

## INFO BRIEF

# Status of State Marijuana Legalization: November 2020

This brief provides an update to the status of state marijuana laws in the United States, following the November 2020 election. Although marijuana remains illegal at the federal level, 35 states and the District of Columbia have now legalized medical marijuana, with sixteen (16) of those jurisdictions also legalizing recreational marijuana use. Overall, nearly 69% of U.S. residents now live in a state with legalized medical or recreational marijuana use

FIGURE 1. STATUS OF STATE MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION: NOVEMBER 2020

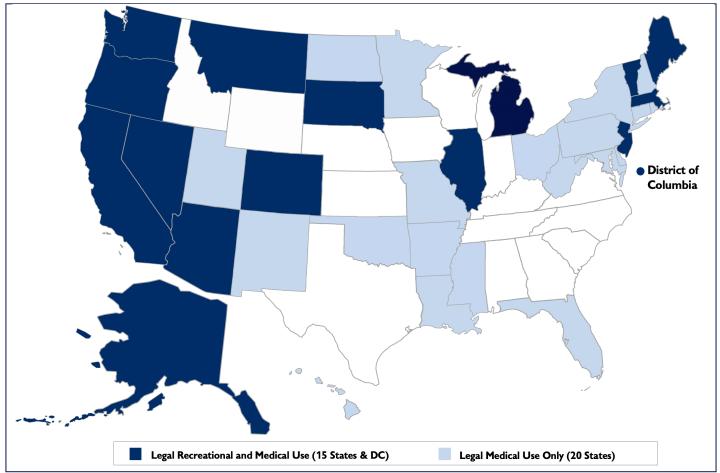


Figure 1 shows the current status of state marijuana laws after the November 2020 election. Though the total share of U.S. residents now living in a state with legalized medical or recreational marijuana use increased only slightly, roughly 34% of residents now live in one of the 16 jurisdictions that permit recreational use – up from 28% before November's election.

Figures 2 depicts the number of states that have legalized in each category, the population affected, and the changes in

each area during November 2020. Four Public opinion polling and recent states legalized recreational use via ballot initiative in November: Arizona, Montana, New Jersey, and South Dakota, adding over 18 million people who now reside in jurisdictions with legalized recreational marijuana. South Dakota and Mississippi legalized medical use. And South Dakota became the first state to legalize medical use and recreational use at the same time, transitioning directly from prohibition to full state legalization.

elections show ever-growing support for marijuana legalization. Regardless of the wisdom of legalization, the ballot initiatives and polls indicate that recreational legalization is likely to continue. Marijuana stakeholders should be equipped with the information and tools they need to ensure that states can best optimize their approaches to protect public health and safety.

### FIGURE 2. STATES AND POPULATION WITH LEGALIZED USE: NOVEMBER 2020<sup>1, 2</sup>

States with Legalized	States with Legalized			States with Legalized	
Medical Use Only	Population	Recreational and Medical U	se Population	Medical or Recreational Use	Population
Arkansas	3,017,804	Alaska	731,545	Alaska	731,545
Connecticut	3,565,287	Arizona	7,278,717	Arizona	7,278,717
Delaware	973,764	California	39,512,223	Arkansas	3,017,804
Florida	21,477,737	Colorado	5,758,736	California	39,512,223
Hawaii	1,415,872	Illinois	12,671,821	Colorado	5,758,736
Louisiana	4,648,794	Maine	1,344,212	Connecticut	3,565,287
Maryland	6,045,680	Massachusetts	6,892,503	Delaware	973,764
Minnesota	5,639,632	Michigan	9,986,857	Florida	21,477,737
Mississippi	2,976,149	Montana	1,068,778	Hawaii	1,415,872
Misouri	6,137,428	Nevada	3,080,156	Illinois	12,671,821
New Hampshire	1,359,711	New Jersey	8,882,190	Louisiana	4,648,794
New Mexico	2,096,829	Oregon	4,217,737	Maine	1,344,212
New York	19,453,561	South Dakota	884,659	Maryland	6,045,680
North Dakota	762,062	Vermont	623,989	Massachusetts	6,892,503
Ohio	11,689,100	Washington	7,614,893	Michigan	9,986,857
Oklahoma	3,956,971	District of Columbia	705,749	Minnesota	5,639,632
Pennsylvania	12,801,989	Pre-November 2020	93,140,421	Mississippi	2,976,149
Rhode Island	1,059,361	Population Added Nov. 2020	18,114,344	Misouri	6,137,428
Utah	3,205,958	Total Population	111,254,765	Montana	1,068,778
West Virginia	1,792,147	Percentage of US Population	33.9%	Nevada	3,080,156
Pre-November 2020	111,099,687			New Hampshire	1,359,711
Population Added Nov. 2020	2,976,149			New Jersey	8,882,190
Total Population	114,075,836			New Mexico	2,096,829
Percentage of US Population	34.8%			New York	19,453,561
		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		North Dakota	762,062
300M Iot provide a state of US Population 100M				Ohio	11,689,100
		<b>69</b> %		Oklahoma	3,956,971
		of US Population		Oregon	4,217,737
				Pennsylvania	12,801,989
				Rhode Island	1,059,361
SO 35%	3.40/			South Dakota	884,659
o of US Population	<b>34%</b> of US Popula			Utah	3,205,958
I00M				Vermont	623,989
0				Washington	7,614,893
				West Virginia	1,792,147
				vvest virginia	
OM				-	
0M				District of Columbia	705,749
Legalized Medical			US Population	District of Columbia Pre-November 2020	705,749 221,469,793
	Legalize Recreationa Medical L	al and Recreational Use	US Population	District of Columbia	705,749 221,469,793 3,860,808 225,330,601

#### **NOTES:**

- <sup>1</sup> Population figures were obtained from the US Census Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019. Estimates are for 2019.
- <sup>2</sup> All states that have legalized recreational use have also legalized medical use. South Dakota legalized medical and recreational use simultaneously in November 2020. In all other states, medical legalization preceded recreational legalization.

This Info Brief is a publication of Carnevale Associates, LLC. Carnevale Associates brings strategic consulting solutions to governments, organizations, and communities as they confront the policy and program challenges of substance use, behavioral health, and criminal justice. www.carnevaleassociates.com

#### November 2020