

# Frequently Asked Questions

**What exactly will I see on the ballot on November 5, 2019?** NORTHFIELD TOWNSHIP – 1 PROPOSAL Should the Township of Northfield, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 6.1 of the Michigan Regulation and Taxation of Marihuana Act, 2018 Initiated Law 1, § 6.1, MCL 333.27956, Subsection 1, completely prohibit any marihuana establishment, as that term is defined in Section 3(h) of the Michigan Regulation and Taxation of Marihuana Act, 2018 Initiated Law 1, § 3(h), MCL 333.27953(h), within its boundaries.

**What does Proposal 1 mean?** Bottom line, if you want to ban marijuana businesses within Northfield Township, vote yes. If you would like to provide an opportunity for marijuana businesses within Northfield Township, **VOTE NO.**

**Why is marijuana spelled wrong on the proposal?** Both spellings – marijuana and marihuana – are acceptable. While the spelling with a “j” is more common today, you will still see Michigan law using the “h” spelling. Under the Michigan Regulation and Taxation of Marihuana Act, 2018, Michigan adopted its statutory definition of marijuana in the Public Health Code, utilizing the then current federal spelling, marihuana. To avoid confusion, many in the industry refer to the botanical plant – cannabis.

**What is the township’s current status on allowing marijuana businesses in Northfield Township?** The township is opted-out, which means currently, no marijuana businesses cannot obtain the appropriate permits and licenses to operate in Northfield Township at this time. The Board of Trustees will vote on 9/24/2019 to extend the opt-out ordinance until the outcome of the November 5<sup>th</sup> vote. If Proposal 1 passes, the opt-out will continue with an ordinance. If it fails, the board must adopt ordinances regulating marijuana businesses by restricting the number of licenses and zoning areas.

**Does the township currently have an ordinance in place?** No. The Township Board is still determining the specifics of the ordinances regarding how many, what type of business and where the business will be

permitted. Nothing has been decided. The ordinances must be in place by November 5<sup>th</sup>. The state recommends each municipality to have ordinances in place, whether or not a community has opted out.

**Will Northfield Township be an “open door” to marijuana businesses, if Proposal 1 fails?** NO. If Proposal 1 fails, Northfield Township is required to opt-in with an ordinance, which must be approved by the Board of Trustees. The ordinance will restrict the number of licenses and zoning in each business classification. Northfield Township has 20 different zoning areas focusing on Agricultural, General and Light Industrial and Whitmore Lake Downtown areas – the ordinance will determine the best option for each type of business. The ordinance will also determine restrictions from schools or other entities, such as parks, churches or other marijuana businesses.

**If a marijuana business wants to establish a business in Northfield Township, is it automatically approved?** NO. For starters, the state will not issue a license until the township has approved and enacted ordinances in compliance with state regulations. Without question, the largest obstacle for marijuana businesses is finding a facility in a township that has adopted the required ordinances. Each business must go through conditional use approval with includes site plan approval by the Northfield Township Planning Commission and approved by the Township Board before opening. Conditional Use approvals come with conditions for land use.

**I heard marijuana businesses smell bad.** Marijuana businesses are now required to install odor abatement equipment, which are regulated by the State of Michigan. These are called air scrubbers and eliminate the smell of the plant. Forcing people to grow in their home without local access to a shop allows those odors to go uncontrolled.

**What about light and noise pollution from businesses?** Lighting and noise pollution are regulated by local township ordinances. They have to comply with the conditions of the ordinance just as any other business in the same area. They have dictated hours of operation, the type of lighting allowed and brightness. Non-compliance would risk their business and license.

**I have heard the presence of marijuana businesses in Northfield Township will attract crime and undesirable**

**visitors.** Not true. Proponents of legalizing marijuana for recreational use say that it will reduce crime. Opponents say it will have the opposite effect. In Washington State, which legalized marijuana for recreational use in 2013, the number of low-level court filings for marijuana fell by 98% between 2012 and 2013. The number of adults (over 21) convicted for misdemeanor possession fell from 297 in January 2012 to 0 in January 2013—and has remained there since. Meanwhile, the number of those under 21 convicted for possession fell by about 50% between 2012 and 2013. In Colorado, the number of cases brought against people for cultivation, distribution and possession of marijuana fell by 85% in the first full year of legal sales (2014) compared to the average in the three years prior to legalization (2010–2012). Similar declines in charges and convictions were seen in jurisdictions that subsequently legalized recreational cannabis, including Oregon, Alaska, and Washington, D.C. Source: <https://reason.org/wp-content/uploads/does-legalizing-marijuana-reduce-crime.pdf>

**What are the financial requirement for licensure?** An applicant and any persons who have a direct or indirect interest in the applicant, as well as any officers, directors, and managerial employees of the applicant, shall disclose all the financial information specific to financial accounts from any or all financial institutions, property ownership, all tax information and business organizational documents filed in Michigan.

Source: [https://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-89334\\_79571\\_83746-453503--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-89334_79571_83746-453503--,00.html)

**What other benefits will marijuana businesses bring to our community?**

Northfield Township will benefit from the number of jobs created with the new marijuana businesses — not to mention the ancillary work in areas like accounting, law, insurance, heating and ventilation, and other support services. Given these potential benefits, W. Dane Carey, from Dingeman & Dancer, PLC states, “the recent trend of local officials coming out in favor of allowing medical marijuana businesses in their communities is not surprising. Municipalities that embrace the new industry will have access to additional sources of funding, an improved local economy, and be in a far better position if the state ultimately legalizes recreational marijuana, as many anticipate.”

**What if a business violates state regulations or local ordinances?** If a complaint is received, it is thoroughly investigated through the State of Michigan. If found to be out of compliance, the business is shut down and loses its license. This is a huge incentive for owners to comply with state and local regulations. It costs

hundreds of thousands of dollars and rigorous obstacles to obtain a license. Business owners have too much invested to risk losing it all.

**Will marijuana businesses promote use by our children?**

Today’s youth is more aware of what marijuana is, who has it, and how to get it; as much (or more) than adults. Children are more likely to be exposed to marijuana through family and friends than a heavily regulated retail space. Marijuana retail businesses do not sell to minors, nor are children allowed into the establishment. Bringing marijuana into the open takes it out of the basement, where children of any age have access and are more likely to use, share, or sell it, or worse; a medical emergency from a product that has not been tested or graded. Allowing businesses where people can buy locally will make marijuana safer for everyone.

**Why should I not be afraid of grow businesses?**

All classes of grow operations are indoor operations. They are locked and have an extraordinary amount of security with required noise and odor abatement equipment. They have lighting restrictions along with hours of operations and traffic restrictions. They are much less intrusive than most businesses allowed in the same area. Grow businesses must go through multiple layers of state, county, local, and environmental agency approvals as well as Planning Commission Conditional Use and Site Plan approvals. Based on Planning Commission recommendations, the Township Board determines approval. Again, all the businesses are licensed annually. If they do not meet standards that year, they are not licensed. No other Michigan business has to meet this standard.



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