

Timeline of Cannabis Related Issues in Canada from 2015-2017

Sept. 30, 2015

While campaigning during the 2015 federal election before the Liberal party came to power, Justin Trudeau said his party was committed to legalizing and regulating marijuana. He said controlling it would “protect our kids and remove criminal elements from it.” He added at the time the Liberal party would “get started on that right away.”

April 20, 2016

Federal Health Minister Jane Philpott announced the Liberal government will introduce legislation to legalize marijuana in spring 2017.

Meanwhile in Toronto, thousands attended the city’s annual 4-20 pot rally at Yonge-Dundas Square. As marijuana dispensaries started popping up in anticipation of the legislation, a public opinion poll at the time showed 68 per cent of Canadians felt pot should be legal.

April 24, 2016

A spike in marijuana dispensaries in parts of Canada promoted calls for the government to regulate the businesses.

May 26, 2016

Toronto police conducted “Project Claudia,” a large coordinated series of raids on 43 marijuana dispensaries. Officers said 90 people were arrested and 257 charges were laid.

June 13, 2016

Attorney General Jody Wilson-Raybould announced the federal government wouldn’t decriminalize marijuana before legalizing it. She also said the Liberals wouldn’t support an NDP motion urging the government to immediately decriminalize simple pot possession.

June 23, 2016

Toronto Police Chief Mark Saunders announced officers raided several marijuana dispensaries in the city, almost a month after Project Claudia. He said the businesses were operating illegally. A coalition of marijuana dispensaries called the May raids “a major mistake” and said the stores offered high-quality medical cannabis products to those who need it.

June 30, 2016

Attorney General Jody Wilson-Raybould announced the creation of a task force as “the first step in a process” to legalize marijuana in Canada.

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Dec. 13, 2016

The federal Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation released recommendations on how marijuana should be produced, sold and regulated. It recommended selling marijuana in separate stores to those who are 18 and older.

April 13, 2017

On April 13, 2017, bill C-45, with short title Cannabis Act, was introduced to Parliament, sponsored by Jody Wilson-Raybould, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

“On or before July 1, 2018”

The initial target for legalization of cannabis.