

Chapter 4

(Senate Bill 517 of the 2015 Regular Session)

AN ACT concerning

**Criminal Law – Use and Possession of Marijuana and Drug Paraphernalia**

FOR the purpose of ~~repealing a certain criminal prohibition on the use or possession of marijuana; establishing that certain civil penalties apply to the use or possession of any quantity of marijuana; establishing a civil penalty for the smoking of marijuana in a public place; requiring a court to dismiss a certain use or possession of marijuana charge if the court finds that the person used or possessed marijuana because of a certain medical necessity; providing that the provisions of this Act may not be construed to authorize certain activities; establishing that certain procedures regarding the issuance of a citation for the use or possession of marijuana apply to all amounts and not just certain amounts of marijuana; establishing that a certain criminal prohibition on the use or possession of drug paraphernalia does not apply to the use or possession of drug paraphernalia involving the use or possession of marijuana; repealing a certain affirmative defense regarding a certain medical necessity as it relates to a certain offense prohibiting the use and possession of drug paraphernalia; prohibiting the use of marijuana in a vehicle while on a highway; providing for certain penalties for a violation of this Act; providing for the application of certain provisions of this Act;~~ and generally relating to the use and possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia.

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
Article – Criminal Law  
Section ~~5–601, 5–601.1, 5–601(c)(1)~~ and 5–619  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(2012 Replacement Volume and 2014 Supplement)

~~BY adding to  
Article – Transportation  
Section 21–903.1 and 27–116  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(2012 Replacement Volume and 2014 Supplement)~~

BY adding to  
Article – Criminal Law  
Section 5–601(c)(4)  
Annotated Code of Maryland  
(2012 Replacement Volume and 2014 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

## Article – Criminal Law

5–601.

~~(a) Except as otherwise provided in this title, a person may not:~~

~~(1) possess or administer to another a controlled dangerous substance, unless obtained directly or by prescription or order from an authorized provider acting in the course of professional practice; or~~

~~(2) obtain or attempt to obtain a controlled dangerous substance, or procure or attempt to procure the administration of a controlled dangerous substance by:~~

~~(i) fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or subterfuge;~~

~~(ii) the counterfeiting or alteration of a prescription or a written order;~~

~~(iii) the concealment of a material fact;~~

~~(iv) the use of a false name or address;~~

~~(v) falsely assuming the title of or representing to be a manufacturer, distributor, or authorized provider; or~~

~~(vi) making, issuing, or presenting a false or counterfeit prescription or written order.~~

~~(b) Information that is communicated to a physician in an effort to obtain a controlled dangerous substance in violation of this section is not a privileged communication.~~

(c) (1) Except as provided in paragraphs (2) ~~and (3)~~, **(3), AND (4)** of this subsection, a person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 4 years or a fine not exceeding \$25,000 or both.

~~(2) (i) Except as provided in subparagraph [(ii)] **(III)** of this paragraph, a [person whose] violation of this section [involves] **INVOLVING** the use or possession of marijuana is **A CIVIL OFFENSE** subject to [imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or a fine not exceeding \$1,000 or both.];~~

~~[(ii)] 1. **[A] FOR A** first violation, [of this section involving the use or possession of less than 10 grams of marijuana is a civil offense punishable by] a fine not exceeding \$100[.];~~

~~2. [A] FOR A second violation, [of this section involving the use or possession of less than 10 grams of marijuana is a civil offense punishable by] a fine not exceeding \$250[.]; AND~~

~~3. [A] FOR A third or subsequent violation, [of this section involving the use or possession of less than 10 grams of marijuana is a civil offense punishable by] a fine not exceeding \$500.~~

~~[4. A.] (H) 1. In addition to a fine, a court shall order a person under the age of 21 years who commits a violation punishable under [subsubparagraph 1, 2, or 3 of this] subparagraph (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH to attend a drug education program approved by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, refer the person to an assessment for substance abuse disorder, and refer the person to substance abuse treatment, if necessary.~~

~~[B.] 2. In addition to a fine, a court shall order a person at least 21 years old who commits a violation punishable under [subsubparagraph 3 of this] subparagraph (I) 3 OF THIS PARAGRAPH to attend a drug education program approved by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, refer the person to an assessment for substance abuse disorder, and refer the person to substance abuse treatment, if necessary.~~

~~(H) (4) A VIOLATION OF THIS SECTION INVOLVING THE SMOKING OF MARIJUANA IN A PUBLIC PLACE IS A CIVIL OFFENSE PUNISHABLE BY A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$1,000 \$500 .~~

~~(3) (i) 1. In this paragraph the following words have the meanings indicated:~~

~~2. "Bona fide physician-patient relationship" means a relationship in which the physician has ongoing responsibility for the assessment, care, and treatment of a patient's medical condition.~~

~~3. "Caregiver" means an individual designated by a patient with a debilitating medical condition to provide physical or medical assistance to the patient, including assisting with the medical use of marijuana, who:~~

~~A. is a resident of the State;~~

~~B. is at least 21 years old;~~

~~C. is an immediate family member, a spouse, or a domestic partner of the patient;~~

~~D. has not been convicted of a crime of violence as defined in § 14-101 of this article;~~

~~E. has not been convicted of a violation of a State or federal controlled dangerous substances law;~~

~~F. has not been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude;~~

~~G. has been designated as caregiver by the patient in writing that has been placed in the patient's medical record prior to arrest;~~

~~H. is the only individual designated by the patient to serve as caregiver; and~~

~~I. is not serving as caregiver for any other patient.~~

~~4. "Debilitating medical condition" means a chronic or debilitating disease or medical condition or the treatment of a chronic or debilitating disease or medical condition that produces one or more of the following, as documented by a physician with whom the patient has a bona fide physician-patient relationship:~~

~~A. cachexia or wasting syndrome;~~

~~B. severe or chronic pain;~~

~~C. severe nausea;~~

~~D. seizures;~~

~~E. severe and persistent muscle spasms; or~~

~~F. any other condition that is severe and resistant to conventional medicine.~~

~~(ii) 1. In a prosecution for the use or possession of marijuana, the defendant may introduce and the court shall consider as a mitigating factor any evidence of medical necessity.~~

~~2. Notwithstanding paragraph (2) of this subsection, if the court finds that the person used or possessed marijuana because of medical necessity, [on conviction of a violation of this section, the maximum penalty that the court may impose on the person is a fine not exceeding \$100] THE COURT SHALL DISMISS THE CHARGE.~~

~~(iii) 1. In a prosecution for the use or possession of marijuana under this section, it is an affirmative defense that the defendant used or possessed marijuana because:~~

~~A. the defendant has a debilitating medical condition that has been diagnosed by a physician with whom the defendant has a bona fide physician-patient relationship;~~

~~B. the debilitating medical condition is severe and resistant to conventional medicine; and~~

~~C. marijuana is likely to provide the defendant with therapeutic or palliative relief from the debilitating medical condition.~~

~~2. A. In a prosecution for the possession of marijuana under this section, it is an affirmative defense that the defendant possessed marijuana because the marijuana was intended for medical use by an individual with a debilitating medical condition for whom the defendant is a caregiver.~~

~~B. A defendant may not assert the affirmative defense under this subsubparagraph unless the defendant notifies the State's Attorney of the defendant's intention to assert the affirmative defense and provides the State's Attorney with all documentation in support of the affirmative defense in accordance with the rules of discovery provided in Maryland Rules 4-262 and 4-263.~~

~~3. An affirmative defense under this subparagraph may not be used if the defendant was:~~

~~A. using marijuana in a public place or assisting the individual for whom the defendant is a caregiver in using the marijuana in a public place; or~~

~~B. in possession of more than 1 ounce of marijuana.~~

~~(d) The provisions of subsection [(c)(2)(ii)] (C)(2)(I) of this section making the possession of marijuana a civil offense may not be construed to:~~

~~(1) affect the laws relating to:~~

~~[(1)] (I) operating a vehicle or vessel while under the influence of or while impaired by a controlled dangerous substance; or~~

~~[(2)] (II) SEARCH, seizure and forfeiture OF A VEHICLE, VESSEL, OR REAL PROPERTY; OR~~

~~(2) AUTHORIZE A PERSON TO ENGAGE IN:~~

~~(I) SMOKING MARIJUANA IN ANY PUBLIC PLACE;~~

~~(II) SMOKING MARIJUANA IN A MOTOR VEHICLE; OR~~

~~(III) UNDERTAKING ANY TASK UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF MARIJUANA, WHEN DOING SO WOULD CONSTITUTE NEGLIGENCE OR PROFESSIONAL MALPRACTICE.~~

~~§ 601.1.~~

~~(a) A police officer shall issue a citation to a person who the police officer has probable cause to believe has committed a violation of § 5-601 of this part involving the use or possession of [less than 10 grams of] marijuana.~~

~~(b) (1) A violation of § 5-601 of this part involving the use or possession of [less than 10 grams of] marijuana is a civil offense.~~

~~(2) Adjudication of a violation under § 5-601 of this part involving the use or possession of [less than 10 grams of] marijuana:~~

~~(i) is not a criminal conviction for any purpose; and~~

~~(ii) does not impose any of the civil disabilities that may result from a criminal conviction.~~

~~(c) (1) A citation issued for a violation of § 5-601 of this part involving the use or possession of [less than 10 grams of] marijuana shall be signed by the police officer who issues the citation and shall contain:~~

~~(i) the name and address of the person charged;~~

~~(ii) the date and time that the violation occurred;~~

~~(iii) the location at which the violation occurred;~~

~~(iv) the fine that may be imposed;~~

~~(v) a notice stating that prepayment of the fine is allowed, except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection; and~~

~~(vi) a notice in boldface type that states that the person shall:~~

~~1. pay the full amount of the preset fine; or~~

~~2. request a trial date at the date, time, and place established by the District Court by writ or trial notice.~~

~~(2) (i) If a citation for a violation of § 5-601 of this part involving the use or possession of [less than 10 grams of] marijuana is issued to a person under the age of 21 years, the court shall summon the person for trial.~~

~~(ii) If the court finds that a person at least 21 years old has committed a third or subsequent violation of § 5-601 of this part involving the use or possession of [less than 10 grams of] marijuana, the court shall summon the person for trial.~~

~~(d) The form of the citation shall be uniform throughout the State and shall be prescribed by the District Court.~~

~~(e) The Chief Judge of the District Court shall establish a schedule for the prepayment of the fine.~~

~~(f) A person issued a citation for a violation of § 5-601 of this part involving the use or possession of [less than 10 grams of] marijuana who is under the age of 18 years shall be subject to the procedures and dispositions provided in Title 3, Subtitle 8A of the Courts Article.~~

~~(g) A citation for a violation of § 5-601 of this part involving the use or possession of [less than 10 grams of] marijuana and the official record of a court regarding the citation are not subject to public inspection and may not be included on the public Web site maintained by the Maryland Judiciary.~~

5-619.

(a) To determine whether an object is drug paraphernalia, a court shall consider, among other logically relevant factors:

(1) any statement by an owner or a person in control of the object concerning its use;

(2) any prior conviction of an owner or a person in control of the object under a State or federal law relating to a controlled dangerous substance;

(3) the proximity of the object, in time and space, to a direct violation of this section or to a controlled dangerous substance;

(4) a residue of a controlled dangerous substance on the object;

(5) direct or circumstantial evidence of the intent of an owner or a person in control of the object to deliver it to another who, the owner or the person knows or should reasonably know, intends to use the object to facilitate a violation of this section;

- (6) any instructions, oral or written, provided with the object concerning its use;
- (7) any descriptive materials accompanying the object that explain or depict its use;
- (8) national and local advertising concerning use of the object;
- (9) the manner in which the object is displayed for sale;
- (10) whether the owner or a person in control of the object is a licensed distributor or dealer of tobacco products or other legitimate supplier of related items to the community;
- (11) direct or circumstantial evidence of the ratio of sales of the object to the total sales of the business enterprise;
- (12) the existence and scope of legitimate uses for the object in the community; and
- (13) expert testimony concerning use of the object.

(b) The innocence of an owner or a person in control of the object as to a direct violation of this section does not prevent a finding that the object is intended for use or designed for use as drug paraphernalia.

(c) (1) **THIS SUBSECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO THE USE OR POSSESSION OF DRUG PARAPHERNALIA INVOLVING THE USE OR POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA.**

(2) Unless authorized under this title, a person may not use or possess with intent to use drug paraphernalia to:

(i) plant, propagate, cultivate, grow, harvest, manufacture, compound, convert, produce, process, prepare, test, analyze, pack, repack, store, contain, or conceal a controlled dangerous substance; or

(ii) inject, ingest, inhale, or otherwise introduce into the human body a controlled dangerous substance.

**[(2)] (3)** A person who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to:

(i) for a first violation, a fine not exceeding \$500; and

(ii) for each subsequent violation, imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or a fine not exceeding \$2,000 or both.



~~[(3)] (4)~~ A person who is convicted of violating this subsection for the first time and who previously has been convicted of violating subsection (d)(4) of this section is subject to the penalty specified under paragraph ~~[(2)(ii)] (3)(II)~~ of this subsection.

~~[(4)] (i)~~ 1. In this paragraph the following words have the meanings indicated.

2. “Bona fide physician–patient relationship” means a relationship in which the physician has ongoing responsibility for the assessment, care, and treatment of a patient’s medical condition.

3. “Caregiver” means an individual designated by a patient with a debilitating medical condition to provide physical or medical assistance to the patient, including assisting with the medical use of marijuana, who:

- A. is a resident of the State;
- B. is at least 21 years old;
- C. is an immediate family member, a spouse, or a domestic partner of the patient;
- D. has not been convicted of a crime of violence as defined in § 14–101 of this article;
- E. has not been convicted of a violation of a State or federal controlled dangerous substances law;
- F. has not been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude;
- G. has been designated as caregiver by the patient in writing that has been placed in the patient’s medical record prior to arrest;
- H. is the only individual designated by the patient to serve as caregiver; and
- I. is not serving as caregiver for any other patient.

4. “Debilitating medical condition” means a chronic or debilitating disease or medical condition or the treatment of a chronic or debilitating disease or medical condition that produces one or more of the following, as documented by a physician with whom the patient has a bona fide physician–patient relationship:

- A. cachexia or wasting syndrome;

- B. severe or chronic pain;
- C. severe nausea;
- D. seizures;
- E. severe and persistent muscle spasms; or
- F. any other condition that is severe and resistant to conventional medicine.

(ii) 1. In a prosecution under this subsection involving drug paraphernalia related to marijuana, the defendant may introduce and the court shall consider as a mitigating factor any evidence of medical necessity.

2. Notwithstanding paragraph (2) of this subsection, if the court finds that the person used or possessed drug paraphernalia related to marijuana because of medical necessity, on conviction of a violation of this subsection, the maximum penalty that the court may impose on the person is a fine not exceeding \$100.

(iii) 1. In a prosecution under this subsection involving drug paraphernalia related to marijuana, it is an affirmative defense that the defendant used or possessed drug paraphernalia related to marijuana because:

A. the defendant has a debilitating medical condition that has been diagnosed by a physician with whom the defendant has a bona fide physician–patient relationship;

B. the debilitating medical condition is severe and resistant to conventional medicine; and

C. marijuana is likely to provide the defendant with therapeutic or palliative relief from the debilitating medical condition.

2. A. In a prosecution under this subsection involving drug paraphernalia related to marijuana, it is an affirmative defense that the defendant possessed drug paraphernalia related to marijuana because the drug paraphernalia related to marijuana was intended for medical use by an individual with a debilitating medical condition for whom the defendant is a caregiver.

B. A defendant may not assert the affirmative defense under this subparagraph unless the defendant notifies the State’s Attorney of the defendant’s intention to assert the affirmative defense and provides the State’s Attorney with all documentation in support of the affirmative defense in accordance with the rules of discovery provided in Maryland Rules 4–262 and 4–263.

3. An affirmative defense under this subparagraph may not be used if the defendant was:

A. using marijuana in a public place or assisting the individual for whom the defendant is a caregiver in using the marijuana in a public place; or

B. in possession of more than 1 ounce of marijuana.]

(d) (1) Unless authorized under this title, a person may not deliver or sell, or manufacture or possess with intent to deliver or sell, drug paraphernalia, knowing, or under circumstances where one reasonably should know, that the drug paraphernalia will be used to:

(i) plant, propagate, cultivate, grow, harvest, manufacture, compound, convert, produce, process, prepare, test, analyze, pack, repack, store, contain, or conceal a controlled dangerous substance; or

(ii) inject, ingest, inhale, or otherwise introduce into the human body a controlled dangerous substance.

(2) A person who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to:

(i) for a first violation, a fine not exceeding \$500; and

(ii) for each subsequent violation, imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or a fine not exceeding \$2,000 or both.

(3) A person who is convicted of violating this subsection for the first time and who previously has been convicted of violating paragraph (4) of this subsection is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or a fine not exceeding \$2,000 or both.

(4) If a person who is at least 18 years old violates paragraph (1) of this subsection by delivering drug paraphernalia to a minor who is at least 3 years younger than the person, the person is guilty of a separate misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 8 years or a fine not exceeding \$15,000 or both.

(e) (1) A person may not advertise in a newspaper, magazine, handbill, poster, sign, mailing, or other writing or publication, or by sound truck, knowing, or under circumstances where one reasonably should know, that the purpose of the advertisement, wholly or partly, is to promote the sale or delivery of drug paraphernalia.

(2) A person who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to:

- (i) for a first violation, a fine not exceeding \$500; and
- (ii) for each subsequent violation, imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or a fine not exceeding \$2,000 or both.

~~Article—Transportation~~

~~21-903.1.~~

~~(A) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO A MOTOR VEHICLE THAT IS DRIVEN, STOPPED, STANDING, OR OTHERWISE LOCATED ON A HIGHWAY.~~

~~(B) A PERSON MAY NOT USE MARIJUANA IN A MOTOR VEHICLE ON A HIGHWAY.~~

~~(C) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, THE PROHIBITION CONTAINED IN THIS SECTION APPLIES THROUGHOUT THE STATE.~~

~~27-116.~~

~~ANY PERSON CONVICTED OF A VIOLATION OF § 21-903.1 OF THIS ARTICLE IS SUBJECT TO A CIVIL FINE OF NOT MORE THAN \$1,000.~~

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2015.

Gubernatorial Veto Override, January 21, 2016.