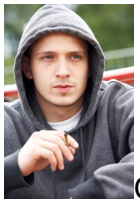
NCADD
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCE, INC.

NCADD Policy Alert: Marijuana Legalization CO and WA- DOJ - Department of Justice

---

 On August 29, 2013, the U. S. Department of Justice (DOJ) just issued a ruling advising that it will not challenge the states that have enacted laws legalizing marijuana, such as Colorado and Washington.

The ruling states that DOJ expects the states to establish strict regulatory schemes that are "tough in practice. . . and include strong state-based enforcement efforts, backed by adequate funding."

The DOJ ruling lays out eight enforcement priority areas and announced that if any of the stated harms materialize, federal prosecutors will intervene based on federal enforcement priorities.

The eight priority areas are as follows:

- Preventing the distribution of marijuana to minors;
- Preventing revenue from the sale of marijuana from going to criminal enterprises, gangs and cartels;
- Preventing the diversion of marijuana from states where it is legal under state law in some form to other states;
- Preventing state-authorized marijuana activity from being used as a cover or pretext for the trafficking of other illegal drugs or other illegal activity;
- Preventing violence and the use of firearms in the cultivation and distribution of marijuana;
- Preventing drugged driving and the exacerbation of other adverse public health consequences associated with marijuana use;
- Preventing the growing of marijuana on public lands and the attendant public safety and environmental dangers posed by marijuana production on public lands; and
- Preventing marijuana possession or use on federal property.

Reference Materials: For your convenience, as detailed background, we have attached the following documents:

1. DOJ Press Release: Update to Marijuana Enforcement Policy

2. DOJ Memorandum to All U.S. Attorneys: Guidance Regarding Marijuana Enforcement
3. ONDCP E-Blast: The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy
4. Press Release- Smart Approaches To Marijuana - SAM – "Trust But Verify"

The SAM Press Release points out that the DOJ approach, entitled "Trust but Verify," is the first chapter in the long story about marijuana legalization in the U.S. and will likely lead to an increase in consequences among kids, similar to what was seen in Colorado around medical marijuana in 2009. SAM is Directed by Kevin Sabet, PhD. Dr. Sabet will be speaking at the NCADD Conference of Affiliates to be held October 23-25, 2013 in Arlington, VA.