

# It's Time to Treat Adults Like Grown-Ups Legalize Simple Possession of Cannabis



The Live Free State is the only place in New England that punishes adults 21 and older for relaxing with cannabis in the privacy of their homes. This anti-liberty approach is at odds with the wishes of the vast majority of New Hampshire voters: Only 19% of voters support keeping adult-use cannabis illegal, according to a June 2024 Granite State Poll.

HB 198 would legalize adults' possession of modest amounts of cannabis, while prohibiting public smoking and vaping. It would save the more contentious issue of how (and if) the Granite State should legalize sales for another time.

## Prohibition ruins lives.

- All of New Hampshire's neighboring states allow adults to purchase cannabis, with limits of between one and 2.5 ounces.
- Bringing those amounts of cannabis home to New Hampshire (over  $\frac{3}{4}$  ounce) is a misdemeanor, carrying up to a year in jail.
- Cannabis records can cause people to lose their jobs, career paths, and housing. Even years after sentences are complete, cannabis records close the door of opportunity.

## Adults shouldn't be penalized for using cannabis.

- Cannabis is far less toxic, less addictive, and less harmful to the body than alcohol. While the CDC attributes 117,000 deaths per year to the chronic health effects of alcohol, cannabis has not been shown to increase all-cause mortality.
- It is hypocritical and irrational to punish adults for the safer substance.
- Most cannabis consumers use it as an over-the-counter medicine. According to a survey by New Frontier, 61% of consumers use cannabis as a sleep-aid and 48% use it for pain relief.
- Only about 6% of cannabis consumers are registered patients. Just over 1% of adults are registered patients, while more than 15% admit having used cannabis in the past month.

## HB 198 would:

- remove penalties for adults 21 and older who possess up to two ounces of cannabis or a modest amount of cannabis-infused products, and
- impose escalating penalties on public smoking or vaping of cannabis, with a first offense carrying a fine of up to \$100, a second offense within five years carrying up to a \$500 civil fine, and a third offense carrying a misdemeanor.

**The Live Free State shouldn't be a nanny state.  
Vote "YES" on HB 198.**

**65%**  
of NH voters support  
legalizing cannabis

**100%**  
of NH's neighbors have  
legalized cannabis

**Over 20%**  
of NH adults admit using  
cannabis in the past year

**Over 690**  
NH arrests for cannabis  
possession in 2023