

Colorado says yes to medical use of 'magic mushrooms'

November 14 2022, by Cara Murez



Colorado voters have voted narrowly to approve the [medical use](#) of

"magic mushrooms" in Colorado.

"I'm in awe of what we were able to accomplish," said Veronica Lightning Horse Perez, a lead proponent for legalizing [psilocybin](#), the main psychoactive compound in mushrooms. "Over a million people voted yes on this. To think that many people see the value in these medicines, that many people know that these can be used for healing—that's huge."

In 2018, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration called psilocybin a "breakthrough therapy," which has sped up development of medications using the compound.

Psilocybin may have potential as a treatment for a host of mental health conditions, including depression, anxiety, [post-traumatic stress disorder](#) (PTSD), drug dependency and eating disorders. Clinical trials to further research this are continuing.

A movement to legalize psilocybin is growing: Oregon voters approved allowing its therapeutic use in 2020, while it has been decriminalized in Washington, D.C. and more than a dozen additional cities, *NBC News* reported.

An additional 19 states have seen the introduction of bills to legalize its possession, though none have been approved yet. These include Missouri, Iowa and Kansas. More than a dozen other states are seeking to further study its health benefits, including Florida, *NBC News* reported.

Meanwhile, Hawaii's state Senate has approved assembling a [task force](#) that would plan for making the drug available to adults as a mental health treatment. Connecticut has adjusted its state budget to fund programs that would use the drug in working with veterans and retired first

responders.

In Oklahoma's House of Representatives, a bill to authorize scientific research into psilocybin is headed to the Senate. It would allow state-run [clinical trials](#) for adults with specific conditions, *NBC News* reported.

"More folks are starting to recognize and understand, when it comes to psychedelic therapy, this is not some sort of radical field. It's becoming more mainstream," Oklahoma state Rep. Daniel Pae, who co-authored the bill, told *NBC News*.

Texas has already passed a similar bill to study the drug.

Meanwhile, psilocybin remains illegal at the federal level and in most [states](#), *NBC News* reported.

Importantly, the new Colorado law does not allow [retail sales](#) or use in various circumstances, including schools, in public or while operating a vehicle.

Denver-based addiction counselor Kevin Franciotti told *NBC News* that the measure gives Colorado the "opportunity to be a leader in pushing American drug policy in the right direction."

Still, opponents of the Colorado measure called for not jumping ahead of FDA approval.

"I'm hoping the rest of the country can learn the hard lessons from my state's foray," Luke Niforatos, who leads two national organizations that opposed the measure. "As the years go on and we learn more about this experiment, hopefully we'll say we're going to let the FDA and scientists lead medicine, not corporations."

More information: The National Library of Medicine has more on [psilocybin](#) as a therapeutic.

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