NORML Policy on Personal Use

NORML supports the right of adults to use marijuana responsibly, whether for medical or personal purposes. All penalties, both civil and criminal, should be eliminated for responsible use. Further, to eliminate the crime, corruption and violence associated with any "black market," a legally regulated market should be established where consumers could buy marijuana in a safe and secure environment.

Personal Use
Millions of Americans use marijuana; few abuse it. Arresting these otherwise law-abiding citizens serves no legitimate purpose; extends government into inappropriate areas of our private lives; and causes enormous harm to the lives, careers and families of the more than 500,000 marijuana smokers arrested each year in this country.

Marijuana smokers are no different from their nonsmoking peers, except for their marijuana use. Like most Americans, they are responsible citizens who work hard, raise families, contribute to their communities, and want a safe, crime-free neighborhood in which to live. They are not part of the crime problem and should not be treated like criminals.

Responsible marijuana use causes no harm to society and should be of no interest to state and federal governments. Today, far more harm is caused by marijuana prohibition than by the use of marijuana itself.

Decriminalization
NORML supports the removal of all penalties for the private possession of marijuana by adults, cultivation for personal use, and the casual nonprofit transfers of small amounts. NORML also supports the development of a legally controlled market for marijuana.

Harm Reduction
All drugs, including marijuana, can be abused. Our marijuana policies should discourage irresponsible use, including use by adolescents.

The best way to prevent drug abuse is with honest, credible and factual drug education. Only in a climate in which marijuana is viewed from a public health perspective, instead of a criminal justice perspective, can prevention efforts be effective.

Reasonable Restrictions
As with alcohol consumption, marijuana smoking should be limited to adults. Driving or operating heavy machinery after smoking marijuana should be prohibited. NORML's "Principles of Responsible Cannabis Use" defines acceptable conduct (available upon request).