



Rhode Island Hemp Program

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ISLAND

What is Hemp?

“Hemp” means the plant *Cannabis sativa* L. and any part of that plant, including the seeds thereof and all derivatives, extracts, cannabinoids, isomers, acids, salts, and salts of isomers, whether growing or not, with a total THC concentration distribution range of not more than three-tenths percent (.3%) on a dry weight or per volume basis regardless of moisture content.

Hemp: Who regulates it in RI?

- **Hemp Growers**
 - US Department of Agriculture/Department of Business Regulation (“DBR”)
 - In order to grow hemp in Rhode Island, an entity is required to obtain a license (dual, grower) from DBR. DBR rules reflect the current requirements under the Farm Bill.
- **Hemp Manufacturer/Processor**
 - DBR
 - A handler or dual license is required to further process or manufacture hemp post harvest in Rhode Island.
- **Hemp-Derived Consumable Product Distribution**
 - DBR
 - If you want to sell defined hemp-derived consumable products to a RI retailer, a license from DBR is required.
- **Hemp-Derived Consumable Product Retail Sale**
 - DBR- If you want to sell defined hemp-derived consumable products to consumers in RI (even online), a license from DBR is required.
- DBR will continue to regulate hemp post May 1st when Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) rules are effective.
- Governor McKee’s 2025-2026 Budget Proposal includes the transfer of authority of the hemp program from DBR to the CCC.

New England States & Hemp Regulatory Authority

State	Does the state's cannabis regulatory agency have regulatory authority over hemp products? (Y/N)	Retail Restrictions?
Connecticut	Yes – Department of Consumer Protection	Hemp-derived THC-infused beverages may not be sold in convenience stores/gas stations. Only sold at liquor stores and licensed dispensaries/retailers/hybrid retailers.
Maine	No	N/A
Massachusetts	No	Only authorized cannabis retailers or medical marijuana dispensaries are allowed to sell such products.
Vermont	Yes – Cannabis Control Board	Delta-8 and other synthetic hemp derivatives are prohibited.

Cannabis Regulatory Agencies With Hemp Regulatory Authority

State	Regulatory authority over any hemp products?	Notable Notes
District of Columbia	DC Alcoholic Beverage and Cannabis Administration	Hemp is deemed to be cannabis under DC law and all cannabis rules apply to hemp products.
Louisiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Agriculture and Forestry - Department of Health - Office of Alcohol and Tobacco Control (ATC) 	Prohibits products containing synthetic cannabinoids.
Maryland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maryland Department of Agriculture - Maryland Cannabis Administration 	Any hemp product acquired by licensed cannabis businesses that is greater than 0.5mg/serving, or 2.5mg/package must be labeled and tested in accordance with other cannabis products.
Michigan	Cannabis Regulatory Agency	N/A
Minnesota	Office of Cannabis Management	Prohibits products containing synthetic cannabinoids; no more than 5mg.THC in single serving; no more than 50mg THC per package for edibles; beverages limited to 2 servings per container.
New Jersey	Department of Agriculture	Any product cultivated, derived, or manufactured from hemp has a concentration of total THC greater than 0.5 milligrams per serving or 2.5 milligrams per package.
New York	Office of Cannabis Management	Prohibits products containing synthetic cannabinoids.
Oregon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Department of Agriculture - Liquor & Cannabis Commission 	Cannabinoid limits in hemp products; age restrictions; some product labeling and testing requirements

USDA Farm Bills

- The 2014 Farm Bill (Agricultural Act of 2014, P.L. 113- 79, §7606) established the Hemp Research Pilot Program (7 U.S.C. §5940).
- The 2018 Farm Bill (Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-334, §§ 10113-10114, 12619) expanded on hemp provisions in the 2014 farm bill, establishing the Domestic Hemp Production Program, amending the Agricultural Marketing Act (AMA) of 1946 (7 U.S.C. §§1639o-s).

Hemp: Rhode Island

- **2016: RI Hemp Growth Act**
 - 2018 DBR Rules and Regulations
- **2019: Amended RI Hemp Growth Act**
 - **2021: Amended DBR Rules and Regulations**
 - Added in 2018 Farm Bill Requirements
 - Added hemp-derived consumable distributor and retail license requirement
 - **2024: Amended DBR Rules and Regulations**
 - Added specific product types (flower, concentrates, edible/beverages)
 - Added total THC limits for hemp-derived consumable products

Hemp-Derived: What does that mean?

- Hemp is federally legal pursuant to the Farm Bill.
 - Licenses to grow hemp are required.
 - Hemp is deemed “hemp” if potency results from an approved third-party lab show a THC concentration of no more than .3% on a dry-weight basis 30 days prior to harvest. Compliant hemp can then be harvested. Noncompliant hemp is required to be destroyed.
 - Hemp-derived products are required to come from compliantly harvested hemp and as such may be transferred between states.
 - Hemp-derived cannabinoids cannot be synthetically produced and/or sold in Rhode Island.

Hemp-Derived Consumable Products in RI

- Hemp regulations were amended in 2024 to ensure total THC limits were in place for hemp-derived products.
- Office of Cannabis Regulation (“OCR”), within DBR, requires a distributor or retail license to distribute/sell hemp flower, concentrates, and edible type products.
 - **Hemp Flower:** No more than 1% THC limit (guidance issued in 2025)
 - **Concentrates intended to be inhaled:** No more than 5mgs of total THC per packaged product.
 - **Edible products:** No more than 1mg of total THC per serving and 5mgs of total THC per package.

"THC" means THC as defined in R.I. Gen. Laws § 2-26-3(13) and includes delta 9-tetrahydrocannabinol, the principal psychoactive constituent of cannabis, tetrahydrocannabinol acid and the natural or synthetic equivalents of the substances contained in the plant, or in the resinous extractives of, cannabis sativa L., or any synthetic substances, compounds, salts, or derivatives of the plant or chemicals and their isomers.

Overview: Rhode Island Hemp Licensees

Hemp-Derived Consumable Retailers

- 113

Hemp-Derived Consumable Distributors

- 11

Hemp Handlers

- 4

Hemp Dual (Growers/Handlers)

- 4

Enforcement Priorities

- **Licensing Retail Shops and Education**
 - The goal in 2024 was to get businesses in RI selling hemp-derived products licensed and most importantly to ensure that synthetic cannabinoid products were off the shelves.
- **Hemp-Derived Seltzers**
 - These seltzers can be found in licensed hemp retail locations and may contain no more than 1mg of THC per serving and 5mgs of THC per package.
- **Flower above the allowable total THC limit**
- **Testing**
 - All current hemp-derived products available for sale are required to be tested for potency. Additional tests similar to what is required for cannabis, should also be phased in such as pesticides, heavy metals and microbiological contaminants.

Key Takeaways and Future Needs

- Implement similar requirements for hemp as we have for cannabis.
 - Total THC limits
 - Packaging and Labeling
 - Testing
- **The goal is to ensure that every product sold in RI whether it be hemp or cannabis derived is held to the same high standard.**