

## The Province Announces Plans for Cannabis Retail Sale & Use

The Province of BC announced plans for the regulation of the sale and use of non-medical cannabis today.

As expected retail cannabis sales will occur along the same lines as liquor sales, with the Province's Liquor Distribution Branch serving as the sole source of wholesale distribution. Just as with liquor, there will be government-operated as well as private retail stores. Co-selling with other products (i.e. liquor, tobacco, food) will not be permitted. Sale by 'craft' or micro producers will be prohibited, at least for now.

Importantly for local governments, the Provincial licensing regime will begin taking applications this spring, ahead of the scheduled legalization in July, and the first licensed retailers are expected to open their doors in late summer. The licensing regime will not usurp the ability of local governments to control cannabis retail in their communities. For example, the Province will defer to local governments that wish to ban retail sales entirely (as the City of Richmond has expressed). In addition, local governments will retain the ability to restrict the locations where retailers may operate. There is also some indication that to obtain a licence, the applicant will require the support of the local government.

Also of note to local governments, cannabis use will be permitted in those areas where tobacco and vaping are permitted, although it will be banned in public places frequented by children, including parks, community beaches and playgrounds. Local governments will have the right to further restrict the use of cannabis in public. Personal cultivation will be permitted for up to four plants per household, with the caveat that plants must not be visible from public spaces. Landlords will be able to restrict or prohibit production on their property.

The Province stressed that many important policy decisions remain to be made, in particular in the areas of supply chain tracking, testing, and packaging.

Here is a summary of the Province's plans announced today:

### Retail framework

- Private run and government-operated retail stores, and government online sales
- Liquor Control and Licensing Branch will be responsible for licensing stores and monitoring the retail sector
- Operating rules to be similar to liquor sales

- Wholesale distribution by the Liquor Distribution Branch
- Cannabis and accessories must be sold in stand-alone stores. No co-selling of cannabis with either liquor or tobacco (or food, gas, lottery, clothing) \*except in rural communities, with details to be determined (will likely be similar to liquor stores, where co-selling exists)
- Early registration process for licenses will be open this spring (\*see additional detail below)
- Consumption lounges will not be permitted, at least initially
- No sampling

#### Personal public possession

- 19 years minimum age for purchase and possession
- Up to 30 grams of non-medical cannabis permitted for possession in a public space
- Cannabis transported in a vehicle will need to be in a sealed package or inaccessible to vehicle occupants

#### Public Use

- Use permitted in public spaces where tobacco and vaping are permitted
- Use banned in areas frequented by children (parks, community beaches, playgrounds)
- Use banned in vehicles, for all occupants
- Local Governments will be able to set additional restrictions, as they do now for tobacco use.
- Landlords and strata councils will be able to restrict or prohibit non-medical cannabis smoking and vaping at tenanted or strata properties

#### Personal cultivation

- Up to four plants per household, unless home is used as a daycare cultivation will be prohibited
- Must not be visible from public spaces
- Landlords and strata councils will be able to restrict or prohibit home cultivation

#### Drug-impaired driving

- Drug Impaired driving continues to be illegal in B.C.
- New 90-day administrative driving prohibition to be created
- Zero-tolerance for drivers in the Graduated Licensing Program

## Retail licensing

- Existing dispensaries will not be given preferential treatment
- Local government support an element of the application process
- Local government to consider public input in the location of the proposed retail store
- Province will not cap the number of licences, however, local governments to decide how many retailers may operate within their boundaries
- Dried cannabis, oils, and seed permitted – no edibles, per federal requirements
- Stores in rural communities to follow somewhat different model (i.e. regarding co-selling with other products)

See the following links for more information:

Watch [Mike Farnworth's announcement here](#).

Provincial government links:

- [Cannabis Retail, Driving Laws Amongst New Firm-On-Safety Policy Decisions](#)
- [B.C. Cannabis Private Retail Licensing Guide - Applications and Operations](#)

**Please contact us should you wish to discuss the implications of this decision in more detail.**