



CONNECTION IN FOCUS

Resilience, Risk Reduction and Suicide Prevention in Focus

Marijuana and Your Career

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Marijuana, despite being legal or decriminalized in some states, is still classified as a Schedule I drug by the Federal Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and considered an illicit substance. This includes all parts of the plant, whether it is THC (the chemical that gets you high) or CBD (the chemical that calms you down). The DoD's Drug-Free Workplace policy, 24 CFR 223.5 prohibits use by all its personnel. Thus, there are consequences for using it, especially if you're a Soldier, DA Civilian or government contractor.

Consequences for illegal marijuana use vary. Soldiers may be punished under the UCMJ (i.e. loss of rank, forfeiture of pay, restriction, and extra-duty). Additional repercussions may include administrative actions (i.e. bar to re-enlistment, flags, loss of benefits and incentives including use of tuition assistance for college or technical training, loss of opportunities for attendance at military schools, and suspension or loss of security clearance). Civilian personnel and contractors are not subject to the UCMJ, but can still face career-impacting administrative actions. The most serious is the suspension or loss of a security clearance. Often, the ability to perform duties is tied to this clearance, so the loss of a clearance could mean the loss of a job or contract. Other considerations include impacts to performance reviews or evaluations, and loss of work time due to dealing with law enforcement and legal authorities. A short-term high can have long-term career impacts.

Know the Difference: Marijuana, CBD & Hemp

CBD- a chemical compound in hemp and marijuana. It comes in many forms and should not produce a high. Beware: CBD products are not regulated and could have some amount of THC in them, thus producing a high and the potential to test positive

Marijuana- When cannabis plants have more than 0.3% (by dry weight) THC, it is considered marijuana. The amount of THC in marijuana produces a high. Marijuana can be smoked, vaped and eaten, and can sometimes create psychological or physical dependence.

Hemp- When cannabis plants have no more than 0.3% (by dry weight) THC, it is considered hemp. Due to the THC levels, hemp should not produce a high, but similar to CBD, the THC levels in hemp products are not regulated. Hemp and its components are sometimes used to produce materials and foods.

THC- is a chemical compound in hemp and marijuana. In high enough quantities, this psychoactive ingredient produces the "high" that marijuana is known for. THC can be found in edibles, weed or pot and even vape oils.

What Can I Lose

Here are some of the things you can lose when you are discharged or separated for a drug offense:

- **Veterans benefits.** You may lose the benefits you would have had as a veteran which include veterans' preference on federal jobs, healthcare, disability benefits and a home loan.
- **Education benefits.** Going to school or other programs can help you build a career after the military. However, there are three discharges that can cost you college and other education opportunities. These include other than honorable discharge, a bad conduct discharge, dismissal or a dishonorable discharge. Losing these education benefits could negatively impact your career opportunities.
- **Right to bear arms.** Even though the right to bear arms is a constitutional right, if you get a drug offense in the military, you may lose this right. A dishonorable discharge will impact your ability to possess a firearm.
- **Security clearance.** Past or current drug offenses can affect your ability to get or keep a security clearance. This can impact your ability to get or keep certain jobs even outside of the military.



**Military/Veterans
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