

RETHINKING ACCESS TO MARIJUANA

# Advocacy Tools for Local Policy Change

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Inform. Educate. Advocate.

## OBJECTIVES

- Understand how an environmental assessment can be used to validate the impact of local AOD (marijuana) issues.
- Identify strategies for environmental change through marijuana policy advocacy.
- Identify how to build environmental change through targeted education.



# DISCLAIMER

Rethinking Access to Marijuana (RAM) Workgroup materials and projects were made possible through funds from County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Health, Substance Abuse Prevention and Control. The messages, views or opinions made by any of the publications, speakers, or staff do not reflect the official policy or position of any LA County agency, including SAPC.



## VISION

Flourishing youth and communities free from marijuana-related harms.

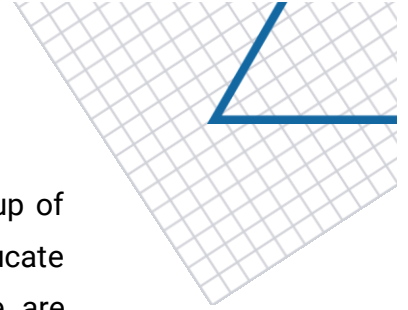
## MISSION

To prevent access and availability that leads to the use of marijuana by youth in the communities of Los Angeles County.

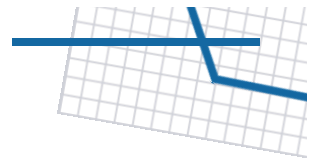


# WHO WE ARE

Rethinking Access to Marijuana (RAM) is a diverse group of community-based organizations working together to educate people about the harms of youth marijuana use. We are committed to helping LA County residents take action in their communities to minimize youth exposure to marijuana.



# COMMITTEES



Education



Policy



Research



Media



# CALIFORNIA & LA COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

- There are **58 counties** in California  
(source: [www.csac.counties.org](http://www.csac.counties.org))
- California population # of **37,253,956**  
(source: US Census Bureau 2010)
- There are **88 cities** in Los Angeles County with total population 10,441,080 (source: [lacounty.gov](http://lacounty.gov))
- There are approximately **140 unincorporated areas and communities** within Los Angeles County.
- Los Angeles city population # of **3,976,322** with a land area of **468.67 square miles**  
(source: US Census Bureau 2010)



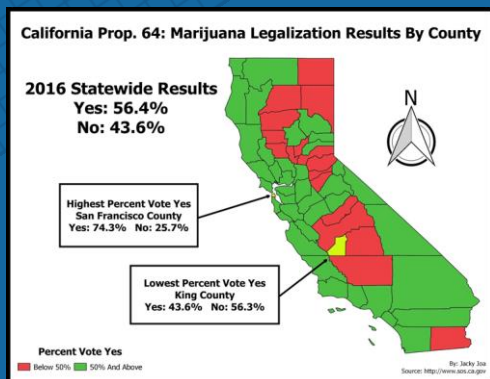
## PROPOSITION 64 - CA ADULT USE MARIJUANA ACT

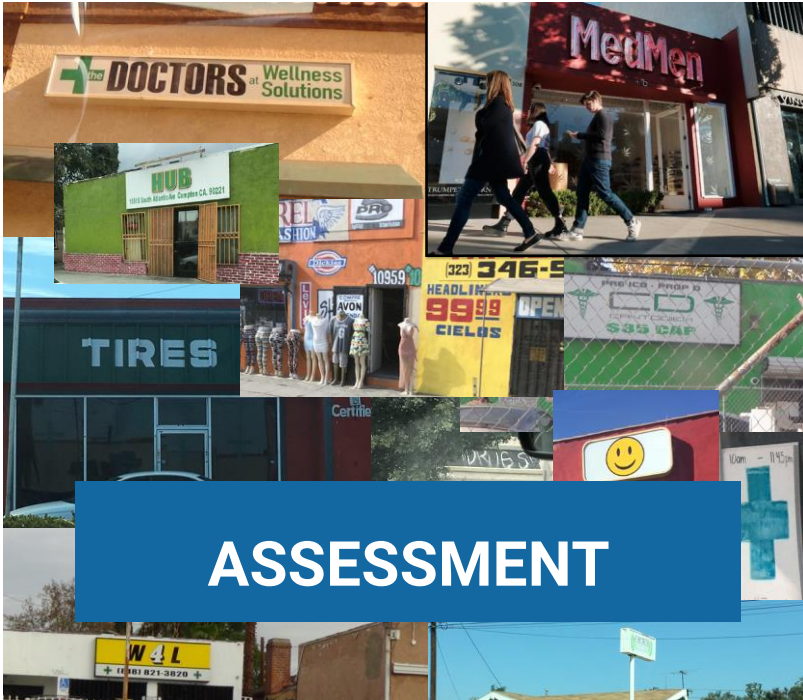
Proposition 64 legalizes the commercialization of marijuana and adult use of marijuana by individuals 21 years of age or older.

- Passed by 57% of voter approval

Concerns:

- Lack of research available
- Influence on voters
- Increase of access and availability





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# ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

## COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

### PURPOSE

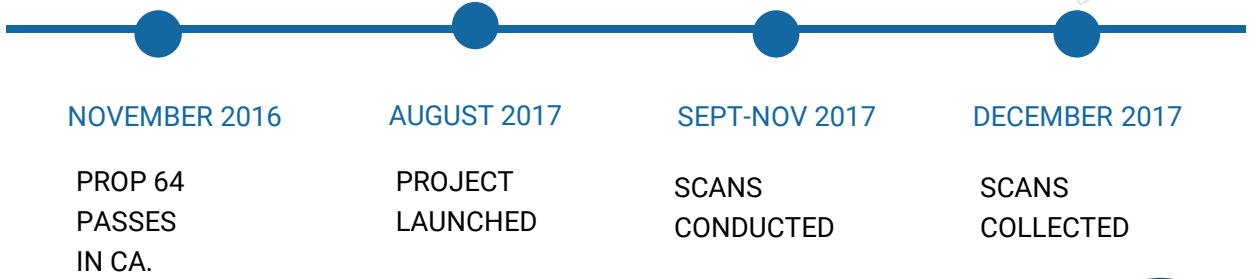
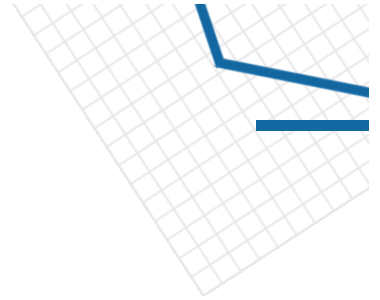
Document the changes of marijuana storefront proliferation in Los Angeles County, before and after legalization of licensed non-medical marijuana businesses.

- Influence on youth access and use based upon storefront density.
- Proximity impact on local neighborhoods and other sensitive areas.
- Inform and educate community and local leaders on environmental costs and harms to public health and well being.

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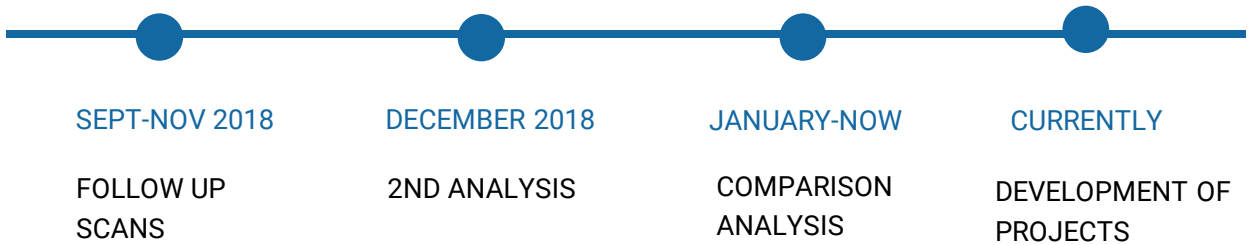
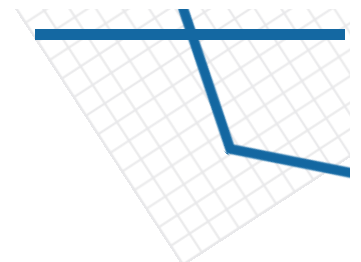
# PROJECT TIMELINE

Prepare and conduct the initial environmental scan on new and existing marijuana businesses to create baseline data before the issuance of state marijuana licenses.



# PROJECT TIMELINE

Conduct a follow-up environmental scan on changes in new and existing marijuana businesses since the issuance of state marijuana licenses on Jan 1, 2018.

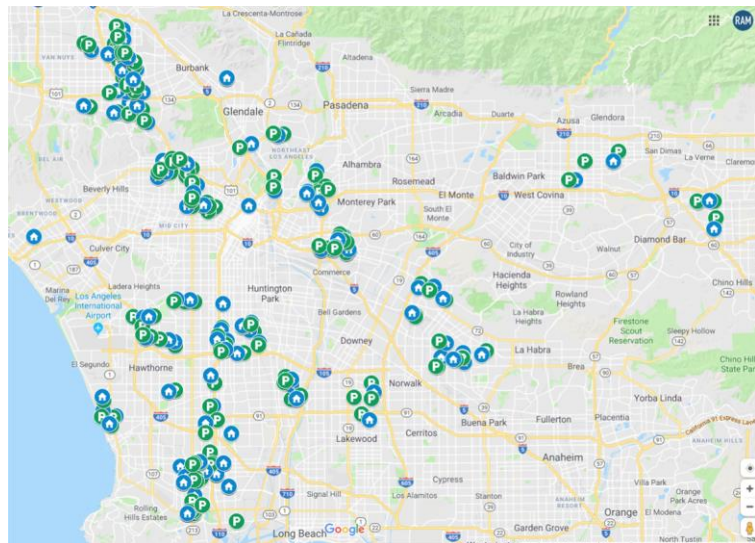


# Categories for Observation

- STOREFRONT EXTERIOR
- STOREFRONT (PATRON) ACTIVITY
- IMMEDIATE PROXIMITY
- SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOOD
- MARIJUANA ADVERTISEMENTS

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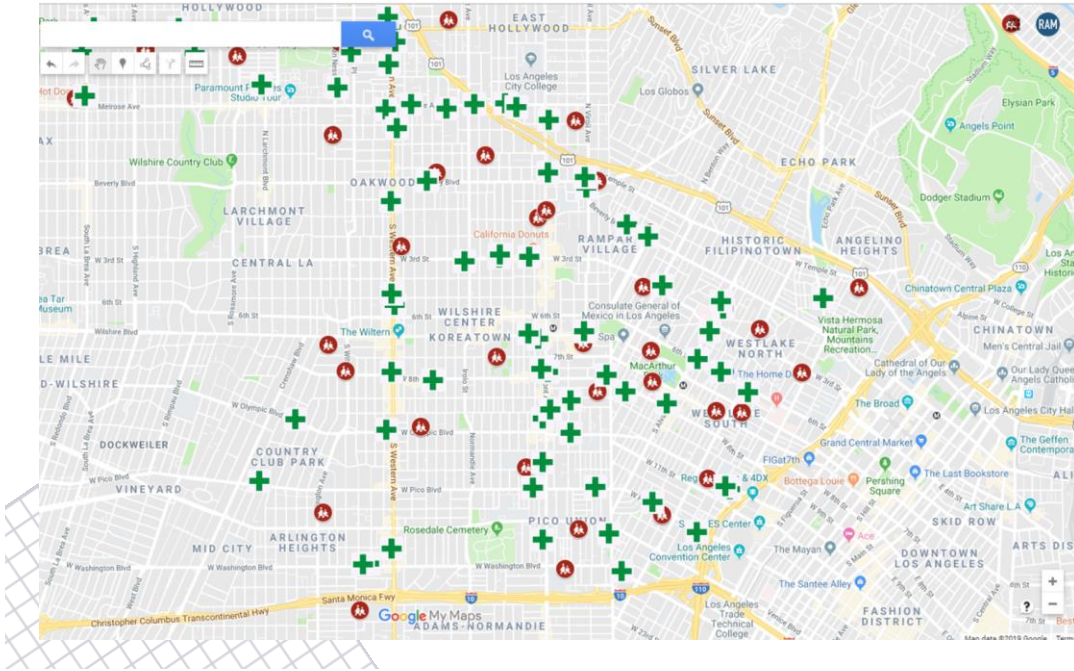
## ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN MAP (2017)



School Starting Point      Dispensary/Marijuana Business

Los Angeles County

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Locations within 1/2 mile radius or less in Central LA near School Starting Points



## 2017 - 2018 ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN SAMPLE

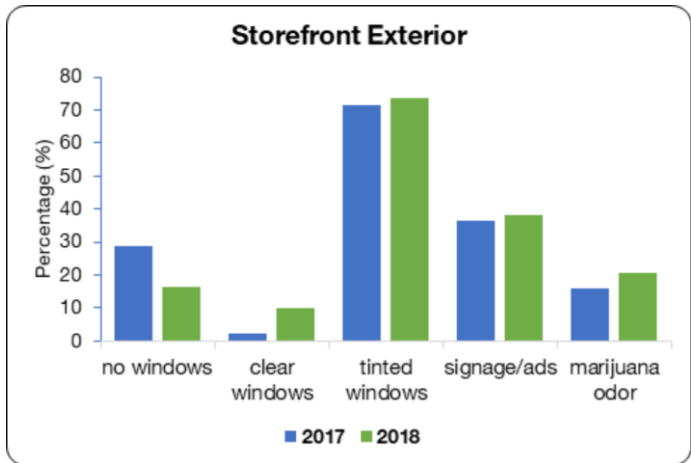
- Marijuana storefronts (MMD and retailers)
- School Starting Point
  - Marijuana storefront master list
  - Included storefronts in 14 cities in 2017, and over 20 cities in 2018
  - 14 Prevention Partner Agencies

### Total Scans completed

- Year 1: 182 STOREFRONTS
- Year 2: 347 STOREFRONTS

### Scans with operating marijuana retailers

- Year 1: 88 CHESSE Survey
- Year 2: 181 CHESSE Survey

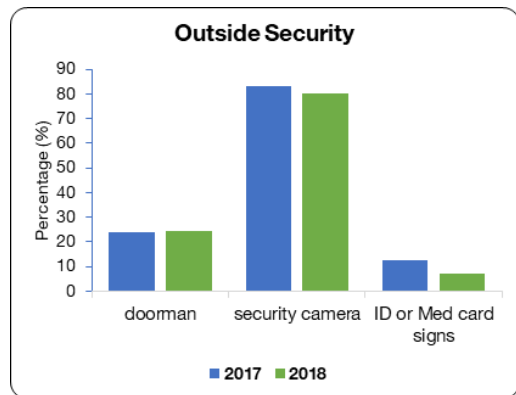
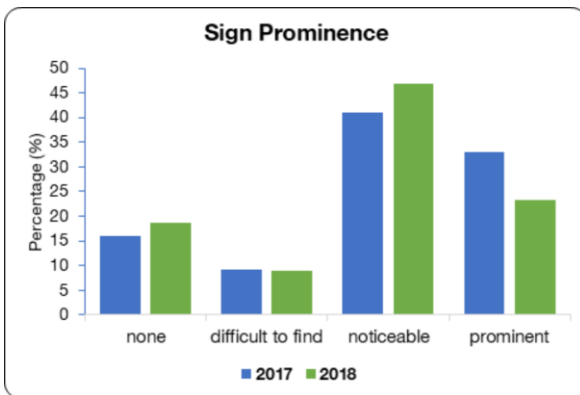




# STOREFRONT EXTERIOR



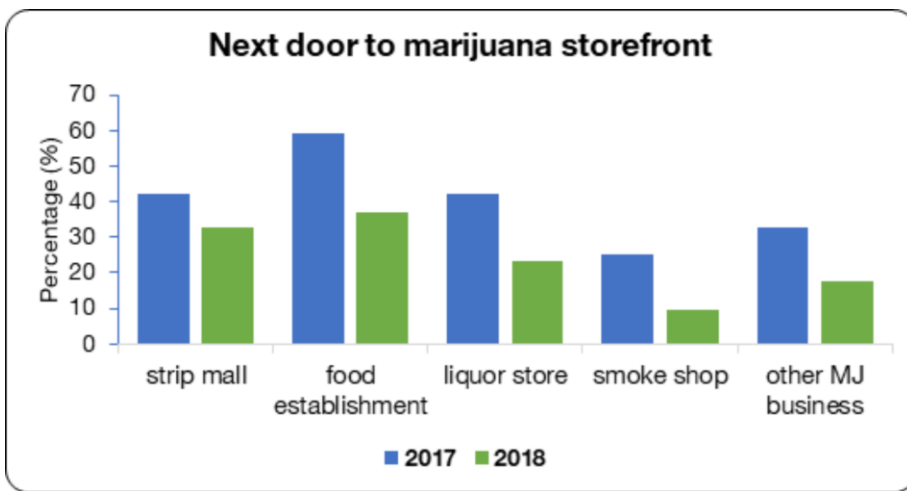
## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS



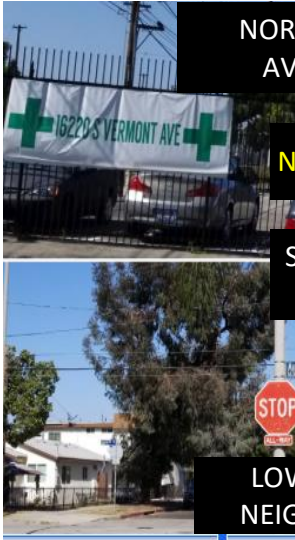
## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS Security, Signage, Patron Activity



## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS



# PRELIMINARY FINDINGS



NORMALIZED COMMERCIAL AVAILABILITY TO YOUTH

NEIGHBORHOOD INFLUENCE

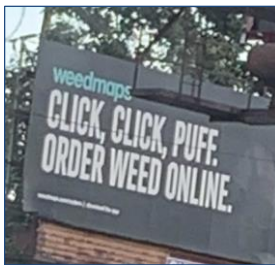
STOREFRONTS LOCATED ON MAIN STREET CORRIDORS

CLOSE PROXIMITY TO HIGHWAYS

LOWER INCOME NEIGHBORHOODS



# PRELIMINARY FINDINGS



## MARIJUANA ADVERTISING (2017)

Advertisements observed during the 2017 environmental scan included:

- Billboards
- Neon signs
- Posters/flyers
- Bus stop advertisements





## PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

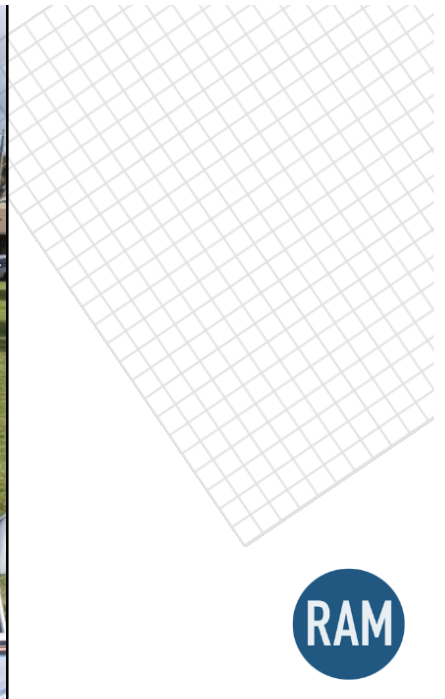
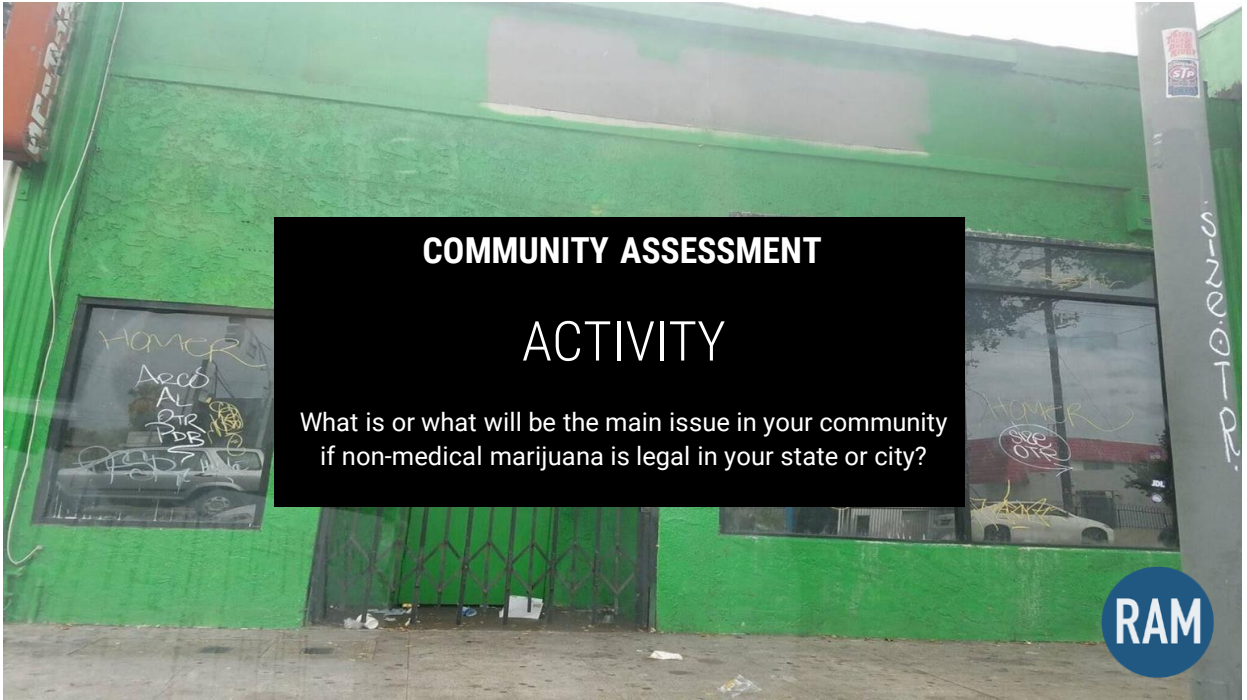
### LIMITATIONS

- The storefronts observed for RAM Scans are only a portion of total storefronts in LA County.
- Some storefronts were listed on Weedmaps as an active business, but during scans they were no longer in operation. Many pop-up stores in 2018
- Some survey questions changed from initial scan (2017) to second scan (2018)

### LESSONS LEARNED

- Some illegal storefronts were difficult to find or were hidden inside other businesses
- Safety of project team members
- Pictures help tell the full story
- Do practice observations with environmental scan tool before finalizing survey form, modify the form to best fit your particular area





# POLICY MENU

## WHAT IS IT?

- Living document that evolves as policy changes
- Best practices for enforcement
- Four Preliminary Areas to Address
  - Storefront Marijuana Businesses
  - Delivery Services
  - Commercial Cultivation
  - Personal Cultivation



# MARIJUANA POLICY DECISION MATRIX

## Re: Marijuana RAM

### Marijuana Regulation and Enforcement Priorities for Cities

Changes in marijuana policy are gaining momentum throughout Los Angeles County, most notably with the passage of Prop 64, the Adult Use of Marijuana Act. Little is known about the impact these shifts will have on health systems, prevention and treatment of substance abuse, social outcomes such as education and professional achievement, and other disease prevention. Profoundness of marijuana use, whether recreational or medical, has the potential for a serious negative impact on the health and safety of communities, and youth in particular.

As public health advocates, we are concerned with preventing health harms associated with marijuana use. The chief priority for protecting the health of LA County residents is promoting safe use of marijuana during the important developmental periods of childhood and adolescence. Marijuana is particularly risky for young people to use because it can interfere with brain development<sup>1</sup> and has been shown to cause long-term deficits in cognitive function when use begins in adolescence<sup>2</sup>.

Comprehensive regulation is a crucial strategy for city leaders to prevent negative impacts from marijuana on youth. Despite California's new Marijuana Law, many areas of regulation are still under development. How can city residents and officials act now to ensure that local policies protect youth and preserve the character of our communities?

This document reviews proven strategies to limit youth access to marijuana by regulating marijuana dispensaries, personal use cultivation, commercial cultivation, and delivery services. It also outlines the potential impact of various policy options. The following matrix includes important information for local legislators concerned with enacting smart marijuana regulation that adequately protects youth in our communities.

### Key Domains for Regulation

#### Storefront Marijuana Businesses

Restricting and carefully monitoring business and storefront licensing practices that are actively enforced through regular random compliance checks in which violations, such as those that will to minors, are subject to meaningful penalties (including license suspension and revocation) create a culture of compliance among marijuana licenses.



**Restricting density of marijuana outlets:** Location of research on alcohol and tobacco use demonstrates the need for strong controls on the density of businesses, and research shows the physical availability of marijuana storefronts is similarly related to the prevalence and frequency of marijuana use (Fletcher & Gurevitch, 2016). Density restrictions on the number of businesses that can locate in a given area can prevent excess clustering of marijuana outlets in our neighborhoods.

**Restricting where marijuana storefronts can be located:** Marijuana-related businesses should not be located near areas youth frequent such as schools, parks, and playgrounds. Similarly, locating marijuana businesses in mainstream shopping districts can increase perceptions among youth that marijuana is normal and socially acceptable, which has been shown to have strong associations with underage marijuana use (Kilbridge et al., 2016).



#### Personal Use Cultivation

Regulating licensing and inspections for each license: Current state laws regarding personal use cultivation lack basic requirements for security and preventing youth access. Ideally, property proposed as a site for personal use marijuana cultivation should be subject to an inspection and approval process, taking into account ways children might be exposed to the site and other concerns, such as security from theft, usability, water/irrigation usage, the potential for nuisance from drifting odors, and the rights of property owners.

#### Commercial Cultivation

**Restricting where marijuana storefronts can be located:** The current State law is more comprehensive in its regulation on commercial cultivation. However, it asks to city leaders to minimize the impact of commercial cultivation on youth by enacting zoning regulations to more residential areas and enforcing state regulations intended to prevent diversion of marijuana products to the black market.

<sup>1</sup> Lee, Miller et al., 2016  
<sup>2</sup> Lee, Miller et al., 2016



# Marijuana Policy Decision Matrix: Best Regulatory Practices for Minimizing Youth Harms



ALLOW



**BEST PRACTICES TO MINIMIZE YOUTH IMPACTS**

- Limit the quantity of storefront marijuana businesses and prevent outlets from clustering in specific neighborhoods
- Restrict location of marijuana outlets to low visibility areas far from places youth frequent
- Restrict signage and advertising to minimize visibility to youth
- Limit hours of operation
- Cap THC concentrations or allow only low THC/high CBD products
- Require child safe packaging and clear labeling for edibles
- Prohibit on-site use
- Implement security requirements to prevent robbery and burglary

**HOW TO ENFORCE**

- Require conditional use permits contingent on passing an annual compliance review
- Impose an annual renewal fee for conditional use permits to fund compliance inspections
- Implement high visibility enforcement like drugged driving checkpoints
- Take quick legal action against unlicensed or non-compliant outlets
- Fine and hold accountable building owners for renting to an unlicensed marijuana outlet
- Use a portion of licensing fees to fund random inspections and responsible retailer training
- Implement and locally publicize a Minor Decoy Program to evaluate compliance with age restrictions on marijuana sales

DON'T ALLOW



- Ensure the ordinance addresses all relevant marijuana activities, including cultivation and delivery (see sections below)

- Educate law enforcement officers about the local policy and their role in enforcement
- Educate residents about how to report unlicensed or non-compliant marijuana outlets



**POLICY MENU**

**SUCCESSSES**

- Multiple cities in Los Angeles County implemented a ban after discussion with city officials using the policy menu.
- Served as a model for local policy.
- Provided education and resources to community leaders and elected officials.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Connect and build relationships with local elected officials prior to introducing the decision matrix.
- Mobilize community members to echo the need for public health considerations in local policy.
  - Note: policy changes and local elected officials will also change.







# RESPONSIBLE CANNABIS BUSINESS TRAINING




RAM



## WHAT WE HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH

### GOALS

- To promote best practices and compliance of local and state regulations through a comprehensive training.
- Currently discussing with local officials to implement this as policy at city and county level.

### OUTCOMES

- Compliance of local and state regulations from retailers.
- Reduction in access and availability of marijuana to youth.
- A collaboration between law enforcement and public health in minimizing negative impacts associated with marijuana use in communities.



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# RCBT OVERVIEW

## COMMUNITY IMPACT

Understanding community impact between dispensaries and “sensitive areas” through data correlation.

## STATE AND LOCAL REGULATIONS

Understanding of state and city policies regarding cannabis.

## BEST PRACTICES

Recommendations and tips to create responsible policies for cannabis retail businesses.

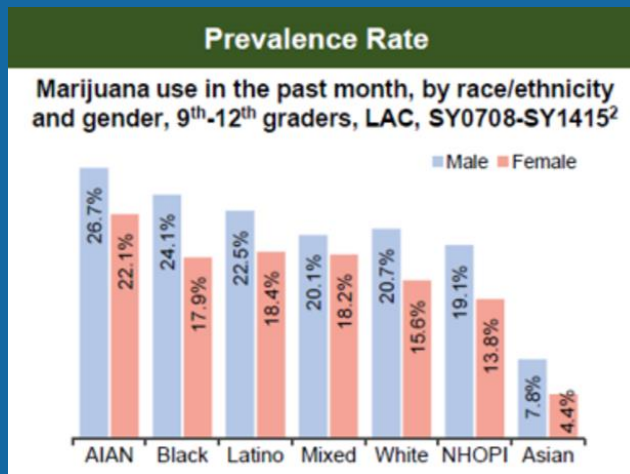
## RESPONSIBLE USE

Understanding of risks and harms related to cannabis and its products.

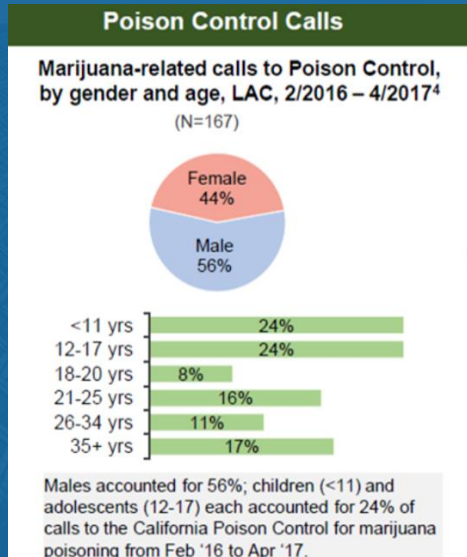


# COMMUNITY IMPACT

## LOS ANGELES COUNTY DATA BRIEF (03/19)

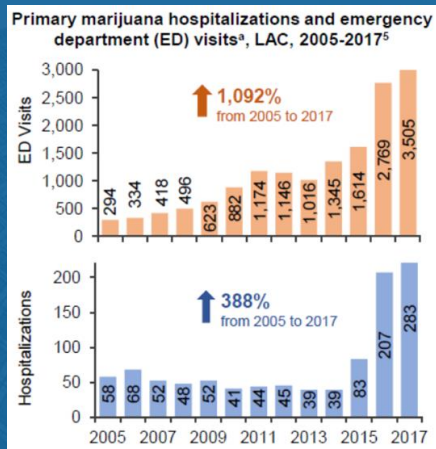


# LOS ANGELES COUNTY DATA BRIEF (03/19)



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# LOS ANGELES COUNTY DATA BRIEF (03/19)



Marijuana ED visits increased steadily from 2005 to 2017. Hospitalizations due to marijuana remained stable through 2014, then increased sharply.

<sup>a</sup> AIAN: American Indians/Alaskan Natives. NHOPI: Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

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# STATE & LOCAL REGULATIONS

## LICENSING & ENFORCEMENT ENTITIES

### BUREAU OF CANNABIS CONTROL

The Bureau of Cannabis Control (Bureau) is the lead agency in regulating commercial cannabis licenses for medical and adult-use cannabis in California. The Bureau is responsible for licensing retailers, distributors, testing laboratories, microbusinesses, and temporary cannabis events.

[bcc.ca.gov](http://bcc.ca.gov)

### CITY OF L.A. DEPT. OF CANNABIS REGULATION

The Department of Cannabis Regulation (DCR) is responsible for administering the commercial cannabis licensing and regulatory program established by the Los Angeles City Council. Specifically, DCR processes all applications for commercial cannabis licenses in the City of Los Angeles, makes licensing decisions or licensing recommendations to the Cannabis Regulation Commission, and regulates the operations of licensed commercial cannabis businesses in the City.

[cannabis.lacity.org](http://cannabis.lacity.org)

### LA COUNTY OFFICE OF CANNABIS MANAGEMENT

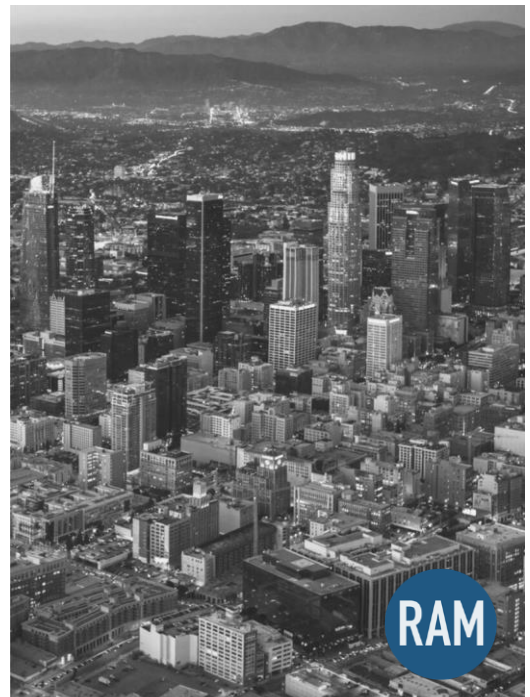
The Los Angeles County Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) has served LA County and its residents by leading the transition of cannabis to a regulated market with policies that seek to protect consumers, promote the health & safety of our communities.

[cannabis.lacounty.gov](http://cannabis.lacounty.gov)

## SUMMARY OF LAWS

### STATE REGULATIONS

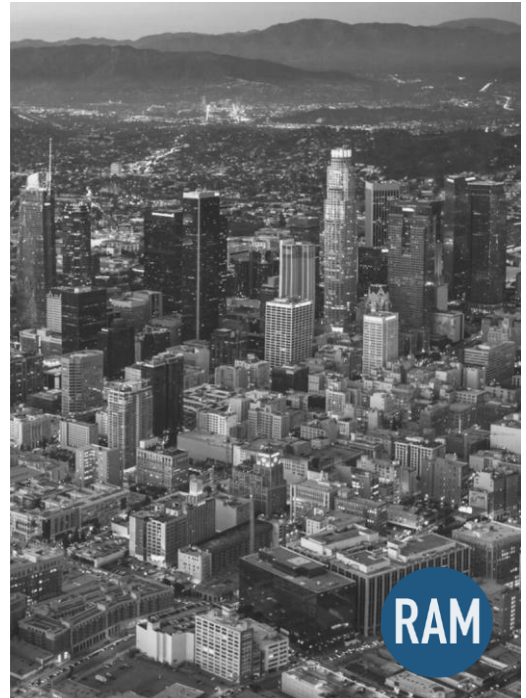
- General Provisions
- Definitions
- After Hours
- Enforcement
- Licensing
- Retailers, Distributors, Microbusinesses
- Packaging & Labeling
- Manufacturers & Cannabis Products
- False I.D. (Possession or Use Of)
- Protection of Minors
- Advertising & Marketing Regulations
- Local Control



# LOCAL REGULATIONS

## RESOURCES

- [Legal Do's & Don'ts Video: https://youtu.be/VhEQ12xuSs8](https://youtu.be/VhEQ12xuSs8)
- [Adult Use Cannabis 101 Guide \(Available in Spanish\)](#)
- [LAC DPH Medical Cannabis Program: http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh/SSE/MedicalMarijuana/](#)
- [Los Angeles County Let's Talk Cannabis](#)
- [Office of Cannabis Management](#)
- [File A Complaint: https://cannabis.lacity.org/resources/complaint-portal](https://cannabis.lacity.org/resources/complaint-portal)



## BEST PRACTICES:

### PREVENTING SALES TO MINOR

#### MINOR DECOYS (ENFORCEMENT)

- Have policies in place that emphasize the responsibility of all employees to make responsible sales and ensuring no product is being sold to minors
- Understanding that having a license means that you can potentially be subjected to having minor decoy buys from law enforcement to deter sales to minors

#### CHECKING ID'S AND/OR HAVING A VERIFICATION PROCESS

#### HAVING BUSINESS' POLICIES AND SIGNAGE IN PLAIN VIEW FOR CUSTOMERS

#### CHECKING FOR POTENTIAL SHOULDER TAPS



# BEST PRACTICES: SITE SAFETY

SECURITY PERSONNEL (ARMED, HIGHLY RECOMMEND) AND SECURITY CAMERAS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE WITHIN THE BUSINESS' PERIMETERS

SUFFICIENT LIGHTING ON THE EXTERIOR PART OF THE BUSINESS

SUFFICIENT LIGHTING THROUGHOUT ESTABLISHMENT INCLUDING POINT OF SALE AND STORAGE AREAS

FOLLOWING STATE LAW REQUIREMENTS FOR HOURS OF OPERATION (6AM-10PM)

MAINTAINING A CLEAN, ORGANIZED AND SAFE SPACE FOR EMPLOYEES AND CUSTOMERS

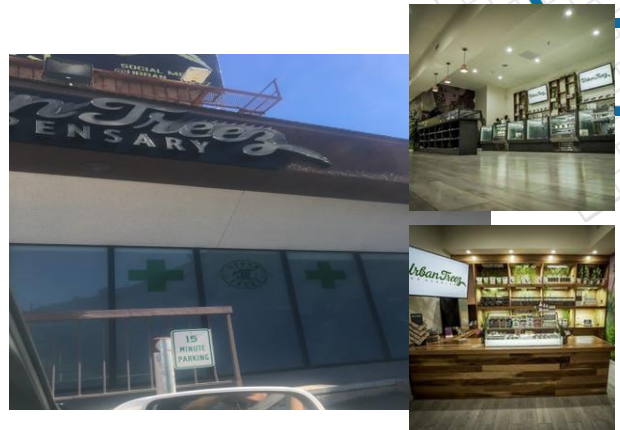
POST SIGNAGE THAT ENFORCES RETAILER'S POLICIES



## BEST PRACTICES: SITE SAFETY



LOW-END DISPENSARY (USUALLY ILLICIT OR NON-COMPLIANT) LOCATED IN LOWER-INCOME COMMUNITIES AND HAVE THE MOST IMPACT. TEND TO BE LOCATED NEAR SENSITIVE AREAS.



HIGH-END DISPENSARY (USUALLY LICENSED AND COMPLIANT) LOCATED IN HIGHER-INCOME COMMUNITIES AND HAVE THE LEAST IMPACT. TEND TO BE LOCATED FURTHER FROM SENSITIVE AREAS.



**BEST PRACTICES:**

**PRODUCT SAFETY**

BUSINESSES & EMPLOYEES SHOULD FOLLOW STATE LAW IN PLACING PRODUCTS INTO OPAQUE PACKAGING BEFORE LEAVING BUSINESS LOCATION

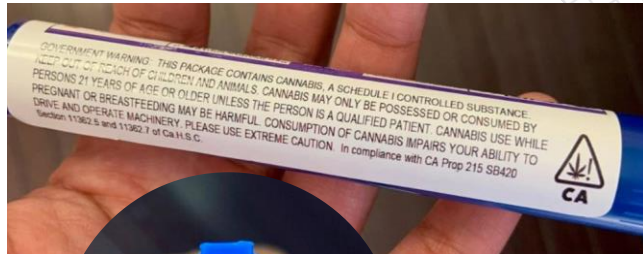
PRODUCTS TO BE LOCKED AND ACCESSIBLE TO EMPLOYEES ONLY UNTIL POINT OF SALE

PRODUCTS SHOULD BE LABELED PROPERLY (% THC, % CBD, MG OF THC & CBD)

ENSURING PRODUCTS IS IN PACKAGING THAT ISN'T EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY CHILDREN



**BEST PRACTICES: PRODUCT SAFETY**



# BEST PRACTICES: MARKETING/ ADVERTISEMENTS

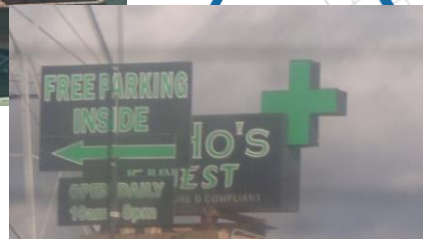
NO BILLBOARDS OR ADVERTISING THAT IS VISIBLE TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC FROM ANY STREET, SIDEWALK THAT ARE LOCATED 1,000 FT (700 FT FOR CITY OF LOS ANGELES) FROM "SENSITIVE AREAS"

ADVERTISEMENT OR MARKETING SHOULD NOT BE INTENDED TO ENCOURAGE PERSONS UNDER 21 YEARS OF AGE

NO HAPPY HOURS OR GIVEAWAYS AT EVENTS/FESTIVALS, NEIGHBORHOODS, RETAIL STORES, OR NEAR/AT "SENSITIVE AREAS" WHERE EXPECTED PERSONS OF 21 YEARS OR YOUNGER WILL BE PRESENT.



## ADVERTISING IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY





## BEST PRACTICES:

### EMPLOYEE ETHICS

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ALL EMPLOYEES MUST BE AT LEAST 21 YEARS OF AGE

ALL EMPLOYEES MUST BE RESPECTFUL TO EACH OTHER AND CUSTOMERS

ALL EMPLOYEES SHOULD NOT BE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF MARIJUANA WHILE ON THE JOB

ALL EMPLOYEES SHOULD PROVIDE ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CANNABIS PRODUCTS BEING SOLD AND THE POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS



## BEST PRACTICES:

### EMPLOYEE ETHICS

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ALL EMPLOYEES SHOULD NOT PROVIDE MEDICAL ADVICE & RECOMMEND ALL CLIENTS SEEK PHYSICIAN EXPERTISE, PARTICULARLY WITH THOSE WHO HAVE PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS AND/OR ARE TAKING OTHER MEDICATIONS

ALL EMPLOYEES SHOULD STRIVE TO WEAR APPROPRIATE ATTIRE (I.E. UNIFORM) OR BUSINESS CASUAL ATTIRE

ALL EMPLOYEES SHOULD HAVE NAME BADGES

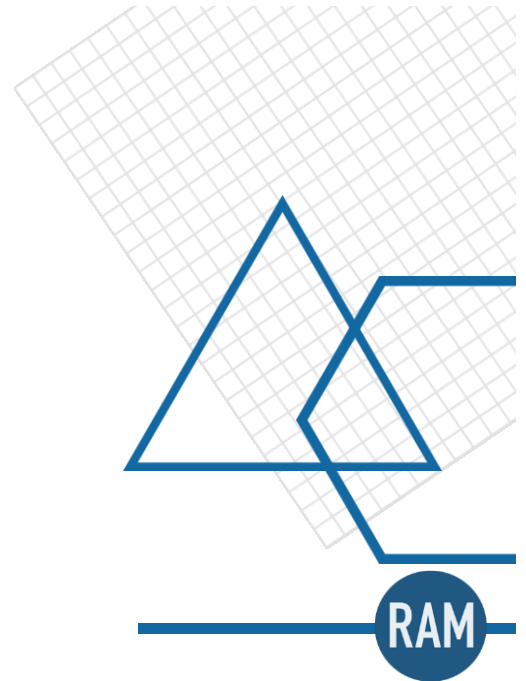
ALL EMPLOYEES SHOULD BE TRAINED ON ALL STORE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AS WELL AS ALL STATE AND LOCAL REGULATIONS



# RESPONSIBLE USE

## RISKS AND HARMS

Ensuring that retailers are knowledgeable of risks and harms related to cannabis and its products. Emphasizing that best practices and strong store policies lead to responsible use from consumers and limits the negative impacts marijuana use can have on communities.



# EFFECTS OF MARIJUANA

## SHORT-TERM

- Hallucinations and delusions
- Paranoia
- Impaired judgement, perception, and coordination
- Intoxication/High
- Red eyes
- Rapid heart beat/arrhythmia
- Hypertension
- Worsening anxiety
- Increased risky behavior

## LONG-TERM

- Memory and learning problems
- Addiction
- Withdrawal symptoms – including weight loss, irritability, sleep problems
- Mental health problems
- Respiratory infections and bronchitis
- Mood Disorders (Anxiety, Depression)
- Psychosis
- Poor social functioning
- Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome

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## TIME COURSE OF MARIJUANA EFFECTS BY INGESTION METHOD

<u>Method of Use</u>	<u>Peak Effects</u>	<u>Duration of Effects</u>
Smoking	15 – 30 minutes	Up to 4 hours
Eating/Drinking	30 minutes to 3 hours	Up to 12 hours
Vaping	15 – 30 minutes	Up to 4 hours
Dabbing	Seconds to minutes	Several hours
Topical Use*	Up to an hour	4 to 6 hours

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## CONSIDERATIONS FOR PUBLIC SPACES

- You cannot use marijuana in a public place **where tobacco is not allowed**. You can be fined for breaking public smoking laws.
- There are harmful toxins in marijuana smoke that cause problems like asthma.
- Marijuana smoke bothers your lungs because of the chemicals found in them.

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## THE CONSEQUENCES OF DRIVING HIGH

Driving Under the Influence (DUI) penalties apply when driving under the influence of marijuana, alcohol, and/or any other drug. The consequences for a first offense include:

- Fines up to \$1,000 and DUI program fees up \$1,200
- Jail time for up to 6 months
- DUI classes for up to 9 months
- License suspensions up to 10 months

The logo for RAM, consisting of the letters 'RAM' in a bold, white, sans-serif font inside a dark blue circle.

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF DRIVING HIGH

Driving Under the Influence (DUI) penalties apply when driving under the influence of marijuana, alcohol, and/or any other drug. The consequences for a additional offenses include:

- Court fines up \$5,000 and DUI program fees up to \$3,500
- Jail time for up to 4 years
- DUI classes for up to 9 months for a 1st offense and 18-30 months for subsequent offenses
- License suspensions up to 5 years

The logo for RAM, consisting of the letters 'RAM' in a bold, white, sans-serif font inside a dark blue circle.

# THE CONSEQUENCES OF DRIVING HIGH

- Marijuana use can increase the risk of crashes by slowing down reaction time and by affecting judgment of time and distance.
- The possession or use of marijuana can lead to a violation of probation or parole.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

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# RECOMMENDATIONS/CONSIDERATIONS

## ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

- Program capacity for conducting environmental scans
- Observations of interior of cannabis businesses
- Interpretation of survey questions and implementation

## POLICY MENU

- Comprehensive list of areas to address related to marijuana
- Change in state and local regulations
- Relationship-building prior to the presentation of the decision matrix

## RCBT

- Limited feedback from cannabis retailers
- Correlating regulations with best practices
- Local support for policy implementation in the development stage

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Please visit our website for more information and resources.

[www.lacountyram.org](http://www.lacountyram.org)

@lacountyram



# CONTACTS

## PRESENTER INFORMATION



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