

For Release: October 15, 2018
Originator: Inspector Kevin Maher, Regional Investigative Services, kevin.maher@haltonpolice.ca
Contact: Inspector Kevin Maher, Regional Investigative Services, kevin.maher@haltonpolice.ca
Location: Halton Region

AFTER CANNABIS LEGALIZATION: HALTON POLICE TO FOCUS RESOURCES ON COMMUNITY SAFETY

As of October 17, 2018, the legislation that governs the possession, consumption, sale and cultivation of cannabis will be substantially changing.

The Halton Regional Police Service has collaborated closely with our Municipal and Regional partners to ensure a consistent service delivery response for members of the public, in all areas of the Region, once cannabis becomes legalized.

We recognize that after October 17, there will be a period of transition and social adjustment that will require flexibility and consideration as the community, the Service and the Courts react to the new laws.

Enforcement Role of the Halton Regional Police Service

The Halton Regional Police Service remains committed to the safety and well-being of our community.

In this regard, the Service will continue to respond to and investigate complaints involving:

- The alleged illegal sale and distribution of cannabis, particularly occurrences involving the sale of cannabis to youth;
- Incidents of drug-impaired driving;
- Youth (under the age of 19) who are possibly possessing or consuming cannabis, regardless of the location; and
- Cannabis consumption in a motor vehicle or on a vessel (boat).

The Halton Regional Police Service will not be responding to incidents where the sole complaint is that of nuisance cannabis smoke or cannabis consumption not involving youth or a motor vehicle/boat.

The Halton Region Health Department will be responsible for enforcing requirements of the amended Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017, which is expected to come into force on October 17, 2018. The Act would prohibit the smoking of cannabis in the same places where the smoking of tobacco is prohibited. These places include enclosed workplaces, enclosed public places and other specified places such as school property, recreational facilities, sports fields, children's playgrounds, hospital grounds and restaurant patios.

Halton residents who wish to report complaints about cannabis use in prohibited places that don't involve youth or a motor vehicle are directed to contact the Halton Region Health Department at 311.

Where Can Residents Access Additional Information

If you wish to learn more about the new legislation, please refer to our Cannabis Resources on our [website](#). We have included information about the consumption, sale, possession and cultivation of cannabis, as well as the detection and enforcement of drug-impaired driving. For your convenience, there is also a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page where you can find answers to common questions.

How Can Residents Navigate Cannabis-Related Conflict

We understand that the legalization of cannabis may cause conflict in the community.

It is important that our residents know that once legislation is in place, there is no lawful authority for our officers to respond to complaints regarding nuisance cannabis smoke. If you are concerned about nuisance cannabis smoke (for example your neighbor is smoking cannabis on their deck and you can smell it in your backyard), we would encourage you to engage in a respectful conversation with the person or ask for the assistance of a third party (another neighbor).

We ask that members of the community remain patient and respectful, particularly in the period of transition after cannabis is legalized.

Commitment to Consistency

We anticipate that members of our community will be reaching out with questions and complaints regarding cannabis once it is legalized. We have provided enhanced training to our call takers and dispatchers in our Communications Bureau, and have collaborated diligently with our Municipal and Regional partners to ensure that you get consistent responses, regardless of where you direct your inquiry.

Legislative Summary

Two new pieces of legislation come into effect on October 17, 2018.

The Federal Cannabis Act — this piece of legislation decriminalizes the possession and cultivation of cannabis for personal use in Canada. The Act has defined legal possession levels for the various forms that cannabis can take (i.e. seeds, dried cannabis, fresh plants). However, the Act also creates a series of criminal offences for unlawful possession, trafficking, and cultivation.

The Cannabis Control Act, 2017 — this new legislation will govern where and how individuals can purchase, transport and consume cannabis in the Province of Ontario. This new act is very similar in terms of wordings and authorities to the Liquor Licence Act. The new act defines the legal age for possession of cannabis (in Ontario) as 19 years of age or older. The Act also includes some offences relating to sale and distribution of cannabis. Those who commit offences under this act will receive Provincial Offence Notices with a set fine, or be summonsed to appear in court if the charge is more serious.

In addition, the amended *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017* is expected to come into effect on October 17, 2018. This legislation would prohibit the smoking of cannabis in the same places where the smoking of tobacco is prohibited.

Please direct inquiries to Inspector Kevin Maher at kevin.maher@haltonpolice.ca.