

Seven things to know about recreational marijuana sales and use in New Bedford

On Sunday, July 1, 2018, it became legal to purchase recreational marijuana from licensed retailers in Massachusetts. Oddly enough, as of July 1, there were only medical marijuana facilities open in Massachusetts. It seems state legislators and officials aren't in a rush to get the state license marijuana blunts rolling just yet.

For a good reference on legalized marijuana in Massachusetts, there is a 75-page law on Marijuana sales and consumption that can be read [here](#). The State has also set up a page with useful information [here](#).

Here are seven things to know about recreational marijuana use and sales in New Bedford:

1. Per state law, you must be 21 years old or older to purchase or consume marijuana.

While it is legal to smoke cigarettes at 18, it isn't legal to consume or purchase marijuana unless you are at least 21. If you are 21 years old, you can gift up to 1 ounce of marijuana, but can't sell it without a state license.

2. It is still illegal to consume marijuana in a public space.

Per state law, marijuana must be consumed on private property with the permission of the owner. Landlords can prohibit smoking or growing marijuana on their property. So before you light up in the park or other public spaces, know that you can be cited or arrested for doing so.

3. You can legally grow marijuana plants in your home.

Growing marijuana out of your home can be prohibited by your landlord and you should follow all applicable **state laws**. You can grow up to six marijuana plants per person or 12 plants per home.

4. Expect to pay a 20% tax on recreational sales of marijuana.

New Bedford will have a 3% excise tax on marijuana sales within the city.

Massachusetts legislators passed legislation that set the maximum tax on marijuana at 20% – even though Massachusetts residents approved a ballot measure in 2016 setting the maximum tax at 12%. Currently, the State has a sales tax of 6.25% tax and an excise tax rate to 10.75% bringing the total Massachusetts tax on marijuana to 17%. Add on the 3% City of New Bedford tax and 20% is the total tax New Bedford people can expect to pay when purchasing marijuana for recreational use in New Bedford.

5. There are no current recreational marijuana shops in New Bedford (or in Massachusetts).

Currently, there are no recreational marijuana shops in New Bedford as Mayor Jon Mitchell has a **moratorium on recreational marijuana sales in New Bedford** until 30 Sept or until zoning for recreational marijuana shops has been approved. Here is a look at the **proposed zoning ordinance and map**.

6. New Bedford will be a top producer of marijuana in Massachusetts and will make up to \$300,000 a year from it.

New Bedford has a host city agreement with ARL healthcare that provides New Bedford with \$25 per pound of marijuana produced. Full details **here**.

7. Per the mayor's office, New Bedford will issue up to 8 retail marijuana licenses.

New Bedford will issue marijuana licenses at 20% of current

retail liquor licenses. According to the mayor's office, there are 40 retail liquor licenses. Beacon Compassion will likely be the first recreational marijuana retailer in New Bedford as **they already have a license to sell medical marijuana in New Bedford** and it's the medical marijuana facilities that will get the first crack at retail sales.