

1 Polk County Board of Supervisors

2 Resolution No: 21-17

3 Resolution to Adopt the Board of Health and Human Services Policy Statement on the Opposition to
4 Legalization of Recreational Marijuana

5 TO THE HONORABLE SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY BOARD OF THE COUNTY OF
6 POLK:

7 Gentlemen:

8 WHEREAS while, marijuana remains an illegal substance under federal and Wisconsin state law,
9 several states have either passed or are considering legislation to legalize recreational use of
10 marijuana; and

11 WHEREAS, science has shown that marijuana use has a wide range of short and long term effects
12 that can be seriously detrimental to the overall health of the user as well as result in an addiction
13 status; and

14
15 WHEREAS, the 2014 Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavioral Survey (YRBS) results indicate that 17% of
16 Wisconsin high school students are current marijuana users; and

17 WHEREAS, in Colorado, a state that legalized recreational marijuana, a 2016 report by the Rocky
18 Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking agency, showed a 32 percent increase in marijuana related
19 traffic fatalities, increases in emergency room visits and hospitalizations and greater pot usage by
20 youths age 12-17; as well as 40 percent more school expulsion since 2008, most of them marijuana
21 related; and

22 WHEREAS, the Polk County Health and Human Services Board has passed a policy statement in
23 opposition to legalization of recreational marijuana.

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Polk County Board of Supervisors supports the
25 attached policy statement titled *Opposition to Legalization of Recreational Marijuana* to guide the
26 substance abuse prevention work of the Polk County Health Department.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Polk County Board of Supervisors opposes the legalization
28 of recreational marijuana and informs its state representatives of such.

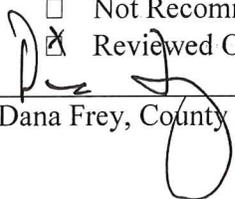
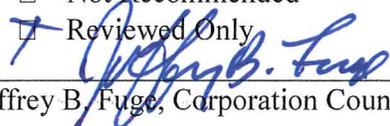
29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the authorization provided in this resolution shall be subject to
30 review and approval according to county policy.

(Continued on Page 2)

Polk County Board of Supervisors

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Resolution to Adopt the Board of Health and Human Services Policy Statement on the Opposition to Legalization of Recreational Marijuana

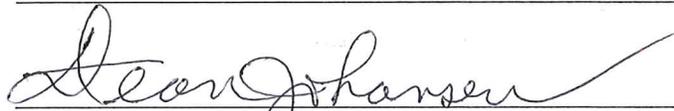
Funding Source/ Funding Amount:	Not Applicable
Date Reviewed as to Appropriations:	Not Applicable
Committee Recommendation as To Appropriation:	Not Applicable
Effective Date:	Upon Passage
Dated Submitted To County Board	March 21, 2017
Submitted and Sponsored By Health and Human Services Board:	<i>Rec'd FOR THE HHS BOARD</i>
Review By County Administrator: <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended <input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reviewed Only  Dana Frey, County Administrator	Review By Corporation Counsel: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved as to Form <input type="checkbox"/> Recommended <input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reviewed Only  Jeffrey B. Fuge, Corporation Counsel

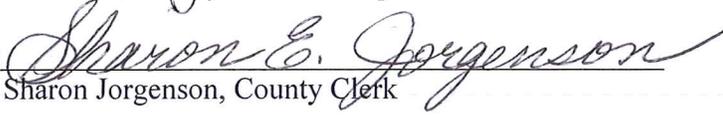
Acknowledgement of County Board Action

At its regular business meeting on the 21st of March 2017, the Polk County Board of Supervisors considered and acted on the above resolution, Resolution No 21-17: Resolution to Adopt the Board of Health and Human Services Policy Statement on the Opposition to Legalization of Recreational Marijuana, as follows:

- Adopted by simple majority of the board of supervisors by a vote of _____ in favor and _____ against.
- Adopted by unanimous vote.
- Defeated by a vote of 5 in favor and 8+2 absent against.
- Defeated by voice vote.
- Action Deferred by Procedural Action, as follows: _____

SIGNED BY:


 Dean Johansen, County Board Chairperson

Attest: 
 Sharon Jorgenson, County Clerk

Polk County Health Department: Board of Health and Human Services Policy Statement
Opposition to Legalization of Recreational Marijuana

Approved Date: 06/14/2016

Policy Number: 003

Date Revised:

Background

Cannabis, or marijuana, refers to the dried leaves, flowers, stems, and seeds from the hemp plant *Cannabis sativa*, which contains the psychoactive (mind-altering) chemical delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), as well as other related compounds. This plant material can also be concentrated in a resin called hashish or a sticky black liquid called hash oil. THC is believed to be the main chemical ingredient that produces the psychoactive effect. Cannabis is often smoked in hand-rolled cigarettes (joints), pipes, or water pipes (bongs).

Health Impact of Marijuana

Marijuana use has a wide range of short- and long-term effects. It seriously impairs judgment and motor coordination and, contrary to common belief, marijuana is addictive.ⁱ Short-term effects include; sensory distortion, panic, anxiety, poor coordination of movement, lowered reaction time, sleepiness or depression, and increased heartbeat (with risk of heart attack). Long-term effects include reduced resistance to common illnesses (colds, bronchitis, etc.), suppression of the immune system, growth disorders, increases of abnormally structured cells in the body, reduction of male sex hormones, rapid destruction of lung fibers, lesions (injuries) to the brain which can be permanent, reduced sexual capacity, reduced ability to learn and retain information, apathy, drowsiness, lack of motivation, personality and mood changes and the inability to understand things clearly.ⁱⁱ

Dataⁱⁱⁱ

Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavioral Survey (YRBS) results indicate current marijuana use - defined as use within the previous 30 days - among Wisconsin high school students has been similar to, or slightly lower than, use among high school students nationally for several years.^{iv} In 2013, it dropped to 17% in Wisconsin, compared to 23% nationally. As with current use, lifetime use of marijuana among high school students has dropped slightly in recent years, both in Wisconsin and nationally. The prevalence of lifetime use was similar in the state and nationally at 37% from 2005 to 2011.^v Wisconsin's prevalence dropped noticeably in 2013 to 31%, but more data is needed to determine whether this signals a trend. Although 2013 Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey data of Wisconsin high school students showed a decrease in marijuana use from 39% in 1999 to 31%, one of six students (17%) report using the drug more than once in the past 30 days.

In Colorado, a state that legalized recreational marijuana, the Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area's third annual report, released in June, 2016, showed the effects of legal marijuana in that state, including a 32 percent jump in marijuana-related traffic fatalities, increases in emergency-room visits and hospitalizations, and greater pot usage by youths age 12 to 17.^{vi} The report, generated by the agency funded through the National Office of Drug Control Policy, also showed 40 percent more school expulsions since 2008, most of them marijuana related; greater exposure of young children to the drug; a 2,000 percent increase in the number of Colorado mail parcels intercepted destined for other states; and 32 marijuana extraction-lab explosions in 2014.

Although several states have decriminalized marijuana (for recreational or medical use), it remains an illegal substance under federal law. As state laws change, it is likely to create issues for substance abuse service delivery. To provide guidelines, the Department of Justice issued new [guidance regarding marijuana enforcement – 2013 \(PDF | 525 KB\)](#) for federal prosecutors regarding eight factors for consideration in marijuana enforcement. Two key strategies from this report include preventing the

distribution of marijuana to minors and to prevent “drugged” driving and the prevention of other adverse public health consequences associated with marijuana use.

Relationship to Existing Health Department Policy

There is no existing PCHD policy on marijuana. PCHD recently offered educational information to schools and community groups on this topic.

Recommendation

Due to the adverse health effects of marijuana use and the emergence of alarming data post legalization of marijuana from the state of Colorado, the Polk County Board of Health supports the existing Wisconsin legislation that makes marijuana an illegal substance and opposes legalization of recreational marijuana.

Action Steps

The Board of Health recommends that the Health Department should:

- Offer marijuana educational presentations focusing on the adverse health effects of the drug, to Polk County school districts targeting middle and high school students
- Encourage Polk County school districts to incorporate evidence based and age appropriate comprehensive substance use prevention curriculum including marijuana into classroom instruction
- Collaborate with law enforcement to conduct an ongoing public awareness campaign about the adverse health effects and legal ramifications of marijuana use
- Disseminate, through school district newsletters, evidence-based youth marijuana prevention messages to parents, teachers, school administrators, and school board members
- Advocate with legislators to fund a statewide, coordinated, comprehensive, and evidence-based substance abuse prevention program to protect the public’s health

ⁱ National Institute on Drug Abuse. Drug Facts: Marijuana - accessed from <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/marijuana> (updated January 2014)

ⁱⁱ Foundation for a Drug-Free World <http://www.drugfreeworld.org/#/interactive>

ⁱⁱⁱ 2015 YRBS conducted in Wisconsin (including Polk County schools) did not achieve weighted status thus is recommended by the Department of Public Instruction to not be used. The next data collection period is 2017

^{iv} Wisconsin Epidemiological Profile on Alcohol and Other Drug Use, 2014, Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Prepared by the Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, and the Office of Health Informatics, Division of Public Health

^v Ibid

^{vi} Columbus Dispatch, Columbus, Ohio, June 13, 2016