

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

AFRICA



Travel & Possession Not Permitted Under Any Circumstance



Summary

- Cannabis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is legal for industrial, medicinal and scientific use. It continues to be illegal for recreational use.
- On February 27, 2021, legalization to establish the conditions of operations regarding narcotics and psychotropic substances exclusively for purposes that are medical was enacted in the DRC. This law allows controlled cultivation, research, and production, but only under formal authorization from the Minister of Health. Unauthorized use, cultivation, or distribution remains prohibited.
- Unfortunately, the Democratic Republic of the Congo does not have a recreational use program and there is no legal framework for medical cannabis in the DRC.

Background

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), cannabis remains illegal for recreational use. However, there have been significant developments regarding its medicinal and industrial use.

In 2021, the DRC legalized the cultivation and use of cannabis for medicinal and scientific purposes. This legislation allows for the controlled production and distribution of cannabis for these specific purposes, under strict regulations. The first license for the cultivation and export of medicinal cannabis was issued to TMIG/Instadose Pharma DRC. This move is part of the country's efforts to tap into the global medicinal cannabis market.

Cannabis is the only drug produced locally in the DRC (which is one of the largest producers in Africa) and is primarily for local consumption,^{[5][6]} though smaller amounts are smuggled to France and Belgium.

Furthermore, CBD is also illegal in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the DRC, CBD is still regarded as a restricted substance. This implies that the country forbids the sale of CBD-related products, such as oils and supplements.



Non-Medical Cannabis

The cultivation, sale, and possession of cannabis for recreational purposes are illegal in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Drug enforcement is said not to be a priority for law enforcement, but any kind of possession can lead to severe punishment.

- Consumption: Recreational use remains illegal. Any consumption for non-medical purposes is banned.
- Possession: Strictly prohibited, with offenders facing severe legal repercussions. Penalties can include fines, imprisonment, and in rare extreme cases, even capital punishment (though the latter is reported as uncommon).
- Sale & Distribution: Explicitly illegal, with trafficking treated as a serious offense under DRC law. Enforcement can be inconsistent, but the legal framework remains firm.

Traveling to Democratic Republic of the Congo with Medical Cannabis

Importing or using personal medical cannabis in the DRC is not permitted. The legal framework allows only tightly controlled, authorized cultivation for institutional purposes, not individual treatment.

Travelling with any form of cannabis, including CBD, risks serious legal consequences, including arrest or imprisonment.

Steps to Take Before Departure:

1. Do not carry any cannabis product to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
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. The authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo do not acknowledge them.
5. Identify local clinics or hospitals in Democratic Republic of the Congo in case you need medical assistance.

Congolese Pharmaceutical Regulatory Authority (ACOREP) Contact Information

- Address: ACOREP, 66 Boulevard du 30 juin, immeubles Building 5 à sec, 4ème niveau, Kinshasa, DRC
- Phone Number: +243 824 007 007
- General Email: contact@acorep.gouv.cd



Practical Tips

- If you are taking other medications, carry them in original packaging with prescriptions and doctor's letters, best to verify legality via embassy.
- Speak to your embassy or consulate regarding your medical needs before planning travel.
- Use alternative, legal permitted medicines during your stay in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

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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