

Milford CARES

Community Against Recreational Marijuana Retail Establishments

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Milford's Retail Recreational Marijuana Ballot Question Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

We already voted to legalize marijuana. Why are we voting again?

Last November's Question 4 vote, which legalized marijuana for recreational use,¹ also authorized communities to hold a second vote to opt out of recreational marijuana establishments. Milford's Board of Selectmen decided unanimously to hold this second vote.² If you voted YES on Question 4 in November, you also voted YES to give every community across the state the right to opt out of hosting recreational marijuana establishments in their own city or town.

The Retail Recreational Marijuana Ballot Question is confusing. Do I vote YES or NO?

The text of the question you will see on the ballot is:

Shall the Town prohibit the operation of Marijuana Retailers, as defined in G.L.c.94G § 1, within the Town of Milford, a summary of which appears below?

Vote YES to prohibit—or ban—retail pot shops from operating within Milford. Vote NO to allow retail pot shops to operate in Milford. Check out a sample ballot on CitizensforMilford.com/MilfordCARES.

Medical marijuana helps a lot of people. Why not allow pot shops to open in Milford?

Milford's September 19th vote will have no effect on medical marijuana treatment centers. Treatment centers will still be allowed to open in Milford in the approved zones.³

Is there a difference between medical marijuana and recreational marijuana?

Yes, recreational marijuana typically contains high levels of Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the mind-altering chemical that produces euphoria. But many patients use medical marijuana solely for the therapeutic properties of Cannabidiol (CBD), which has no mind-altering side effects. Medicinal marijuana often is rich in CBD with little or no THC.⁴

How can marijuana be dangerous?

Marijuana can be addictive. The earlier someone begins using marijuana, the higher their risk of addiction—one in six users who start under age 18 becomes dependent; 25 to 50% of teen heavy users become addicted.⁵ In addition, the American Academy of Pediatrics has concluded that marijuana use among adolescents is dangerous for multiple reasons, including posing adverse effects on judgment, concentration, attention span, and reaction time, all of which are particularly dangerous while driving.⁶

“On average, today's marijuana is three times more potent than pre-1993 marijuana and eight times more potent than grass seized in 1976 and earlier.”⁷ And the appetizing and fanciful appearance of edible marijuana “treats” containing high levels of THC (such as cookies, candy bars, and gummy bears) appeal to kids who are unable to distinguish them from their non-pot counterparts.⁸

VOTE YES! Tuesday, September 19, 2017

What is the impact of the September vote on personal choice and freedom?

The vote will have NO impact on Milford residents' personal freedom to possess, grow, and use either medical or recreational marijuana as allowed by state law.

How might the operation of pot shops affect revenue and expenses for the Town?

The amount of revenue the fees and sales taxes on recreational marijuana might bring cannot be predicted, but Milford would need to increase spending for law enforcement, emergency services, education, and substance abuse treatment.⁹

Example: The town of Amherst, Massachusetts (population ~38,000) anticipates needing to hire two new police officers and four new EMTs when pot shops open, costing the town \$550,000 each year.¹⁰

What is the expected impact of pot shops on the black market?

Even though Colorado initiated legalized sales of recreational marijuana three years ago, the Denver Police Department has stated "The black market is booming."¹¹ The Massachusetts Senate Report notes that "even with legalization and reasonable tax rates, the black market is likely to persist due to the significant profits to be gained from meeting demand across New England, as well as the ease of growing marijuana and the difficulty that law enforcement would face in enforcing home growing limits."¹²

What communities around Milford have opted out?

Holliston, Medway, and Southborough have banned pot shops. Hopkinton and Ashland have enacted moratoriums. Hopedale and Upton are currently reviewing how to proceed.¹³

When do Milford residents vote on pot shops?

Milford's Special Town Election will be held **Tuesday, September 19 from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.** The Marijuana Ballot Question will be the only item on the ballot. Absentee Ballots for the Special Election are available in the Town Clerk's Office. Learn more on the town website: Milford.MA.us.

**Who is allowed to vote in Milford's September Election?**

Any Milford resident who is a REGISTERED VOTER can vote in the September 19th Special Town Election. The deadline to register at the Town Clerk's office is 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 30.

Where can I find more information that will help me decide how to vote?

- Milford CARES: CitizensforMilford.com/MilfordCARES
- The Marijuana Policy Initiative: Marijuana-Policy.org
- Massachusetts Medical Society: MassMed.org
- Massachusetts Prevention Alliance: MaPreventionAlliance.org
- Smart Approaches to Marijuana: LearnAboutSam.org

References

1. "Chapter 94G: Drug Stewardship Program" on MALegislature.gov.
2. "Milford Selectmen Set Marijuana Vote" in *Milford Daily News*, 5 June 2017.
3. "Zoning By-law" Town of Milford, Massachusetts on Milford.MA.US.
4. "Medical Vs. Recreational Marijuana" on drugrehab.com, 2017.
5. "Marijuana What's at Stake" by the Massachusetts Prevention Alliance, 2016.
6. "The Impact of Marijuana Policies on Youth: Clinical, Research, and Legal Update," *Pediatrics*, March 2015, Volume 135/Issue 3.
7. "Marijuana legalization opponent says today's marijuana is 300% to 800% stronger than in the past" on Politifact.com, 30 March 2014.
8. "The Hidden Dangers of Marijuana Edibles" by Robert Glatter, MD, on *Forbes*, 27 July 2015.
9. "Massachusetts Report of the Special Senate Committee on Marijuana," 8 March 2016.
10. "Amherst Official Says College Town Will Need More Staff When Pot Stores Open," WAMC.org, 12 April 2017.
11. "Black market marijuana business booming in Colorado" on KDVR.com, 3 March 2017.
12. "Massachusetts Report of the Special Senate Committee on Marijuana," 8 March 2016.
13. "Marijuana map: Cities, towns, developing rules for recreational pot" on WCVB.com, 7 June 2017