

From: JSG DM & Associate DM
To: [JSG DM & Associate DM](#)
Subject: Update to stakeholders on the legalization of cannabis
Date: Thursday, July 19, 2018 10:56:27 AM

Dear stakeholder:

On June 21, the federal Bill C-45: the *Cannabis Act* received Royal Assent, and will come into force on October 17, 2018. Thanks to your input, along with tens of thousands of other Albertans, our province will be ready. I would like to share an overview of our system, and update you on our progress as the legalization date approaches.

Our province has developed a system that lives up to the expectations of Albertans. The system emerged from the Alberta Cannabis Framework that was publicly released last fall, and is built on four policy priorities: keeping cannabis out of the hands of children and youth; protecting public health; protecting safety on roads, in workplaces, and in public spaces; and limiting the illegal market for cannabis.

When cannabis is legalized on October 17, Albertans who are 18 years of age or older will be able to legally purchase, possess, and consume cannabis. The maximum limit for possession in public will be 30 grams; and smoking or vaping of cannabis will be allowed at home and in some public places, but not in vehicles, any cannabis retail outlet, anywhere smoking or vaping tobacco is already prohibited, or in specific areas frequented by children. Municipalities may strengthen rules around public consumption, so I encourage Albertans to check with their local governments about rules in their own communities.

Once cannabis is legalized, adults will be able to purchase cannabis from licensed private retailers and online through a single website operated by the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (AGLC); and adults may grow cannabis at home, up to four plants per household (not per person) for personal consumption.

Over the past year, several pieces of legislation have been introduced to prepare our province for cannabis legalization:

- Bill 26, an *Act to Control and Regulate Cannabis*, was introduced on November 16, 2017, and passed on November 30, 2017. This legislation gives the AGLC authority for oversight, compliance and retail licensing, enables online sales, and creates restrictions on youth possession and public consumption. Anyone under the age of 18 caught with five grams of cannabis or less will face sanctions similar to those for underage possession of alcohol or tobacco. Minors caught possessing more than five grams of cannabis could face criminal charges.
- Also in November 2017, amendments were introduced to the *Traffic Safety Act*. Bill 29: *An Act to Reduce Cannabis and Alcohol Impaired Driving* established new tools to address all forms of impaired driving. For example, licence suspensions and vehicle seizures that apply to alcohol-impaired driving have been expanded to include cannabis impairment; and to include cannabis in the zero tolerance provisions for those on graduated driver licences. Changes to Alberta's impaired driving laws came into effect on April 9, 2018.
- In February 2018, after consulting with the AGLC, municipalities, Indigenous communities, law enforcement, and industry stakeholders, the Alberta government announced the rules around the retail sale of cannabis. The *Gaming and Liquor*

Regulation was amended, and the title was repealed and substituted with the *Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Regulation*. The regulation further defines who can own and work in a private retail store, the locations of the stores, and how they must operate.

- In April 2018, our government passed Bill 6: *Gaming and Liquor Statutes Amendment Act* that modernizes the *Gaming and Liquor Act* to include cannabis, and better equip the AGLC to carry out its expanded mandate. Changes included prohibiting cannabis retailers from using any words or symbols that have medical connotations in their names or signage as a means to prevent any misleading promotion of health benefits of cannabis consumption. Changes also add capacity to the AGLC board, including allowing for more board members and extending their terms.

In the coming weeks, you may see advertising and educational materials aimed at informing Albertans about legalized cannabis. Public education is an important aspect of our system. Our government, along with federal and municipal governments and the AGLC, will be creating public awareness about the rules around legalized cannabis, responsible use, its risks, and potential health impacts.

For specific details about Alberta's system for legalized cannabis, I invite you to watch this short [video](#) that highlights the rules around cannabis in Alberta once it is legalized. I also encourage you to share this video with your family, friends, and colleagues, and to continue the conversation with people in your community.

For more information about cannabis legalization, please visit alberta.ca/cannabis. For information about regulations or the licensing process, visit aglc.ca/cannabis.

Once again, thank you for your interest in this matter and for your input.

Yours truly,

Philip Bryden, Q.C.
Deputy Minister of Justice and
Deputy Solicitor General

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