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Legal Cannabis Industry is the Most Prolific Job Creator in America - Supporting More Than 428,000 Jobs



The US cannabis industry now supports 428,059 jobs

SEATTLE, WA (February 23, 2022) – Leafly (LFLY), one of the leading online cannabis discovery marketplaces and resources for cannabis consumers, today released its sixth annual cannabis industry jobs report. This year’s report found there are now 428,059 full-time equivalent jobs supported by the legal cannabis industry in the U.S. Leafly’s research also shows that America’s 11 operating adult-use markets and 27 medical states combined sold just under \$25 billion worth of cannabis products – more than \$6 billion more from the previous year. Looking ahead, the report forecasts that the total employment potential in a mature US legal cannabis market will be approximately 1.5 to 1.75 million workers, almost 4 times as many workers as in this year’s report.

This year’s report, created in partnership with Whitney Economics, shows that despite the ongoing economic and employment challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, cannabis continues to be the most powerful job creator in America – with no other industry coming close. 2021 was the fifth year in a row the cannabis industry saw an annual job growth rate higher than 27% – with a 33% increase in cannabis jobs in just a single year. To put that in perspective, employment in business and financial occupations is only projected to grow 8% through the decade. With states like New Mexico, New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut expected to open their first adult-use cannabis stores within the next 18 months, America’s cannabis job creation boom is expected to continue through at least 2025.

There has never been a better time to land a job in the legal cannabis industry. The Leafly Jobs Report found that nationwide cannabis sales increased 33% in 2021, and the investment capital that fled the cannabis space in early 2020 has largely returned, giving companies the money needed to increase payroll. One problem: not enough applicants. As with other industries, cannabis companies are struggling to find new employees in this era of the Great Resignation. And they'll need them soon. With stores in New York, New Jersey, New Mexico, and Connecticut opening soon, the demand for workers—experienced or not—is only expected to get hotter.

Key findings from the 2022 Leafly Cannabis Jobs Report include:

- 2021 marked the first year that cannabis job creation hit six figures. After adding 32,700 jobs in 2019 and 77,300 jobs in 2020, the industry added 107,059 new jobs in 2021.
- The United States now has three times as many cannabis workers as dentists.
- There are more people employed in the cannabis industry than there are hair stylists, barbers, and cosmetologists—combined.
- In 2022, three out of four Americans live in a state where cannabis is medically legal.
- The total cannabis sales figure found in this year's report—\$25 billion—represents only about 25% of the total potential US cannabis market.
- By 2025, America's total annual legal cannabis revenue is forecast to be closer to \$45 billion, which is still less than half the total potential market.
- Last year, America's legal cannabis industry created more than 280 new jobs every day. In 2021, someone was hired for a cannabis-supported job every 2 minutes of the work day.

“Since 2014, when the nation's first adult-use cannabis stores opened, the industry has created hundreds of thousands of new American jobs – and there are still plenty more yet to be created. We know the potential cannabis has as both an economic driver and force for good, and it's heartening to see employment numbers continue to reflect this strong growth,” said Leafly CEO Yoko Miyashita. “Leafly is proud to step up and fill the gap created by a lack of federal reporting, and to advocate for federal legalization that's equitable and accessible to all communities. During this midterm election year, it's essential our elected officials recognize the reality that cannabis is a leading, homegrown American industry, and help us achieve our goal of an inclusive and profitable cannabis industry for all.”

The 2022 Leafly Cannabis Jobs Report includes detailed state-level data for nine states at various stages of legalization, and can be accessed [here](#).

Methodology

The 2022 Leafly Jobs Report calculates the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) American jobs supported by legal cannabis. Working in partnership with Whitney Economics, Leafly undertakes this annual project to provide data missing from state and national labor studies, which refuse to count cannabis jobs due to federal prohibition. Each of the 38 states with some form of legal cannabis maintains its own unique set of regulations, which can profoundly affect the opportunity for cannabis sales and employment. Thus, each state requires a custom job-support calculation.

The Leafly/Whitney Economics team drills down into each state's specific regulatory environment, investment climate, cannabis license data, and past performance to shape each state's employment calculation. Macro events—like 2020's Covid pandemic, investment scarcity, and hiring pessimism—are factored in, as are other data points like a state's number of active cannabis worker cards. Added to that information are spot-check interviews with cannabis business owners and managers, as well as financial statements published by publicly traded cannabis companies.

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About Leafly

Cannabis discovery marketplace Leafly aims to help more than 100 million visitors discover cannabis this year. Our powerful ecommerce tools help shoppers make informed purchase decisions and empower cannabis businesses to attract and retain loyal customers through advertising and technology services. Learn more at [Leafly.com](https://www.leafly.com) or download the Leafly mobile app through Apple's App Store or Google Play.

About Whitney Economics

Whitney Economics is a global leader in cannabis and hemp business consulting, data, and economic research. The firm regularly consults with private companies as well as local, state, and national government agencies, applying economic principles to create actionable policies and strategies.

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