

Racial Disparity in Marijuana Arrests

African Americans are arrested for violating marijuana possession laws at nearly four times the rates of whites, yet both ethnicities consume marijuana at roughly the same rates.

A 2021 analysis of marijuana-related arrests in 2020 in New York City's five boroughs reported that people of color comprised 94 percent of those arrested.

[AMNY.com, People of color made up 94 percent of marijuana arrests by NYPD in 2020, data from Legal Aid says, 2021](#)

A 2021 analysis from the Milwaukee County, Wisconsin District Attorney's Office reported that Black Wisconsinites were 4.3 times more likely than their white counterparts to be convicted for having marijuana. The worst disparities in Wisconsin are in Ozaukee County, where Black people are 34.9 times more likely to be arrested and Manitowoc County, where Black people are 29.9 times more likely to be arrested."

[Wisconsin Public Radio, Report: Black Wisconsinites 4.3 Times More Likely To Be Convicted For Possession Of Marijuana, 2021](#)

A 2020 analysis by the American Civil Liberties Union, concluded, "Black people are 3.64 times more likely than white people to be arrested for marijuana possession, notwithstanding comparable usage rates." Authors reported, "In every single state, Black people were more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession, and in some states, Black people were up to six, eight, or almost ten times more likely to be arrested. In 31 states, racial disparities were actually larger in 2018 than they were in 2010."

[American Civil Liberties Union, A Tale of Two Countries: Racially Targeted Arrests in the Era of Marijuana Reform, 2020](#)