



MEDIA RELEASE

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SAULT STE. MARIE, Mich.

Sault Tribe legalizes recreational marijuana

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SAULT STE. MARIE, Mich. — The Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians Board of Directors approved a resolution at its April 16 meeting to legalize marijuana on the Sault Tribe reservation. The new law takes effect May 15.

“The wave of legalization of personal or recreational use of marijuana has reached the Sault Tribe reservation for adult Sault Tribe citizens,” said Tribal Chairperson Aaron Payment. “Some will celebrate while others have concerns. Fundamental change is never easy.”

On April 8, Bay Mills Indian Community adopted an ordinance, allowing individuals to cultivate, possess and use marijuana, which mirrors state law. Michigan voters approved a referendum last fall legalizing marijuana.

The Sault Tribe law also mirrors state law: Only those 21 and older can possess, use and grow small amounts of marijuana within their residence. Those with past marijuana related offenses may request they be vacated via Tribal Court. Marijuana cannot be used or displayed in public; drivers cannot be under the influence of marijuana. Permitted manufacture, process and sale of marijuana is limited to authorized tribal enterprises.

The new Tribal Code “Chapter 71: Criminal Offenses, Subchapter XVI: Controlled Substances and Related Offenses” takes effect May 15 to be in accord with the 30-day referendum timeline set forth in the Sault Tribe Constitution, said Payment. The tribe will use the time to put an implementation plan and press plan in place, according to the resolution.

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