

FAQs for visitors

Legalization of Cannabis

As of October 17, 2018, the Government of Canada will legalize and regulate cannabis. The following information will help answer specific questions you may have about what this means when visiting a Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) institution.

Is cannabis allowed in CSC institutions?

No, cannabis is not allowed in CSC institutions and is considered contraband. Generally, contraband includes any item that could jeopardize the security of an institution or the safety of persons, when that item is not possessed without prior authorization.

Some of the items that CSC considers to be contraband are: intoxicants (e.g. narcotics), weapons (including ammunition for a weapon), currency, explosives and cigarettes.

A safe, drug-free penitentiary is necessary for the successful reintegration of inmates into the community. The presence of drugs creates violence within penitentiaries and makes them unsafe for offenders, staff and visitors.

What happens when I visit a CSC institution?

You will go through an initial search (walk through a metal detector and/or have items scanned with an ion scanner or x-ray machine). You may also be searched by a drug detector dog. If there is suspicion that you possess contraband, you may face a more intrusive search.

What happens if I am caught smelling like, having consumed or possessing cannabis?

Your visit could be denied if you bring cannabis into a penitentiary. It could also mean that you delay the release of the inmate you're visiting or impact their visiting privileges.

If you smell like, or have consumed cannabis, you will be processed as per normal procedures, and a Threat Risk Assessment (TRA) will be conducted. This will impact the

duration of your visit, as processing will take longer. The outcome of the TRA may result in a closed visit or alternatively, the visit being denied.

We look at multiple factors before a visit is approved, restricted or denied. Even though an ion scan or detector dog alert may occur, we will continue to assess and evaluate different factors.

Will I be criminally charged if I have cannabis in my possession?

Unless you have a prescription for cannabis, you are not to have it in your possession when entering the institution for your visit.

For more information please refer to the *Cannabis Act*.

What if I have a medicinal marijuana prescription?

As with all prescription medication, you will be asked to turn over your prescription (including a copy of your prescription) to CSC staff, while being processed for your visit. Your medication will be secured for the duration of your visit. If you need your medication during your visit, contact the officer in charge and arrangements will be made for you to access and consume your medication, as prescribed.

What can I do if I am being pressured to smuggle cannabis?

Talk to CSC staff. Contact the penitentiary or a parole office and ask for help. You have information about contraband in an institution and wish to remain anonymous? Call CSC's Tip Line at 1-866-780-3784.