

# MARIJUANA DATA: SNAPSHOT OF KEY SOURCES

SJ 48 (2025) directs the committee to explore available state-level data to monitor the impact of legal recreational marijuana sales in Montana, which began in the state on January 1, 2022. Because sales began so recently, and because there is a delay between data collection and its publication, it is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions about long-term trends at this juncture. However, existing information collection efforts place Montana in a good position to identify trends over time.

## PUBLIC HEALTH SOURCES

### NATIONAL SOURCES

Nationwide sources are a critical tool to monitor changes in substance use because we can compare data between states and to national averages. Many reputable national surveys with lengthy histories collect data at the state level; when state-level data is not published publicly, it is usually available by request to serious researchers or data analysts. Comparative assessments between Montana, states where marijuana remains illegal, and states with established legal markets can help determine whether changes observed in Montana are the result of legalization itself or of other factors related to legalization, like different regulatory processes.

Source	Summary	Frequency
<b>Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)</b> <a href="https://cdc.gov/brfss">cdc.gov/brfss</a>	A CDC telephone survey that tracks health and health-related behaviors, including tobacco, alcohol, and cannabis use (and mode of its use), among adults. Designed in collaboration with BRFSS state coordinators. The questionnaire includes a core component, optional modules, and state-added questions. All states must ask the core component questions, but the modules and state-added questions are optional. State-level data available.	Annual since: 1984  Most recently published results: 2024
<b>Monitoring the Future (MTF)</b> <a href="https://monitoringthefuture.org">monitoringthefuture.org</a>	An ongoing study of the behaviors, attitudes, and values of Americans from adolescence through adulthood. Surveys 8th, 10th and 12th grade students for the main study, and approximately 20,000 adults aged 19 through 65 as part of a panel study. Much data is available publicly, but state-level data is available only upon request; regional key findings published annually. The Monitoring the Future Study is funded through research grants from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, a part of the National Institutes of Health.	Annual since: 1975  Most recently published results: 2024
<b>National College Health Assessment (NCHA)</b> <a href="https://www.naspa.org/hcm">https://www.naspa.org/hcm</a>	A national survey from the American College Health Association that collects information about health, including cannabis use, among college students. Survey conducted twice per academic year. Healthy College Montana (HCM) is a coalition of 19 colleges and universities in Montana; HCM recently funded participation in this survey for its coalition members. Historic and current participation and publication of school-level results varies by school. (Statewide report for Montana not found by the publication deadline for this data source table.)	First survey: Spring 2000  Most recently published national report: Fall 2025

<p><b>National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES)</b></p> <p><a href="https://cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes/">cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes/</a></p>	<p>NHANES is unique because it includes physical examinations and laboratory tests, in addition to interviews. This survey captures data on numerous health conditions, health markers, and behavior, including cannabis, tobacco, and alcohol use. Administered by the National Center for Health Statistics, a department of the CDC. Studies 5,000 people annually; national data available.</p>	<p>Annual since: 1999 (program began earlier)</p> <p>Most recently published results: 2023</p>
<p><b>National Poison Data System</b></p> <p><a href="https://poisoncenters.org/national-poison-data-system">https://poisoncenters.org/national-poison-data-system</a></p>	<p>Each of the 55 poison control centers in the United States submits de-identified data on exposures (which do not necessarily represent a poisoning or overdose) to the NPDS. The exposures are reported by individuals or by trained health officials who make calls to one of the national poison control centers. Data available by request; annual report published using nationally representative data.</p>	<p>Near real-time publication of data; annual reports and key findings.</p> <p>Most recently published annual report: 2024</p>
<p><b>National Survey on Drug Use or Health (NSDUH)</b></p> <p><a href="https://nsduhweb.rti.org">nsduhweb.rti.org</a></p>	<p>Provides annual, nationally representative information on tobacco, alcohol, and drug use, mental health and other health-related issues in people 12 years of age and older. State-level data available. NSDUH also maintains an online data tool that displays the estimated prevalence of mental health or substance use issues within different geographic areas.</p> <p>Authorized by Section 505 of the Public Health Service Act, which requires annual surveys to collect data about substance abuse. Administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality.</p>	<p>Annual since: 1971</p> <p>Most recently published results: 2024</p>
<p><b>Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health (PATH)</b></p> <p><a href="https://pathstudy.nih.gov/">pathstudy.nih.gov/</a></p>	<p>Provides extensive data on tobacco, nicotine, and cannabis co-use. Also collects information on how use affects the health of people in the United States. This is a large, longitudinal study conducted by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).</p>	<p>Annual since: 2013</p> <p>Most recently published results: 2023</p>
<p><b>Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)</b></p> <p><a href="https://dphhs.mt.gov/ecfsd/PRAMS">dphhs.mt.gov/ecfsd/PRAMS</a> <a href="https://cdc.gov/prams">cdc.gov/prams</a></p>	<p>PRAMS is a joint effort between the CDC and state health departments, collecting data on maternal attitudes and experiences before, during, and shortly after pregnancy – including marijuana use. Core questions are asked by all states; remaining questions are chosen from a pretested list of standard questions developed by CDC, or states may develop their own. National and state data available, the latter through state warehouses.</p>	<p>Annual since: 1987</p> <p>Most recently published results (Montana): 2022</p>
<p><b>Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS)</b></p>	<p>People receiving treatment for substance use disorder may be admitted to and discharged from treatment multiple times. TEDS-A collects data on admissions, and TEDS-D on discharges. State administrative systems collect TEDS</p>	<p>Annual since: 1992 (TEDS-A) and 2000 (TEDS-D)</p>

<p><a href="https://samhsa.gov/data/data-we-collect/teds-treatment-episode-data-set">samhsa.gov/data/data-we-collect/teds-treatment-episode-data-set</a></p>	<p>information and report it to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). State and national data available.</p>	<p>Most recently published results (Montana): 2024</p>
<p><b>Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS)</b></p> <p><a href="https://cdc.gov/yrbs">cdc.gov/yrbs</a>  <a href="https://opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Data-Reporting/Youth-Risk-Behavior-Survey">opi.mt.gov/Leadership/Data-Reporting/Youth-Risk-Behavior-Survey</a></p>	<p>Monitors health and risk behaviors, including marijuana, tobacco, and alcohol use, among high school students. This survey also collects information on student experiences, including parental monitoring, bullying, and community violence. National, state, and local data available.</p>	<p>Biennial since: 1991</p> <p>Most recently published results: 2023</p>

## STATE SOURCES

Two important, Montana-specific sources provide information that can be used to monitor marijuana use in Montana.

Source	Summary	Frequency
<p><b>Montana Prevention Needs Assessment (PNA)</b></p> <p><a href="https://montana.isadata.com/#resources">montana.isadata.com/#resources</a></p>	<p>The survey collects information from students at participating schools on risky behaviors associated with the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, such as school dropout, delinquency, and violence - that can result in injury or impede positive development among youth. The survey also collects information on risk and protective factors. Results cannot be used for comparison with other states.</p>	<p>Annual since: 1998</p> <p>Most recently published results (Montana): 2024</p>
<p><b>Montana Hospital Discharge Data System</b></p> <p><a href="https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/epidemiology/oess-mhdds">dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/epidemiology/oess-mhdds</a></p>	<p>The Hospital Discharge Data System provides access to inpatient hospitalization data provided by the Montana Hospital Association. Raw data access is only available to epidemiologists and analysts who work for local and tribal health departments in Montana; or who work for DPHHS within the Public Health and Safety Division (PHSD), Early Childhood and Family Services Division (ECFSD), the Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Division (BHDD). All interested persons may request summary analyses.</p>	<p>Updated routinely</p>

## LEGAL & CRIME SOURCES

Source	Summary	Available Data
<b>National Forensic Laboratory Information System (NFLIS)</b>  nflis.deadiversion.usdoj.gov	The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) established the NFLIS in 1997. This information system collects data on drug chemistry results from state, local, and federal forensic labs.	Data system updated frequently; snapshots published quarterly, most recently in June 2025 (for a period ending in March 2025)
<b>Fatal Analysis Reporting System (FARS)</b> nhtsa.gov/research-data/fatality-analysis-reporting-system-fars	Provides insights into cannabis-associated motor vehicle fatalities.	Data from 1994-2023 available online

### A NOTE ON THE MONTANA INCIDENT-BASED REPORTING SYSTEM (MIBRS):

Montana police departments and sheriff's offices report data to the MIBRS; this data is used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to observe trends in criminal behavior across the country – it is not designed to monitor the use of marijuana or any other substance. The Substance Abuse Prevention Program within DPHHS notes that “changes in arrests may reflect changes in criminal behavior, officer patrolling, or reporting procedures... results are useful for comparing crime activity but should not be interpreted as changes in substance use.”<sup>1</sup>

1. “Prevention Specialist Resources.” Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. Accessed February 20, 2026. <https://dphhs.mt.gov/BHDD/Prevention/SubstanceAbusePrevention/preventionspecialistresources>.

## ADMINISTRATION

Seed-to-sale databases are state-managed systems tracking legal cannabis from cultivation to retail sale. The Cannabis and Alcohol Regulation Division uses METRC as the state’s seed-to-sale database. Montana-based businesses use this system to track inventory and sales; they may maintain their own point of sale system in addition to METRC. Website: [www.metrc.com/partner/montana/](http://www.metrc.com/partner/montana/)