

COMMUNITY SAFETY UNIT

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more details on cannabis legalization, including a link to B.C.'s cannabis Acts and Regulations, go to the Get Cannabis Clarity website at:
www.cannabis.gov.bc.ca



BRITISH COLUMBIA
**COMMUNITY
SAFETY UNIT**

Licensed Retail
Sale of Cannabis
IN BRITISH COLUMBIA AND
Enforcement Against
Illegal Sellers



Licensing and Enforcement

As of October 17, 2018, non-medical cannabis is legal in Canada. The production, distribution, sale, possession and use of cannabis is strictly regulated in Canada by federal, provincial and territorial governments. British Columbia's *Cannabis Control and Licensing Act* (CCLA) and Regulations, establishes provincial rules for the sale, supply, possession, personal cultivation and consumption of non-medical cannabis.

Operating a non-medical cannabis retail store in British Columbia without a provincial licence is illegal under both federal and provincial law. The consequences for violating the federal and provincial regulatory regimes can be severe and may include:

- » A fine of up to \$5 million, imprisonment of up to three years, or both under the federal *Cannabis Act*; and/or
- » A fine of up to \$100,000, imprisonment of up to 12 months, or both under the CCLA.

Note: Health Canada is responsible for the sale of authorized medical cannabis and allows only online sales through approved Licensed Producers. Further information is available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/topics/cannabis-for-medical-purposes.html>

How to obtain a non-medical cannabis retail licence in B.C.

In order to legally sell non-medical cannabis, a person must have a provincial licence issued under the CCLA by the Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB). It is illegal to sell non-medical cannabis in British Columbia without a valid provincial licence.

Cannabis retail stores operating without a valid provincial licence must obtain a provincial licence from the LCRB. Holding a business licence from the local government is not sufficient to operate in B.C.

The LCRB is responsible for licensing private non-medical cannabis retail stores. For more information on obtaining a provincial non-medical cannabis retail licence, contact the LCRB at:
www.gov.bc.ca/cannabisregulationandlicensing
Toll Free: 1-866-209-2111
Office: 250-952-5787
Email: cannabisregs@gov.bc.ca



The Community Safety Unit

The Community Safety Unit (CSU), within the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, is responsible for compliance and enforcement under the CCLA, with a focus on the illegal sale of cannabis. The CSU's team of investigators carry out compliance and enforcement activities against unlicensed cannabis retailers and other illegal sellers across the province.

Enforcement Activities of the Community Safety Unit

The CSU has the authority to enter premises where cannabis is being sold without a provincial retail store licence and take enforcement action. Enforcement action may include:

- » Seizure of illegal cannabis;
- » Imposition of administrative monetary penalties equal to two times the value of the cannabis sold, or possessed for the purpose of sale;
- » Application to the courts for injunctive relief to prevent the continued illegal sale of cannabis; and
- » Recommendations to the B.C. Prosecution Service in relation to provincial or criminal charges.

A person may be charged for a provincial or criminal offence and be subject to an administrative monetary penalty under the CCLA for the same contravention. Conviction of a provincial offence under the CCLA can result in fines up to \$100,000, imprisonment for up to 12 months, or both. In addition to enforcement action by the CSU, a person illegally selling cannabis may be subject to enforcement action by the police.