growing concern related to the public health implications of this trend.^{1–3} Long-term health and safety consequences of this widespread use are largely unknown.^{4–8} Although there is a growing body of literature pertaining to adult and adolescent cannabis use, there is less research addressing the effect on young children.

A recent systematic review of cannabis ingestions in children found that most research in the preadolescent age range consists of case series and case reports.⁹ Although patient-level characteristics

of children who ingest cannabis are limited, national data do suggest increased rates of young children ingesting cannabis. Bennet et al¹⁰ used a large administrative database to look at trends in children younger than 6 years and found a 13.3-fold increase in cannabis exposures from 2004 to 2018. Cannabis-related calls to poison control centers for children younger than 9 years have also increased since 2017.¹¹ Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a rapid and sustained increase in cannabis ingestions in young children.¹² Studies have implicated commercially produced edible cannabis products as a key factor in the increasing frequency and severity of cases.^{13,14} The few case series pertaining to management and outcomes of children who present with cannabis toxicity to an emergency room suggest children may receive unnecessary testing.^{15,16}

The literature widely lacks insight into the circumstances surrounding pediatric cannabis exposures and the management on medical contact. A wide range of presentations have been described from asymptomatic to severe lethargy, ataxia, and seizures; however, there are no studies evaluating what, if any, factors influence emergency room management. With regards to Child Protective Services (CPS) involvement, some guidelines recommend engaging child abuse pediatrics or social work teams to determine whether referral to CPS is warranted, though policies vary among states and institutions. Studies on infants diagnosed with prenatal substance exposure have shown wide variety in CPS reporting practices.¹⁷ Wood et al¹⁸ studied variables leading to CPS reports in childhood poisonings; however, in that study, cannabis is not specifically mentioned. To our knowledge, there are no studies evaluating rates of CPS reporting when young children are found to be positive for cannabis.

We aim to fill this gap in the literature by studying a large cohort of young children who ingest cannabis and present to an emergency room for medical care. Our objective is to understand 1) cannabis ingestion trends and circumstances that led to their presentation over time and 2) the factors that may influence emergency room management and reporting to CPS.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Population and Setting

Data for this retrospective cross-sectional study were obtained from a large tertiary children's hospital network. All children aged younger than 10 years who tested positive for cannabis on urine drug testing between January 2014 and June 2022 were initially included in this study. We included children aged younger than 10 because those children are less likely to consume cannabis through intentional exploration.^{10,12,19,20} Testing at our institution begins with a urine screening immunoassay for Delta-9-THC-9 carboxylic acid. If positive, the sample is sent out for mass spectroscopy/gas chromatography confirmation. Children were excluded if born positive, prescribed cannabis, or if confirmatory testing was not completed or negative. Of the encounters meeting

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Disclosure: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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inclusion criteria, a detailed chart review was completed that extracted data regarding demographics (age, sex, date of admission, route of transportation, reported race, and ethnicity), presentation (chief complaint/concern [CC], reported symptoms, physical examination findings, and vital signs), emergency room management (laboratory work, EKGs, imaging, medications, consults called, and medical interventions), and outcomes (overall length of stay, level of care, and CPS reporting). Further description was obtained, when possible, from detailed Child Abuse Reports written by social workers regarding route of cannabis consumption, place of intoxication, type of cannabis product (edible, vape, roach), and reported cannabis user. For children transferred from other hospital systems, records from the original presenting emergency department (ED) were consulted. At the author's institution, cannabis has been recreationally legal since 2016. Hospital policy is that all cannabis-positive children aged younger than 10 be reviewed by the hospital's child abuse team.

This study was reviewed and determined exempt by the University of California San Diego Institutional Review Board. The Strengthening the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology Statement on cross-sectional studies was followed for this study.

Measures and Outcomes

The primary outcome of this study was to describe trends in presentation and caregiver-reported exposure circumstances over time. Specifically, we wanted to understand if the route of ingestion was changing (inhalation vs edible) and if the reported location of ingestion was different before and after legalization. To trend the rate of encounters over time, the outcome encounter rate was defined as the number of children testing positive per 100,000 encounters over a 6-month period. Geographically, there are 3 distinct periods that occurred during the study period. To account for this, exposure incidents were sorted into 1 of the 3 periods: before recreational legalization in California (2014–2016), postrecreational legalization in California (2017–2019), and the COVID-19 pandemic (April 2020–June 2022). This last period also represents time after enactment of local laws limiting brightly colored packaging.

A secondary outcome was to characterize ED management and CPS reporting. It was hypothesized that caregiver-reported suspicion of a drug exposure at presentation would influence care and outcomes. To investigate this, patients were divided into 2 categories: those with a CC that included a cannabis ingestion occurred and those with other CCs with no indication that the child ingested cannabis. Two cases were excluded from this analysis due to lack of contact with the ED because patients were seen in the outpatient clinic for drug screening. Data collected from both groups included laboratory studies, imaging, medical intervention, medical disposition, and CPS reporting.

Statistical Analysis

For the primary outcome, descriptive statistics were used to characterize this population time. Regression modeling of exposures per 100,000 admissions every 6 months was used to determine whether there was a positive trend over time. To assess for statistically significant trends over 3 culturally distinct periods, this study used a single-factor analysis of variance for quantitative data (age, length of stay, etc) and Fisher exact tests for qualitative data (demographics, formulation, location of ingestion, marijuana consumer). In addition, linear regression modeling was used for select measures to assess for directionality of changes over time. Analysis was completed using Stata software version 17.0 (StataCorp. 2023, Stata Statistical Software: Release 18; StataCorp LLC, College Station, TX).

For the secondary outcome, 2-tailed *t* tests and Fisher exact tests were used to compare management between the 2 groups

and assess for factors affecting CPS reporting. Stata software version 17.0 (StataCorp. 2023, Stata Statistical Software: Release 18; StataCorp LLC, College Station, TX) was used for statistical analysis. All tests of significance were 2-sided with $P < 0.05$ considered to be statistically significant.

RESULTS

Primary Outcome

In the timeline of the study, 179 children tested positive for cannabis exposure (mean age, 3.7 [SD 2.4] years, 86 [48%] boys). Of these, 21 encounters occurred during prerecreational legalization period, 49 during the postrecreational legalization period, and 109 in the COVID-19/post-COVID-19 era (Table 1). There was no statistically significant change in age or demographics of patients with positive cannabis urine toxicology over time.

There was a statistically significant increase over time in cannabis-positive urine screens relative to hospital census ($P < 0.001$, t 4.42, R^2 0.566) with a peak in July to December 2020 (Fig. 1). This 6-month period overlaps with the height of California's COVID caseload and lockdown measures.

The most reported CC was ingestion (88 [49%] cases). The frequency of this CC remained relatively constant despite the passage of time (R^2 0.333, $P = 0.104$). Other frequently documented CCs included altered mental status (59 [33%] cases), fatigue (20 [11%] cases), and possible seizure (11 [6%] cases). Nearly 70% of the population had a parental-reported symptom attributed to the CC, meaning even if the CC was ingestion, the parents frequently reported other symptoms at time of triage. In review of ED documentation, only 13 (7%) children, were described as completely asymptomatic by a physician. Overall, there was no statistical significance between CC and time period (Table 1).

There was a statistically significant change in cannabis formulation exposure over time. Overall, edibles were the most frequently reported (98 [55%] cases). Since recreation legalization in the end of 2016, edible ingestions contributed to a steadily increasing fraction of exposures (R^2 0.929, $P = 0.002$). Of the edibles, 72 (73%) cases were a fruity candy, 12 (12%) cases were chocolate, 9 (9%) cases were brownies, and 3 (3%) cases were cookies. The patient's primary residence was most frequently reported as the location of ingestion (97 cases, 54%) which remained stable over time. With regards to marijuana consumers among the child's contacts, the most frequently reported user were the parents (46%). There was no statistically significant change in reported users over time (Table 1).

Secondary Outcome

In this 177-patient cohort, 88 children had ingestion included in the CC, whereas the remaining 89 had another symptom-related CC not implying ingestion. When looking at blood tests, 81 (91%) children in the noningestion CC group received needle sticks compared with only 38 (43%) in the ingestion CC group (Table 2). In addition, medications and intravenous fluids were less likely to be administered to patients in the ingestion group. Regarding procedures and imaging, children with an ingestion CC were less likely to undergo any imaging or procedures ($P < 0.01$) (Table 2). Patients with ingestion CCs had a shorter average length of stay (13.3 vs 18.3 hours; $P = 0.004$), were more likely to be discharged from the ED (57% vs 38%; $P = 0.016$), and less likely to be sent to the pediatric intensive care unit (2% vs 17%, $P = 0.001$). There was no difference with respect to admission to the floor between the 2 groups. The mean Emergency Severity Index for both groups was 3.

Finally, regarding CPS reporting, 87% of total patients were reported to CPS. Patients within the ingestion group were less

TABLE 1. Comparison of Demographic Characteristics Across 3 Periods

Characteristics	Total	Prerecreational Legalization 2014–2016	Postrecreational Legalization 2017–2019	COVID and Post-COVID Era 2020–Jun 2022	P
Total no. admissions	179	21	49	109	0.000
Male sex, n (%)	86 (48)	9 (43)	28 (57)	49 (45)	0.331
Mean age, y (SD) [range]	3.7 (2.4) [0.1–9.9]	3.4 (2.4) [0.9–9.8]	3.1 (2.0) [0.6–9.5]	3.9 (2.5) [0.1–9.9]	0.141
Length of stay, n (SD) [range]		19.8 (16.7)	16.8 (10.2) [1.9–39.8]	14.6 (11.3) [2.1–54.0]	0.134
Demographics					
Hispanic/Latino/Latinx, n (%)	89 (50)	14 (67)	23 (47)	52 (48)	0.142
Non-Hispanic White, n (%)	53 (30)	6 (29)	14 (29)	33 (30)	
African American, n (%)	29 (16)	1 (5)	12 (24)	16 (15)	
Asian/Pacific Islander, n (%)	8 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)	8 (7)	
Chief concerns*					
Ingestion/drug overdose, n (%)	88 (49)	9 (43)	18 (37)	61 (56)	NA
Altered mental status, n (%)	59 (33)	10 (48)	16 (33)	33 (30)	
Fatigue, n (%)	20 (11)	1 (5)	8 (16)	11 (10)	
Possible seizure, n (%)	11 (6)	2 (10)	3 (6)	6 (6)	
Social concerns, n (%)	7 (4)	0 (0)	1 (2)	6 (6)	
Head injury, n (%)	4 (2)	0 (0)	3 (6)	1 (1)	
Nausea/vomiting, n (%)	8 (4)	2 (10)	1 (2)	5 (5)	
Dizzy, n (%)	4 (2)	0 (0)	2 (4)	2 (2)	
Irritable, n (%)	4 (2)	0 (0)	1 (2)	3 (3)	
Abnormal gait, n (%)	4 (2)	1 (5)	0 (0)	3 (3)	
Vision problems, n (%)	3 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (3)	
Marijuana formulation					
Edibles, n (%)	98 (55)	10 (48)	18 (37)	70 (64)	0.002
Not specified, n (%)	66 (37)	10 (48)	21 (43)	35 (32)	
Vape/smoking, n (%)	7	0 (0)	4 (8)	3 (3)	
Other (roach, pill, resin), n (%)	8	1 (5)	6 (12)	1 (1)	
Reported ingestion location					
Home, n (%)	97 (54)	8 (38)	27 (55)	62 (57)	0.657
Not specified, n (%)	34 (19)	7 (33)	9 (18)	18 (17)	
Other relative's home, n (%)	20 (11)	2 (10)	4 (8)	14 (13)	
Park, n (%)	11 (6)	2 (10)	3 (6)	6 (6)	
Other (car, church, etc)	17 (9)	2 (10)	6 (12)	9 (8)	
Reported marijuana user					
Parents, n (%)	82 (46)	8 (38)	26 (53)	48 (44)	0.175
Other relatives, n (%)	30 (17)	5 (24)	3 (6)	22 (20)	
Nonrelated caregiver/friend, n (%)	10 (6)	2 (10)	4 (8)	4 (4)	
Unknown/multiple users, n (%)	57 (32)	6 (29)	16 (33)	35 (32)	
Level of care					
Sent home from ED, n (%)	87 (48)	8 (38)	17 (35)	62 (57)	0.025
Admitted to the floor, n (%)	75 (42)	9 (43)	25 (51)	41 (38)	
Admitted to the PICU, n (%)	17 (10)	4 (19)	7 (14)	6 (6)	

*Sum of column greater than total N because 1 patient could have multiple CCs.

PICU indicates pediatric intensive care unit.

likely to have a CPS report filed (78% vs 93%, $P = 0.005$). Although there was no significant association with regards to sex or race/ethnicity and reporting status ($P = 0.092$), younger children with exposures were more likely to be reported (Table 3).

DISCUSSION

In our study of 179 children younger than 10 years at a large freestanding children's hospital, who tested positive for cannabis, we demonstrated that there is statically significant variation in

emergency room management and reporting to CPS when comparing a group triaged with cannabis ingestion in the CC versus other CCs and no historical clue that a cannabis ingestion occurred. Patients with CCs including ingestion were less likely to receive needle sticks for laboratory work, invasive procedures, imaging, and medications. They were also less frequently reported to CPS. This study demonstrated a consistent pattern of circumstances leading up to cannabis exposure, with parental or relative cannabis use in the child's home being the most frequently reported.

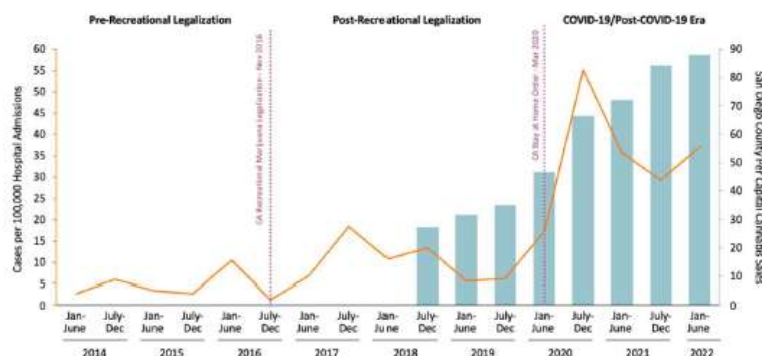


FIGURE 1. Emergency department visits due to cannabis exposure over time relative to hospital census and per capita cannabis sales.

Mirroring national data, ingestion rates in our study increased over time, with a growing percentage related to edible consumption. Also consistent with previous case reports or series, our study

demonstrates a wide range of clinical presentations among children presenting with cannabis exposure. Although the most common symptoms remain altered mental status and fatigue/lethargy,

TABLE 2. Comparison of Cannabis + Urine Toxicology Patients With Initial Chief Complaint of Ingestion Versus Other Symptom-Related Chief Complaints

ED Workup	Ingestion CC n = 88	Other CC n = 89	P
Length of stay, h (SD) [range]	13.3	18.3	0.004
Laboratory tests			
Any blood test, n (%)	38 (43)	81 (91)	<0.001
CBC, n (%)	25 (28)	77 (87)	<0.001
CMP, n (%)	34 (39)	78 (88)	<0.001
Inflammatory marker: ESR/CRP, n (%)	2 (2)	28 (31)	<0.001
UA/UCx, n (%)	7 (8)	43 (48)	<0.001
VBG, n (%)	14 (16)	48 (54)	<0.001
POCT glucose, n (%)	18 (20)	37 (42)	0.003
Coagulation panel, n (%)	4 (5)	11 (12)	0.103
Blood cultures, n (%)	0 (0)	14 (16)	<0.001
Tox screen: APAP/salicylate/EtOH, n (%)	33 (38)	44 (49)	0.130
Medications			
IV fluids, n (%)	29 (33)	49 (55)	0.004
Antiepileptic drugs, n (%)	0 (0)	8 (9)	0.007
Antibiotics, n (%)	0 (0)	7 (8)	0.014
Narcan/flumazenil/activated charcoal, n (%)	3 (3)	4 (4)	0.771
Consults			
Child protection team consult, n (%)	44 (50)	38 (43)	0.367
CPS report filed, n (%)	69 (78)	83 (93)	0.005
Toxicology/poison control consulted, n (%)	62 (70)	33 (37)	0.000
Imaging/procedures			
EKG, n (%)	22 (25)	50 (56)	0.000
Lumbar puncture, n (%)	0 (0)	7 (8)	0.014
CT head, n (%)	4 (5)	50 (56)	0.000
Abdominal imaging: CTAP or KUB, n (%)	0 (0)	14 (16)	0.000
Chest x-ray, n (%)	3 (3)	16 (18)	0.003
Level of care			
Discharged from the ED, n (%)	50 (57)	34 (38)	0.016
Admitted to the floor, n (%)	36 (41)	40 (45)	0.650
Admitted to the PICU, n (%)	2 (2)	15 (17)	0.001

APAP indicates aspirin; CBC, complete blood count; CMP, complete metabolic panel; CPR, C-reactive protein; CT, computed tomography; CTAP, cat scan abdomen and pelvis; EKG, electrocardiogram; ESR, erythrocyte sedimentation rate; EtOH, alcohol; KUB, kidney, ureter and bladder; POCT, point of care testing; Tox screen, toxicology screen; UA, urinalysis; UCx, urine culture; VBG, venous blood gas.

TABLE 3. Comparison of CPS Reported and Not Reported Children With Cannabis + Urine Toxicology

	No CPS Report	CPS Report Filed	P
Total cases, n (%)	25 (14)	154 (86)	
Male sex, n (%)	14 (56)	72 (47)	0.518
Mean age, y (SD) [range]	4.8 (7.9) [0.7–9.8]	3.5 (5.1) [0.1–9.9]	0.038
Length of stay, n (SD) [range]	11.5 (151.9) [2.1–46.4]	16.5 (135.2) [1.9–65.8]	0.066
Demographics			
Hispanic/Latino/Latinx, n (%)	8 (10)	89 (90)	0.143
Non-Hispanic White, n (%)	9 (17)	44 (83)	
African American, n (%)	4 (14)	25 (86)	
Asian/Pacific Islander, n (%)	3 (38)	5 (63)	
Level of care			
Sent home from ED, n (%)	18 (72)	68 (44)	0.041
Admitted to the floor, n (%)	6 (24)	70 (45)	
Admitted to the PICU, n (%)	1 (4)	16 (10)	

the clinical spectrum ranges from asymptomatic to more severe illness. It is likely this wide range of symptoms contributes to the variation in clinical management and testing. Our study highlights the importance of parental reports of suspected cannabis ingestions or cannabis products in the home. When a caregiver is unaware or not forthcoming about the possibility of a cannabis ingestion, clinicians may be more likely to obtain laboratory work, imaging, and do invasive procedures such as lumbar punctures. A potential explanation for this discrepancy in management is availability bias, which is a tendency to estimate the likelihood of a diagnosis based on common or previous experiences.^{21,22} Although pediatric cannabis ingestions are increasing, symptoms of acute cannabis toxicity may not be widely recognized in young children. Without a historical clue to explain the symptoms, it seems clinicians may err on the side of caution regarding medical decision-making and testing.

With regards to CPS reporting, most children in this hospital were reported. Similar to the Wood et al¹⁸ previous study, our study found that younger children and those requiring higher levels of care were more likely to have a report filed. Child Protective Services reports were filed less frequently if the medical team was alerted to cannabis ingestion by the caregiver at the initial presentation. Laws on reporting child maltreatment vary by state and are not always specific with regard to cannabis ingestion in children. Although we did not identify any differences in reporting based on race/ethnicity/insurance, this could be influenced by hospital policies and practices put in place by the child abuse team to reduce implicit bias. Current literature still identifies key issues with overreporting of non-White populations throughout the country.^{23–26} The authors suggest that institutions adopt a standard approach, in line with state laws, to report cases of cannabis ingestion. This helps avoid implicit bias and ensures all patients and families are treated equally regardless of race/ethnicity and perceived social economic status.

Regarding limitations of this study, this is a single-center study that is subject to practice and geographic variation and local laws. This center has a dedicated pediatric ED with access to pediatric-specialized staff including social workers and a child abuse division. This study was not designed to comment on whether the degree of care in the ED was appropriate because granular measures of illness severity were not obtained. A confounding variable is that the noningestion CC group was sicker overall. Although this may be true, given that 70% of the triaged CC included a symptom, and the mean Emergency Severity Index

was the same for both groups, the authors believe that alerting the ED team to a cannabis ingestion did alter medical management, leading to less invasive testing.

Of note, none of the children died nor were given a life-threatening diagnosis (such as sepsis or meningitis) and the laboratory/imaging studies were overwhelmingly negative in both groups with relatively little effect on management. All the children in this study made a full recovery.

This study demonstrated that suspicion of ingestion at presentation may lead to reduction in testing and escalation of care. This suggests that a high index of suspicion among clinicians and early urine toxicology testing could reduce potentially unnecessary testing. Among previously healthy children with sudden onset of altered mental status, lethargy, or unexplained drowsiness, medical providers should consider asking specific questions regarding cannabis and encourage caregivers to be forthcoming about potential exposures.

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