

Illegal Cannabis Crackdown: New York Closes More Than 100 Shops in 3 Weeks

New York Governor Kathy Hochul has announced the closure of over 100 illicit cannabis stores across the state by the New York State Cannabis Enforcement Task Force in the past three weeks. This has resulted in a 27 percent increase in legal cannabis sales in areas affected by the Task Force's actions.

New Initiatives to Protect Legal Marketplace

Governor Hochul unveiled new initiatives in April to shut down illicit cannabis operations and protect the legal marketplace as part of the FY25 Enacted Budget. These initiatives grant the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) and local municipalities new authority to act against illicit storefronts and those who support them.

Launch of Cannabis Enforcement Task Force

On May 21, Governor Hochul launched the Cannabis Enforcement Task Force, led by the State Police First Deputy Superintendent. This statewide effort coordinates staff from several agencies to combat the illicit cannabis market. The Task Force has collaborated with landlords to evict illegal dispensaries and penalize landlords who fail to take action against tenants operating illegally.

Impact of Task Force's Actions

Since its launch, the Task Force has padlocked 114 illegal cannabis stores. The OCM reports that \$29,306,247 worth of illegal substances were seized from these stores. Legal cannabis sales have increased by 27 percent since May in stores close to the padlocked locations.

Commitment to Equity

OCM is committed to the Governor's vision of an equitable cannabis market. The Social and Economic Equity (SEE) program promotes inclusivity and opportunity within the industry. Currently, 54 percent of new applicants are SEE candidates, including 39 percent minority-owned businesses, 39 percent women-owned businesses, 9 percent service-disabled veteran-owned businesses, 8 percent distressed farmers, and 6 percent communities disproportionately impacted.

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