



Is your town considering restrictions on recreational pot sales?

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Medical marijuana, a pipe, rolling papers, and two joints in Belfast, Maine.

By [Matt Rocheleau](#)

GLOBE STAFF APRIL 05, 2017

(Note: This story was updated the latest information on July 6.)

At least 153 cities and towns across Massachusetts are considering — or at least have considered recently — restrictions on the sale of recreational marijuana.

The restrictions vary: From delaying when retail pot shops can open, to prohibiting them in certain areas, to banning them altogether, according to a review of recent news coverage as well as documents posted on municipal websites.

So far, at least 29 of the 153 communities have approved outright bans, another 70 municipalities have approved a moratorium (or temporary ban), and four others have approved rules limiting where shops can open.

Meanwhile, in at least five communities, proposals to enact a moratorium were turned down recently.



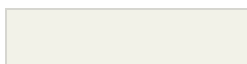
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Many other municipal governments plan to decide on potential restrictions at town meetings or other public hearings in the coming months.





Medical marijuana in disarray amid recreational pot uncertainty

Some towns are wary of allowing medical marijuana shops, fearful those shops will also be allowed to sell recreational pot.

And at least two additional communities have not formally proposed any restrictions, but have established committees to explore how to address the looming issue of retail recreational marijuana.

The restrictions that have been proposed and implemented so far have largely been in suburban communities, which has [upset city leaders](#), including [Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh](#), who worry urban areas will be overwhelmed by marijuana shoppers, the Boston Herald has reported.

In November, nearly 1.8 million Massachusetts voters, about 54 percent who cast a ballot, legalized recreational marijuana.

Growing, buying, possessing, and using limited quantities of the drug became legal statewide in December. Retail sales are due to begin in mid-2018.

Despite the statewide results, majorities of voters in 91

A promotional banner for Boston Traveler. The background is a vibrant tropical beach scene with palm trees, a blue ocean, and mountains in the distance. The text is overlaid on the image. At the top, it says "Make this the first item on your itinerary." Below that, "Sign up for great travel offers." There is a prominent orange "Sign up" button. At the bottom, the text "boston.com | Boston Traveler" is displayed in white on a dark background.

communities opposed legalization. And among those who voted to legalize recreational use of the drug, some may oppose marijuana shops opening in their communities.

The law gives cities and towns several options to push back, including by restricting where retail shops can open or banning them altogether.

Municipal leaders have [expressed concern](#) that state law doesn't make clear what process that cities and towns must follow to ban or restrict marijuana sales in their communities.

A bill filed with the Legislature seeks to end such confusion, the [State House News Service](#) reported recently.

(Note: Due to the large number of communities currently considering restrictions on marijuana commerce, the information below may be incomplete or out of date.)

In the map below:

Red = have enacted bans;

Blue = have enacted moratoriums;

Orange = have enacted zoning restrictions;

Yellow = are considering or have considered restrictions.

| Town | Action considered | Approved | Vote on Question 4 |
|-------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Abington | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Agawam | Moratorium | - | Against |
| Amesbury | Recreational Marijuana Committee | - | For |
| Amherst | Zoning restrictions | - | For |
| Andover | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Arlington | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Ashby | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Ashland | Ban; moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Auburn | Ban | Ban | For |
| Barnstable | Moratorium | - | Against |
| Barre | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Belmont | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Berlin | Moratorium | - | For |
| Beverly | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Billerica | Moratorium | - | For |
| Bolton | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Bourne | Ban | Moratorium | Against |
| Boxborough | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Boxford | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Braintree | Ban; moratorium | - | Against |
| Bridgewater | forming committee to study | - | Against |
| Brookline | Moratorium | - | For |
| Burlington | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Canton | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Carver | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Charlton | Ban | - | For |
| Chicopee | Moratorium | - | For |
| Clarksburg | Moratorium | - | For |
| Cohasset | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Dalton | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Danvers | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |

| | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| Dedham | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Dennis | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Douglas | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Dudley | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| East Bridgewater | Ban | Ban | For |
| East Brookfield | Ban | Ban | For |
| East Longmeadow | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Easton | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Egremont | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Essex | Moratorium | - | For |
| Fairhaven | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Falmouth | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Fitchburg | Moratorium | - | For |
| Foxborough | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Framingham | Moratorium; zoning restrictions | - | For |
| Franklin | Zoning restrictions | Zoning restrictions | For |
| Georgetown | Moratorium | - | For |
| Gloucester | Zoning restrictions | - | For |
| Grafton | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Greenfield | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Hadley | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Halifax | Zoning restrictions | Zoning restrictions | For |
| Hamilton | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Hanover | Moratorium | - | Against |
| Hanson | Moratorium | Failed to approve moratorium | For |
| Harvard | Moratorium | Failed to approve moratorium | For |
| Harwich | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Hingham | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Holbrook | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Holden | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Holliston | Ban | - | For |
| Holyoke | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |

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|---------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| Hopkinton | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Hull | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Ipswich | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Kingston | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Lee | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Lenox | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Leominster | Moratorium | Failed to approve moratorium | For |
| Lexington | Ban; moratorium | - | Against |
| Lincoln | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Littleton | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Ludlow | Moratorium | - | Against |
| Lunenburg | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Lynnfield | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Malden | Ban; moratorium; zoning restrictions | - | For |
| Mansfield | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Marlborough | Moratorium | - | For |
| Mashpee | Ban, cap on licenses, other rules | - | Against |
| Mattapoisett | Moratorium | - | Against |
| Medfield | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Medway | Ban | Ban | For |
| Melrose | Moratorium | - | For |
| Merrimac | Moratorium | - | For |
| Methuen | Ban | - | Against |
| Middleton | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Milford | Zoning restrictions | - | For |
| Millbury | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Milton | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Nantucket | Zoning restrictions | - | For |
| Needham | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| New Bedford | Moratorium | - | For |
| North Andover | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| North Reading | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Northborough | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Northbridge | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |

| | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------|
| Norwell | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Norwood | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Orleans | Ban; moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Paxton | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Peabody | Ban | - | Against |
| Pembroke | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Plainville | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Plymouth | Ban | - | For |
| Raynham | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Reading | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Rehoboth | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Revere | Zoning restrictions | Zoning restrictions | Against |
| Rochester | Moratorium | - | For |
| Rutland | Moratorium | - | Against |
| Sandwich | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Scituate | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Shelburne | Moratorium | - | For |
| Sherborn | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Shrewsbury | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| South Hadley | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Southborough | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Southbridge | Moratorium | - | For |
| Southwick | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Spencer | Ban | Ban | For |
| Springfield | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Sterling | Ban; moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Stoneham | Moratorium | - | Against |
| Stoughton | Ban | Ban | For |
| Stow | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Sturbridge | Ban; moratorium | Ban | For |
| Sudbury | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Sutton | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Taunton | Moratorium | - | For |
| Tewksbury | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |

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|------------------|---|------------------------------|---------|
| Topsfield | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Wakefield | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Walpole | Ban | - | Against |
| Ware | Moratorium | Failed to approve moratorium | For |
| Wareham | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Wayland | Moratorium | Failed to approve moratorium | For |
| Webster | Moratorium | - | For |
| Wellesley | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| West Bridgewater | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| West Springfield | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Westborough | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Weston | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Westport | Moratorium | Moratorium | For |
| Westwood | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Weymouth | Ban; moratorium | - | Against |
| Whitman | Moratorium | - | For |
| Wilbraham | Ban | Ban | Against |
| Williamstown | Ban; zoning restrictions | Zoning restrictions | For |
| Wilmington | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |
| Winchester | Moratorium | - | Against |
| Winthrop | Moratorium | - | For |
| Woburn | Ban | - | Against |
| Worcester | Ban; moratorium; cap on licenses; zoning restrictions | - | For |
| Yarmouth | Moratorium | Moratorium | Against |

SOURCE: **Globe review of recent news coverage; Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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