W OFFICE OF RESEARCH UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
To: University of WashingtonFaculty,Staff, andStudentsInvolved in Research

From: Mary Lidstrom, PhD

Vice Provostfor Research

Date: October1, 2014

Re: Guidancefor Researchersat the University of WashingtonConcerningMarijuana

Research

Summary

DespiteWashingtonState’slegalizationof marijuana,UW marijuanaresearchis still subjectto

thesamefederalrulesand regulationsasbeforethe passageof WashingtonStateinitiative No.

502. Thereis asyet no provisionfor the legal useof marijuanain researchat UW exceptas

alreadyestablishedand involving compliancewith DEA, FDA, and NIDA policiesand regulations.

This appliesto any researchconductedunderthe auspicesof the University of Washington,

regardlessof whetheror not the researchis conductedon the UW campus.

Introduction

The passageof Initiative MeasureNo. 502 in 2012 amendedWashingtonStatelaw to permit

the use,sale,processing,and productionof marijuanafor recreationalpurposesin additionto

already-permittedmedicaluses.Coloradoalso recentlylegalizedthe recreationaluseof

marijuanaand a majority of stateshavelegalizedits medicaluse.Consequently,it is anticipated

thattherewill be expandedinterestin, andopportunityfor, marijuanaresearch.The University

of Washington(UW) is a world-classresearchinstitution whoserobustresearchcommunityand

expertisein diverseareasmakeit a likely location for such research.

The purposeof this guidanceis to inform the UW researchcommunityof the University’s

currentposition on marijuanaresearchandthe conditionsunderwhich marijuanaresearchmay

be conducted.Thereappearsto be disagreementwithin and betweenfederalagenciesabout

marijuana,which meansthattherearesomeissuesfor which the applicablelaws and

proceduresare not yet clear.This guidancewill be updatedas laws and policiesdevelop.

Definition of MarijuanaResearch

For the purposesof this Guidance,marijuanaresearchis definedas researchthat involvesthe

growth, production,procurement,administration,or useof marijuana.It doesnot referto

observationalresearchfor which the researcherdoesnot grow, produce,procure,or

administer

Background

Marijuana is categorized as a Schedule I drug by the DEA under the federal Controlled

UW faculty, staff, and students may legally conduct marijuana research without a Schedule 1

license when the marijuana exists in the form of industrial products, processed plant materials, and animal feed mixtures made from certain portions of the cannabis plant, to the extent that such products and plant materials contain THC but are not used, or intended,

1. Source offunding. Potential sponsors of marijuana-related research may include federal or

state agencies, non-profit organizations, industry, and private individuals. Whether researchers

may accept funding that comes directly from the marijuana industry (for example, from a

professional association of growers legally licensed in Washington State) is a difficult question

that should be addressed with the Office of Research before applying for or accepting the

funding.

2. Research activities. Research with marijuana should comply with the guidelines and

procedures described in this Guidance.

3. Mechanism offunding. The

address additional specific issues. The University recognizes and wishes to facilitate the desire

of its faculty to conduct marijuana research that has significant scientific merit and/or public

health value. Therefore, the University is working with other institutions to request more

regulatory clarity from the federal government.

Contact

Contact the Office of Research at j rc@uwedii or 206-616-0804 if you have questions

about this Guidance or about specific marijuana-related research at the UW.

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