

CANNABIS LEGALIZATION

RISKS OF IMPAIRED DRIVING BROCHURE - COMMERCIAL CLIENTS

Cannabis legalization introduces many changes to Canadian society and preparing yourself for these changes is important. While cannabis impairment differs from the effects of alcohol, there are still fines and consequences involved if you drive under the influence of cannabis. This brochure provides you with all the priority points in one, easy to find place to help you understand how it affects your ability to drive, and the risks involved.

HOW DO DRUGS AND ALCOHOL AFFECT YOUR DRIVING?

A lot of what you know about impaired driving applies to legal cannabis use as well. Illegal drugs, cannabis, over-the-counter and prescription medications can all affect your judgment, reaction time, coordination and motor skills. Even a small amount of drugs, no matter how they are taken, can impair your ability to drive, and when you drive high, your risk of crashing more than doubles.

WHAT COUNTS AS IMPAIRED DRIVING?

Impaired driving means operating a vehicle (including cars, trucks, boats, snowmobiles and off-road vehicles) while your ability to do so has been compromised by consuming alcohol, cannabis, or other drugs, or a combination of the two.

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT MEDICAL CANNABIS USERS?

If you have been authorized to use cannabis or another drug by a healthcare professional, it is your responsibility to ensure it does not impair you while driving.

WHAT ARE THE REGULATIONS FOR ALL FULLY LICENSED DRIVERS?

Under the Criminal Code, Bill C-46, THC levels of five nanograms per millilitre of blood are penalized in three tiers:

1. A minimum fine of \$1,000 for the first offence,
2. Minimum 30 days imprisonment for a second offence,
3. Minimum of 120 days in jail for the third and any subsequent offenses.

These penalties increase significantly if you injure or kill anyone, from two years to life in jail. Less than 5ng but over 2.5ng will face a fine of up to \$1,000. If police determine that you are driving while impaired by any drug, including illegal drugs, cannabis, prescription, and over-the-counter medications, you will face severe consequences and criminal charges.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR COMMERCIAL DRIVERS?

Starting July 1, 2018 drivers of vehicles requiring an A-F class licence, vehicles requiring a Commercial Vehicle Operator's Registration (CVOR) and road building machines will be prohibited from having any presence of alcohol in their blood when behind the wheel of these types of vehicles. These drivers will also be prohibited from having any presence of cannabis in their system and other drugs that can be detected by an oral fluid screening device.

All other commercial drivers face a zero tolerance requirement and, although they face both fines and licence suspensions, their suspensions are limited to three days (unless convicted in court).

If police determine that you have cannabis or alcohol in your system and/or you are impaired by any substance including illegal drugs, prescription drugs or over-the-counter medications, you will face severe consequences and potential criminal charges.

Learn more about Impaired Driving from the Ontario Government's Ministry of Transportation.