

Medical Marijuana

Mike Palladini, RPh MBA



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Is marijuana legal in Pennsylvania?

No. Marijuana is still illegal in Pennsylvania.

“Marijuana is a Schedule I Controlled Substance in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. As Pennsylvania’s law currently stands, a person can be charged by any law enforcement agency in Pennsylvania for illegal possession of marijuana.”



Is marijuana legal in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh?

No. Marijuana is decriminalized in Philadelphia and Allegheny counties, which reduces the penalties for marijuana-related offenses to that of a civil violation.

Police won't arrest you for possessing, buying, or consuming small amounts of marijuana (up to 30 grams)

You still can't sell marijuana and you can't possess more than 30 grams in those counties — then you can be arrested. If you're caught with a small amount of weed, you receive a \$25 fine.

If you're caught smoking weed, it's \$100.

Civil violations do not show up on your criminal or driving record.

Is medical marijuana legal in Pennsylvania?

If you have a medical marijuana card, then you have access to legal weed in the Commonwealth. Additionally, medical marijuana patients have to consume their own marijuana.

Buying or consuming weed bought elsewhere, like legally in New Jersey or on the traditional, underground market — now referred to as the “legacy market” — is still illegal

Can I get arrested for possession of marijuana in Pennsylvania?

Yes. Any amount of marijuana in your possession, whether it's one gram or one pound, is illegal.

Thirty grams or less is a misdemeanor crime that comes with a \$500 fine and up to 30 days in jail. More than 30 grams is still a misdemeanor, but the fine is \$5,000 and up to one year in jail.

If arrested and found guilty of possession a second or subsequent time, you can be fined \$25,000 and be incarcerated for up to three years.

Can I get arrested for selling marijuana in Pennsylvania?

Yes. It's a felony to sell any amount of marijuana in Pennsylvania. If you're caught selling marijuana you can be fined \$15,000 and be incarcerated for two and a half to five years for the first offense

If one sells you one pre-roll joint for \$5, one commits a felony distribution of marijuana. If one sells 500 pre-roll joints for \$2,500 dollars, it's still the same offense. (Sentencing guidelines increase depending on weight.)

Can I get arrested for smoking marijuana in Pennsylvania?

Yes. If you are caught consuming marijuana by the police, then they will arrest you. The penalties are the same as for possession depending on how much marijuana you have.

Smoking marijuana, even if one is a registered medical cannabis patient, is illegal in Pennsylvania and can result in a misdemeanor 'small amount' charge or simple possession depending on the total amount possessed.

However, it is legal to smoke marijuana with less than .03% total THC — the major cannabinoid in marijuana that produces psychoactive effects. Cannabis products like hemp, Delta 8, or CBD, fall under the legal federal limit for THC in a cannabis product.

Can I get arrested for buying marijuana in Pennsylvania?

Yes. If prosecutors or law enforcement don't believe you'll be selling the marijuana after being caught buying it, then you will face the same penalties as you would for possession depending on how much you have.

Can I get arrested for growing marijuana in Pennsylvania?

Yes. It's a felony to grow any amount of marijuana plants, even if it's not meant to be sold. If you're caught growing marijuana, you can be fined \$15,000 and incarcerated for two and a half to five years.

Penalties increase for second and subsequent convictions.

Can I get arrested for driving while high in Pennsylvania?

Yes. If you're caught driving with any amount of controlled substances, like marijuana, in your system, then you can be charged with a DUI — even if you haven't consumed marijuana that day.

A first-time DUI is a misdemeanor that carries a \$200 fine and you can be incarcerated for up to 6 months.



Medical marijuana certifications on the rise in Pa.

The number of Pennsylvania medical marijuana certifications created by doctors has increased every year since the program launched in 2017.



Certifications for 2017 began in November. Data are not included for 2022 because the Department of Health data did not reflect the entire year. These totals include certifications labeled active or expired in health department data.

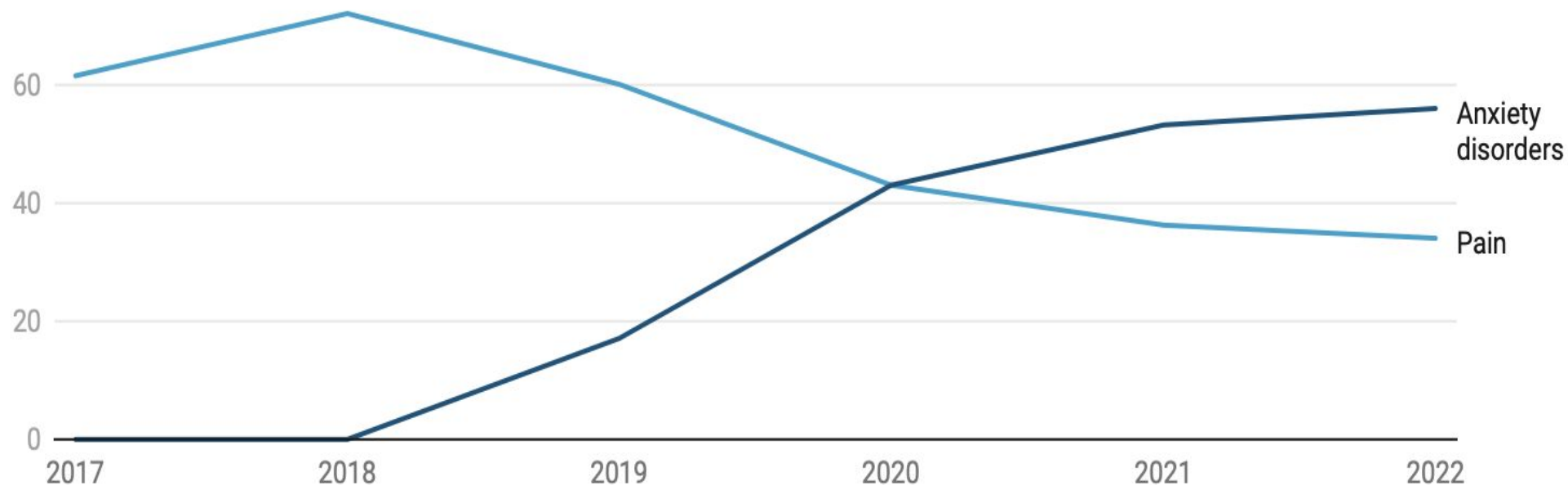
As of May 15, 2022, 1,812 physicians have been approved to certify patients

Medical conditions that apply to receive a card

- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis
- **Anxiety disorders**
- Autism
- Cancer, including remission therapy
- Crohn's disease
- Damage to the nervous tissue of the central nervous system (brain-spinal cord) with objective neurological indication of intractable spasticity, and other associated neuropathies
- Dyskinetic and spastic movement disorders
- Epilepsy
- Glaucoma
- Huntington's disease
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Intractable seizures
- Multiple sclerosis
- Neurodegenerative diseases
- Neuropathies
- **Opioid use disorder** for which conventional therapeutic interventions are contraindicated or ineffective, or for which adjunctive therapy is indicated in combination with primary therapeutic interventions
- Parkinson's disease
- Positive status human immunodeficiency virus or acquired immune deficiency syndrome
- **Post-traumatic stress disorder**
- **Severe chronic or intractable pain** of neuropathic origin or severe chronic or intractable pain
- Sickle cell anemia
- Terminal illness
- Tourette syndrome

Anxiety overtakes pain as the leading qualifying condition for medical marijuana in Pa.

In the program's early years, pain was the most common reason people got a medical marijuana card. That changed after anxiety disorders were added as a qualifying condition in 2019. As of August 2022, anxiety disorders made up 56% of certifications created that year that listed a single condition.



Pain is a combination of three qualifying conditions the health department has said all represent pain-related conditions: severe chronic pain, cancer, and neuropathies. These totals include certifications labeled active or expired in health department data.

Process for Acquiring a Medical Marijuana Card

Before obtaining medical marijuana products at a dispensary, patients must complete the following steps:

1. Register online with the Department (18 or older)
2. Be certified by an approved practitioner as having at least one of the 23 serious medical conditions
3. Purchase a medical marijuana identification (ID) card

(Minors will have a designated caregiver who may be a parent, legal guardian, or a designee approved by the Department, who will obtain medical marijuana products for them.)

Certified Caregiver

- A caregiver must be at least 21 years old, register with the Department, and complete a federal background check (FBI fingerprints).
- A certified patient can designate up to two caregivers and an approved caregiver may be designated by an unlimited number of certified patients.

Advertising

Doctors are not allowed to advertise medical marijuana services

Many rogue organizations have recently popped up, charging for the service to connect patients to certifying physicians.

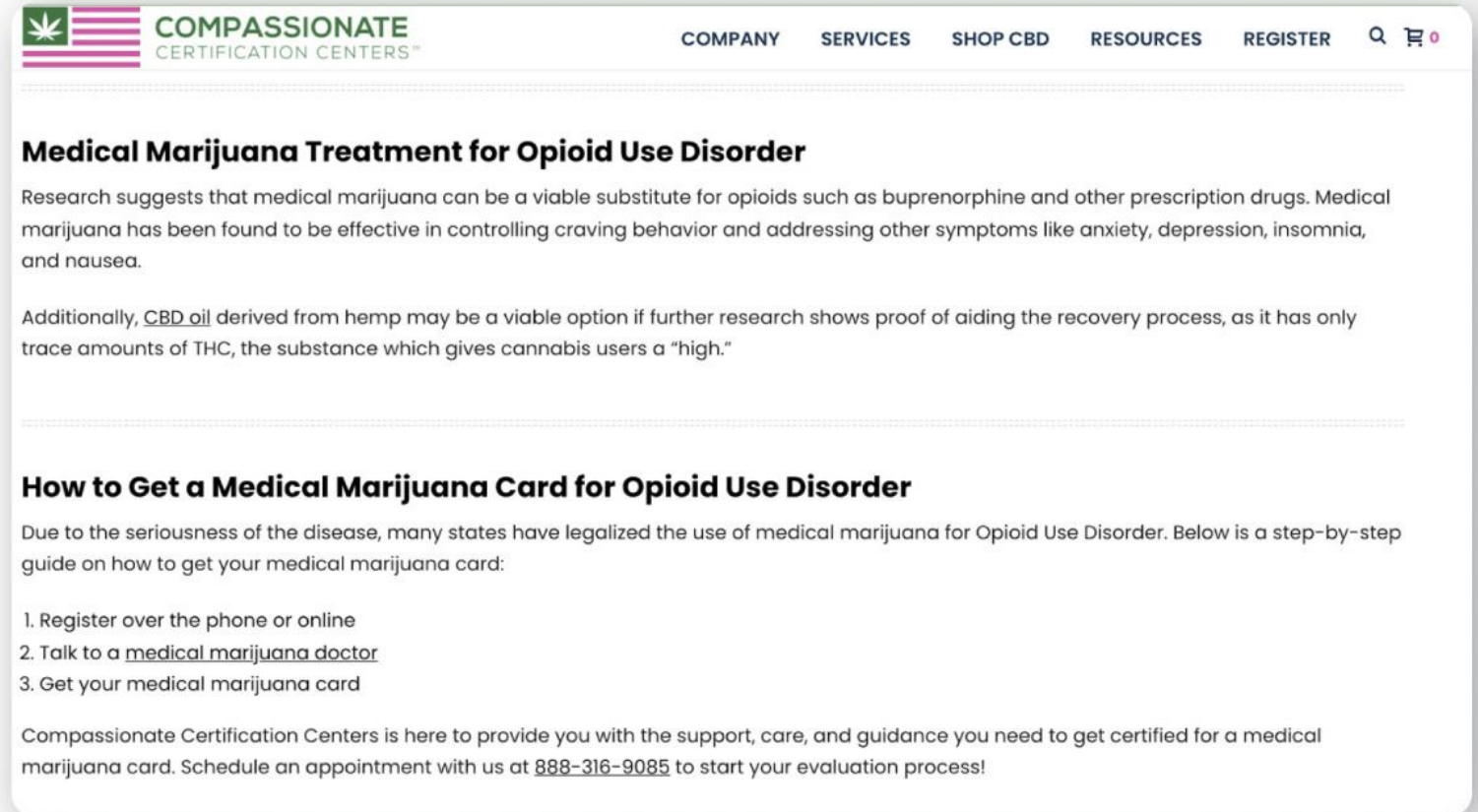
There are two sides to this spectrum:

- Some clinical-driven organizations are carving outpatient treatment and counseling plans.

- Most of these certifying organizations are akin to a pill mill, with certification and any medical guidance being minimized to a single 5-minute phone call.

Issues with Advertising

Compassionate Certification Centers



The screenshot shows the website for Compassionate Certification Centers. The header includes the company logo (a green leaf with a white outline) and the text "COMPASSIONATE CERTIFICATION CENTERS™". Navigation links for "COMPANY", "SERVICES", "SHOP CBD", "RESOURCES", and "REGISTER" are visible, along with search and shopping cart icons.

Medical Marijuana Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder

Research suggests that medical marijuana can be a viable substitute for opioids such as buprenorphine and other prescription drugs. Medical marijuana has been found to be effective in controlling craving behavior and addressing other symptoms like anxiety, depression, insomnia, and nausea.

Additionally, [CBD oil](#) derived from hemp may be a viable option if further research shows proof of aiding the recovery process, as it has only trace amounts of THC, the substance which gives cannabis users a "high."

How to Get a Medical Marijuana Card for Opioid Use Disorder

Due to the seriousness of the disease, many states have legalized the use of medical marijuana for Opioid Use Disorder. Below is a step-by-step guide on how to get your medical marijuana card:

1. Register over the phone or online
2. Talk to a [medical marijuana doctor](#)
3. Get your medical marijuana card

Compassionate Certification Centers is here to provide you with the support, care, and guidance you need to get certified for a medical marijuana card. Schedule an appointment with us at [888-316-9085](tel:888-316-9085) to start your evaluation process!

The webpages did not cite any research to support the claims. Multiple experts described the statements as misleading or dangerous.

Medicinal use and issues with pregnant women

Only a few drugs have been approved for use during pregnancy by the FDA.

Cannabis has proven to help with reducing nausea and vomiting

One state-wide study in Colorado found that 69% of cannabis dispensaries recommended cannabis for pregnancy sickness during the first trimester, with the majority basing their recommendation on personal opinion and 36% saying cannabis was safe during pregnancy.

The official recommendation from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists is for pregnant women to discontinue marijuana use, including medical cannabis, in favor of safer alternatives.

Medicinal use and issues with pregnant women

Objective facts are that we do not know enough about cannabis use and how it may affect fetal development.

Additionally, cannabis is often used alongside other well-known teratogens, such as tobacco.

Studies show conflicting results on the effects of cannabis use during pregnancy, with some suggesting that it may lead to **lower birth weight** and **developmental issues** in children, while others argue that any adverse outcomes are likely due to tobacco use

Most studies focus on recreational cannabis use

Medical Sales

- Licensed medical cannabis products (produced in a licensed facility, sold by a licensed dispensary, to a certified patient) products contain more than >0.3% THC.
- Dispensaries can legally sell dried flower, capsules, vaporizers, tinctures, lotions, suppositories, and more.
- “Flower” for vaporization only, and there are no 'classic' edibles such as gummies, candies, or baked goods, per PA regulations.

Administration

- Pill
- Extracts (concentrates: *shatter, wax, oil, budder, resin*)
- Topical forms, including gel, creams, ointments, patches
- Tinctures, liquids
- A form medically appropriate for administration by **vaporization** or nebulization, including dry leaf or plant form for administration by vaporization. (*“dry leaf” or “flower”*)

YOU CAN'T SMOKE IT

Recreational Sales

- Additionally, 18 and over are able to purchase semi-synthetic delta 8 product formulations such as tinctures, beverages, edibles, and even flower and concentrates.
- Due to the 2018 farm bill, many vape stores and other ancillary businesses are carrying 'hemp-derived' psychoactive cannabinoids that are technically <0.3% delta9-THC.
- This opens another conversation regarding the safety and regulation of these grey market compounds.

CBD vs THC for medical uses

- Hemp derived CBD is a completely unregulated market. There are currently no testing or labeling requirements in the industry. Some of the legitimate organizations are attempting to change this. Some organizations such as the Hemp Industries Association (HIA) have been discussing ways to ensure the industry is legitimate. Recent DEA rulings are now of strong concern to the hemp industry.
- Often a small amount of THC may be needed for a patient to find symptom relief. Some patients do find relief of symptoms with just a full spectrum CBD product.
- People need to be aware that if they are using a whole plant, full spectrum CBD product, they may well test positive for THC on a drug screen.



Reputable brand of CBD

- New CBD companies seem to be popping up daily. Again, the CBD industry is completely unregulated for now
- There are some key things that you can look for when searching for a reputable product or brand
 - The hemp should be sourced in the United States
 - The company should provide a Certificate of Analysis from a third-party lab who tests for potency, contaminants such as mold, pesticides, and heavy metals
- Healer.com has a new line of CBD and CBDA products.
- Charlotte's Web is another solid company who has been around for some time.

CBD Products

Three main types of CBD on the market:

1. **Isolate** contains only CBD, with no other cannabinoids.
2. **Full-spectrum** contains all cannabinoids naturally found in the cannabis plant, including THC.
3. **Broad-spectrum** contains multiple cannabinoids naturally found in the cannabis plant, but doesn't contain THC.

Reputable?

***There are 3,500+ brands of CBD on the market**

***The product label includes the amount of CBD**

- the bottle should contain 250–1000mg per 30ml

***Transparent CBD oil test results**

- The information might be on the bottle, the box it came in, on an insert, or published on the website.

***Made from “whole plant” extracts, not CBD isolates**

- isolate sounds good; it's pure CBD, but it's often made from cheap materials and lacks the other cannabinoids, flavonoids, and terpenes

***Contains under 0.3% THC**

***No outrageous medical claims are made**

- not approved as a medical treatment by any government agency. That means it falls into the same category as vitamins and other supplements, and no company can legally claim that it treats or cures any medical condition. If you're looking at a CBD oil that makes a claim like that, steer clear. It's probably snake oil.



Delta 8 - THC



IS DELTA 8 THC LEGAL IN PENNSYLVANIA?



Yes, at least for the time being, delta 8 THC is legal in Pennsylvania.

EFFICACY

Evidence of Efficacy

- Neuropathic pain.
- Useful adjunct in treating cancer pain.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Stimulating appetite.
- May help treat anxiety.
- There is moderate evidence that cannabinoids are effective for spasticity.

Lack of Evidence of Efficacy

- Acute pain
- Tremor in MS
- Huntington's disease
- Glaucoma
- Schizophrenia
- Depression

Evidence for efficacy

- Research continues to be lacking due to the Federal Schedule 1 status, however, in PA there is a research component to the program in the beginning stages now.
- Various apps exist for patients to track symptoms, relief, etc.
- Recommending physicians report many of their patients are experiencing relief of symptoms and a decrease in the use of pharmaceuticals
- “Start low and go slow”
- THC/CBD combinations seem to work best for symptom relief

Medical Marijuana Research in PA



Pennsylvania is first in the nation to require that research accompany legalization of cannabis for serious medical conditions, thereby positioning the Commonwealth as the leader in generating new knowledge that further defines the drug's therapeutic applications.

Marijuana and Pain

- A systematic review of 18 randomized controlled trials (RCTs) with a total of 766 participants with chronic non-cancer pain found that 15/18 trials showed a significant analgesic effect of cannabinoids, compared to placebo.
- Conditions studied included neuropathic pain, “chronic pain”, rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia, and central pain in multiple sclerosis.
- High CBD:THC ratios

Dosing/Administration

- Medical marijuana dosing and administration is very individualized. Dosing depends on many factors including, severity of symptoms and tolerance.
- Administration is very much the preference of the patient with each form having differing onset and duration.

NIDA Research Summary for Pregnancy

- Risk for miscarriage increases if marijuana is used early in pregnancy.
- Some associations have been found between marijuana use during pregnancy and future developmental and hyperactivity disorders in children
- Evidence is mixed as to whether marijuana use by pregnant women is associated with low birth weight or premature birth, although long-term use may elevate these risks.
- Pregnant women who use marijuana have a 2.3 times greater risk of stillbirth.

Anxiety

- Anxiety was added to the Department of Health's list of qualifying conditions in July 2019. This decision was not immediately made, as Dr. Levine wanted to do more research. She stated medical marijuana should be used in conjunction with counseling or therapy.
- THC appears to decrease anxiety at lower dosages and increase anxiety at higher dosages
- CBD appears to decrease anxiety at higher dosages. High CBD products are not as commonly manufactured and sold at retail

Opioid Use Disorder(evidence-based data)/Relapse prevention/Use in recovery

Experts suggest its medical use should be as an adjunct, rather than a sole treatment

Helps with cravings and withdrawal symptoms

Anxiety and Pain

Harm Reduction



Effects

- Euphoria, well-being, relaxation
- Increased sensuality (tactile, auditory, taste)
- Increased appetite
- Disruption of linear thinking
- Metacognition and Introspection
- Anxiety
- Dry mouth
- Increased heart rate
- Delayed Reaction Times
- Reduced Muscle Coordination
- Acute psychosis
- Chest pain and heart rhythm irregularity

The image features a central text element surrounded by a decorative border of green fern leaves. The leaves are rendered in various shades of green, from light to dark, with detailed vein patterns. They are positioned in the corners and along the sides, creating a natural, organic frame for the text.

Thank you!

Michaelpalladini.com

References

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