

Compliance with ID rules in recreational cannabis stores

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A new study by collaborators at Klein Buendel, Inc. and the Prevention Research Center finds that recreational cannabis stores in Colorado and Washington state, both of which legalized adult recreational use in 2012, show high levels of compliance with rules preventing underage purchase of cannabis. The study also shows that there is more than can be done to

reach full compliance.

Between September 2016 and April 2017, 175 recreational cannabis stores in Colorado and Washington State were visited by "pseudo-buyers." The protocols were as follows:

- Each store in each state was visited twice.
- An observer entered the store first to scan the store's environment and observe the buyers' purchase behavior.
- On each of these visits in Washington, a young-adult buyer attempted to enter the store and purchase cannabis without showing a state-approved ID (a valid driver's license).
- The same protocol was used on the first visit in Colorado, while in a second Colorado visit, an 18-20 year old buyer showed an underage driver's license and attempted to enter the store to purchase cannabis.

The results show:

- All stores across the two states requested an ID.
- Stores refused buyers in 73.6% of visits at the entrance, 88.3% cumulative before the counter, and 92.6% by the time of a purchase attempt.
- Refusal was lower in Washington State than in Colorado (at entry, 53.1%; before the counter, 80.5%; and at purchase attempt, 86.6%), but refusal did not differ by buyer protocol.

Says PIRE Co-Author Dr. Robert Saltz: "Compliance with laws restricting cannabis sales to individuals 21 or older with a valid ID was high and higher than we see for alcohol sales. Whether this reflects the newness of the industry or not will be determined by future [compliance](#) checks. Compliance in Washington state might be improved by having store personnel check IDs at the [store](#) entry."

More information: Buller, David B., W. Gill Woodall, Robert Saltz, and Mary Klein Buller. "Compliance With Personal ID Regulations by Recreational Marijuana Stores in Two US States." *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 80, no. 6 (2019): 679-686.

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