

COAA Position Statement on Marijuana & Workplace Safety

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The Government of Canada has announced legislative changes that will de-criminalize the growth, sale, possession and consumption of marijuana. As such, several questions have been stimulated regarding how these impending changes will affect workplace safety. The COAA has long held the position that unacceptable safety risks are created when alcohol and drugs are used in a way which can impair cognition and/or reaction times on safety-sensitive worksites. 'The Canadian Model for Providing a Safe Workplace', first published in 1999 and regularly updated, establishes guidelines for companies to manage the safety risks posed by inappropriate use of alcohol and drugs by some workers, while respecting the dignity and privacy of all workers.

The Canadian Model presently stipulates maximum allowable levels of marijuana metabolites at a threshold for which there is acceptably low risk of residual impairment. Since the threshold was established there has been no new science-based evidence on marijuana use and attendant risks of workplace impairment, so it is expected that the maximum allowable levels will not change upon the legalization of marijuana in Canada.

For additional information, please see the [backgrounder](#) or view the Canadian Model, which can be found at www.coaa.ab.ca/library/category/safety/subcategory/canadian-model/ .