

Stockton Poll: N.J. Residents Support Cannabis Sales, Mixed on Tourism

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Galloway, N.J. - As legal marijuana sales begin in New Jersey, a majority of adults would welcome dispensaries selling cannabis in their towns, and half would market it as a tourist attraction, according to a Stockton University Poll released today. But results do vary slightly by region.

Of the 640 state residents sampled in the poll, 56% said they would support dispensaries selling legal recreational marijuana in their towns, while 36% would oppose it and 8% are unsure. The poll was conducted for the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University.

Half of all respondents (50%) would like the state's hospitality industry – which according to state data employs 9% of New Jersey's private-sector workers – to offer cannabis-related attractions such as lounges and restaurants where weed can be consumed.

The percentage supporting marijuana tourism grew to 55% in New Jersey's six southernmost counties, but conservative Ocean County was generally opposed. Statewide, 43% opposed the tourist industry marketing cannabis-related attractions.

“The South Jersey tourist industry was especially damaged by pandemic restrictions and by customers avoiding public crowds,” Hughes Center Director John Froomjian said. “If tourists want to enjoy legal marijuana when they go out, a segment of this region wants to see that market served.”

About a dozen dispensaries begin legally selling recreational marijuana in New Jersey today, nearly 18 months after voters approved legalizing pot in a statewide referendum. Most poll respondents were understanding about the long delay; 22% said it was reasonable and 50% had no opinion. About one in four (27%) found the delay unacceptable.

New Jersey will dedicate 70% of tax revenue raised from recreational marijuana sales to economically struggling communities most harmed by past marijuana convictions. Asked for their spending priorities in those areas, the top responses were education (37%) and social services (13%).

The Stockton Poll found one product sale that state residents clearly disapprove of: unregulated, over-the-counter sale of hemp products used by some to get high. Two-thirds (67%) opposed such unregulated sales of hemp, which is a legal product, while 28% supported it and 4% were unsure.

Responses remained consistent and varied little across gender, racial and other demographic categories, said Alyssa Maurice, research associate for the Hughes Center.

Full poll results are at [Stockton.edu/hughes-center](https://stockton.edu/hughes-center)

Methodology

The poll of New Jersey adult residents was conducted by the Stockton Polling Institute of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy April 4-13, 2022. Live interviewers who are mostly Stockton University students called cell phones and landlines from the Stockton University campus. Opinion Services supplemented a portion of the fieldwork. Overall, 88 percent of interviews were conducted on cell phones and 12 percent on landline phones. A total of 640 New Jersey adult residents were interviewed. Both cell and landline samples consisted of random digit dialing (RDD) sample. Data are weighted based on U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey data for New Jersey on variables of age, race, ethnicity, education level, sex, and region. The poll's margin of error is +/- 3.8 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level. MOE is higher for subsets.

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Stockton University

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