

Summary of Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Private Members Bill (PMB) proposes to allow for personal use of cannabis: possession (up to 50g), cultivation (up to four plants per person) and consumption of cannabis in private places for persons aged 18 years or older. • The Bill does not propose: legalising the sale or supply of cannabis to others (other than by authorised persons); legalising cultivation of more than four plants for personal use; nor legalising the personal use of cannabis for those under 18 years of age. • The Submission proposes a government position on the inquiry into the PMB and government amendments to the PMB which would have the effect of removing penalties for the use and possession of personal amounts of cannabis in line with the ACT's harm minimisation objectives. Furthermore, the SCNs scheme would continue for individuals under 18 years of age.

Key to impacts: Red – negative, Blue – neutral, Green – positive.

Social

Justice and crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government amendments would remove criminal penalties for personal cultivation, possession and consumption of cannabis for persons aged 18 years or older and would therefore reduce burden on police resources by removing minor cannabis offences for adults. • There would be a reduction in negative impacts of obtaining a criminal record for cannabis use and possession, which causes little harm beyond potential harm to an individual's health. • Allowing cultivation of a specific number of cannabis plants for personal use reduces the need for cannabis users to obtain cannabis through illegal means.
Community and individual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There may be potential unintended consequences to individual and community health, such as increased uptake in cannabis use. Long-term international evidence is currently inconclusive as the countries that have legalised or decriminalised cannabis have done so only recently. • The ACT Government would continue to actively discourage people from using cannabis, particularly children and young people who may be at higher risk of adverse effects from consumption. It is known that adverse psychosocial and mental health outcomes that are correlated with long-term cannabis use are most commonly seen in daily or near-daily cannabis users. • There is a potential for an increase in cannabis users seeking treatment due to a reduction of stigma. • Implications in relation to mental health are being carefully considered and the ACT Government will take into account the best available evidence around effects on public health.
Disability and disadvantaged and vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bill may reduce the stigma around the use of cannabis and seeking treatment for that use and will also result in a reduction in the negative impacts of having a criminal record for cannabis use and possession. These are all particularly important for disadvantaged and vulnerable people.

Economic

ACT Government Budget

- There are no immediate budget impacts; however, there may be future budget impacts. Possible impacts in the future may include funding for a community education and awareness campaign, development and provision of training and information for government and non-government employees.

Environmental

Nil impact.