

Public Support for Medical Marijuana in New York State: Reading the Polls

Twenty-three states and the District of Columbia have passed laws to allow access to medical marijuana. This trend reflects increasing public support throughout the nation for allowing those with living with debilitating diseases and devastating pain to access a medication that can relieve their suffering and prolong their lives. Support for patient access to medical marijuana in New York is exceptionally strong.

Public Support in New York

- A 2014 Quinnipiac University poll found that 88 percent of all New Yorkers think allowing medical marijuana at the recommendation of a doctor is a good idea -with strong support amongst all groups.
 - For example, 58 percent of republicans favor medical marijuana.
- A 2013 poll by Siena Research Institute found that 82 percent of New Yorkers supported support allowing seriously and terminally ill people to legally use marijuana for medical purposes if recommended by a doctor.
 - 81 percent of Republicans and Democrats, and 89 percent of Independents were in support.
- A 2013 Quinnipiac University poll found that 70 percent of all New Yorkers think allowing medical marijuana at the recommendation of a doctor is a good idea -with strong support amongst all groups.
 - For example, 58 percent of republicans favor medical marijuana
- A 2010 Quinnipiac University poll found that 71 percent of all New Yorkers support allowing adults to legally use medical marijuana if recommended by a physician – and found majority support across all political, racial and regional groups.
 - For example, 55 percent of republicans favor medical marijuana, and 63 percent of voters over 65 support it.
- A 2010 Cornell University Survey Research Institute poll found that 64 percent of New Yorkers support medical marijuana.
- A 2005 poll by Siena Research Institute found that 76 percent of New Yorkers supported medical marijuana and also found support across political parties, racial groups, regions and ages.
 - 72 percent of Republicans, 79 percent of Independents and 80 percent of Democrats were in support.
 - 75 percent of Upstate, 78 percent of Suburban and 77 percent of New York City voters were in support.
- A 2003 poll by Zogby found that 66 percent of New Yorkers supported medical marijuana.

Support for access to medical marijuana is also strong in other states.

Florida:

- A November 2013 Quinnipiac poll found that 82% of Floridians would support a medical marijuana ballot initiative - only 16% are opposed.

Texas:

- A 2013 poll of Texans found that 58% allow seriously and terminally ill patients to use medical marijuana for a limited number of conditions if their doctors recommend it.

New Jersey:

- A 2011 survey of registered voters in New Jersey found 86 percent approve of making medical marijuana available for medical use.
- A 2006 Polling Company poll found that 86 percent of New Jerseyans support allowing access to medical marijuana. This was an increase over the 82 percent support found in a 2002 Eagleton poll.

Connecticut:

- A 2012 Quinnipiac University poll found that 68 percent of Connecticut voters support a proposal to allow adults to use marijuana for medical purposes, with a physician's recommendation.
- A 2002 poll by the Lucas Organization and Arlington Research Group found that 73 percent of Connecticut residents favored a bill that would allow access to medical marijuana with the approval of a physician.

National Support

Nationally, support for medical marijuana is very strong, with polls consistently finding that between 70 and 80 percent of Americans think medical marijuana should be made available to patients who need it:

- A 2013 Fox News poll of registered voters found that 85% of supported legal access to medical marijuana if recommended by a doctor.
- A 2012 Reason-Rupe poll found that 73 percent of those surveyed agreed it should be legal for doctors to prescribe medical marijuana to their patients.
- A 2011 CBS poll found that 77 percent of those surveyed supported allowing a doctor to recommend marijuana.
- A 2010 Gallup poll found that 70 percent favored making marijuana legally available through a doctor to reduce pain and suffering.
- A 2010 ABC poll found that 81 percent of those surveyed agreed that doctors should be allowed to recommend marijuana for medical purposes to treat their patients.
- A 2010 survey by the Pew Research Center found that 73 percent of Americans favor allowing the sale and use of marijuana for medical purposes if it is recommended by a doctor.
 - Pew also found that support for legalizing medical marijuana spans all major political and demographic groups – and is equally high in states that have and have not already passed medical marijuana laws.
- A 2004 poll by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) found 72 percent of adults 45 and older were in support of allowing access to medical marijuana.
- A 2002 CNN/Time poll found that 80 percent of Americans support allowing patients access to medical marijuana.

- A 2001 national poll for the Pew Research Center found 73 percent of those polled favored allowing access to medical marijuana.
- A Gallup poll conducted in 1999 found 73 percent support for medical marijuana.
- An ABC New/Discovery News poll conducted in 1997 found 70 percent support for medical marijuana.
- The most comprehensive analysis of medical marijuana polling was done by the Ohio Patient Network in 2002. The report reviewed more than 60 polls on medical marijuana and concluded that as many as two-thirds of voters will reward candidates who support medical marijuana.
- Polls also suggest that support for medical marijuana among Americans has been increasing over time. In polls from the 1990's, support for medical marijuana among the general public was reported at between 60-70%.