

Permanent residents of Canada:

Make sure you know and follow our laws, including our tough new rules for impaired driving and marijuana-related crimes.

If you don't, you could face serious legal and immigration consequences.



As a permanent resident of Canada, it is important to know what you can and cannot do. For example, you may lose your status and have to leave Canada if you **commit a serious crime**, no matter how long you have lived here or whether you committed the crime inside or outside Canada.

What is changing with impaired driving and marijuana-related rules and how could they affect my status?

In fall 2018, Canada is imposing **tough new penalties** for anyone who **drives while under the influence of alcohol or drugs**, including marijuana (cannabis), or **commits a cannabis-related crime**.

Most of these types of offences will be **serious crimes in Canada** with **serious immigration impacts**. Not only could you face a fine, criminal charges or even jail, but you may also **lose your status** and have **to leave the country**.

What if I receive the minimum fine for impaired driving, and no one is hurt? Could I lose my status?

When the **new impaired driving rules take effect in December 2018**, most infractions will be considered serious.

If you are **convicted** in Canada of **impaired driving**, or commit a **similar offence outside the country**, for example, while on vacation, you may **lose your status and have to leave the country**. This is possible, **even if you only receive the minimum \$1,000 fine, it is a first-offence and no one is hurt**.

Hasn't Canada legalized cannabis? Are there similar immigration impacts for cannabis-related crimes?

Canada has made cannabis legally available to adults, but under a strict legal framework. The tough new penalties, which took effect at the same time as the new framework, help deter crime and keep our kids and streets safe.

If you commit a crime, such as illegally producing or selling cannabis, whether inside or outside Canada, you could be found **inadmissible for serious criminality** under our immigration laws. In these situations, you may **lose your status** and be **ordered to leave Canada**.

Will I be able to appeal an order to leave Canada and keep my permanent resident status?

If you receive a fine or a jail sentence of **less than 6 months** for a conviction received **inside Canada**, you **can appeal** the removal order to the Immigration Appeal Division of the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada.

However, if you receive a jail sentence of **6 months or more**, or commit an offence while outside Canada, you do **not have the right to appeal** and must leave the country. You no longer have permanent resident status.

If I lose my status and have to leave Canada, will I be able to return?

If you are removed from Canada for serious criminality, you will not be able to return unless you receive **written authorization** from an immigration officer. You may also need a **temporary resident permit** to enter Canada. To note, there is no guarantee that you will be allowed to return.

For more information, please see this web notice: New impaired driving and marijuana-related penalties could affect immigration status for permanent and temporary residents

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/notices/impaired-driving-cannabis-penalties-affect-immigration-status.html>

