

Here's How CT's New Marijuana Law Will Affect Tobacco Smokers

If you thought the legalization of recreational marijuana in the state will loosen regulations on all smoking and vaping, you're very wrong.



- [Rich Kirby, Patch Staff](#)
- Posted Thu, Jun 24, 2021 at 11:20 am ET|Updated Fri, Jun 25, 2021 at 10:34 am ET

Replies (203)



A vape is a cigarette is a joint, under the eyes of the new law, and as of Oct. 1, where residents can smoke a cigarette, they can smoke a joint. (Rachel Nunes/Patch)

CONNECTICUT — In what is now the marquee legislation of his administration, Gov. Ned Lamont on Tuesday signed a recreational marijuana law.

Vapers and tobacco smokers may be surprised to learn that some rights they previously enjoyed will be curtailed under the [new law](#).

In a nutshell, the [legislation](#) will wrap up tobacco, e-cigarette and marijuana smoking all into the same rolling papers. This makes practical sense, as it relieves police — and property owners — of having to "sniff out" the pot smokers from the tobacco smokers for purposes of enforcement.

The state is also no longer going to split hairs between electronic delivery systems for nicotine and cannabis. A vape is a cigarette is a joint, under the eyes of the new law, and as of Oct. 1, where residents can smoke a cigarette, they can smoke a joint.

There will just be far fewer places in the state where they can smoke a cigarette.

Find out what's happening in Danbury with free, real-time updates from Patch.

Let's go!

For example, the new law requires hotels and motels to prohibit the smoking or vaping of cannabis anywhere on their premises. So, gone are special lounges and guest rooms for tobacco users.

In the workplace, so-called "smoking rooms" are banned under the new law. Currently, an employer with five or more employees may designate employee smoking rooms if the company also designates enough non-smoking break rooms. Companies with fewer than five employees are currently exempt from rules forbidding smoking in the workplace. That all goes away on Oct. 1.

Think you'll instead just grab your jacket and take your smoke break outside by the entrance to the parking garage? Think again. The new law prohibits smoking within 25 feet of a doorway, working window, or air intake vent, in addition to the premise's interior. In most downtown areas, that'll place your break time in the middle of traffic, making smoking *really* bad for your health.

The new cannabis law also bans tobacco smoking and vaping in any area of a school building, instead of only inside it. That includes any area of a college dormitory, forever altering the vibes of mid-term exam "hell weeks" in Connecticut universities.

Currently, it's against the law to light up inside a state or municipally owned, operated, or leased building. Come Oct. 1, you can add the campus and grounds around those buildings to the suddenly long list of smoke-free zones.

Although most retail operations in Connecticut have forbidden smoking inside their premises, the ban is only mandatory in food stores. The new law triggers a blanket smoking ban in any area of a retail establishment accessed by the public.

The law also specifically authorizes the Department of Correction to ban cannabis possession in any DOC facility or halfway house, and not just its consumption. The legislation also removes designated smoking areas in psychiatric facilities.

The new rules do cut some slack. Exempt from the law is anything you may be lighting up for medical or therapeutic purposes that has been prescribed or directed by a licensed health care provider. Facilities doing medical research on the effects of smoking are also logically exempt. Less intuitively, certain outdoor areas of establishments serving alcohol, and public housing projects, are getting a pass, so smoke 'em if ya got 'em.