

2013-2014 RWU Student Handbook: Statement on Marijuana (Draft – 02/19/2013)

Rhode Island law currently permits with certain restrictions (e.g. prohibited on any school grounds) the use of marijuana for persons possessing a lawfully issued medical marijuana card. In addition, effective April 1, 2013, Rhode Island law was amended to decriminalize a limited amount (one ounce or less) of marijuana from a misdemeanor to a civil offense for the first and second violations in an 18 month period (the entire statute is available here: <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE21/21-28/21-28-4.01-1.HTM>). It is important to note, however, that federal law still prohibits the use, possession, distribution, sale or cultivation of marijuana.

The use of marijuana can negatively impact learning, impair clear thinking and mental alertness, and conflicts with the educational mission of Roger Williams University. As an educational institution that receives federal funds, Roger Williams University must comply with federal law under the Drug- Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 (20 U.S.C. Section 1011i). Accordingly, the use, possession, distribution, sale or cultivation of marijuana remains prohibited for all students on and off campus via the RWU Student Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct. However, students who possess a lawfully issued medical marijuana card and use marijuana for that purpose in *private, off-campus residences* will be exempt from University policy in that regard.