

Understanding Arizona How is Medical Marijuana Affecting their State?

In 2010, Proposition 203, the **Arizona Medical Marijuana Act (AMMA)**, narrowly passed with 50.13% of votes. The AMMA designates the Arizona Department of Health Services as the licensing and issuing authority for the Medical Marijuana Program. Since the enactment of the AMMA, available data have substantiated several areas of concern.

Increased Availability

- ◇ Expansion of **underground marijuana market** involving illegal dispensaries, clubs, and co-ops engaged in for-profit distribution.¹
- ◇ Indoor **marijuana plants seized** soared from 1,462 plants to 3,192 in just three years.²
- ◇ **Marijuana abuse and crime** in Arizona are heavily impacted by increased marijuana diversion and availability.

Difficult Enforcement

- ◇ The AMMA allows **home cultivation of up to 12 plants** for patients and caregivers who live more than **25 miles** from a dispensary.³
- ◇ Positive marijuana test results for drivers involved in **fatal traffic accidents increased 49%** from 2010 to 2013.⁴
- ◇ Marijuana was the most frequently reported drug used by arrestees, and more than **35.2% tested positive for marijuana at time of arrest.**⁵
- ◇ There are over **82,000** residents with an AMMA card.⁵

Health Risks

- ◇ In 2013, marijuana surpassed alcohol as the **most commonly used substance associated with a child's death.**⁶
- ◇ Since 2010, hospital emergency department encounters involving marijuana **increased 50%.**⁷
- ◇ Marijuana **exposure calls rose 32%** from 2011 through 2014.⁸
- ◇ **14.3%** of students currently using marijuana **received it from an AMMA cardholder.**⁹

Recreational Use

- ◇ **76% of cardholders have a prescription for chronic pain.** The second largest condition is **cancer at 3%.** This raises concerns of the legitimacy of prescriptions.³
- ◇ **A proposition to fully legalize marijuana is planned for 2016.** Under this proposition, current dispensaries will become medical and recreational.
- ◇ Many **dispensaries are funding** promotion of this proposition.

1. Arizona HIDTA 2015 Arizona Threat Assessment Report.

2. Arizona High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Investigative Support Center, September 2015.

3. Arizona Department of Health Services Medical Marijuana Program Monthly Report, October 2015.

4. NHTSA Fatality Reporting System, July 2015.

5. ASU Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety, Arizona Arrestee Reporting Information Network, October 2012, the Characteristics of the Adult Arrestee Population.

6. Arizona Child Fatality Program Report, 2014.

7. Arizona Department of Health Services, September 2015.

8. Arizona Poison Control Center, College of Pharmacy, University of Arizona, July 2015.

9. State of Arizona, Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, 2012/2014, Arizona Youth Survey.