

# NCAA Supports Removing Cannabis from Banned Substances List

The NCAA has voted to remove cannabis from the list of banned substances for college athletes, effective immediately for Division I players.

## Historical Context

In 2022, the NCAA raised the THC threshold for a positive test, indicating a shift in its stance on cannabis use.

## Significance

This change reflects evolving societal attitudes toward cannabis, recognizing it as non-performance-enhancing and aiming to align NCAA policies with broader views.

## Implementation

The new policy will start from the 2024-2025 academic year. It will be retroactively applied, discontinuing penalties for cannabis-related violations.

## Official Statements

Josh Whitman, chair of the NCAA's Division I Council, stated, "The NCAA drug testing program is intended to focus on the integrity of competition, and cannabis products do not provide a competitive advantage."

## Broader Impact

This decision aligns NCAA rules with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and follows recommendations from the NCAA's Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports (CSMAS). Divisions II and III have yet to vote on the proposal.

## Legislative Support

Rep. *Earl Blumenauer* (D-OR) praised the decision, linking it to broader efforts to reform drug policies in the U.S.

## Comparative Trends

Other sports organizations, like the NFL and UFC, have also revised their cannabis policies, moving towards harm reduction and away from punitive measures.

The NCAA's decision marks a significant shift in the regulation of cannabis in sports, focusing on student-athlete health and well-being rather than punitive measures.

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