

# New law on street drugs includes limits on substances

*The Oregonian*

SALEM — Starting Feb. 1, 2021, Oregon’s new drug decriminalization measure takes effect and the state becomes the first to remove criminal penalties for small amounts of street drugs. The law also reduces penalties for possession of larger amounts of drugs and redirects marijuana tax revenue toward services and programs aimed at addressing drug addiction in Oregon.

Here are the limits. The measure makes it a non-criminal violation similar to a traffic ticket to possess the following:

- Less than 1 gram of heroin
- Less than 1 gram, or less than 5 pills, of MDMA
- Less than 2 grams of methamphetamine
- Less than 40 units of LSD (acid)
- Less than 12 grams of psilocybin
- Less than 40 units of methadone
- Less than 40 pills of oxycodone
- Less than 2 grams of cocaine

The measure reduces from a felony to a misdemeanor simple possession of substances containing:

- 1 to 3 grams of heroin
- 1 to 4 grams of MDMA
- 2 to 8 grams of methamphetamine
- 2 to 8 grams of cocaine

**What happens next?**

The law takes effect Feb. 1. That’s also the date when the Oregon Health Authority is required to have appointed members for the oversight and accountability council that will evaluate which substance abuse programs statewide will get funding.

That panel is required to start distributing money by Oct. 1, 2021. The money comes from state marijuana sales tax revenue and will go into a fund.

By Dec. 31, 2022, the Oregon Secretary of State’s Office must conduct financial and performance audits regarding the effectiveness of the new fund.

State Senate President Peter Courtney told *The Oregonian* in an interview after the election that the Oregon Legislature will play a role in the rollout of the new law. He said he expects lawmakers will consider the policy’s financial implications and how to provide meaningful intervention for people in the throes of addiction. He said he expects lawmakers to take up the policy over the next two sessions.

Anthony Johnson, a key proponent of the measure, said lawmakers don’t need to weigh in for the new policy to go into effect.



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# New COVID-19 workplace rule poses challenges for ag

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**  
*Capital Press*

SALEM — Harvest season may be over, but Oregon farms are racing to comply with a new set of state-imposed guidelines aimed at curbing workplace outbreaks of COVID-19.

Oregon OSHA, the state’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration, has adopted a temporary rule for all businesses — including farms and ranches — that outlines requirements for wearing masks, maintaining 6 feet of social distance and sanitizing “high-touch” surfaces such as doorknobs and light switches, among other provisions.

The rule went into effect Nov. 16 and is expected to run through May 4, 2021. It comes amid a surge of new coronavirus infections in Oregon, which averaged 1,211 daily cases statewide between Nov. 17-24.

All employers must by Dec. 7 complete a COVID-19 exposure risk assessment and infection control plan, detailing job duties and compliance measures among their workforce.

Certain businesses may also be subject to additional regulations under one of 19 appendices covered in the 105-page rule, affecting a broad range of industries from breweries, wineries and retail establishments to sports teams, veterinar-

ians and law enforcement agencies.

Samantha Bayer, policy counsel for the Oregon Farm Bureau, said the rule is a massive undertaking for small, family-owned farms that may only have a few full-time employees. Ninety-seven percent of Oregon’s 37,200 farms are family-owned and operated.

“I think there is a lack of recognition in this rule about how much of an administrative burden this is going to be for small businesses,” Bayer said.

The exposure risk assessment requires feedback from employees, which Bayer said is especially challenging for farms and ranches given the amount of

seasonal labor.

Bayer said the Farm Bureau objected to the rule for essentially treating a farm in rural Oregon the same as a large indoor office building in downtown Portland. Oregon OSHA should instead be developing flexible, industry-specific guidance with input from businesses, she said.

“We would have liked a seat at the table, and I think most businesses would have liked to be able to weigh in on how best to protect their employees and workplaces,” Bayer said.

Michael Wood, Oregon OSHA administrator, said the rule does contain industry-specific guidance in its appendices. Each business’s

exposure risk assessment and infection control plan should also be tailored to its own unique operations.

“The key is to focus on those situations where people are exposed to one another,” he said. “In a lot of respects, the control measures are pretty straightforward.”

Oregon OSHA will enforce the rule on a complaint-driven basis, Wood said. Inspections may lead to a citation, though Wood said the agency always considers whether the business is making a good-faith effort to comply, versus blatant and willful violations.

“Anybody who has made a genuine effort is going to be in good shape,” Wood said.



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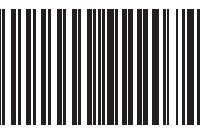
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