



Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police

Supporting police professionals through innovative and inclusive police leadership to advance the safety and security of all Canadians.

June 1, 2022

CACP Statement: Exemption of the province of British Columbia to decriminalize possession of some illegal drugs for personal use

On May 31, 2022, Health Canada announced that British Columbia has been granted a three-year exemption (January 31, 2023 to January 31, 2026) under section 56(1) of the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* to decriminalize possession of some illegal drugs for personal use.

The CACP applauds this initiative, the collaborative efforts taking place between the federal government, the province of British Columbia, health authorities, law enforcement as well as social and community organizations. The CACP is pleased to see that funds are being invested to strengthen the community infrastructure required for decriminalization to be one part of an effective solution.

The 2.5 gram cumulative threshold that was approved by Health Canada is supported by the CACP and we will continue to remain engaged and support the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of this exemption and threshold.

The implementation of decriminalization on a trial basis, in one specific region of the country, is an excellent way to offer an immediate solution to an urgent opioid crisis, where it has been felt the most, while assessing the impact, challenges, and unintended consequences of this exception to the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*. Doing so, supports an evidence-based approach to determining whether decriminalization for simple possession of illicit drugs is a viable solution that can successfully be adopted in all regions of the country.

In the meantime, police services across Canada will continue to focus on organized crime and criminal networks trafficking dangerous substances and jeopardizing the health and safety of Canadians.