

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

ASIA



Travel & Possession Not Permitted Under Any Circumstance



Summary

- Both medical and recreational cannabis (including CBD or trace-THC products) are strictly prohibited in the UAE. No legal framework exists.
- Travelers caught with cannabis may face confiscation, fines, imprisonment, and deportation. In certain cases, administrative measures may apply instead of criminal charges.

Background

Cannabis and its derivatives remain prohibited substances in the UAE. They are classified under various schedules of Federal Decree-Law No. 30 of 2021, including:

- Schedule 1, Clause 29 – Cannabis, resin, and extracts.
- Schedule 4, Part 2, Clause 8 – Cannabis sativa
- Schedule 5, Clause 34 – Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)
- Schedule 6, Clause 4 – Delta-9-THC and variants

This means possession, use, or distribution remains illegal, but enforcement and penalties have evolved significantly.

Cabinet Resolution No. 43 introduces a procedural framework for non-residents carrying personal-use quantities of controlled substances at UAE ports of entry (e.g., airports). It expands upon Article 96 of the 2021 law and provides a more structured, administrative handling of such cases.

Key features include:

- Fines ranging from AED 5,000 to AED 20,000 for first-time offenders
- Entry into the UAE permitted only after fine payment
- Repeat violations may trigger a 2-year entry ban
- Seizure of the substances and administrative reporting



Non-Medical Cannabis

- Consumption: Illegal in all contexts. No tolerance for recreational use.
 - Possession: Criminal offense regardless of quantity. New laws allow first-time offenders at border to be instead of imprisoned, but using cannabis inside the country still carries risk.
 - Sale & Distribution: Harshly penalized with long prison sentences, often 5–20 years.
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Traveling to United Arab Emirates with Medical Cannabis

Importing any cannabis products (CBD, THC, oils, edibles) is illegal, even if you are a medical cannabis patient or hold a prescription.

Steps to Take Before Departure:

1. Do not carry any cannabis product.
 2. Carry only non-cannabis medications that are legal.
 3. Obtain pharmacy-labeled packaging with valid prescription for all legal medications.
 4. Do not rely on foreign prescriptions for cannabis. UAE authorities do not acknowledge them.
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Practical Tips

- If you are taking other medications, carry them in original packaging with prescriptions and clinic letters, best to verify legality via embassy.
- Use alternative, legal permitted medicines during your stay in the UAE.

The information provided reflects the most current data available; however, as cannabis laws are continually evolving, this content should not be interpreted as legal advice.

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