

Cannabis Prohibition

An Unnecessary Burden on the Criminal Justice System

86%

of Delaware cannabis possession court filings **DO NOT** include a Title 11, 16, or 21 felony charge.

16.4

cannabis possession court filings per day in 2018.

5,981

cannabis possession court filings in 2018.

127%

increase in cannabis possession court filings over the past 5 years.

48.6%

of all drug offense court filings in 2017 were for cannabis possession only.

1 in 7

Delaware adults consumed cannabis in 2017.

7.6%

increase in adult cannabis consumption since 2014.

Up to **125,000**

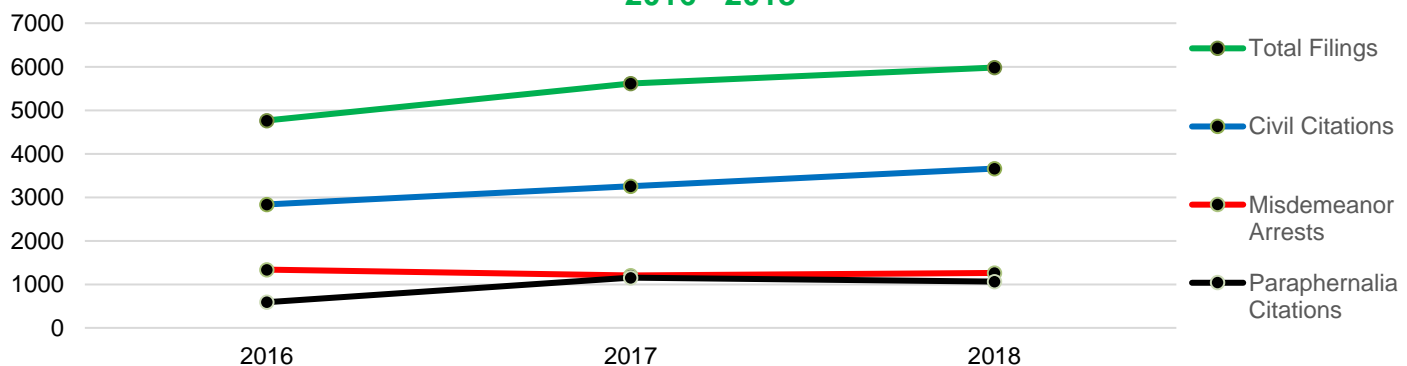
Delawarean cannabis consumers in 2017

Cannabis Prohibition (Decriminalization) is a failed, costly policy that diverts law enforcement resources away from serious crime and puts an unnecessary strain on our criminal justice system. In addition to the monetary and opportunity costs associated with enforcement, cannabis prohibition comes with an unjustifiable human cost.

Decriminalization of cannabis is narrowly defined in Delaware, and thousands of responsible consumers have faced misdemeanor cannabis possession charges since 2015, with legal consequences including seizure of personal property, fines, probation, court-ordered treatment, and court fees. Collateral consequences of a cannabis possession conviction include loss of parental and constitutional rights, employment, housing, and eligibility for educational loans. These consequences serve as an undue impediment to being a productive member of society. Even individuals cited with civil violations are subject to property seizures, court appearances, fines, and court costs.

Cannabis consumption is broadly accepted social conduct, with adult consumption rates rising, and support for legalization growing. Continuing to expose Delawareans to the perils of prohibition is an unjust and ineffective.

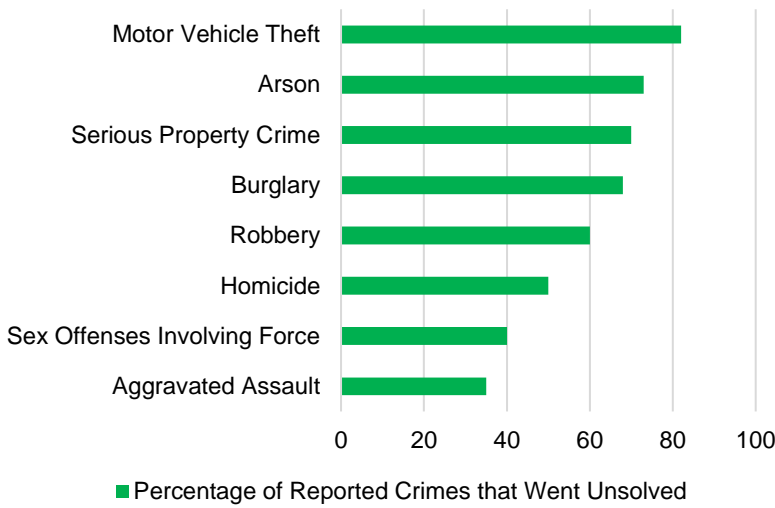
"Possession Only" Cannabis Arrests and Court Filings in Delaware, 2016 - 2018



(Delaware Statistical Analysis Center, 2019)

Prohibition Diverts Police Manpower Away from Real Crime

Unsolved Crime in Delaware



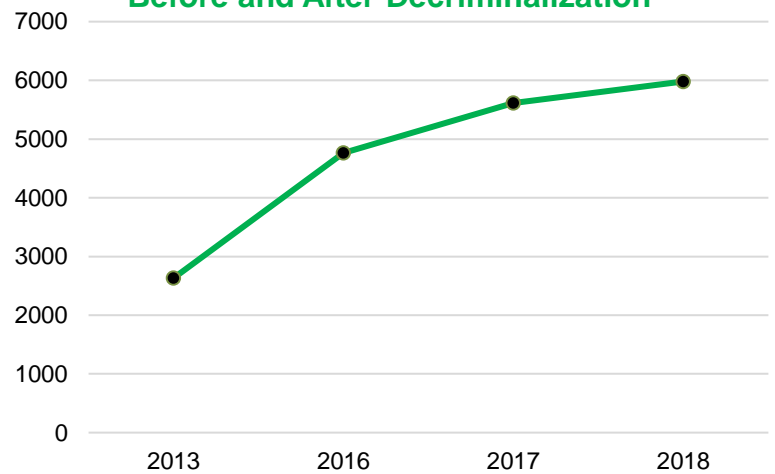
Delaware Statistical Analysis Center. (2019). Crime in Delaware 2013-2017. Criminal Justice Council.

Police Quarterly Reports Legalization Improves Crime Clearance Rates

"Findings suggest no negative effects of legalization on crime clearance rates. Moreover, evidence suggests some crime clearance rates have improved. Our findings suggest legalization has resulted in improvements in some clearance rates."

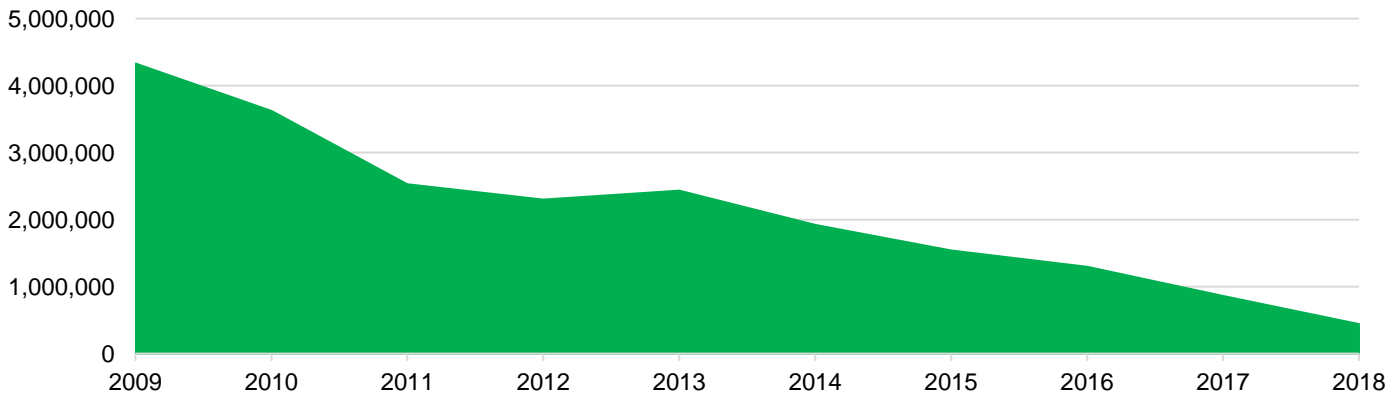
Makin, Willits, Wu, et al., (2018, July 4). *Marijuana Legalization and Crime Clearance Rates: Testing Proponent Assertions in Colorado and Washington State*, Police Quarterly, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1098611118786255>

"Possession Only" Cannabis Arrests and Court Filings in Delaware, Before and After Decriminalization



Despite decriminalization in 2015, cannabis possession court filings are at an all-time high. Delaware continues to waste millions in law enforcement and criminal justice resources by maintaining a system in which the criminal market supplies a growing consumer demand. At the same time, liberalization of cannabis policies across the country has resulted in a precipitous drop in cannabis border seizures. Cannabis legalization erodes the economic base of gangs and cartels, reduces crime related to the criminal market, and allows police agencies to reallocate limited law enforcement resources.

Cannabis Seized at the U.S. Border (in pounds)



* FY2018 YTD, October 1, 2017 - August 31, 2018, U.S. Customs and Border Protection