

Florida Adult Use Cannabis Moves Forward Despite State Pushback

Florida Adult Use Cannabis Legalization Advances Despite State Resistance

Election Officials Validate Signatures After Legal Challenge

[Florida election officials](#) have officially confirmed that a proposed constitutional amendment to legalize adult-use marijuana is moving forward toward the November 2026 ballot though the approval comes only after a lawsuit accusing Gov. Ron DeSantis' administration of trying to obstruct the process.

On Monday, Division of Elections Director Maria Matthews issued a letter affirming that Smart & Safe Florida, the campaign behind the legalization effort, submitted enough valid signatures to trigger mandatory attorney general and state Supreme Court review, [according to reporting from the Florida Phoenix](#).

The state's acknowledgment prompted Attorney General James Uthmeier on Tuesday to ask the Florida Supreme Court to dismiss the lawsuit, arguing that officials have now complied with Smart & Safe's demands.

Legal Hurdles and Accusations of State Interference

This latest dispute marks the second time Smart & Safe has taken legal action over what it claims is improper interference from the DeSantis administration.

An earlier lawsuit filed in October challenged a state directive to discard nearly 200,000 collected signatures, which the campaign said improperly disrupted the amendment qualification process.

Smart & Safe will ultimately need more than 880,000 valid signatures from registered Florida voters for the measure to appear on the 2026 ballot one of the highest thresholds in the country.

Attorney General Review and Supreme Court Scrutiny Now Underway

With the Division of Elections' verification complete, the proposal now moves to the attorney general, who is expected to forward it to the Florida Supreme Court. Justices will determine whether the ballot language meets legal requirements, including clarity and compliance with constitutional rules.

The review stage is critical: In 2021, the state Supreme Court struck down two separate adult-use proposals, ruling the wording misleading.

Florida's Cannabis Market Seen as the Nation's Top Prize

Florida is already the most lucrative medical-only cannabis market in the United States, generating an estimated \$1.8 billion annually. Legalization advocates, industry analysts and multistate operators view Florida as the most significant remaining expansion opportunity for adult-use cannabis.

This same amendment backed heavily by major cannabis companies made it onto the 2024 ballot but fell just short. Despite receiving over 56% support, it failed to meet the state's 60% supermajority requirement for passing constitutional amendments.

Massive Industry Funding Powers the Legalization Effort

Smart & Safe Florida's campaigns have been fueled largely by Trulieve Cannabis Corp., the state's dominant medical marijuana operator. The company poured more than \$153 million into the 2024 legalization effort and has already contributed \$25.8 million toward the 2026 push.

Other medical marijuana companies have joined in, seeing adult-use legalization as a pathway to significant revenue growth and expanded customer access.

DeSantis Administration Accused of Using State Resources to Block Legalization

Despite strong public support in 2024 and major industry backing, the adult-use initiative has repeatedly faced pushback from Gov. Ron DeSantis and a number of top state officials.

Some officials face accusations of using state resources to undermine the legalization campaign allegations serious enough to prompt a reported grand jury investigation, according to the Florida Phoenix.

What Comes Next for Florida's Legalization Effort

With the signature verification milestone reached, all eyes now turn to the Florida Supreme Court. If the amendment survives review and the campaign continues gathering signatures at its current pace, Florida voters will once again have the chance to decide whether adults 21 and older should legally access cannabis.

After narrowly failing in 2024 and with industry investment still pouring in, advocates believe 2026 may be the year Florida finally makes the leap to adult-use legalization.

For more information contact at info@cannabisriskmanager.com

Email: info@cannabisriskmanager.com | Phone: +855-507-2622

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