

Rhode Island May Allow More Colorful Cannabis Packaging

Rhode Island Cannabis Control Commission Considers Changes to Packaging Rules

As cannabis becomes more widely available in Rhode Island, drivers along the state's highways can't miss the bright, attention-grabbing billboards advertising the few licensed cannabis retailers. Yet, inside those same stores, customers are met with a stark contrast: shelves filled with products wrapped in neutral colors like **white**, **gray**, or **black**, with the occasional appearance of **navy blue**. These muted tones are not just a stylistic choice—they're a deliberate effort to comply with state regulations aimed at ensuring cannabis products are not attractive to children.

However, those **color restrictions** could soon change. The **Rhode Island Cannabis Control Commission** is considering updates to the state's cannabis packaging regulations that would allow for more vibrant branding options.

Why the Neutral Colors?

Rhode Island's current packaging rules for cannabis products have been designed with safety in mind, especially to prevent **children from mistakenly ingesting** cannabis products. By restricting the use of **bright, eye-catching colors**, state regulators hope to make cannabis less appealing to younger, more impressionable audiences.

The neutral colors, which dominate the design choices for cannabis packaging, reflect this priority. **Cannabis Control Commission** regulations have limited retailers' ability to brand their products using the bright hues typically associated with product packaging in other sectors. But as Rhode Island's **cannabis industry** continues to evolve, some stakeholders are calling for a reassessment of these restrictions.

Commission Ponders Packaging Changes

During its **July 30 meeting**, the three-member Cannabis Control Commission discussed the possibility of relaxing these strict packaging rules to allow more creative freedom for cannabis retailers. The idea of permitting the use of color in cannabis packaging was presented to the commissioners, who agreed to include the proposal in the ongoing draft regulations for the state's cannabis sector.

The proposal came from the **Cannabis Advisory Board**, an 18-member body that advises the commission on industry-related issues. According to the July presentation, allowing the use of color on packaging would give licensees greater **branding freedom**. This could help businesses stand out in an increasingly competitive market while still ensuring that cannabis products remain responsibly packaged and marketed.

Other Proposed Packaging Changes

In addition to discussions about color, the Cannabis Control Commission is also considering other changes to the **packaging regulations** that govern Rhode Island's cannabis industry. One proposed change would require the **name of the laboratory** that tested the cannabis to be clearly displayed on product packaging. This move is aimed at enhancing transparency for consumers, ensuring they know exactly where and how their cannabis was tested for safety and quality.

Another proposal involves the potential use of **QR codes** on packaging, subject to the commission's approval. These codes would allow consumers to scan the product's label with a smartphone to access additional information about the product, such as its chemical composition, lab results, and even the growing methods used. This would give consumers a more detailed understanding of the cannabis products they're purchasing, which is particularly important in an industry where transparency is key to building trust.

Additionally, the commission is considering mandating a clear **list of cannabinoids** present in each product, helping consumers better understand the specific effects and benefits they can expect from different strains or products. This change would further improve labeling clarity and provide crucial information to medical cannabis users who may rely on specific cannabinoids for symptom relief.

The Push for More Branding Freedom

The proposed updates, particularly the introduction of **color to cannabis packaging**, reflect the evolving needs of the state's fledgling cannabis market. As the industry grows, many licensees and retailers are seeking more flexibility in how they present their products to consumers. **Branding freedom** is critical in any industry, but especially in a nascent one like cannabis, where companies are working to differentiate themselves while adhering to strict regulations.

Allowing more color in packaging could be a key step in giving retailers more room to express their brand identity. However, the challenge for regulators will be balancing this freedom with their continued efforts to prevent the **misuse of cannabis products** by minors. By considering feedback from industry stakeholders, including the **Cannabis Advisory Board**, the commission hopes to strike the right balance between **branding creativity** and **consumer protection**.

What's Next for Rhode Island's Cannabis Sector?

As the **Rhode Island Cannabis Control Commission** continues to refine its regulations, the future of cannabis packaging in the state remains a hot topic. For now, the state's cannabis sector is governed by stringent rules aimed at **safety and responsibility**, but the inclusion of more **colorful and branded packaging** could signal a new phase for Rhode Island's cannabis businesses.

The next steps involve a review of the draft regulations and further discussions among the commission members, with the possibility that these changes could be enacted in the near future. For cannabis retailers, the introduction of color could provide a much-needed boost in terms of marketing and consumer engagement, while maintaining the safeguards necessary to protect public health.

As Rhode Island's cannabis industry grows, stakeholders are watching closely to see how these proposed regulations shape the future of the market. If the commission moves forward with these updates, it could open new doors for businesses looking to make their mark in an increasingly competitive and regulated industry.

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