

Upcoming Impaired Driving and Cannabis-Related Penalties



By [Jenna Kirk](#)

On December 18, 2018, Canada will begin imposing tough new penalties on those who drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including cannabis, or who commit cannabis-related crimes. Most impaired driving offences will be considered serious crimes in Canada, with the maximum penalty for impaired driving offences increasing from 5 years to 10 years.

Cannabis-related Crimes:

Most cannabis-related crimes will have a maximum penalty of 14 years. Cannabis-related crimes include the following:

- Illegally producing, distributing or selling cannabis; or
- Illegally importing or exporting cannabis or cannabis-related products across Canada's international borders.

How you could be affected:

These new penalties will significantly impact permanent residents and temporary residents of Canada. With the maximum penalty for an impaired driving offence increasing to 10 years, you can be found inadmissible to Canada for serious criminality, for offences that have happened inside or outside of Canada.

Permanent Residents: May lose their permanent resident status and have to leave Canada

Temporary Residents (including foreign workers, international students, visitors): May not be able to enter or stay in Canada

Refugee Claimants: May not be eligible to have their claim referred for a refugee hearing

Contact Field Law's [Immigration Team](#) if you require assistance with applications for rehabilitation, record suspension (formerly called a pardon), or appealing decisions regarding loss of permanent residence or temporary residence in Canada.

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