

# Californians Stock Up on Hemp Ahead of THC Ban

## Panic Buying Hemp in California Amid THC Ban Threat

Gov. Gavin Newsom's recent announcement of a potential emergency ban on hemp THC products has triggered a wave of "panic buying" across California. The proposed ban seeks to outlaw all hemp-derived THC products—those sold outside of licensed marijuana dispensaries—potentially taking effect as early as Thursday.

### The Impending Emergency Ban

The emergency measure, filed by Newsom's Department of Public Health, would prohibit the [sale of any product containing a detectable amount of total THC](#). Currently, hemp THC products are readily available through online retailers, liquor stores, and convenience outlets. This shift has left many consumers scrambling to stock up before the ban is implemented.

### Impact on Medical Users

Many Californians who use hemp products for medical conditions, particularly severe epilepsy, are expressing significant concern. Paige Figi, a nationwide hemp advocate and founder of a hemp company, revealed that some families are panic buying thousands of dollars in hemp products. "I know people who have cleared their bank accounts," Figi told SFGATE. "These are veterans and first responders and moms of very sick kids."

### Regulatory Background

The Office of Administrative Law (OAL) will determine whether the emergency ban meets the requirements for urgent rulemaking. An OAL spokesperson indicated that approval could happen as soon as Thursday. The proposed ban comes amidst a booming hemp industry in California, which has seen the rise of various THC-infused products, from drinks to cosmetics. However, this expansion has raised public health concerns regarding product safety and accessibility for minors.

### Legislative Challenges

Attempts to regulate the hemp industry have met resistance in the California legislature. A recent bill aimed at restricting hemp THC sales outside of licensed dispensaries failed, with critics arguing that it would negatively impact patients reliant on high doses of hemp CBD.

### Patient Voices

Families dependent on hemp for treatment are voicing their frustrations. Stephanie Bohn, whose daughter uses hemp CBD to manage seizures, expressed that her family feels like “collateral damage” in the face of the ban. “The presence of THC makes these products illegal under Newsom’s proposed regulations,” she said. Bohn emphasized the medical necessity of low levels of THC in her daughter’s treatment, a sentiment echoed by her daughter’s doctor, Bonni Goldstein.

### **Government’s Reassurance**

In response to concerns, Tara Gallegos, a spokesperson for Newsom, reassured the public that the regulations would not hinder access to CBD products without THC. However, critics argue that the proposed changes will limit access to specialized high-CBD tinctures essential for many patients.

### **Concerns Over Accessibility**

Critics point out that while legal marijuana dispensaries may stock some CBD products, they do not carry the high concentrations necessary for patients with complex medical needs. Goldstein noted that some patients require up to 1,600 mg of CBD per day, while dispensaries typically offer products with only up to 600 mg.

### **A Call for Balanced Solutions**

Patients and advocates suggest that the state could prohibit intoxicating hemp products while still allowing access to medical tinctures with higher CBD-to-THC ratios, similar to regulations in Colorado. As the ban looms, Bohn emphasizes the need for a more thoughtful approach. “This is not an emergency. It deserves more care,” she stated, urging that the disabled community deserves consideration beyond hasty regulations.

As Californians rush to secure their hemp products, the debate surrounding the impending ban underscores the complexities of cannabis regulation and the real-world implications for those who rely on these treatments.

Email: [info@cannabisriskmanager.com](mailto:info@cannabisriskmanager.com) | Phone: +415-226-4060

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