



Office of the University Counsel

Memorandum Regarding Marijuana Use or Possession

On November 6, 2012, voters in Washington State passed Initiative 502, amending state law to permit people over the age of 21 years to possess small amounts of marijuana for personal use. To implement Initiative 502, the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board has adopted rules regulating the production, processing and sale of marijuana.

Despite the change in state law regarding marijuana, Seattle University's policy remains unchanged: use and possession of marijuana on campus or in association with any university-sponsored or affiliated activity or program is prohibited. The policy complies with the federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act. Under this federal law, as a condition of receiving federal funds, an institution of higher education such as Seattle University must certify that it has adopted and implemented a program to prevent the unlawful possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees on campus and as part of its activities and programs. At the federal level, this law includes any amount of marijuana.

I-502 created a conflict between state and federal laws. When state and federal laws are in conflict, federal law takes precedence. If Seattle University does not comply with federal law and regulations on marijuana possession and use on campus and in university programs and activities, it risks losing federal funds for student financial aid, faculty research and other important programs and services. Thus, the Seattle University community (i.e., its faculty, staff, students, guests, and program participants) must continue to abide by federal laws and regulations and university policy barring the use and possession of any amount of marijuana on campus or in association with any university-sponsored or affiliated activity or program.

If you have any questions, please contact the Office of the University Counsel at 206-296-2043.

Additional Resources

City of Seattle: [Recreational Marijuana Information](#)

Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board: [FAQs on I-502](#)

University of Washington Alcohol & Drug Abuse Institute: [Learn about Marijuana](#)

King County Public Health: [Health and Marijuana](#)