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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

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A N A C T

RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS -- UNIFORM CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT

Introduced By: Senator David P. Tikoian

Date Introduced: March 22, 2024

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

(Judiciary)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 21-28-4.01 of the General Laws in Chapter 21-28 entitled "Uniform
2 Controlled Substances Act" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **21-28-4.01. Prohibited acts A — Penalties.**

4 (a)(1) Except as authorized by this chapter and chapters 28.6 and 28.11 of title 21, it shall
5 be unlawful for any person to manufacture, deliver, or possess with intent to manufacture or deliver
6 a controlled substance.

7 (2) Any person who is not a drug-addicted person, as defined in § 21-28-1.02, who violates
8 this subsection with respect to a controlled substance classified in schedule I or II, except the
9 substance classified as marijuana, is guilty of a crime and, upon conviction, may be imprisoned to
10 a term up to life or fined not more than five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) nor less than ten
11 thousand dollars (\$10,000), or both.

12 (3) Where the deliverance as prohibited in this subsection shall be the proximate cause of
13 death to the person to whom the controlled substance is delivered, it shall not be a defense that the
14 person delivering the substance was, at the time of delivery, a drug-addicted person as defined in §
15 21-28-1.02.

16 (4) Any person, except as provided for in subsection (a)(2), who violates this subsection
17 with respect to:

18 (i) A controlled substance, classified in schedule I or II, is guilty of a crime and, upon
19 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than thirty (30) years, or fined not more than one

1 hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) nor less than three thousand dollars (\$3,000), or both;

2 (ii) A controlled substance, classified in schedule III or IV, is guilty of a crime and, upon
3 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than twenty (20) years, or fined not more than forty
4 thousand dollars (\$40,000), or both; provided, with respect to a controlled substance classified in
5 schedule III(d), upon conviction may be imprisoned for not more than five (5) years, or fined not
6 more than twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), or both.

7 (iii) A controlled substance, classified in schedule V, is guilty of a crime and, upon
8 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than one year, or fined not more than ten thousand
9 dollars (\$10,000), or both.

10 (b)(1) Except as authorized by this chapter, it is unlawful for any person to create, deliver,
11 or possess with intent to deliver, a counterfeit substance.

12 (2) Any person who violates this subsection with respect to:

13 (i) A counterfeit substance, classified in schedule I or II, is guilty of a crime and, upon
14 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than thirty (30) years, or fined not more than one
15 hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), or both;

16 (ii) A counterfeit substance, classified in schedule III or IV, is guilty of a crime and, upon
17 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than twenty (20) years, or fined not more than forty
18 thousand dollars (\$40,000), or both; provided, with respect to a controlled substance classified in
19 schedule III(d), upon conviction may be imprisoned for not more than five (5) years, or fined not
20 more than twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), or both.

21 (iii) A counterfeit substance, classified in schedule V, is guilty of a crime and, upon
22 conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than one year, or fined not more than ten thousand
23 dollars (\$10,000), or both.

24 (c)(1) It shall be unlawful for any person knowingly or intentionally to possess a controlled
25 substance, unless the substance was obtained directly from, or pursuant to, a valid prescription or
26 order of a practitioner while acting in the course of his or her professional practice, or except as
27 otherwise authorized by this chapter or chapters 28.6 and 28.11 of title 21.

28 (2) Any person who violates this subsection with respect to:

29 (i) Except as otherwise provided in §§ 21-28-4.01.1 and 21-28-4.01.2, ten grams (10 g.) or
30 less of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of a controlled substance classified
31 in schedules I, II, III, IV, and V, except buprenorphine and the substance classified as marijuana,
32 is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than two (2)
33 years, or fined not more than five hundred dollars (\$500) or both.

34 (ii) Except as otherwise provided in §§ 21-28-4.01.1 and 21-28-4.01.2, more than ten grams

1 (10 g.), but less than one ounce (1 oz.) of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of
2 a controlled substance classified in schedules I, II and III, IV, and V, except buprenorphine and the
3 substance classified as marijuana, is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, may be imprisoned
4 for not more than three (3) years, or fined not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), or both.

5 (iii) Except as otherwise provided in §§ 21-28-4.01.1 and 21-28-4.01.2, more than two
6 ounces (2 oz.) or the equivalent amount in the form of cannabis concentrate of a controlled
7 substance classified in schedule I as marijuana is guilty of a misdemeanor unless possessed inside
8 one's own primary residence, except for those persons subject to (a)(1), and, upon conviction, may
9 be imprisoned for not more than one year, or fined not more than five hundred dollars (\$500), or
10 both. Exclusive of live marijuana plants, more than ten ounces (10 oz.) of a controlled substance
11 classified in schedule I as marijuana or the equivalent amount in the form of cannabis concentrate,
12 when possessed within one's personal residence is guilty of a misdemeanor, except for those
13 persons subject to (a)(1), and, upon conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than one year, or
14 fined not less than two hundred dollars (\$200) nor more than five hundred dollars (\$500), or both.

15 Possession of live marijuana plants in excess of the number authorized pursuant to § 21-
16 28.11-22 but less than twenty-five (25) marijuana plants is guilty of a misdemeanor, except for
17 those persons subject to (a)(1) and, upon conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than one year,
18 or fined not less than two hundred dollars (\$200) nor more than five hundred dollars (\$500), or
19 both.

20 Possession of twenty-five (25) or more live marijuana plants is guilty of a felony, except
21 for those persons subject to (a)(1), and upon conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than three
22 (3) years or fined not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), or both.

23 (iv) Notwithstanding any public, special, or general law to the contrary, and except as
24 otherwise provided in §§ 21-28-4.01.1 and 21-28-4.01.2, the possession of more than one ounce (1
25 oz.) but not more than two ounces (2 oz.) of marijuana or the equivalent amount in the form of
26 cannabis concentrate by a person who is at least twenty-one (21) years old, and who is not exempted
27 from penalties pursuant to chapter 28.6 of this title, shall constitute a civil offense, rendering the
28 offender liable to a civil penalty in the amount of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) and forfeiture of
29 the marijuana, but not to any other form of criminal or civil punishment or disqualification.
30 ~~Notwithstanding any public, special, or general law to the contrary, this civil penalty of one hundred~~
31 ~~fifty dollars (\$150) and forfeiture of the marijuana shall apply if the offense is the first (1st) or~~
32 ~~second (2nd) violation within the previous eighteen (18) months.~~

33 (v) Notwithstanding any public, special, or general law to the contrary, possession of two
34 ounces (2 oz.) or less of marijuana or the equivalent amount in the form of cannabis concentrate by

1 a person between seventeen (17) and twenty (20) years old, and who is not exempted from penalties
2 pursuant to chapter 28.6 of this title, shall constitute a civil offense, rendering the offender liable to
3 a civil penalty in the amount of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) and forfeiture of the marijuana;
4 ~~provided the minor offender completes~~ Minor offenders under eighteen (18) years of age, are
5 required to complete an approved, drug-awareness program and community service as determined
6 by the court. If the person ~~seventeen (17) years of age or older and~~ under the age of eighteen (18)
7 years fails to complete an approved, drug-awareness program and community service within one
8 year of the disposition, the penalty shall be a three hundred dollar (\$300) civil fine and forfeiture
9 of the marijuana, except that if no drug-awareness program or community service is available, the
10 penalty shall be a fine of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) and forfeiture of the marijuana. The
11 parents or legal guardian of any offender ~~seventeen (17) years of age or older and~~ under the age of
12 eighteen (18) shall be notified of the offense and the availability of a drug-awareness and
13 community-service program. The drug-awareness program must be approved by the court, but
14 shall, at a minimum, provide four (4) hours of instruction or group discussion and ten (10) hours of
15 community service. ~~Notwithstanding any other public, special, or general law to the contrary, this~~
16 ~~civil penalty shall apply if the offense is the first or second violation within the previous eighteen~~
17 ~~(18) months.~~

18 (vi) [Deleted by P.L. 2022, ch. 31, § 10 and P.L. 2022, ch. 32, § 10.]

19 (vii) Any unpaid civil fine issued under (c)(2)(iv) or (c)(2)(v) shall double to three hundred
20 dollars (\$300) if not paid within thirty (30) days of the disposition. The civil fine shall double again
21 to six hundred dollars (\$600) if it has not been paid within ninety (90) days.

22 (viii) No person may be arrested for a violation of (c)(2)(iv) or (c)(2)(v) of this subsection
23 except as provided in this subparagraph. Any person in possession of an identification card, license,
24 or other form of identification issued by the state or any state, city, or town, or any college or
25 university, who fails to produce the same upon request of a police officer who informs the person
26 that he or she has been found in possession of what appears to the officer to be ~~more than one ounce~~
27 ~~(1 oz.)~~ less than two ounces (2 oz.) of marijuana, or the equivalent amount in the form of cannabis
28 concentrate or any person without any such forms of identification who fails or refuses to truthfully
29 provide his or her name, address, and date of birth to a police officer who has informed such person
30 that the officer intends to provide such individual with a citation for possession of ~~more than one~~
31 ~~ounce (1 oz.) but~~ less than two ounces (2 oz.) of marijuana or the equivalent amount in the form of
32 cannabis concentrate, may be arrested.

33 (ix) No violation of (c)(2)(iv) or (c)(2)(v) of this subsection shall be considered a violation
34 of parole or probation.

1 (x) Any records collected by any state agency, tribunal, or the family court that include
2 personally identifiable information about violations of (c)(2)(iv) or (c)(2)(v) shall not be open to
3 public inspection in accordance with § 8-8.2-21.

4 (3) **Jurisdiction.**

5 (i) Any and all adjudications of violations of (c)(2)(i) shall be within the original
6 jurisdiction of the Rhode Island superior court. The department of attorney general shall prosecute
7 any and all violations of (c)(2)(i).

8 (ii) Any and all violations of (c)(2)(iv) and (c)(2)(v) shall be the exclusive jurisdiction of
9 the Rhode Island traffic tribunal. ~~All money associated with the civil fine issued under~~ Fifty percent
10 (50%) of all fines collected by the Rhode Island traffic tribunal from civil penalties issued pursuant
11 to (c)(2)(iv) or (c)(2)(v) shall be ~~payable to the Rhode Island traffic tribunal~~ deposited as general
12 revenues. Fifty percent (50%) of all fines collected by the Rhode Island traffic tribunal from civil
13 penalties issued pursuant to (c)(2)(iv) or (c)(2)(v) shall be expended on drug-awareness and
14 treatment programs for youth.

15 (4) Additionally, every person convicted or who pleads nolo contendere under (c)(2)(i) or
16 (c)(2)(ii) or convicted or who pleads nolo contendere a second or subsequent time under (c)(2)(iii),
17 who is not sentenced to a term of imprisonment to serve for the offense, shall be required to:

18 (i) Perform up to one hundred (100) hours of community service;

19 (ii) Attend and complete a drug-counseling and education program, as prescribed, by the
20 director of the department of behavioral healthcare, developmental disabilities and hospitals
21 (BHDDH) similar to that in § 21-28.11-27.2, and pay the sum of four hundred dollars (\$400) to
22 help defray the costs of this program which shall be deposited as general revenues. Failure to attend
23 may result, after hearing by the court, in jail sentence up to one year;

24 (iii) The court shall not suspend any part or all of the imposition of the fee required by this
25 subsection, unless the court finds an inability to pay;

26 (iv) If the offense involves the use of any automobile to transport the substance or the
27 substance is found within an automobile, then a person convicted or who pleads nolo contendere
28 under (c)(2)(i), (c)(2)(ii) or (c)(2)(iii) shall be subject to a loss of license for a period of six (6)
29 months for a first offense and one year for each offense after.

30 (5) All fees assessed and collected pursuant to (c)(2)(i), (c)(2)(ii) and (c)(2)(iii) shall be
31 deposited as general revenues and shall be collected from the person convicted or who pleads nolo
32 contendere ~~before any other fines authorized by this chapter.~~

33 (d) It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, distribute, or possess with intent to
34 manufacture or distribute, an imitation controlled substance. Any person who violates this

1 subsection is guilty of a crime and, upon conviction, shall be subject to the same term of
2 imprisonment and/or fine as provided by this chapter for the manufacture or distribution of the
3 controlled substance that the particular imitation controlled substance forming the basis of the
4 prosecution was designed to resemble and/or represented to be; but in no case shall the
5 imprisonment be for more than five (5) years nor the fine for more than twenty thousand dollars
6 (\$20,000).

7 (e) It shall be unlawful for a practitioner to prescribe, order, distribute, supply, or sell an
8 anabolic steroid or human growth hormone for: (1) Enhancing performance in an exercise, sport,
9 or game, or (2) Hormonal manipulation intended to increase muscle mass, strength, or weight
10 without a medical necessity. Any person who violates this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor
11 and, upon conviction, may be imprisoned for not more than six (6) months or a fine of not more
12 than one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or both.

13 (f) It is unlawful for any person to knowingly or intentionally possess, manufacture,
14 distribute, or possess with intent to manufacture or distribute, any extract, compound, salt
15 derivative, or mixture of salvia divinorum or datura stramonium or its extracts unless the person is
16 exempt pursuant to the provisions of § 21-28-3.30. Notwithstanding any laws to the contrary, any
17 person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, may be
18 imprisoned for not more than one year, or fined not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000), or
19 both. The provisions of this section shall not apply to licensed physicians, pharmacists, and
20 accredited hospitals and teaching facilities engaged in the research or study of salvia divinorum or
21 datura stramonium and shall not apply to any person participating in clinical trials involving the
22 use of salvia divinorum or datura stramonium.

23 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS -- UNIFORM CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT

- 1 This act would amend the statutory penalties for possession of marijuana offenses to
- 2 conform to the penalties promulgated in the Rhode Island cannabis act.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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