

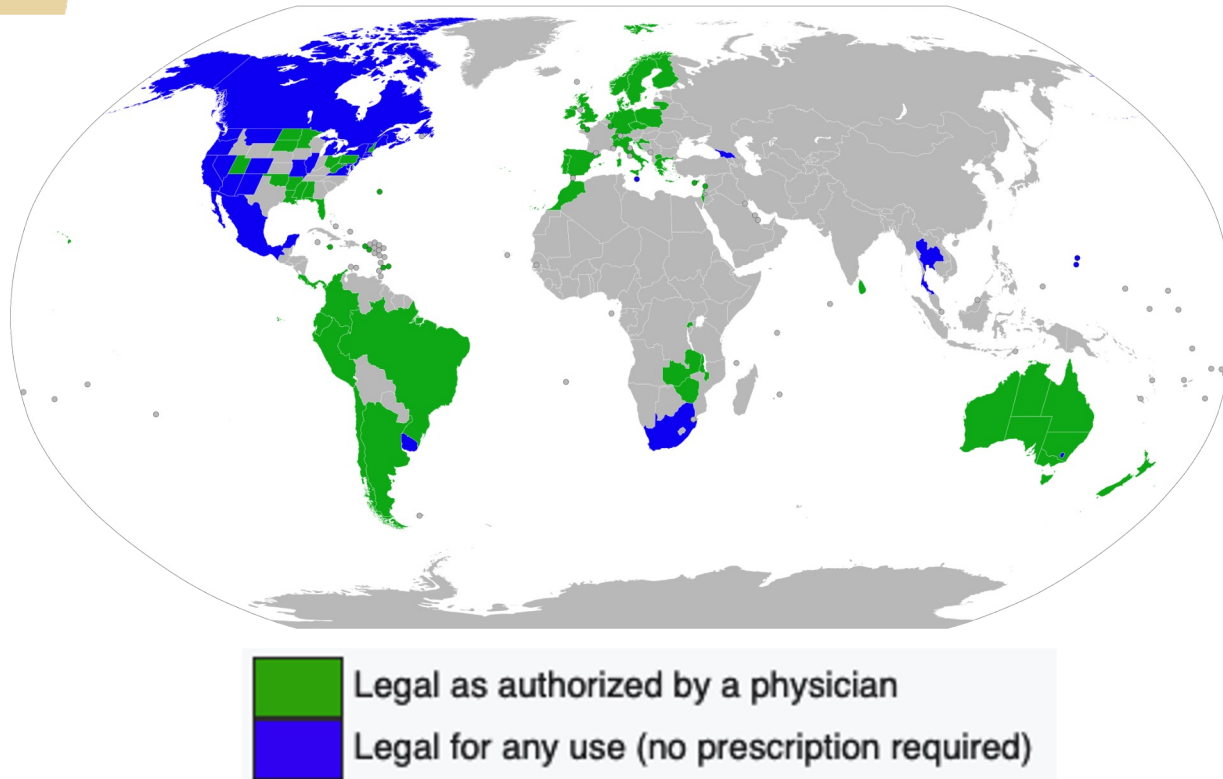
Occupational Health Hazards in the Cannabis Industry

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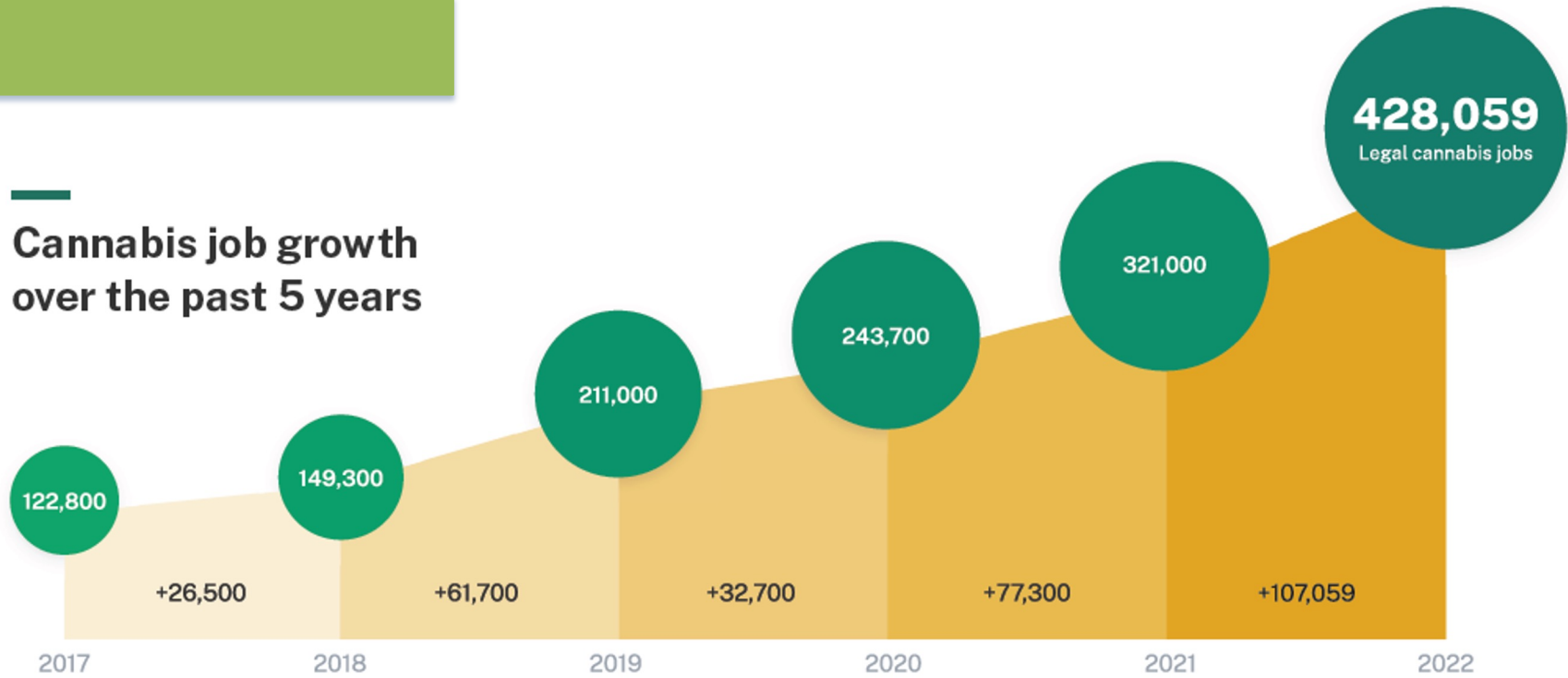
Legal status of cannabis



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legality_of_cannabis#/media/File:Map-of-world-medical-cannabis-laws.svg



Cannabis job growth over the past 5 years



<https://www.leafly.com/news/industry/cannabis-jobs-report>

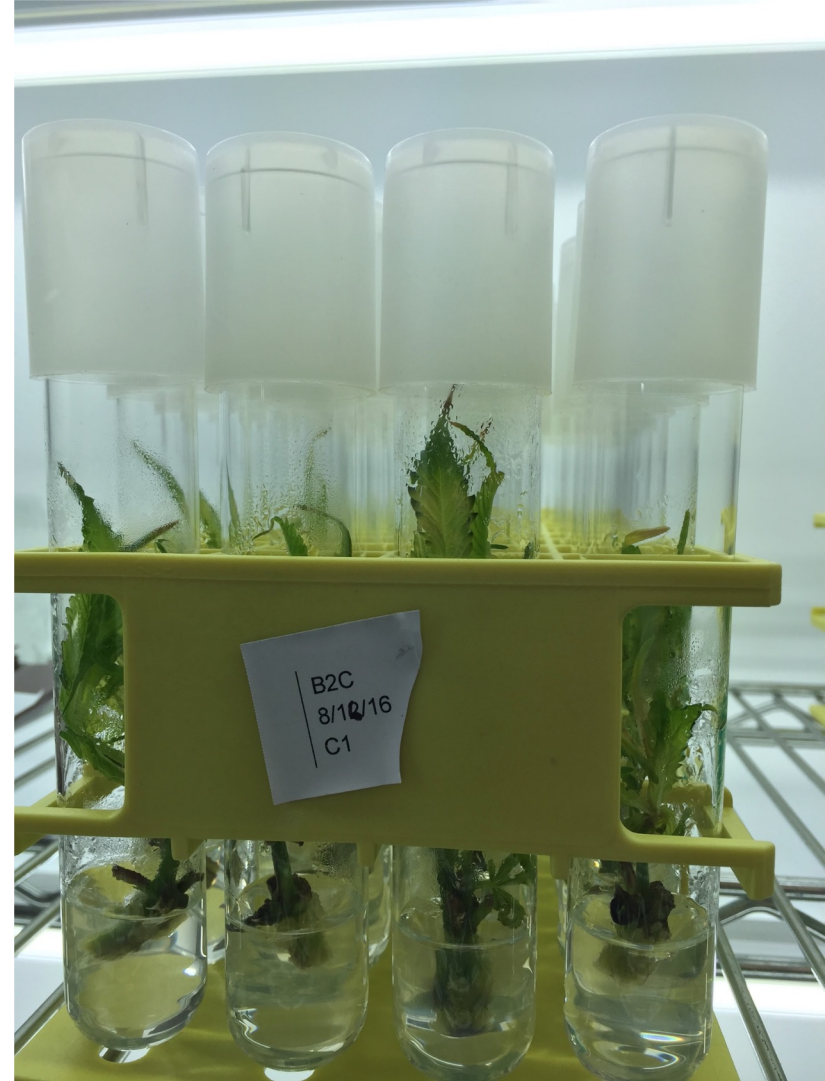


Stage I: Breeding/Cloning

Germinate from
seed/propagate from
clippings of another plant
under low light

EXPOSURES:

- UV Light
- Repetitive Motion
- Mold, organic dust



Stage 2: Growing

Transfer plants into progressively larger vessels

Water and prune regularly

Change rooms to alter light (indoor),
or transfer outside





Stage 3: Harvest

Remove buds from plants

Cure, hang dry plants

“Buck” (or remove) buds off of stems to prepare for processing

Exposures:

- Molds/Mildew
- Particulate Matter
- VOCs/Terpenes

- Hunching/Heavy Lifting
- Repetitive motion exposures



Stage 4: Processing

Trim buds to remove leaves and stems

Use excess cannabis or “shake” to pack into pre-rolled joints

Place joints or flowers into packaging, add labels

Extraction - to produce oils

Exposures:

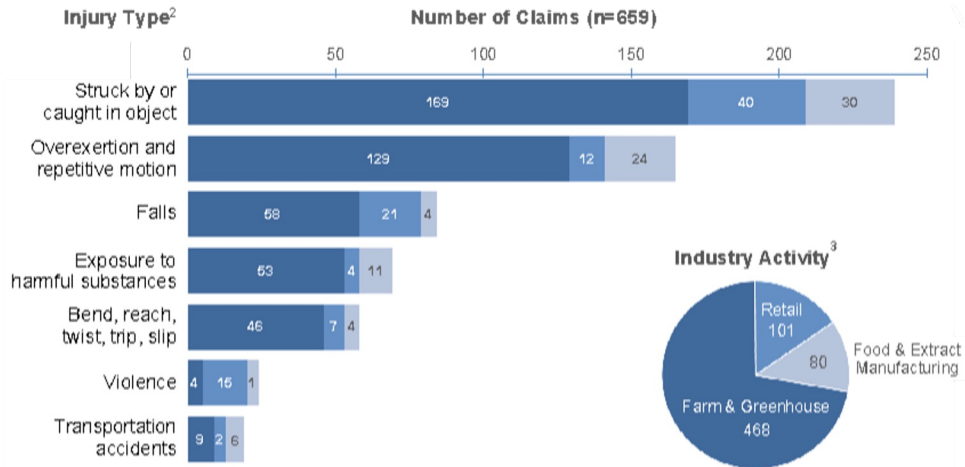
- Molds/Mildew/cannabis dust
- Repetitive Motion, Poor Posture
- Volatile Solvents – e.g. Butane





Injury and Illness in the legal cannabis industry¹

Washington State Workers' Compensation Claims, July 2014 through December 2018



Cannabis greenhouse workers were injured at a rate similar to non-cannabis greenhouse workers performing comparable work⁴. The claim rate for cannabis greenhouse workers was 41.1 claims per 10,000 Full Time Equivalent⁵ workers compared to 48.8 for non-cannabis greenhouse workers.

For all cannabis industry workers:

- ∨ Struck By or Caught In an Object was the leading injury type (36%). These included cuts and lacerations (n=89), contusions (35), fractures (15), and concussions (10).
- ∨ There were 5 fingertip amputations and 1 avulsion at bud trim saws.
- ∨ Overexertion & Repetitive Motion (25%) and Bend, Reach, Twist, Trip, or Slip (9%) were common. Nearly 60% of these injuries involved 'sprain, strain, or tear' (133).
- ∨ Exposure to Harmful Substances (10%) predominantly involved inhalation injuries from exposure to pesticides (8) and allergens including cannabis dust and mold (7). Other harmful exposures included burns from chemicals (7) and hot candy (5), and UV radiation to eye/skin (3).
- ∨ Violence (3%) occurred primarily in retail stores and included homicide (1), armed robbery (8) and 10 physical assaults (7 with co-worker as the aggressor).

https://lni.wa.gov/dA/60e1b9c24e/76_21_2020_Cannabis_2020Update3.pdf

