Cannabis and Public Health

Opportunities for Equitable Policies and Approaches

ChangeLab Solutions
www.changelabsolutions.org
Derek Carr, JD
Staff Attorney

ChangeLab Solutions
www.changelabsolutions.org
Disclaimer

The information provided in this discussion is for informational purposes only, and does not constitute legal advice. ChangeLab Solutions does not enter into attorney-client relationships.

ChangeLab Solutions is a non-partisan, nonprofit organization that educates and informs the public through objective, non-partisan analysis, study, and/or research. The primary purpose of this discussion is to address legal and/or policy options to improve public health. There is no intent to reflect a view on specific legislation.

© 2017 ChangeLab Solutions
Our mission:
Healthy communities for all through better laws & policies
Applying an Equity Lens to Cannabis Policymaking

Who has been harmed?

Who stands to benefit and how?

How to prevent future harm?
Proposition 64 Does A Lot...

- Legalizes Recreational Cannabis Use, Cultivation, and Distribution
- Packaging, Labeling, Advertising, and Marketing Standards and Restrictions
- Requires State and Local Approval for All Cannabis Businesses
- Provides Expansive Local Regulatory Authority
- Restricts Cannabis Use in Specified Locations
But Where’s the Equity?
Local Communities Should Lead the Way
Preventing Future Harm
Avoiding Unintended Consequences
Clustering in Low-Income Communities

Denver, CO
Restrictions on Cannabis Use*

• Consumption prohibited in all public places

• Smoking prohibited wherever tobacco smoking is prohibited by state or local law

* not an exhaustive list
Addressing Health Inequities Requires Equitable Enforcement

Strong Public Health Policies Can Help Address Health Inequities

- **Smokefree Housing**: Communities of color & low-income communities are significantly more likely to be exposed to secondhand smoke at home.

But Enforcement Must Be Equitable

- Racially inequitable enforcement persisted in Colorado, Washington State
- Housing security
- Immigration status
- Inability to pay fines
Additional Equity Considerations

- Exposure to Cannabis Advertising
- Predatory Industry Practices
- Allocation of Tax Revenues