

Survey Finds Cannabis Workers Are the Happiest in the U.S.

Cannabis Industry Workers Rank as America's Happiest Employees in New National Survey

Hourly Marijuana Sector Employees Report Highest Job Satisfaction Among All U.S. Industries

A new nationwide survey reveals that hourly workers in the cannabis industry are the happiest employees in the country, outperforming all other sectors in job satisfaction. According to the *2025 Shift Pulse Report* released by workforce platform Deputy, nearly 92 percent of cannabis and tobacco industry workers report feeling positively about their jobs—a number unmatched in any other field surveyed.

The survey, which compiled over 1.5 million responses from shift workers across the U.S. between April 2024 and April 2025, provides a comprehensive snapshot of how hourly employees across 10 major industries feel about their work environments.

Despite Federal Challenges, Cannabis Sector Leads in Worker Morale and Culture

The finding is especially notable given the unique obstacles that cannabis industry workers face, including federal prohibition, limited access to traditional banking, and increased risks related to cash-only operations. Even so, cannabis employees report significantly higher job sentiment compared to those in fields with far fewer legal and regulatory complications.

Deputy analysts suggest the industry's high satisfaction rates stem from modern workforce strategies that prioritize culture, employee retention, and flexibility. "This may reflect stronger workplace culture and wage competitiveness in newer, regulated industries that prioritize employee retention as they scale rapidly," the report explains.

Purpose and Autonomy Matter More Than Prestige in Job Satisfaction Trends

The report's authors note that worker happiness appears to be driven less by prestige or compensation alone and more by factors like autonomy, team cohesion, and predictability. "Purpose, predictability, and a sense of control over one's workday matter just as much—if not more—than prestige or pay alone," the authors write. These findings point to a shift in what hourly workers truly value in their employment environments.

Cannabis Workers Surpass Colleagues in Cafés, Catering, Dentistry, and Fitness

The cannabis and tobacco sector led the way with a 91.9 percent positive sentiment score. By comparison:

- **Catering:** 91%
- **Cafés:** 90%
- **Dentistry:** 90%
- **Gyms/Fitness Centers:** 89%
- **Firearms:** 87%
- **Sit-down Restaurants:** 86%
- **Cleaning Services:** 84%
- **Childcare:** 83%

These statistics highlight the cannabis industry's emergence not only as a major economic sector but also as a leader in employee satisfaction.

Medical Workers and Delivery Drivers Rank Among the Least Happy Hourly Employees

In contrast, the unhappiest employees in the report work in the pharmaceutical and health services industries. The lowest sentiment scores came from:

- **Pharmaceuticals:** 14%
- **Delivery and Postal Services:** 14%
- **Animal Health:** 12%
- **Doctor's Offices:** 12%
- **Outpatient Care Centers:** 10%
- **Other Hospitality Services:** 8%

These numbers underscore stark differences in how hourly workers experience their professional lives depending on the nature of their industry.

Report Highlights How Local Economies and Cultural Norms Influence Job Satisfaction

The *2025 Shift Pulse Report* emphasizes that geography, local economic conditions, and regional cultural attitudes also significantly influence worker sentiment. It advises employers and policymakers that “no single national strategy will solve for sentiment without considering these local realities.”

This message is particularly relevant for the cannabis industry, which remains subject to a patchwork of state regulations and remains federally illegal. The contrast between its employee satisfaction levels and those in more conventional sectors sends a clear message: traditional workplaces may need to rethink what makes employees feel valued and secure.

Cannabis Industry's Labor Landscape Evolves Amid Legal Challenges and Union Debates

Despite high job satisfaction, cannabis industry workers continue to face challenges related to legal protections and labor rights. Many states with legal cannabis markets require labor peace agreements between businesses and employees, ensuring that employers remain neutral in union efforts.

However, a federal judge recently struck down an Oregon law requiring such agreements, raising questions about the future of union protections in the cannabis sector. The ruling emphasized the tension between labor standards and state-level cannabis policies that continue to evolve in a legally uncertain environment.

Survey Underscores the Cannabis Industry's Growing Role as a Positive Force for Workers

While the broader U.S. workforce saw a slight decline in overall happiness—from 80 percent in 2024 to 78.5 percent in 2025 the cannabis industry stands out as a beacon of positive workplace sentiment.

As legalization continues to spread and the industry matures, cannabis businesses may not only lead in economic growth but also set new standards in employee well-being and satisfaction.

For policymakers, industry leaders, and prospective job seekers alike, the takeaway is clear: in a workforce struggling with morale, the cannabis sector is blazing a surprisingly happy trail.

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