

CLIENT ALERT

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CANNABIS

CANADIAN SENATE PASSES BILL LEGALIZING RECREATIONAL CANNABIS

by Wendy Hulton

Canada has voted to legalize the recreational use of marijuana. The Senate approved Bill C-45 (the *Cannabis Act*) on Tuesday, clearing the last major hurdle before becoming law. Today, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Cabinet announced that the recreational use of cannabis will be legal as of October 17, 2018.

The Canadian government had initially planned for retail sales to begin by Canada Day (July 1st, 2018) but was pushed back after the Senate requested more time to review the Bill. Following their review, the Senate proposed 46 amendments to the *Cannabis Act* with 13 being rejected by the House of Commons. Some of the rejected provisions included a proposal allowing provinces to ban home cultivation of marijuana, distribution of branded “swag” by cannabis companies as well as a public registry of cannabis investors.

The October date will allow provinces time to prepare for the sale of recreational marijuana. Some provinces and key stakeholders, including Indigenous groups and police organizations, have urged the federal government to delay its implementation for up to a year to allow provinces more time to set up police enforcement, public health, and public education programs.

Any further delay seems unlikely as Prime Minister Trudeau has promised to implement the law as quickly as possible. If all goes according to plan, the recreational use of marijuana will be available to all Canadians just after Autumn arrives.

This client alert is published by Dickinson Wright PLLC to inform our clients and friends of important developments in the field of cannabis law. The content is informational only and does not constitute legal or professional advice. We encourage you to consult a Dickinson Wright attorney if you have specific questions or concerns relating to any of the topics covered in here.

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